



Vol. 2, No. 22, May 29, 2020

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From the Editor

Today we welcome a returning guest author Lindsay Downs, talking about his new book – *A Conspiracy Uncovered* – which releases today.

Our weekly articles are up to the letter ‘N’ – so the era/time period we’re talking about this week is the Nifty-Fifties. I barely have feet in the fifties, so I don’t have any personal memories or recollections of that decade. But from the countless hours I spent watching reruns – *Happy Days*, *Leave it to Beaver*, *LaVerne and Shirley* – I feel like I’ve experienced life in those days.

Stay tuned for future issues –In the weeks ahead we have author interviews coming up with Johanna Wittenberg, Caleb Pirtle III, DK Marley, and more!

Trisha

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New Release!



[A Conspiracy Uncovered](#)

Lindsay Downs

At 12:30pm on November 22, 1963 three gunshots rang out in Dealey Plaza, Dallas, Texas killing the President of the United States and seriously wounding the governor of Texas. By late afternoon, the police had Lee Harvey Oswald in custody.

Twenty years later Professor Richard Dean, Jr was in the receipt of a package sent by Walter Johnson. Inside was a shirt matching the same one Oswald had worn.

While searching out the truth Richard, Jr and his wife find out the assassination was a conspiracy instigated by an international secretive society. Even though there were several naysayers the attempts on Richard Jr., and others, lives helped convince the cynics what Walter Johnson was saying was the truth.

When Richard Jr. learns Walter has a twin the question is raised, is he here to help or kill his brother?

Once everything is settled Richard Jr. helps Walter start over with a new life.

Nifty Fifties



What makes a fictional novel fall into the 'historical fiction' category? There seems to be some debate about the time frame that nudges a novel into the historical fiction genre. Wikipedia states:

Definitions differ as to what constitutes a historical novel. On the one hand the Historical Novel Society defines the genre as works "written at least fifty years after the events described", while critic Sarah Johnson delineates such novels as "set before the middle of the last [20th] century ... in which the author is writing from research rather than personal experience."

If we use the Historical Novel Society's definition, any fictional tale set before 1970 would be considered historical fiction. I'm not really sure how I feel about using that criteria. Because I could easily write a story set in the 1970s and it would be debatable about whether it's historical fiction or not. It's borderline on the cutoff date, but it's the "writing from personal experience" part that troubles me. I could write a story from personal experience in the 1970s, and what I'm not sure about is how I feel about coming that close to the edge of 'historical'.

Now the 1950s, or the 'Nifty Fifties' as they're sometimes called, I couldn't write from personal experience. Granted, I was born then (barely - 1958), but I have no recollections of my first two years of life. Whew! I'm saved on that one. Although those years seem familiar enough that it seems like I lived the 1950s. But I think that's because of the stories I heard from Mom and Dad about their living through the 1950s – and the massive amounts of Happy Days reruns I devoured as a child.

What makes the 1950s different from other generations or eras?

TELEVISION

A big difference in family life was the popularity of the television set. According to Wikipedia:

The 1950s are known as The Golden Age of Television by some people. Sales of TV sets rose tremendously in the 1950s and by 1950 4.4 million families in America had a television set. Americans devoted most of their free time to watching television broadcasts. People spent so much time watching TV, that movie attendance dropped and so did the number of radio listeners. Television revolutionized the way Americans see themselves and the world around them. TV affects all aspects of American culture. "Television affects what we wear, the music we listen to, what we eat, and the news we receive."

MUSIC

Music played a huge part in this decade. Rock and Roll entered mainstream America, much to the consternation of many of the older folks. Elvis Presley, Ricky Nelson, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis...

The new music differed from previous styles in that it was primarily targeted at the teenager market, which became a distinct entity for the first time in the 1950s as growing prosperity meant that young people did not have to grow up as quickly or be expected to support a family. Rock-and-roll proved to be

a difficult phenomenon for older Americans to accept and there were widespread accusations of it being a communist-orchestrated scheme to corrupt the youth, although rock and roll was extremely market based and capitalistic.

The American folk music revival became a phenomenon in the United States in the 1950s to mid-1960s with the initial success of The Weavers who popularized the genre. Their sound, and their broad repertoire of traditional folk material and topical songs inspired other groups such as the Kingston Trio, the Chad Mitchell Trio, The New Christy Minstrels, and the "collegiate folk" groups such as The Brothers Four, The Four Freshmen, The Four Preps, and The Highwaymen. All featured tight vocal harmonies and a repertoire at least initially rooted in folk music and topical songs.

This influence of the American folk music revival was a great lead in to the 1960s popularity of that musical style.

FILM

The film industry was booming in the 1950s. Marilyn Monroe, Marlon Brando, Lucille Ball, Sophia Loren, and more. But who can ever forget the iconic male figure of this time – James Dean?

WAR

The 1950s was a time of conflict referred to as the 'Cold War', involving rival superpowers of the United States against Soviet Union influence.

The Korean War, which took place from 1950 to 1953 also affected many families across the nation. Wikipedia reports:

The war left 33,742 American soldiers dead, 92,134 wounded, and 80,000 missing in action (MIA) or prisoner of war (POW). Estimates place Korean and Chinese casualties at 1,000,000–1,400,000 dead or wounded, and 140,000 MIA or POW.

SOCIETY BEGINS TO CHANGE

With all these changes, family life and society also began to change.

An article, [The 1950s Lifestyles and Social Trends: Overview](#), discusses many of the changes that came about in this decade. They write:

The 1950s was an era of great upheaval in the United States. By the millions, Americans who had just survived two decades of economic depression and war left the cities for the greenery and open spaces of the suburbs. Suburban towns sprang up like crabgrass across the country. With these instant communities came a new American lifestyle that included suburban malls, fast-food restaurants, TV dinners, drive-in movies, and an oversized, gas-guzzling car in every garage.

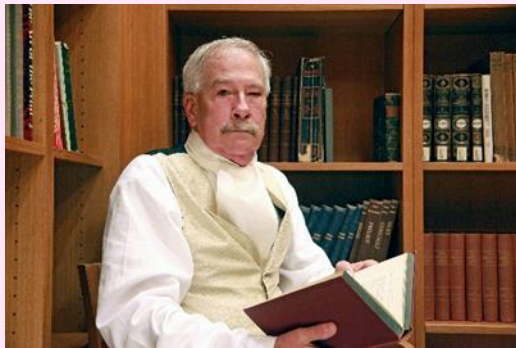
If I were going to be writing a story set in the 1950s, there's a lot more research I'd have to do. But – I probably won't be doing this. It's just too close in proximity to years that I have memories of, and I don't like being that close to something termed 'historical'.

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Author Spotlight: Lindsay Downs

Today we have a returning guest, Lindsay Downs. Lindsay is a talented and multi-genre author. His newest book, *A Conspiracy Uncovered* releases today. We're please to welcome him here and talk a little bit about his newest release.



Hello Lindsay! Welcome back to Pages of the Past. You were one of our earliest author interviews when the newsletter began a little over a year ago. You're back with a new book that just released. Can you tell us a bit about *A Conspiracy Uncovered*?

When you read the book you'll see I'm not so much writing the book as I'm relaying the events to you, the reader, as they were told first and foremost by Prof. Richard Dean, and secondly by Walter Johnson.

I understand that there's a special significance with your new book releasing today, on May 29th. Can you tell us about it?

Yes. When I got permission to put the book up for sale, eBook, and print, I wasn't sure when to have the book released. During my research I realized the primary victim was born on May 29, 1917 so I selected that date for the official release. The primary character, Prof. Richard Dean, wholeheartedly agreed with me the date would be appropriate.

You have a wide range of eras that you've written in, from the Regency period up until the 1940s. What prompted you to jump ahead and write murder mysteries during another time period?

Correction, I have a series set in the 1960's in particularly South Vietnam with, so far, one book set in Los Angeles. Also, a contemporary murder mystery series with two Army JAG officers as the principle characters. That is currently out to a literary agency.

As for why I currently write the different periods in history, I wanted the challenge of including actual historical events, whenever possible, into the stories. I am amazed at what I have learned in my research, many of which was never taught me when I was in school. I'm not sure exactly who do blame for the omissions. The history teachers or the school system in general. What I do know, we can't keep history from the students. Otherwise, they will not learn the truth.

It's been said that a historical or even contemporary author can bore their listeners to death with the facts learned during research and I can and have. For example- we learn about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 and the sinking of the battleship USS Arizona. But, did you know the captain of another battleship, USS California, ordered the ship to be beached near the mouth of the harbor so Japanese submarines wouldn't be able to sneak in and torpedo American ships. That I learned during research for one of my Upson PI Mystery series books.

Or that during the Vietnam war it was alleged that the CIA, through Air America helped smuggle heroin out of the Golden Triangle.

Or that Tiet 1 operators, Navy SEALs, Special Forces, Rangers, in many cases and because of the difficulty in receiving proper medical care could have Traumatic Brain Injuries which not only go untreated nor is the injury entered into their medical file.

Those are just a couple of things I learned while doing research for my different series and therefore books.

From our messages back and forth, I know you've done a lot – A LOT – of research for this book. Can you tell us a little bit about some of the research you needed to do in writing *A Conspiracy Uncovered*?

Using the tape recordings and my notes I was able to confirm where Walter had lived prior to moving to Los Angeles. Also, that he hand built furniture using the tools available to the original maker. As for where he trained, I was able to locate the abandoned base. In regards to the actual shooting I turned to the Warren Commission Report to confirm what he said was true.

What differences did you notice while writing this book compared to some of your other historical novels?

Even though I had written first (1st) person before this book posed an even more difficult challenge for me because what was written came from another person or persons.

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

Yes, and this is very important. You, the reader, has to decide if this book is fiction or nonfiction.

Thank you for joining us today, Lindsay. We appreciate your time and we congratulate you on your newest release. Please leave a few links where our readers can find you and your books and we'll go follow and friend you.



You can find *A Conspiracy Uncovered* here:

Amazon USA- <https://tinyurl.com/vydcu2>

Amazon UK- <https://tinyurl.com/u9394ov>

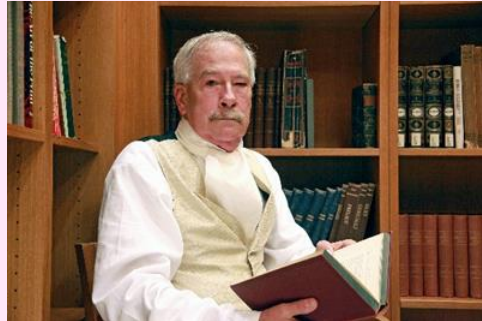
You can find Lindsay here:

Facebook- <http://tinyurl.com/pgq8vzz>

Twitter- @ldowns2966

LinkedIn- <http://tinyurl.com/e8t56>

Goodreads-<http://tinyurl.com/prcdmml>



BIO: I've been an avid reader ever since I was old enough to hold a red leather bound first edition copy of Sir Walter Scott's *The Lady of the Lake* in my lap. So it only seemed natural at some point in my life I take up pen and paper to start writing. Over time my skills slightly improved which I attribute to my English teachers.

My breakthrough came about in the mid 1970's when I read a historical romance written by Sergeanne Golon, Angelique. This French husband and wife team opened my eyes to the real world of fiction. Stories about romance, beautiful damsels, handsome heroes and plots which kept me hooked. Of course, being a man, I had to keep my reading hidden from others as that wasn't appropriate reading for men.

With this newfound appreciation of the written word I took up other books and devoured them as a starving person would a plate of food. I then attempted to write again. I still wasn't satisfied so I put it aside for years as other events entered my life.

Finally, in the early years of the new millennium I tried again to write and once again met with limited success. At least now I was able to get past the first page or two. Then, in 2006 a life changing event brought me back to my love, I took a job as a security officer. This allowed me plenty of time to read different genres.

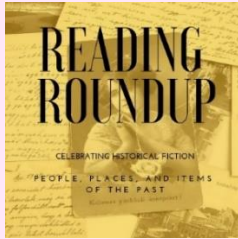
My favorites are regency and murder mystery. As I poured through everyone I could get my hands on I knew this could be something I wanted to do and have been successful.

I've been published since 2008.

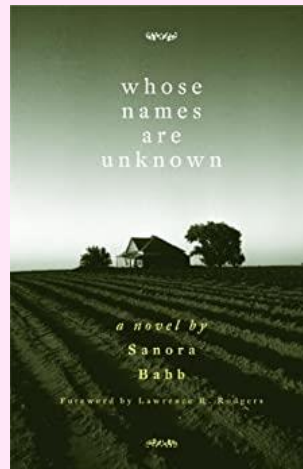
Since 2012 I've lived in central Texas.

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The 1930s



Whose Names are Unknown

Sanora Babb

A clear-eyed and unsentimental story of the Dunne family as they struggle to survive in the Oklahoma Panhandle while never losing faith in themselves. Even when they flee to California and face even worse circumstances as migrant workers. Written with empathy for their plight, this powerful narrative is based upon the author's firsthand experiences of the dust storms and migrant camps in California.

Sanora Babb's long-hidden novel *Whose Names Are Unknown* tells of the High Plains farmers who fled drought and dust storms during the Great Depression. Written with empathy for the farmers' plight, this powerful narrative is based upon the author's firsthand experience.

Babb submitted the manuscript for this book to Random House for consideration in 1939. Editor Bennett Cerf planned to publish this "exceptionally fine" novel but when John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* swept the nation, Cerf explained that the market could not support two books on the subject.

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