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In this issue:

- Roaring Twenties
- Author Spotlight: Anne Louise Bannon
- Reading Roundup: Books from the 1920s

From the Editor

This week is all about the 20s – the 1920s that is, not the 2020’s. Our article this week shares some information about the Roaring Twenties decade. Our author spotlight is a returning author, Anne Louise Bannon. But this time we’re chatting about her Freddy and Kathy series, which is set in the 1920s. And it all works out to tie in with our Reading Roundup, which features books from the 1920s this week. So what books are listed in the Reading Roundup? Why, of course, we’re sharing the blurbs about Anne Louise Bannon’s four books set in this era. Keep reading to find out more.

Stay tuned for future issues –In the weeks ahead we have author interviews scheduled with Gini Grossenbacher, Pamela Nowak, Joyce E.S. Pyka, and more!

Trisha

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Roaring Twenties



Welcome to a glorious decade – the 1920s. Or, as many call it ‘The Roaring Twenties’ or ‘The Jazz Age.’ The 20s were years of exuberance and change. After Suffragette’s protesting and marching and fighting for years, women finally achieved the right to vote. Hemlines were raising. Automobiles were taking over the world. Prohibition reigned but the liquor was still flowing. And the movie industry discovered sound and ‘talkies’ flooded our nation.

One of the popular literary voices of the time, F. Scott Fitzgerald, coined the term ‘Jazz Age.’ “Considered the premiere chronicler of the Roaring Twenties, Fitzgerald is still widely read. His wife, Zelda, was considered the ultimate flapper, and together the couple lived the life of excess and tragedy that has come to represent the era.”

Fitzgerald is probably best known for his book, *The Great Gatsby*, published in 1925. Almost a hundred years later, this book is still considered an iconic classic.

Another well-known author from this era is Ernest Hemingway, a novelist and short-story writer. Stay tuned to Pages of the Past – in two weeks Hemingway has granted our readers an exclusive interview to talk about writing.

The movie industry exploded and flourished during this decade. By 1926, there were twenty thousand movie theaters in the US. When the first feature-length film with sound was released in 1927, *The Jazz Singer*, it secured the success for future talkies. Weekly movie attendance increased from fifty-seven million in 1927 to ninety-five million by 1929. (That’s *weekly* attendance, not monthly or annually.)



An image representative of this era is the flapper. “Women broke free of the traditions and restraints of the Victorian era in favor of short dresses, short hairstyles, and carefree ways.” Women began to break out of the prim mold and went out adorned in makeup and high heels, many smoking and drinking along with the men.



Speakeasies provided more than a place to get an illegal drink. Many also offered live music, dancing, and gambling. Between the late night entertainment, and the increased popularity of radio broadcasting, jazz music was embraced, along with popular dance steps such as the Charleston, Jitterbug, Cakewalk, and Turkey Trot.

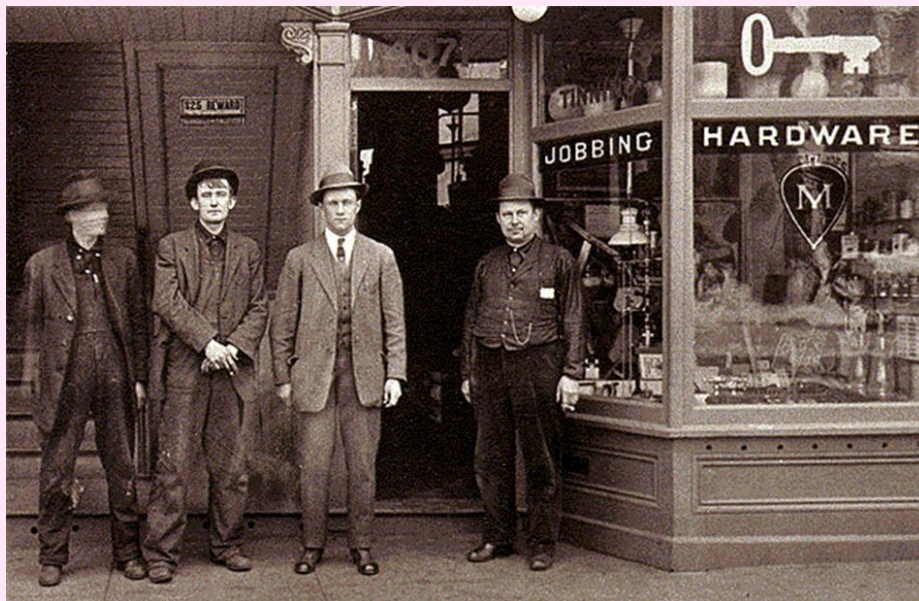
Prohibition went into effect in 1920, much to the delight of religious groups and social reformers. However, this ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment had little effect on the actual

manufacturing or consumption of alcohol. Prohibiting alcohol only made drinking fashionable and exciting. Illegal bars called speakeasies were commonplace and bootleggers made and supplied alcohol across the nation.

Prohibition was later repealed in December 1933. It is the only repealed amendment in the history of the United States Constitution.

With the easier times and an economy on its way to recovery from the devastation of World War I – then called the Great War, because of course, World War II hadn't occurred yet – and the massive deaths from the Spanish Flu pandemic, Americans embraced the easier times of this decade. Automobile sales flourished. Retail establishments gave Americans a place to spend their newly acquired wealth. "By 1927 there were seventy thousand different retail locations throughout the United States, including A&P grocery stores, J.C. Penney department stores, Walgreen drugstores, and Fanny Farmer candy stores. The popularity of sports soared. Baseball became a favorite sport of many and Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig became common household names. Golf and tennis, once the sports of the wealthy upper class became a weekend sport for the middle class. By 1928 eighty-nine cities had public golf courses. (Although that number is a mere drop in the bucket to what's been built over the past hundred years.)

Unfortunately, the optimism that fueled most of the decade was about to come to a screeching halt. Towards the tail end of the decade many businesses began to fail, and the economy started to falter. The stock market crash on October 24, 1929 brought American's wealth to a sudden halt as the nation was plunged into a new era – the Great Depression of the 1930s.



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Author Spotlight: Anne Louise Bannon

In March we chatted with Anne Louise Bannon about her books that are set in 1870 Old Los Angeles - *Death of the Zanjero* and *Death of the City Marshal*. ([You can read her interview here](#)) This week Anne returns to visit with us again, this time about her Freddie & Kathy series. Keep reading to find out some fascinating tidbits about her books and her writing journey.



Hello Anne Louise! Welcome back to Pages of the Past. We talked to you in March about your books that are set in 1870 Old Los Angeles - *Death of the Zanjero* and *Death of the City Marshal*. ([You can read her interview here](#)) This week we're chatting with you about your Freddie & Kathy series that has four books: *Fascinating Rhythm*, *Bring into Bondage*, *The Last Witnesses*, and *Blood Red*. You started your Freddie and Kathy books first, and then in 2018 added your Old Los Angeles book series. What's the biggest difference you've noticed between writing in these two very different times?

There doesn't seem to be a lot of difference in the writing process between the two different times. I still need to do my research. I still need to stay attuned to

the voices of my characters. What is kind of fun is that in the Old Los Angeles series, Maddie is writing as an old woman – in the 1920s. I do not have to do as much medical research in the Freddie and Kathy series, since no one in that series is a doctor. But I'm having to do more research into the history of science, since one character has turned out to be a scientist.

***Fascinating Rhythm* is the first book in your Freddie and Kathy series. What prompted you to write that first book? And how did it end up begin set in 1924 New York City?**

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.

When you started *Fascinating Rhythm*, did you know that it would grow to have multiple books in the series? How did it turn from one book into four?

Believe it or not, I wrote the first drafts of *Fascinating Rhythm* and *Bring Into Bondage* right on top of each other in about a month. I'd broken my elbow in a bicycle accident and had nothing else to do, and damn it, Freddie and Kathy kept talking to me and talking to me. Some of that was the research. Having Kathy come from Kansas opened up a couple interesting ideas, then I stumbled across a really juicy conspiracy theory that was popular in the '20s, and that inspired what became *The Last Witnesses*. The first scene of *Blood Red* was intact in my mind even before *Bring Into Bondage* was finished. And there are at least three more that I've got planned.

To bring your readers into the 1920s with you, I'm sure you had to do a great deal of research. What's one of the most fascinating things you discovered about that era during your digging?

Oh, dang. I can't say because it's a spoiler. But a lot of the Gershwin research was a blast. I've been a total freak on the music of George Gershwin almost since I discovered it when I was in my early 20s. So, finding out about George and Ira was really interesting to me.

You also have an Operation Quickline series, set in the 1980s. Are you able to write in multiple timeframes simultaneously, or how do you juggle your different books and timelines?

Actually, it's not that hard because all the characters are so different. Sid and Lisa are not anything like Freddie and Kathy, who are not anything like Maddie Wilcox. Also, the Quickline books were originally written in the 1980s (I really hate calling them historical). I'm in the process of re-writing them because I'm a much better writer now than I was then. So, there's been some time in between all these novels, which probably hasn't hurt. I will confess, though, that I do have to be sure I don't copy plot events. I wrote *Blood Red* right before I wrote *Death of the City Marshal*, and noticed after the fact that I'd had two main characters lose their homes to fire. Oops. But, again, very different characters and circumstances, so unless you know I wrote the two books one right after the other, you probably wouldn't notice.

In April 2020 you released *Sad Lisa*, book 5 in the Operation Quickline series. Do you have any other books or historical fiction works in progress? Can you give us a little teaser and let us know when we can look for it?

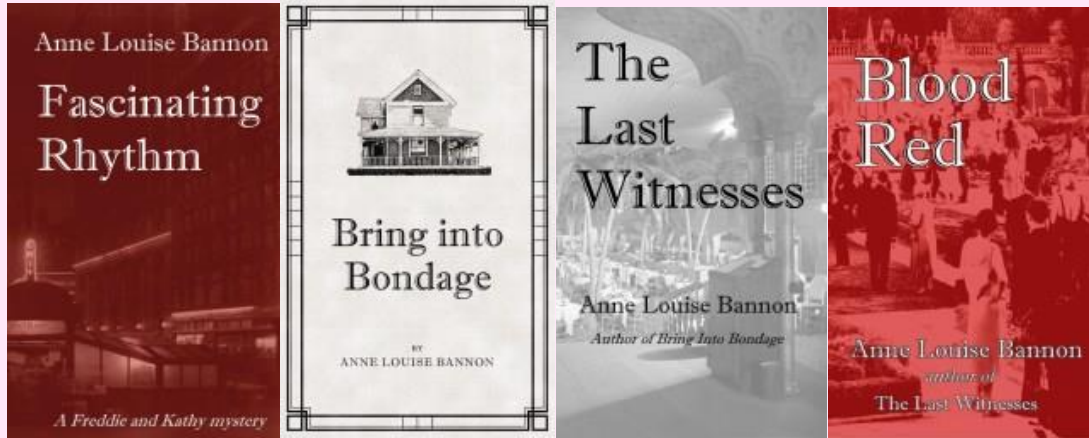
I'm just starting the re-write on the sixth Quickline book, *These Hallowed Halls*. Sid and Lisa are doing undercover work at a small midwestern university with their relationship at a complete impasse, and things blow up quite nicely. That will probably show up on my fiction blog (<https://annelouisebannon.com/blogs>) this winter, and then be available as a book sometime late next spring. The third Old Los Angeles book, *Death of the Chinese Field Hands*, will be released in late September, and it takes place in the aftermath of the lynching of 18 Chinese men (which really happened) in 1871. And I'm working on a contemporary story at the moment, but no idea when that will be finished, let alone ready.

The 1870s, 1920s and 1980s, is any of them your favorite to write about? And why?

I don't have a favorite era or time. I just love history, and more to the point, I love the people in history. I was playing with a story set in Marseilles during the Greek era not too long ago, and the characters were really a lot of fun. And, oddly enough, I am not generally a fan of the Nineteenth Century, but that's where

Maddie Wilcox landed, and I'm finding it really, really interesting. Where my interest flits next will depend on who's talking to me the loudest.

Thank you for joining us today, Anne Louise. We appreciate your time. 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 Anne Louise Bannon's books here:

My books are available at a variety of different retailers, including Barnes & Noble, Amazon, and Kobo.com. The easiest way to get to them is to go to my Fiction page, <https://annelouisebannon.com/fiction/>

You can find Anne Louise Bannon here:

The best way to keep up with me is to sign up for my newsletter, either on my website or here:

<http://eepurl.com/zHOAb>

I'm also on -

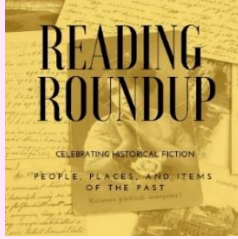
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RobinGoodfellowEnt/>

Twitter: [Twitter.com/ALBannon](https://twitter.com/ALBannon)

BIO: Anne Louise Bannon is an author and journalist who wrote her first novel at age 15. Her journalistic work has appeared in *Ladies' Home Journal*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Wines and Vines*, and in newspapers across the country. She was a TV critic for over 10 years, founded the YourFamilyViewer blog, and created the OddBallGrape.com wine education blog with her husband, Michael Holland. She is the co-author of *Howdunit: Book of Poisons*, with Serita Stevens, as well as author of the Freddie and Kathy mystery series, set in the 1920s, the Operation Quickline Series and the Old Los Angeles series, set in the 1870s. Her most recent title is *Death of the City Marshal*. She and her husband live in Southern California with an assortment of critters. Visit her website at AnneLouiseBannon.com.

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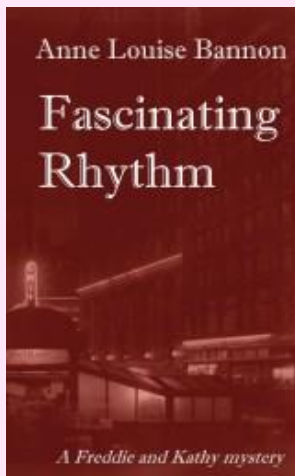
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The 1920s

The Freddie & Kathie Series

Anne Louise Bannon



Set in December of 1924, a senior editor at Healcroft House, Frank Selby, turns up dead in his apartment. Problem is, his secretary, Kathy Briscow, never mentioned that he hadn't been at work for the previous three days. Seems he only came in when he wanted, and since Kathy was doing his work for him, it didn't matter.

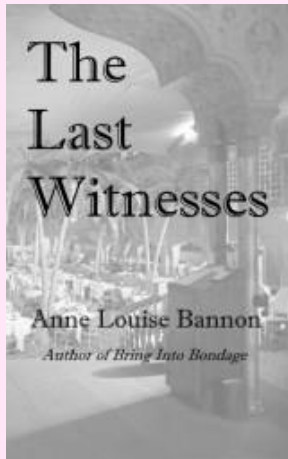
But now, Kathy is the main suspect in his murder. Author and socialite Freddie Little finds out that Kathy has been editing his novel, and not Selby. Freddie also has reason to suspect someone else. So he convinces Kathy to work with him to find the real killer. Together, the two comb the streets and speakeasies of New York City to find a killer with an obsession.

Fascinating Rhythm is available at the fine retailers below. And if you happen to be in Altadena, California, you can also find the paperback at Hoopla! An Emporium of Good Things. Better yet, if you time it right, I might even be around to sign a copy for you. You can click through to my Talks and Classes page to see a clip of me reading from the first two chapters. Or sign up for the Robin Goodfellow Newsletter below to find out where I'll be next and about all the other fun things I'm doing.

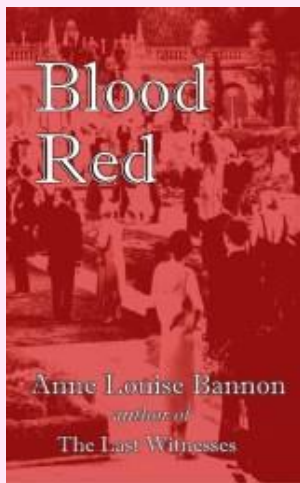


It's back to the Roaring Twenties with Kathy Briscow and her socialite author boyfriend Freddie Little. Freddie arrives for what he hopes will be a very special date with Kathy only to find her in a tizzy and packing. There's been trouble brewing on the family farm in Hays, Kansas, and now Ma Briscow has summoned Kathy home because her father is deathly ill. It's about the only thing that could get Kathy in Freddie's plane. The two fly to Kansas and are greeted by a shotgun blast. It's all sorted out very quickly, and Pa is still very sick but has survived the worst. Vandals, however, have been attacking the farm repeatedly. Kathy and Freddie decide to stay and find out what's going on before someone gets hurt even worse than when Pa got dunked in the creek. Not that Kathy's family doesn't have their own secrets. Her brother Joshua has returned home with a new bride that he forgot to tell his family about. And Kathy's youngest brother, Gamaliel, has an even darker secret. In

town, there's nastiness afoot, as Freddie meets a frightened young boy with tell-tale bruises, and then the boy turns up dead on the Briscow farm. Kathy and Freddie get caught spooning behind the barn, and Pa Briscow gets his shotgun out. Even the threat of being goosed down the aisle isn't half the trouble Freddie and Kathy face, when there's another body found and Freddie gets arrested for murder.



The exciting sequel to *Bring Into Bondage*, featuring socialite author Freddie Little and his editor and not-so-blushing bride Kathy Briscow. In fact, Freddie and Kathy are happily enjoying their newly-married bliss when Freddie's sister, Honoria, finds a dead body in her apartment. Honoria had taken the young woman in as a favor to a friend but it soon becomes clear that the favor caught up. Honoria goes into hiding and Freddie and Kathy take up a chase that will lead all three of them across the country and into a conspiracy that, no matter how unbelievable, could get them all killed.



For Freddie Little, blood red is not only the color of the family heirloom ruby necklace, it is the color of his deep love for his wife, Kathy Briscow Little. When the guests at the gala party see Kathy wearing the huge gem, several start seeing red. But only one is angry enough to kill Freddie's father.

Freddie remains oddly reluctant to search for his father's killer, and Kathy gets worried that perhaps the killer is far closer to them than they thought. Freddie's mother, Gloria, takes up the chase, aided and abetted by his sister Honoria. Freddie feels all too relieved when the police arrest a couple of former laborers at the family business.

But then his Uncle Stephen is killed and the police have good reason to believe that the shooter was the same person who killed Freddie's father. Worse yet, Kathy's younger brother is kidnapped, and then there is the daring burglary of Freddie's apartment while everyone is asleep inside. Already feeling the weight of his new role as family patriarch, Freddie works to squeeze in investigation among all the other demands on his time.

There's help from Honoria and her friend Ivy. Freddie's dear friend Lowell provides disturbing evidence about Freddie's father. But it's Freddie's demons that get the better of him and it takes almost losing Kathy to bring him to his senses and a renewed sense of purpose. With luck, it will be in time to save all that he holds dear.

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