



Vol. 2, No. 29, July 17, 2020

In this issue:

- Short Story Contest
- Author Spotlight: Author Recap #1 (A-D)
- Reading Roundup: Books from the 1940s

## From the Editor

This week we're doing something different. For three weeks, this week and the following two weeks, instead of an author spotlight, we're going to do an Author Recap of the many talented and delightful authors that have shared themselves with Pages of the Past over the past year and a few months. Their names are linked to the original issue that has the entire interview. If you see anything that sounds interesting, just click on their name and you'll be taken to the whole interview that includes links to some of their books, and links where you can follow them on social media.

This week we're sharing a highlight from our A – D authors. (Yes, I got lazy and alphabetized the list as is, so they're in order by first names – not last.)

We're also having a new short story contest! Ana Brazil used the picture below of a 1922 automobile dilemma in her post for [Paper Lantern Writers](#) and thought it might be fun to use as a contest prompt. When I realized that I had a copy of of *The Roaring '20s* that could pair up as a gift for this great photo, I decided to follow through on Ana's suggestion. Details for the short story contest follow, along with a cover copy of the magazine that will go to one lucky winner.

Stay tuned for future issues –In the weeks ahead we have author interviews scheduled with Pamela Nowak, Chris Karlsen, Joyce E.S. Pyka, Linda Ulleseit, Chrystyna Lucyk-Berger, Christina Baker Kline and more!

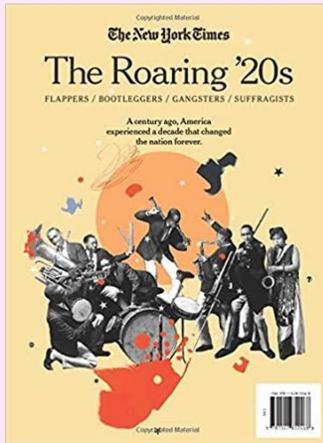
*Trisha*

[texastrishafaye@yahoo.com](mailto:texastrishafaye@yahoo.com)

**[Get Pages of the Past delivered to your inbox every Friday!](#)**

Join us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/184527085517941/>

## Short Story Contest



Let's have a little short story fun. Ana Brazil used the picture below of a 1922 automobile dilemma in a post for [Paper Lantern Writers](#) and thought it might be fun to use as a contest prompt. I realized I had a copy of *The Roaring '20s* that could pair up as a gift for this great photo.

Enter your flash fiction story for a chance to win *The Roaring '20s* (value \$14.99). (Sorry it's not the \$50 gift card that we've had in previous contests, but – COVID times and reduced work hours...)

Write a 300 - 500 word story to the picture below. Email your entry to [texastrishafaye@yahoo.com](mailto:texastrishafaye@yahoo.com) with 'CONTEST ENTRY – (title of your story)' in the subject line.

***Entries are due by midnight, Saturday, August 8th.***

The stories will be printed in the August 14th newsletter. A PDF will be compiled with all the stories and posted on Facebook, allowing readers a chance to read and vote for their favorite. The contest will run until August 24<sup>th</sup> at midnight. The winner will be announced in the August 28<sup>th</sup> newsletter.

***Use the photograph below as a prompt for your story.***



***[Get Pages of the Past delivered to your inbox every Friday!](#)***

Join us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/184527085517941/>

## Author Recap #1 (A-D)

This week we're taking a peek at some highlights from our authors from A to D. We're posting an excerpt from each. Click on their name and it will take you to their original interview so you can read the whole thing. We have so many fascinating authors that have connected with us at Pages from the Past! Thank you all!



### [Ana Brazil](#)

Of course, I'm working on something! Here's part of the current pitch for the novel I'm finishing: In 1919, Viola Clark is a brash, self-confident novelty singer in a second-rate vaudeville troupe. When her pianist-lover is murdered during their run San Francisco, Viola's the police's number one suspect.

The short, short pitch is: "It's a Who Done It meets a Woman Who Knows Too Much in Jazz Age San Francisco".

FUN FACT: A few years ago I inherited a treasure trove of memorabilia from a real-life "brash, self-confident novelty singer in a second-rate vaudeville troupe". Her scrapbooks and music

have long fascinated me and were the perfect launching point (there's that phrase again!) for a murder mystery set in San Francisco.

### [Anne Clare](#)

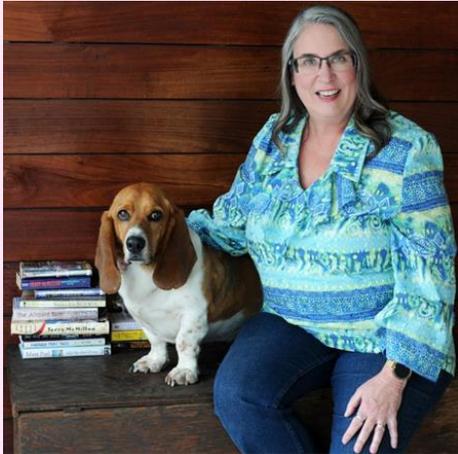
It started with a vivid dream—a dramatic confrontation in an alley in London at the end of the Second World War. I don't usually have such clear dreams (at least not ones that make sense) but this one was interesting. I kept mulling over the details, wondering what had brought the characters to that spot and situation.

I jotted down a few ideas, but I was busy, occupied with day-to-day life. It probably wouldn't have turned into a full-fledged novel if our household plumbing hadn't broken.

Being stuck at home with my three small children, waiting for repairmen to come and waiting on evermounting repair estimates, left me eager for the escape that writing provided.

Of course, the further the story progressed the more I realized that I didn't know nearly as much about World War II as I thought I did, which led to more research, which led to more writing until the whole novel was born. (And, mercifully, we did eventually get to use all of our household systems again!)





[Anne Louise Bannon](#)

The flippant answer is that I spilled a cheesecake. I'd had this weird dream in which I'd seen a 1920s car parked under a theater marquee. Then sometime shortly after, I was mixing up a cheesecake while listening to Ella Fitzgerald sing the George and Ira Gershwin Songbook (an amazing album and well worth listening to). So, she starts singing the tune *Fascinating Rhythm*, and I'm dancing along as I'm putting the cheesecake into the oven, and whoops! As I was cleaning up, I realized that the song is about obsession. What a perfect theme for a murder mystery, and as often happens, Freddie and Kathy started talking to me and I was writing. Because of the dream image, I knew I wanted

the story to be set in New York, in the '20s. Then, when I was doing my research, I found out that the tune *Fascinating Rhythm* was from the first show that George and Ira Gershwin worked on together, *Lady Be Good*, and that it debuted in December, 1924. After that, everything fell into place.

[Barb Warner Dean](#)

I talk about that day (the Normandy invasion) whenever I present my program entitled "Women of WWII: On the Front Lines & the Home Front" at libraries, historical societies, etc., and every time I describe it, I get choked up. The French still fly the U.S. flag, not only at the American Cemetery but in the towns of Normandy. When I was there, a French woman and her grandchild were placing flowers on the grave of an unknown American soldier. The memories of the battles that took place on the beaches below are overwhelming, bittersweet, and long-lasting, so it's heart-warming to learn that the gratitude and respect for those lost in battle there are still strong. It's a very moving experience and definitely started me down the road of writing WW2-era historical novels.



[Barbara Ridley](#)

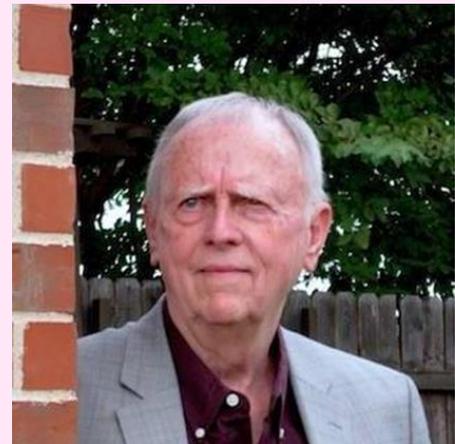
I had one research question that I struggled with, that I could not get answered with any of my online research, nor any other published sources that I could find. My mother, like Lena in the novel, was stuck in Paris when war broke out, unable to get an entry permit to join her boyfriend and many other friends from Prague who had reached England. When she finally was successful—no spoilers here, so I won't reveal how this happened—she traveled from Paris to London by plane in March 1940, the first time she had ever flown. I wanted to know what kind of aircraft this would have been. But all my research stated that there were no civilian flights out of France after the war started in September 1939. I knew this could not be correct. I eventually discovered a funky little British Aviation

Museum close to Heathrow airport, and a dedicated curator who rummaged through his files to find the answer. Civilian flights were indeed suspended in September 1939 but then resumed in November, in the

period of the so-called “phony war”, when there was no action on the Western front, and flights continued until the fall of France in June 1940. My mother would have flown in a 22-passenger Frobisher plane. I left the museum with photographs of the aircraft, both exterior and interior, and the flight schedule.

### [Caleb Pirtle](#)

I grew up on the cusp of the great East Texas oil boom, living on a farm only five miles from the famous Daisy Bradford Number 3 discovery well near New London, and only five miles from the Lou Della Number One well that ushered in the oilfield around Kilgore. In fact, during my boyhood days, Kilgore had 1,100 oil derricks inside the city limits. Businessmen ripped their downtown stores in half to drill for oil and created a one-block area that was known as the World’s Richest Acre. My father worked in the oil patch, and my earliest memories are stories about the boom. The rich had oil wells in their front yards. The poor lived in tents and cardboard shelters in a squalor known as Happy Hollow. Those stories, both good and bad, have been rattling around in my brain for years, and I finally decided to write a series set in a mythical East Texas town when a gambling man struck oil in the midst of the Great Depression and brought life back to a dying town. In reality, a 70-year-old, crippled man named Dad Joiner came to East Texas with \$45 in his pocket in the late ‘20s and promised to drill a well that all the kings of the earth would covet. He prayed with an elderly lady named Daisy Bradford, quoted poetry, and convinced her to let him drill on her land. I patterned my hero, a charming con man named Doc Bannister and a beautiful widow named Eudora Durant after Dad and Daisy, who were much too old to have any kind of a love interest in the 1930s. The books are all fiction. But within every fictional story are nuggets of truth.



### [Caroline Kaiser](#)



I had a job in an auction house cataloging and appraising glass, silver, and porcelain for nearly fourteen years. It was a fascinating place to work, and certain parts of the building, which was an old warehouse, were rather spooky. In particular, the basement (or “lower gallery,” as we called it) was dark and gloomy, and one of my co-workers believed it was haunted—she said she heard voices when she was working down there alone. And I remember working in the basement one Saturday morning, with only my dog for company, and he began barking relentlessly at . . . something. I don’t know what it was he detected, but the experience gave me chills.

From all this, I began to think of the auction house as the perfect setting for a ghostly murder mystery, and being surrounded by so many old and beautiful objects made me want to set a good portion of the story in the past. The past was very much alive for me while I was working there, and I was always wondering about who might have owned the objects I handled, what their lives must have been like.

### [Carolyn E. Cook](#)

Giving the reader a strong sense of an era takes planning and work. Factual details are very important. I might write a scene first and then go back through it, adding small things about the setting, culture, language usage, clothing styles, or significant events of the day. The trick is to keep these details minimal and unobtrusive, just enough to indicate the time frame and not overwhelm the reader. The story should never seem like a textbook quiz on Friday!



### [Charity Bishop](#)

In writing historical fiction about real people, you must look outside biographies about them to learn the context of the world that "made" them. Just reading Tudor biographies did not help me to understand Henry VII's motives; I had to read about European politics to get the big picture. Then, I understand the political decisions he made. Until you get "why" a society believes what it believes, and what social systems were in place, you will not understand the mindset of someone who lived in the past. I do not want my characters to have too modern attitudes. It's inconsistent with the past.

### [Chrystyna K. Lucyk-Berger](#)

A few minutes later, as we were coming down the pass, there was a huge lake before us. It spread to the southern horizon and was nestled between the alpine peaks. It was incredible—the water was Mediterranean blue! And then I saw it... About 100 meters off the shoreline, was a huge stone church tower sticking straight out of the water. I was really frustrated when nobody could tell me what had happened here. "They flooded the valley" was not a good enough answer. That was obvious, anyway. But why? And why was this church tower still standing? There was a story here, and it wasn't one with a happy ending. Immediately, I began imagining the people involved, the pain, the loss. It took me another five years to find out what it was all about and, by that time, I already knew I'd be writing this series.





[Colleen Adair Fliedner](#)

For example, after reading tons of books about World War 1 and the Lusitania, I made a trip to Ireland. In Cobh, I spent time in places where hundreds of bodies were laid out after they were recovered from the site where the ship sank. I went to the cemetery where the mass burials took place. I walked the streets, prayed in the cathedral where special services were held to honor the victims of the devastating act of war perpetrated by the Germans on a passenger liner. I even stayed in one of hotel suites that had been occupied by a family of first-class passengers boarding the Titanic in 1912, and where survivors of the Lusitania tragedy spent days recuperating. I've used a lot of my observations and experiences into my novel.

[D.S. Elliston](#)

The almost forgotten history of the Battle of New Orleans was the biggest draw. The fact that this battle against a foreign enemy was the last fought battle on American soil drew my attention. Had we lost, our history would have been radically changed. Then there was the story of The Gentleman Pirate, Jean Laffite and how he helped Andrew Jackson win the fight against the British.

If you ever have the chance to visit New Orleans and go beyond the French Quarter and the famous Bourbon Street, beyond the jazz and restaurants and off the beaten path, you will find a culture as old as the city itself. This diversity in cultures, the people, and ghost stories, that is what drew me there and still does. The restored plantations, the myths, legends, and its people will take hold of you and, without a doubt, have you wanting more. Many who visit return again and again. It is a unique blend of Creole, Cajun, African American, and more. The flavors, the sites, and sounds bubble together and create an artist pallet for those who seek out its secrets. From Ghosts to Vampires, from the French Quarter to riding the cable car into the Garden District. The riverboats, the bayous, Cafe du Monde, and the nightlife are just the tip of the iceberg.

[David Ebsworth](#)

Well, there's always an exception to every rule – and this is it! Because we've not yet had the chance to visit India, where *Doubtful Diaries* is set. But it's on the cards and we'll get there soon. And with this one, the "stranger than fiction" bit is really about how I came to write this at all. A couple of years ago I was asked to write a novel about Elihu Yale. Now, that might ring a bell because Yale University is named after him. He was born in Boston in 1649 but his Welsh family soon went back to Britain. Elihu made most of his fortune (which in turn allowed him to make donations in support of what was then a fledgling Connecticut college) while working for the English East India Company at Madras (Chennai) and trading in diamonds – as well as Hindu slaves. And despite being reasonably



famous where we now live – he has a very fine tomb in our local churchyard, in Wrexham – he wasn't the sort of character who would normally interest me. But then – purely through serendipity – I came across a copy of his will from the early 1700s. It has a remarkable line: *To my wicked wife...* And then nothing. No bequest. No explanation. Not even her name! I was instantly hooked. Who was this woman? Why wicked?



#### [Deborah Swift](#)

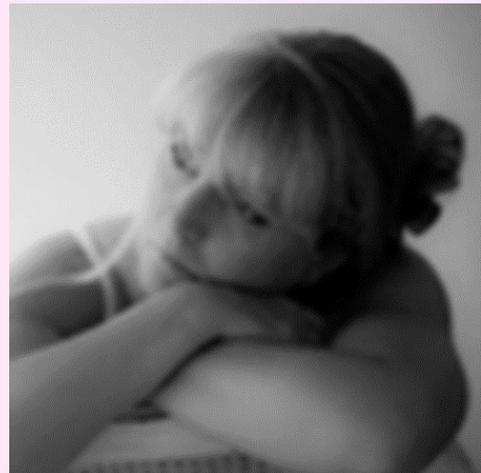
What drew me eventually to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was that I found a story on my doorstep that I wanted to tell – one that was close to home, and featured the filming of an iconic film on my local railway station. The movie 'Brief Encounter' was made near my home in WW2 in 1945. This was just in living memory, and I wanted to capture something of it before those that remembered it were gone. So it meant that instead of archives I could use interviews and real-life testimony to discover the history behind my book. [Past](#)

[Encounters](#) tells the story of two people changed forever by the war, and how that impacted their relationship with each other. Several elderly ladies gave me their own harrowing stories of the time, and it was humbling to be able to use these as material in a book.

#### [DK Marley](#)

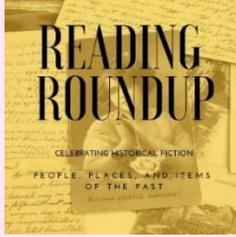
This book is truly one from my heart. I lived close to Jekyll Island for a while and the island is my family's favourite vacation spot. From the time my kids were little, we spent at least one time a year there until my husband and I finally moved there in 2011. I worked on and off on the book throughout the years and for a long time it just sat on my shelf. But then, in 2015 when I lost my daughter to a drunk driver, the time came for me to finish and publish it since the theme of love, and the relationship between a mother and daughter, pulsed vivid in my brain.

Jekyll is truly an enchanting island. I remember sitting there on the beach when I first thought of the book and thinking of how peaceful and how much love the island emits. I started thinking of the island itself as a young girl, an innocent girl, and wondered about the history of the island. How did the first settlers change her? What kind of intolerance and racism did this pure unadulterated beauty experience all those centuries ago?



**[Get Pages of the Past delivered to your inbox every Friday!](#)**

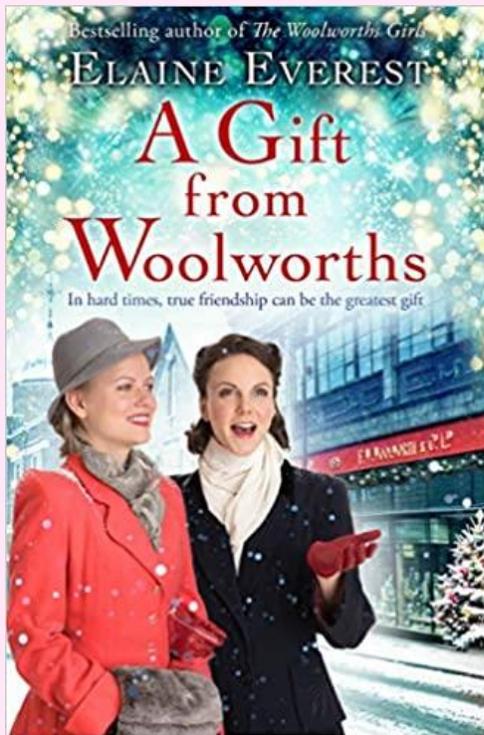
Join us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/184527085517941/>



# The 1940s

## [A Gift from Woolworths](#)

**Elaine Everest**



Will the war be over by Christmas?

As the war moves into 1945 the lives of the women of Woolworths continue. When store manager, Betty Billington, announces she is expecting Douglas's baby her future life is about to change more than she expects.

Freda has fallen in love with the handsome Scottish engineer, but will it end happily?

Maisie loves being a mother and also caring for her two nieces although she still has her own dreams. When her brother appears on the scene, he brings unexpected danger to the family.

Meanwhile Sarah dreams of her husband's return and a cottage with roses around the door but Woolworths beckons. Will our girls sail into times of peace, or will they experience more heartache and sorrow? With a wedding on the horizon, surely only happiness lies ahead – or does it?

**[Get Pages of the Past delivered to your inbox every Friday!](#)**

Join us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/184527085517941/>