

Writer's Block

A Cindy Bauer Books Newsletter

Volume 3 - Issue 10 - October 2009



September in Review

As usual, not a month goes by that something new isn't going on at my house. I've been hoarse since the 4th of April, so I'm having a biopsy done on my vocal cords. Ouch!

Some exciting news though! There's a company wishing to get translation rights to Chasing Memories and also asked about any other books that I have. I have managed to acquire an agent to handle that for me. I'll keep you posted on that one!

We have two very exciting interviews for you this month. We have new and upcoming author, Sandra Lyerla and also best selling author, Gail Gaymer Martin. Gayle has sold over 3 million copies of her books to date.

You can read my review of Sandra's first novel now in the publication process by visiting Reviews By Cindy at:

<http://www.reviewsbycindy.blogspot.com>.

Another new item is that I now have a sponsor for four of my blog sites and they are U-Printing.com which you can visit at: <http://www.uprinting.com>. I recently hosted a give-a-way for DigitalRoom.com (<http://www.digitalroom.com>) to win a free 18-inch by 24-inch rolled poster print from any photo, and I was amazed that only 4 people entered! Since beginning this amazing journey into the publishing world, I can't tell you how many times an author has asked me, "Where can I get a poster for my signing events?" Well folks, you just missed your chance TIMES FOUR! Unbelievable!

The winners are C.C. Cowan, V.K. Sansone and Mary Dressel. U-Printing is supposed to post them on the 1st of October and I would imagine, contact them, as well, to get their photos for their posters which, by the way, include free shipping!

But they will be holding these kinds of give-a-ways often, so don't forget to frequent at least these four blog sites occasionally if you want to get in on the free stuff! Here are the four blogs:

my News blog at: <http://cindybauer.blogspot.com>, my Review blog at: <http://reviewsbycindy.blogspot.com>, my Interview blog at: <http://interviewsbycindy.blogspot.com>, and my Author Resource blog at: <http://authorresourcesbycindy.blogspot.com>.

Do you like to cook? For those of you who said yes (and for those of you who like to eat), I'd like to invite you to participate in a recipe contest. All recipes, including diabetic, low carb, etc etc etc, are welcome!

(AND for anyone interested in co-blogging on my recipe blog instead, just e-mail me at cindybauerbooks@yahoo.com and let me know, and I'll be happy to invite you to blog your favorite recipes with me, and recipe expert & author, Martha

Cheves!)

Submit your recipes to me at cindybauerbooks@yahoo.com. Put recipe submission in the subject line please! I will post the winning daily recipe on my recipe blog (<http://recipesbycindy.blogspot.com>) and also include each daily winning recipe in my newsletter, Writer's Block!

And one other little thing I've decided to try. Buy a book and help a child! As some of you may have noticed while browsing my site, I have a page dedicated to some of my favorite charities. Most of those are charities that support children. With Christmas approaching, I've decided to go one step further in my quest to help children.

From September 25, 2009 thru December 25, 2009, I will donate \$1 in your name to any charity listed on my charities page when you purchase a copy from me of any of my books: Chasing Memories - Shades of Blue - Crystal Clear

Coming Up Next Month...

...I will be interviewing Aggie Villanueva, Michelle Sutton and Donetta Garman. You can read my review of Donetta's second book, The Length of A Dream by visiting my reviews blog at <http://reviewsbycindy.blogspot.com>.

Aggie's book, Rightfully Mine, previously published by Thomas Nelson, has been republished again and it's a fabulous book! The Ten Commandments is my favorite movie of all time and I must say that Rightfully Mine is now my favorite book of all time! You can also read that review on my review blog.



Cindy Bauer



An Interview with Sandra Lyerla

Cindy: You're currently working on a trilogy that started out to simply be a bedtime story. How did the transgression from story to book come about?

Sandra: I have felt the need to pass on this story for quite some time. However, the task of writing an entire book seemed much too overwhelming to undertake. I never pictured myself as a novelist. A short bedtime story did not seem too daunting, and so I began. Once I started writing, my short bedtime story took on a life of its own.

Cindy: You've finished writing the first book in The Legend of Mariah series, The Lairds of Lainnir Torr. Briefly describe the book:

Sandra: This is the first book in a series of a mystical, historical fiction set in the mid-1700's. The story begins in a dark and tumultuous time in Scottish history. It was a time when the English monarchy was struggling to subjugate the Scots. The

highlanders were viewed as a dangerous threat to this agenda.

Caught up in the terror of these times, Mariah Thornton is a young lass in desperate trouble. She is hopelessly trapped in a conflict of her own. Damian Campbell is enamored with her, and Mariah's father hates and loathes this 'Dark Lord of Dragon's Lair. Damian is the man directly responsible for burning them out of their home, the ruthless slaughter of most of their clan, and confiscating their land. To spite Damian, Mariah's father has betrothed her to one of his kinsmen... a vile, coarse man Mariah can barely tolerate. When word reaches Damian of her father's plan, he rides into the village of Foddy Feayn' and kidnaps her.

In desperation, Mariah throws herself upon God's mercy, taking an enormous leap of faith. Defying impossible odds, Mariah braves the icy waters of the northern Atlantic, barely managing to get herself alive to the Isle of Skye. She is found on the beach, unconscious, and taken to the castle of Lainnir Torr. Unable to reveal her true identity for fear she will be sent back to Damian, or worse... her betrothed, she is believed to possibly be a spy. She is held captive by the dark and devastatingly handsome laird of the castle, Ethan MacClain, who has troubles of his own. But this is not the end of Mariah's perils. To her horror, she is to learn that there are not ONE, but TWO young lairds of Lainnir Torr...As the story unfolds, Mariah must negotiate these troubled waters.

Cindy: So then the second book, which you are working on now, will be about what?

Sandra: The second book, The Quest for Everon, picks up Mariah's story where the first book ends. The Lairds of Lainnir Torr come to the decision to emigrate to America, but instead of settling somewhere along the Atlantic coast which was primarily colonized by the English, they set their sights on the Northwest Pacific coast. When writing the second book, I tried to envision what Mariah and the clan might encounter along the way such as what ports of call would they make, what dangers they might encounter, and what kinds of people they might meet. Also, I wanted to convey their hopes and dreams for a land of their own where they could all prosper and live in freedom.

Cindy: How exciting for you! Do you already have the last book in mind as well?

Sandra: Yes. The third book, Return of a Laird, picks up the story in an imaginary valley that Mariah named Everon. Through this story, I tried to touch on the fact that freedom is not free... that the price for freedom is dear. And that once won, freedom requires constant diligence to maintain. There are always forces from within as well as without at work to enslave and ultimately destroy us.

Cindy: Do you have any other works published, such as articles or short stories, etc.?

Sandra: No. I never would have

imagined that I would ever write anything. I started writing for my children and grandchildren to remember me by. I have had these characters running through my imagination since I was a child. Like Mariah, my childhood was very difficult. I grew up with a distorted concept of love and I did not know how to discern legitimate authority. I believe this story was God's way of correcting my misconceptions and wooing me to himself. Perhaps, if the story helped me, there are others who will be benefited as well. It is my greatest desire to leave something worthwhile behind when I leave this earth.

Cindy: After reading your first book in the series, what do you hope your readers will take with them?

Sandra: That there are circumstances in life where everything we believe in betrays us. This is when we must make hard choices in life. We can either give in and accept a cruel fate or fight back and maintain our integrity no matter the cost. It is when we choose integrity that God intervenes and our life takes us in a direction we never could have imagined.

Cindy: The series is historical fiction. Did you travel to get your information on the era?

Sandra: No, but in the writing of this story, I now have a burning desire to visit the places I have written about. My husband has caught the travel bug as well, and we hope to take a vacation to Europe and especially, Scotland in the near future.

Cindy: After this series, do you have any plans on writing other books?

Sandra: Perhaps. I have enough stories in my imagination to write any number of books.

Cindy: What are you finding is the most difficult task in writing a series as opposed to a single book concept?

Sandra: I found that in dividing the story into three parts, I have created a number of problems for myself. Each book must stand on its own in case the books are not read in order or only one or two of the books in the trilogy are read. How much of the previous story do you put into the next book in the series without running the risk of being redundant? And worse, if you don't give enough details of the previous story, will the next book even make sense?

Cindy: Before we part company here, is there anything else you would like to add that I might not have covered in this interview?

Sandra: I would like to thank you and my Agent-Lighthouse Coastal Literary, for all your help and for this wonderful opportunity to share my story.

Cindy: Where can readers learn more about you and your work?

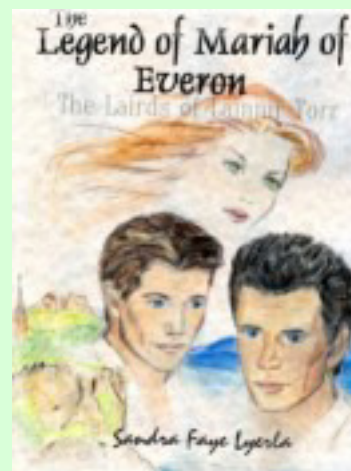
Sandra:

Website - <http://www.LairdsofLainnirTorr.com>

BLOG - <http://theeverontrilogy.blogspot.com>

ShoutLife! - <http://www.shoutlife.com/theeverontrilogy>

Lighthouse - <http://www.lighthousecoastalliterary.com/gpage13.html>



Coming Soon!



An Interview with Gail Gaymer Martin

Cindy: You write for Steeple Hill, which is the Christian Imprint for Harlequin. Had you published anything prior to that?

Gail: I wrote two novels for Barbour Publishing before Steeple Hill, and I continue to write for them. Before fiction, my first sale was a program book for churches and Sunday school, called *Kneel Before The Babe*. It consisted of four Christmas programs for worship services. I also wrote hundreds of articles on parenting and teen issues for Christian magazines, using my expertise as a licensed counselor. I also sold VBS and Sunday school material which included articles and short stories for children and adults. One romantic short story was published in *Affaire d' Coeur*. In 1997, I began writing fiction and sold my first novel in 1998.

Cindy: In order to get anywhere in the writing/publishing business, you need to acquire an agent and a reputable publisher.

How difficult is it to convince an agent and/or publisher that your work is worth consideration?

Gail: A writer cannot convince an agent or editor to work with them if their work doesn't stand up on its own. Literary agents want to represent solid, quality fiction, and editors want the same so trying to convince someone I am a good writer just doesn't work. I let my writing stand for itself. It's not always the writing that causes rejections with editors but what they are buying. A publisher looking for suspense doesn't want a romance or perhaps they've recently published a book with a similar story line. I still receive rejections.

Cindy: Wow, you've sold over 3 million copies! Do you attribute that accomplishment to your books being available through Harlequin's Book Club?

Gail: Certainly direct mailing helps to sell novels, but my novels are in book and retail stores all over the country. I see my novels in grocery stores, K-Mart, Walmart, Target and similar stores. The more the books are placed in the public eye the more opportunity readers have to purchase them. Sales come from books readers enjoy. The fact that I've just signed a contract for my 43rd and 44th books is another reason I have so many copies in print. Logically, the more books the more sales.

Cindy: What book was your favorite to write and why?

Gail: That's a difficult question. I love many of my books and can't

name a favorite. One book that I feel is my best writing is a novel I'm trying to sell now. *Secret Places* is a single title women's fiction.

Cindy: And your most difficult one?

Gail: The same book - *Secret Places*. It's set in Louisiana in Cajun country. It took tremendous research to get the feel of Louisiana, the Cajun people, as well as the jargon, customs, and lifestyle of people in that area. I also needed to know some laws regarding historic homes. The novel is written in two time periods, the forties to the sixties and present day so that added to the research.

Cindy: What are some of the most common errors new authors make?

Gail: Pacing is one of the biggest. Newer authors often don't know where to start a story and how to use scene and sequel to enhance the progress of the story. POV is another. Head-hopping is a problem of many inexperienced writers. Finally, beginning writers don't always understand that everything said and done must move the plot forward. There's no room for chitchat or getting to know each other. The character hops off the train and keeps on running, in the words of CBA editor Karen Ball.

Cindy: You're one of the co-founders of the ACFW organization. How did all of you come up with the idea for the group?

Gail: In February 2000, the six

founders met in a chat room to talk about the need for an organization like RWA for romance writing. Secular romance is very different from Christian romance, not in the romantic tension but in the need for sexual description. Personally I think it takes more talent to write a romance without much of the romance being in bed. Our characters learn to love the character's attributes as much as the "body beautiful." In our first on-line meetings, we discussed creating an organization for romance writers, but within a year, we had many Christian fiction writers longing to join but wanting an organization for all genre. In 2002, we reincorporated and changed our name to American Christian Fiction Writers. Today ACFW has a few members short of 2000 writing in all genre, and our conference is the premier Christian fiction conference in the country.

Cindy: What are some of the advantages to belonging to the group?

Gail: ACFW draws the top agents and editors from the major Christian publishing houses to our conference where they offer appointments to those in attendance (first come first served). Many novelists have made contacts at ACFW that have resulted in the agent they wanted or their first book sale. During the year for the price of the membership, ACFW offers free writing classes to members, critique groups, topics of the week, an archive filled with research material, forums where members can discuss genre issues, a monthly newsletter, marketing news and contact with some of the best Christian

writers in the country who mentor new authors. They also have a loop where authors can ask questions and receive answers.

Cindy: When you hold your annual conferences, what advantages can you offer a new author/member?

Gail: Besides contact with agents and editors in appointments, these people host tables at lunch and dinner so authors have another opportunity to make contact. We also provide an early bird special at an additional cost with major people in the business. This year attendees could have a full day workshop with Donald Maass, agent and author of the *The Breakout Novel* and *The Fire in Fiction*. Six or more continuing sessions are available for writers at all levels, and a multitude of one hour workshops are available on many topics. This year I taught a workshop on Tension and Conflict. These are recorded and available for purchase.

The conference also hosts our annual Award Banquet for winners of the Genesis (unpublished authors) and Book of the Year (published authors). These awards have gained a fine reputation and often lead to a publisher buying the novel. Fellowship, publisher parties, worship and praise are available to those in attendance. Each year an outstanding novelist is the keynote speaker at the conference. This year Debbie Macomber, NY Times Best Selling Author, presented three keynote addresses filled with humor, advice and heart-touching inspiration.

Cindy: Where can readers learn more about you and any new books to watch for?

Gail: My website is: <http://www.gailmartin.com>, I am also on Facebook at: <http://www.facebook.com/people/Gail-Gaymer-Martin/1429640580>, Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/GailGMartin>, Shoutlife at: http://www.shoutlife.com/profile_view.cfm?uid=15129, and others.

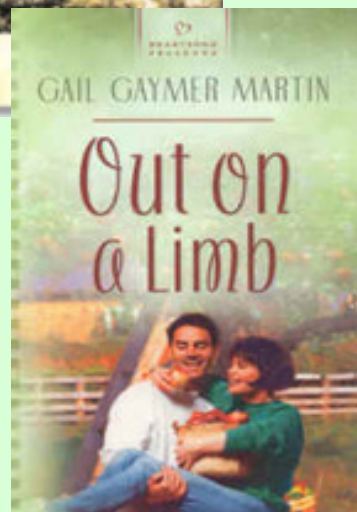
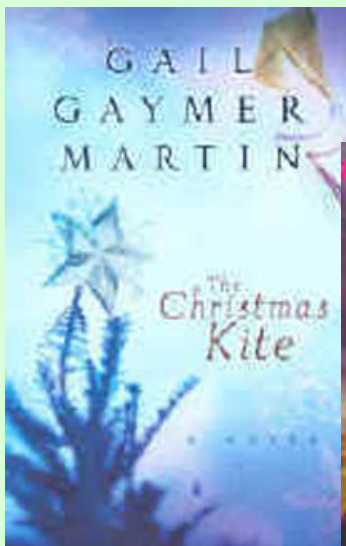
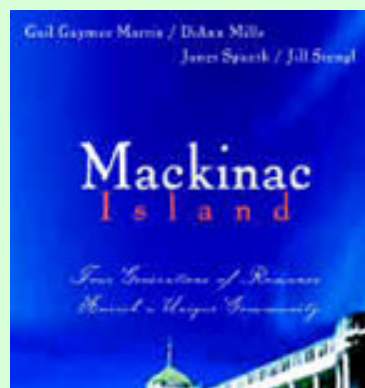
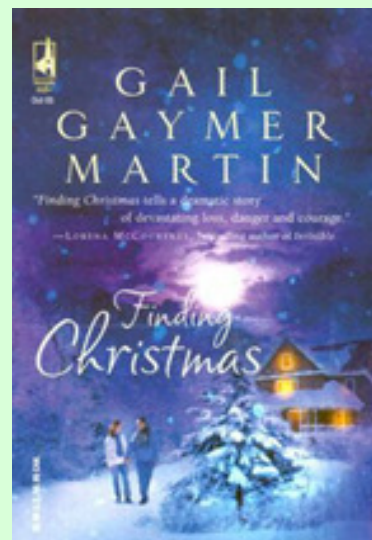
I have a reader's group on Facebook at: <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/group.php?gid=110543112472&ref=ts>. I have a blog at: <http://www.gailmartin.blogspot.com> and a monthly newsletter with photos, news, appearance schedule, info on free book contests, and much more. To subscribe go to my website at: <http://www.gailmartin.com> and fill in the blanks below the welcome message.

If you are a new writer, please visit my Writing Fiction Right blog at: <http://www.writingright-martin.blogspot.com> Writers will find many articles related to all kinds of topics for any genre-secular and Christian fiction-listed in the right hand column.

Cindy: In parting, is there anything else you would like to add to this interview that I may not have covered?

Gail: Thanks for the interview, and if readers are interested, my three book anthology, *Monterey Memories*, a Barbour release, will be in stores some time in November, just in time for Christmas. If readers enjoy connected series novels, my *Man's Best Friend Series*, continues into next year. *Dad In Training* was released by Steeple Hill Love Inspired in September, and although not in stores in October, it can still be purchased from online book stores or an order through your favorite bookstore. The second book, *Groom in Training*, will be released in February 2010 and *Bride In Training*, in July 2010. The stories revolved around three women involved in a dog shelter. The book is in memory of our daughter Brenda who fostered and trained dogs until they could be adopted and provided dog obedience training in people's homes.

Here's just a few of Gail's Books...



Cindy Bauer

Freelance
Writer & Editor

www.CindyBauerBooks.com
email: cindybauerbooks@yahoo.com

Proofing - Copy Editing
Manuscript Formatting - Typesetting
Cover Design - Self Publishing Assistance
Business Card / Banner / Newsletter Design
Bookmark / Postcard / Flyer Design

& So Much More!

Publishing Services:

- Self Publishing Assistance: \$150 & up - Email me for a quote on your specific project
- Proofing & Copy Editing: \$2 per page (a page is 250 words)
- Typesetting: \$1 per page (a page is 250 words)
- Cover Design: \$50 & up - Email me for a quote on your specific project
- Illustrations: Email me for a quote on your specific project (I will forward the information to the artists I work with)

Promotion and Marketing Services:

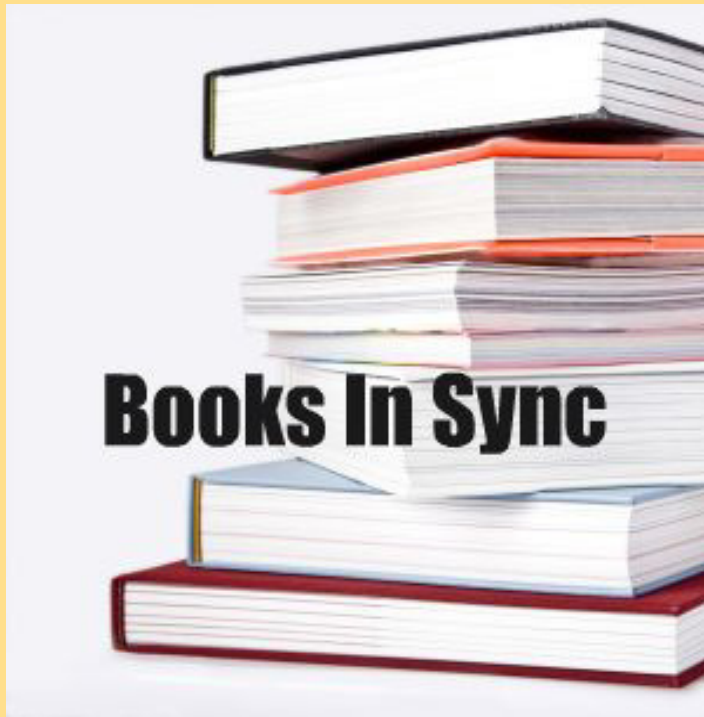
- Public Relations: Email me for a quote on your specific needs
- Bookmark Design: \$25
- Postcard Design: \$25
- Flyer Design: \$25
- Business Card Design: \$25
- Banner Design: \$25
- Newsletter Design: \$25
- Book Trailers: \$50 novel - \$35 childrens
- Website Setup: \$100
- Blog Setup: \$50

All prices are basic set fees. Quotes are based on each individual project, however I will give a discount for multiple projects if you return for additional services.

[Contact Cindy Bauer](#)

(References available on request!)

Service with the accent on you!



Are You An Author Looking For A Promotional Site, Not Just Another Author's Gathering Place?

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Shamrock Editing
Under Cover Book Cover Design

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Book Cover Recognition Contest
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