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From the Editor

We're closing in on a year since Covid-19 entered our lives and turned the world upside down. Almost a year, and far too many deaths and upheaval – but yet, we still keep on. Masks continue. Quarantines return. So many still work from home. I see the pictures plastered across the news and social media sites, with us all adorned in masks of varying colors and designs and I often think about the future. Will people a hundred years from now be looking at these pictures like the ones I scan from 1918/1919?

But yet, despite it all, we still hold each other up, perhaps in some ways more than ever. And we still keep writing. And we still keep reading. Historical fiction, along with other genres, still remain as people spend more time buried in the midst of pages to get us through the difficult days. And at some point in the future, these days will be behind us and soon these days also will be 'history' for others to research and examine.

Historical fiction may have the fictional component, but yet, it has enough truth that it draws us back to days that came before us – and the cycle continues.

Stay tuned for future issues –In the weeks ahead we have author interviews scheduled with Gini Grossenbacher, Chrystyna Lucyk-Berger, Sherry Burton, EJ Barnes, Marina Osipova, Renata Stankova, Tom Palmer, Malve von Hassell, Peter Turnham, and more!

Trisha

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A Hobo, a Tramp, and a Bum



A hobo, a tramp, and a bum walked into a bar...Sorry, that's as far as the joke goes. There is no punchline. To most of us the three terms are interchangeable. They're one and the same.

They're not. Among many things in life that look similar from afar, there are varying degrees to these wandering men we associate with days long gone.

According to Wikipedia, "A hobo is a migratory worker or homeless vagabond—especially one who is penniless. The term originated in the Western—probably Northwestern—United States around 1890. Unlike "tramps", who work only when they are forced to, and "bums", who do not work at all, "hobos" are traveling workers."

Hobos were not uncommon since the turn of the century. With the Great Depression in the early 1930's, hobos proliferated across the country. While growing up a small child, I enjoyed hearing my Grandpa Jones talk of the days when he 'rode the rails' looking for work and eating cold cans of pork and beans.

In Britt, Iowa, there is a Hobo Museum. Check out their webpage. <https://www.britthobodays.com/hobo-museum>

These men from long ago even had a Hobo Code.

An ethical code was created by Tourist Union #63 during its 1889 National Hobo Convention in St. Louis Missouri. This code was voted upon as a concrete set of laws to govern the Nation-wide Hobo Body; it reads this way:

1. Decide your own life, don't let another person run or rule you.
2. When in town, always respect the local law and officials, and try to be a gentleman at all times.
3. Don't take advantage of someone who is in a vulnerable situation, locals or other hobos.
4. Always try to find work, even if temporary, and always seek out jobs nobody wants. By doing so you not only help a business along, but ensure employment should you return to that town again.

5. When no employment is available, make your own work by using your added talents at crafts.
6. Do not allow yourself to become a stupid drunk and set a bad example for locals' treatment of other hobos.
7. When jungling in town, respect handouts, do not wear them out, another hobo will be coming along who will need them as bad, if not worse than you.
8. Always respect nature, do not leave garbage where you are jungling.
9. If in a community jungle, always pitch in and help.
10. Try to stay clean, and boil up wherever possible.
11. When traveling, ride your train respectfully, take no personal chances, cause no problems with the operating crew or host railroad, act like an extra crew member.
12. Do not cause problems in a train yard, another hobo will be coming along who will need passage through that yard.
13. Do not allow other hobos to molest children, expose all molesters to authorities, they are the worst garbage to infest any society
14. Help all runaway children, and try to induce them to return home.
15. Help your fellow hobos whenever and wherever needed, you may need their help someday.
16. If present at a hobo court and you have testimony, give it. Whether for or against the accused, your voice counts.

Now there's another place on my growing list of places to visit. The Hobo Museum in Britt, Iowa. Until then, I'll just thank my Grandpa Jones for his stories of his hobo travels in the days before he became 'Daddy' and 'Grandpa'.



Author Spotlight: Mick Arnold



Hello Mick Arnold! Your book released last November, *A Wing and a Prayer*, is garnering some great reviews. Can you tell us a little bit about it?

Well, thank you very much for saying that Trisha, it means a lot. '*A Wing and a Prayer*' is basically the story of how four girls (as the women of the time were called) from different walks of life (and countries even) bond through the mutual dangers that life delivering military aircraft around Great Britain brings. There is a thread, a mutual

love of the stories of Agatha Christie's Miss Marple character which comes to the fore as they find themselves drawn into their very own murder/mystery!

What drew you to write this story?

Honestly, the last thing I expected to be doing during this mad time we've been going through was to sign my second writing contract. After the best part of a couple of years of quite ill health, I was getting things back together and had started to follow my author friend's advice who'd been through the same trouble and was picking up the 'pen' again – it's not quite the same as, picking up the laptop. I'd tried to start up again where I'd left off with a couple of half-finished stories, but it was proving difficult to get some enthusiasm going for them. Then, one advised me to try something new, something that would get me in a place I hadn't been before. I happened to be watching a television program called, *The Spitfire Girls*, about the women who served in the Air Transport Auxiliary and this sparked something inside me.

What type of research was necessary in order to write *A Wing and a Prayer*?

I'd love to be able to say I sat in front of the television and watched all the movies about the Air Transport Auxiliary, only I can't, because there aren't any. You'd think there would be, but apart from a few tv series, there's a criminal lack of exposure to what our women did in (either World) war. Yes, there are some movies – you have to catch, '*Millions Like Us*'. This is about the girls who worked in a wartime aircraft factory, for example – but none about the ATA. So, the documentary I mentioned already apart, this meant searching through libraries (when they were open) and the internet. At least the ATA have plenty of coverage online, and I've also built up a fair collection of books too. I am so in awe of what the women and men of that service did and don't think it's unfair to say that without them, the Battle of Britain would have been an even closer run thing.

I also discovered how remarkably generous people can still be with their time. During my time writing this story, I made contact with the chairman of the ATA Organisation, who has been invaluable with his time and knowledge.

Four women pilots are involved in the plot of the story. Do you have a favorite among the four? What was it like developing four different female characters?

You know, I'd love to say it's Bobby the cocker spaniel, but multi-talented as he is, I don't think I can get away with that. I do tend towards Doris, my American pilot. Partially because she is so driven that she left her homeland to come over and help our war effort, that takes guts and I hope I show through the book(s) that that's exactly what she's made of. Of course, she's very feminine as well, but there is so much more to being feminine in wartime.

What challenges did you encounter with the writing of this tale?

Trusting my imagination again. As I'd been unable to finish the stories I'd started, when this idea presented itself, I had to go with my gut and see where it took me. Until I got about a third of the way in, I wasn't sure I'd even be able to finish the story. It does look like it was what I needed to kickstart my writing brain though.

I read that you have some experience in the Royal Air Force. How did your experience help (or hinder) in the writing of the book?

I'd love to say – a lot! Or – not at all! It's a mixture of both though. Even though the ATA wasn't a military organization, I could still use my own experiences to bear when it came to how the organization would have worked, personnel wise. However, it was only through the research I did about the era which enabled me to write the story.

What was either your favorite part in the writing of the book, or the most surprising thing with it?

Well, I'm a 'panster' for my troubles – though parts were planned – and so a lot of the time, I didn't know what was around the next corner. About the only parts of the book that were ready when I started writing were the prologue and where I wanted it to end. I knew, or felt, that so far as I'm concerned, my saga was going to need some comic moments. I wasn't going to belittle anyone, the very last thing on my mind, or anything, but I felt a desire to make my readers smile, and not just in relief. So, I found myself writing a scene where RAF Hamble (the base my characters fly from) gets bombed by the Luftwaffe. It's not my favourite part of the book, but it's certainly the most surprising thing about is as the inclination to kill off a character was very strong. I'm glad I didn't – oops. Spoiler alert!

Pages of the Past features historical fiction. Yet many authors write in more genres than only historical fiction, as most readers read in more than one genre. So, we're going to jump a little out of the HF mood for a moment and talk about another book you have out. Your first book, *The Season for Love*, is a women's fiction/romance. In case any readers may be interested in that story, can you tell us a little bit about *The Season for Love*?

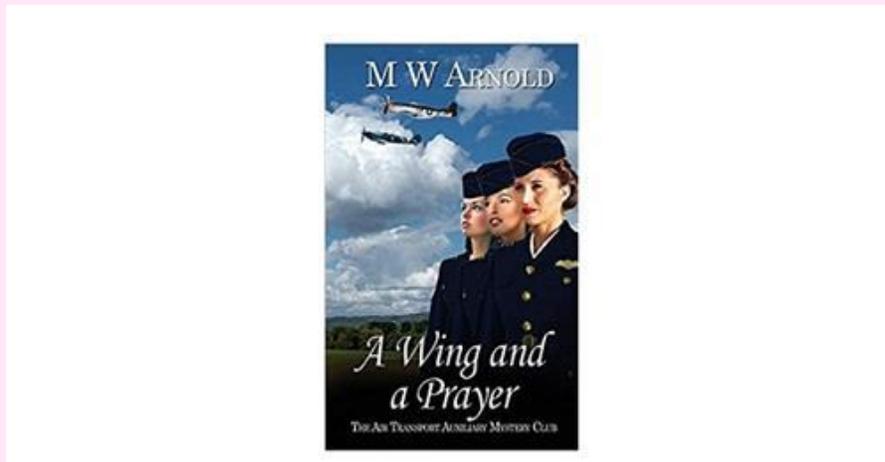
Come on memory, don't fail me now. Well, this was the first book I had published and so, quite special to me. It's a Romantic Drama, though with quite a bit of comedy in as well. It was the second book I ever wrote. It's the story of Chrissie who lost her husband and baby in a car crash eighteen months previously and how, with help from family, friends and a chance encounter with some sprouts, she finds the will to live her life again and perhaps, even to find love a second time. Oh yes, there are red squirrels in it too!

Is there anything you'd like to share with us that I didn't ask you about?

Yes, actually. Since we first spoke about this interview, I've signed the contract for the follow up novel. This is titled, 'Wild Blue Yonder' and this is the second book in what is called the 'Broken Wings' series. The book is with my editor now and I'm expecting edits to come through in the next few weeks, so you're catching me whilst I still have some resemblance of sanity left! I'm currently writing the third, as yet untitled book in the series. This is the Christmas one, so I'm having a lot of fun finding out about Christmas, Wartime style...and we think we have it bad at the moment! I may have more book news coming, other than this one, later in the year too. It's developing into a very busy writing year.

My humongous thanks to you, Trisha, for having me and for allowing me this interview, I've had a wonderful time. Please, take good care of you and yours.

Thank you for joining us today. We look forward to reading your books and following you on social media.



You can find M.W. Arnold's books here:

AmazonUK: [tinyurl.com/y2xhx4d4](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B000APR000)

AmazonUS: [tinyurl.com/y446pzgv](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B000APR000)

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iBooks: [tinyurl.com/y63fmdol](https://www.apple.com/au/itunes/author/MWArnold)

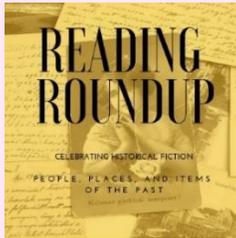
Nook: [tinyurl.com/y53fmoap](https://www.nook.com/author/MWArnold)

You can find M.W. Arnold here:

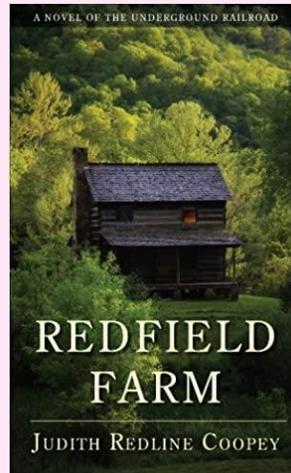
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Instagram – mick859



The 1800s



Redfield Farm

Judith Redline Coopey

Ann Redfield is destined to follow her brother Jesse through life - two years behind him - all the way. Jesse is a conductor on the Underground Railroad, and Ann follows him there as well. Quakers filled with a conviction as hard as Pennsylvania limestone that slavery is an abomination to be resisted with any means available, the Redfield brother and sister lie, sneak, masquerade and defy their way past would-be enforcers of the hated Fugitive Slave Law. Their activities inevitably lead to complicated relationships with other Quakers, pro-slavery neighbors and the fugitives themselves. When Jesse returns from a run with a deadly fever, accompanied by a fugitive, Josiah, who is also sick and close to death, Ann nurses both back to health. But precious time is lost, and Josiah, too weak for winter travel, stays on at Redfield Farm where Ann becomes his teacher, friend and confidant. When grave disappointment disrupts her life, Ann turns to Josiah for comfort, and comfort leads to intimacy. The result, both poignant and inspiring, leads to a life-long devotion to one another and their cause. Author Judith Redline Coopey brings the Underground Railroad alive, giving us characters to remember -- both real and compassionate, and conflict to explore -- when belief in pacifism clashes with dedication to a cause where violence often rules the day.

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