

# The Love Knot

Newsletter of the Ottawa Romance Writers' Association



OCTOBER 2011

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*Summer is like the ultimate one-night stand...*

*...hot as hell, and over before you know it.*

*Unknown*

I can't believe that Summer is over! Where did it go? By the time I start writing my next Message, we will have celebrated Thanksgiving and Halloween and will be heading into the Christmas season! I hope you all had as enjoyable a summer as I experienced, and that the looming shorter and colder days inspire you to hunker down and write like mad. All those excuses I hear myself uttering during the summer fizzle out to that stark reality – *I now have plenty of time to write* – no garden to tend, no grandchildren to entertain, no escape to a lakeside cottage, no sitting under the sun umbrella with a good book (romance of course!) and a glass of wine. I have the opening line of a new book in my head – it's a zinger - now all I need is a hero and heroine, a plot and about 90,000 words...

**REPORT ON OUR SEPTEMBER MEETING**

As most of you are aware, we did not hold a general meeting in September but instead enjoyed a full day with Sabrina Jeffries, who I am sure you agree, is a terrific and entertaining speaker. I will be reporting on the logistics and financial results of the workshop at the October meeting. I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank all those who helped make the day so successful, and to all members for turning out in such impressive numbers. I sincerely hope you enjoyed the day as much as I did.

**THINGS TO THINK ABOUT**

The committee formed to look into how best to recognize our self-published authors has presented its report to the Executive. They have suggested some interesting solutions which I will present to you at the meeting for discussion and vote.

The RWA has created what is referred to as myRWA which essentially provides us with a platform to create a new Chat Loop on the RWA web sight. We will give you a short briefing on what we know so far and look into the issue in more detail in the weeks to come.

Sadly, what I am learning from discussions on the RWA Presidents' Chat Loop, is that several Chapters in the US will be dissolving as they are unable to fill key executive positions. It is a stark reminder that our kind of organization only survives and prospers with the active support and commitment of its members. I will not be running for re-election as President for 2012, so now is the time to start thinking about who you would like to see heading up ORWA and how much time and commitment you yourself are willing to offer to keep our group strong and vibrant in the future. Elections will be held in November. I will post the agenda for our October meeting on the Chat loop a few days prior to the meeting. There will be some important items on the agenda which need the input and agreement from as many members as possible. I hope to see as many of you as possible on October 2. And don't forget, the reward for enduring an ORWA business meeting is the pleasure of attending our very own (and very successful) Opal Carew's workshop – "Using POV to Create Emotionally Powerful Scenes."

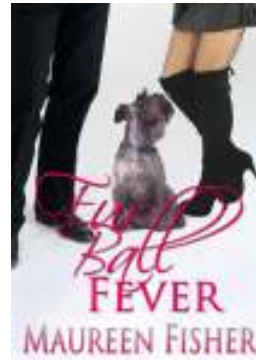
Malena Abel, President

*October gave a party;  
The leaves by hundreds came –  
The Chestnuts, Oaks and Maples,  
And leaves of every name;  
The sunshine spread the carpet  
And everything was grand,  
Miss Weather led the dancing,  
Professor Wind the band.*

*George Cooper, "October Party"*

## Current Releases

MAUREEN FISHER  
**FUR BALL FEVER**  
 August 2011



MAUREEN FISHER  
**THE JAGUAR LEGACY**  
 August 2011

ANNETTE MCCLEAVE  
**DARK DECEIVER**  
 May 2011



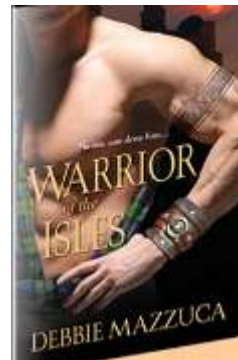
ANNETTE MCCLEAVE  
**TEMPTING THE KNIGHT: A NOVELLA**  
 May 2011

MAGGIE JAGGER  
**VAMPIRE MORGUE**  
 May 2011



TERESA MORGAN  
**HANDCUFFED TO THE SHEIKH**  
 May 2011

DEBBIE MAZZUCA  
**WARRIOR OF THE ISLES**  
 Kensington Books  
 May 2011



TERESA MORGAN  
**CINDERELLA AND THE SHEIKH**  
 May 2011

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## Upcoming Releases

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LINDA POITEVIN  
**SINS OF THE ANGELS**  
Ace Books  
October 2011

DEBBIE MAZZUCA  
**KING OF THE ISLES**  
Kensington Books  
January 2012

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## Upcoming Workshops

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*October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.*

*Using POV to Create Emotionally Powerful Scenes  
with Opal Carew*

As writers, we know all about POV, right? We know the difference between first person, third person, omniscient, camera eye view, etc. We know how to climb into a character's head and immerse the reader in the story through that person's perspective. Make the reader see what that character sees, feel what that character feels. In fact, to provide the whole gambit of sensual experience.

But do we really understand how we're doing that? Because if we do, we can do it more effectively.

As an analytical, computer programmer type, when I was learning to write, I wanted to really understand how to write effectively. I tend to look for methodologies I can apply to a task, especially when I'm learning something new, and adding emotional intensity to my stories was something I felt strongly about. Thus, I came up with a technique to evaluate how to thoroughly get into a character's head and convey to the reader a deeper insight into that character, and thus provide a deeper emotional journey.

How do I do this? I look at the actions in a scene and evaluate how the character will react based on those actions. This involves looking at different levels of consciousness, from basic physiological reactions to stimuli, emotional repercussions to those actions, and so on to more cognitive responses.

Come to the workshop prepared to roll up your sleeves and do some work. I believe we learn by doing, so I'll take you through some examples, then give you a starting point so you can use the techniques and share your results with the others in the workshop. If you have a basic scene, or part of a scene (about a page) you'd like to bring along, please feel free to do so.

[Opal Carew](#) is an award winning author who writes erotic romance for St. Martin's Press, as well as Samhain Publishing, Red Sage Publishing, and Sinful Moments Press. She writes in several subgenres of romance, but all hot.

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November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

*Tax for Artists* with Julia Stanley, CA

There are a variety of expenses writers can claim on their taxes. This workshop will provide an overview of what is allowed and what isn't.

Julie Stanley, CA, is a manager with [Ginsberg Gluzman Page & Levitz](#), LLP, where she has gained a wide range of experience. She has worked with not-for-profit organizations, small businesses and medical professionals. Julie first joined GGF&L in 2002 as a co-op student and after graduating from Dalhousie University with a Bachelor of Commerce, she continued on to obtain her Chartered Accountancy designation. Julia is involved in the Ottawa community through her positions as Treasurer with the Council for the Arts in Ottawa and the Nepean Concert Band.

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## Articles

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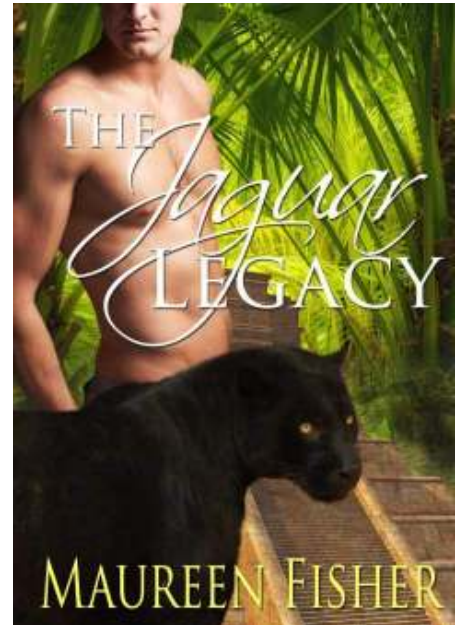
### How Self-Publishing Re-Ignited my Passion

By Maureen Fisher

That's correct! I'm talking about my passion for writing.

It's like this. Last spring, I was not a happy camper. My first book, ***The Jaguar Legacy***, was languishing with a small publishing house. It was earning next to nothing in the way of royalties, and the rights were due to revert to me. My next book, ***Fur Ball Fever***, was going nowhere too, but for a different reason. I couldn't sell it (more about that later).

I grew morose. I grew grumpy. My smile became a twisted snarl, more like a rictus than a grin. Puppies, old ladies, and small children fled from me in terror. So did my husband.



One sunny day in April, two courageous ORWA members who shall remain anonymous noticed my misery and ganged up on me <grins and waves at Maggie and Nina>. Over lunch, they used every argument known to man and beast alike in an attempt to convince me to self-publish.

I fought their suggestion harder than a caged wolverine. What? Give up my goal of being on the NYT Bestseller List? Abandon the dream of juggling the multitudes of publishing houses who were courting me? Forego the hope of receiving a six-figure advance?

Were they nuts, or what?

Ducking behind a table in Montana's, my persistent friends merely pointed out that several other ORWA members had jumped onto the self-publishing bandwagon and were reaping the benefits, and by benefits, we're talking sales, royalties, and control.

The word 'control' perked me up. By self-publishing, I could control the content and the pricing. How cool is that? Before long, I became a convert.

When I announced my decision to self-publish, the shadows hovering over our house dissipated. My husband was so relieved he refrained from rubbing my nose in the fact he'd been saying the same thing for two years. Instead, he volunteered to act as my technical guru. We were on our way, this time in a different sort of partnership. So while he did mysterious things involving building me a new website, executing file conversions, and unearthing the mysteries of Kindle and Smashwords, all accompanied by much cursing, I was free to do the fun stuff.



First and foremost, I wasn't about to humiliate myself by releasing a lousy book on the unsuspecting public, so I hired Nina Davis to conduct a professional edit of ***Fur Ball Fever***. This was one of the best investments I ever made. Nina put her finger on what I believe were the main reasons for the multitude of rejections. Based on her comments, I sat down and re-wrote ***Fur Ball Fever*** (yet again). The changes were relatively easy, and I do believe the end result is a stronger, more compelling read. I also re-wrote ***The Jaguar Legacy***,

nipping, tucking, and streamlining until I succeeded in reducing the word count by over 7,500 words.

While my husband slaved over his computer, red-eyed and haggard, barely surfacing for meals, I researched, networked, joined Chat Loops, contacted promotional sites, prepared submissions, and blogged. On 5 September 2011, we uploaded one book to Amazon Kindle. Four days later, the second one joined it.

I'm told this self-publishing thing isn't a sprint, but rather, a marathon. At the present time, sales are slow but steady as they trickle in. For those who are

interested, I will post the numbers on my blog, but only after I receive my first payment from Amazon.

Since the best way to earn more money is to get another one out there, I'm highly motivated to write, write, write. In a nutshell, that's how self-publishing has re-ignited my passion for writing. Pumped up the passion at the home front too. As a little extra bonus, I have total control of the content, promotion, and pricing of my books. Best of all, I'm having more fun professionally than I have in several years.

*Maureen Fisher*

*Author of Sassy Romance Novels*

*<http://booksbymaureen.com>*



## Writing Tight & Editing for Impact

By Diana Cosby

*The following article appeared in the August 2011 issue of DARA News, the monthly newsletter of Dallas Area Romance Authors. Vikki Wright Editor.*

I enjoy discussing writing, and one of my favorite topics is editing. Editing is the writer's opportunity to tighten their work to ensure each word works, each sentence counts, and that each chapter supports their story and propels it forward. As with anything you do in life, the spin you give each individual endeavor makes it dull, fun, or a challenge.

The following are not hard and fast rules. Like anything else in writing, the below can be bent, twisted, and downright ignored. The important thing is that you use what works best for your story. As I'm a visual learner, I prefer giving examples of how each topic is used.

**F A S [Feeling Action Speech]:** The natural progression in how we react is by feeling, action, then speech.

Before:

Anger flared in his eyes, then he turned away. "You'll finish before we go out," he stated and set the plate upon the small table.

After:

Anger flared in his eyes, then he turned away. He shoved the plate on the small table. "You'll finish before we go out."

Not only did this align the sentence into a natural sequence, but it eliminated the dialogue tag as well.

**The last word and its impact:** You help create calm, suspense, drama, intrigue and so on simply by the word you choose to end each sentence. I consider this one of my more important writing tools. Remember, the last read is most remembered.

Example: For a moment she could only stare, mesmerized.

-or-

Mesmerized, for a moment she could only stare.

Do you see how by simply switching around the words the entire sentence changes? Stare is a stronger word and ends the sentence in a strong tone. Focus and impact at the end of the sentence: If you wish to achieve a more powerful ending, keep the focus of your sentence on one thought. You can do this by removing the word and.

Before: He jumped down to the ground and ran.

After: He jumped down to the ground, then ran.

**Be specific:** the more specific you are, the easier it is for the reader to visualize what you're trying to create. It's important to ensure you don't dwell on the unimportant, but rather layer or weave your description within the story to the right degree.

Before: It seemed like forever since he'd shown her a magic trick like that, when in fact it'd only been a week.

After: It seemed like forever since he'd shown her a magic trick that made her smile, when in fact it'd only been a week.

Before: She stared at her mom, understanding how silly this must look to her.

After: She stared at her mom, understanding how silly being caught dressed up to look like Britney Spears must appear to her.

**Use a variance of words:** We all have our favorite words. When you repeat the same word over and over again, unless for a brief, specific reason, it weakens the story.

Use of odd or unfamiliar words: Use of odd or unfamiliar words will draw attention away from the story.

Unless the word is needed for a specific reason, use words that the reader will easily understand.

The use of three: To give a story point more impact, choose three words which accent the moment and drive the story forward. It's like a story breath or

pause, which does anything but stall the story. In fact, it's like a moment of poetry to your prose:

Examples:

The river churned like a silken ribbon under the moonlight, a light wind rippled across the field of rye in a slow caress, and beyond that stood a cluster of elm and oak where he'd hidden and secured his mount.

He gritted his teeth, turned his mount north and kicked him into a gallop.

**Less is more:** The more concise you can keep your words, the greater the impact.

Example: In front of –tightens to- Before.

**Solid motivation:** Ensure that each scene or action is motivated and has purpose.

Otherwise, the scene or action superficial and will slow the story down.

Author intrusion: When we're in the viewpoint of a character, we know they are thinking. In my opinion, it's unnecessary to put, he thought.

Example: I must get inside, he thought! Becomes "I must get inside!"

**Pace:** Longer sentences slow the story down and bring a softness to your scene.

Short sentences pick up the pace and create tension.

Examples:

Fast:

"Get out. Now."

She glanced back.

"I said now!"

Slow:

Sunlight slipped between the edge of the cave and the wall of water to entwine in a spectacular prism. Encased within the mist of colors along the floor's border grew green stalks, which arched toward the sun, each stem tipped with a slender white flower.

**Writing to the positive:** For stronger sentences, write them with a positive spin.

Before: "If you hadn't tried to escape before, I would not have given a second thought to allowing you free rein within my home.

After: "If you hadn't tried to escape before, I would have given you free rein within my home.

**It and clarity:** Say what you mean. By using the correct word instead of it, we add clarity, thus giving our story greater impact.

Before: If anything, it would make the inevitable parting worse, at least for him.

After: If anything, the extra time spent together would make the inevitable parting worse, at least for him.

**Using character name vs. she/he:**

Personalization

How much is too much? –Balance- What feels right for you. Clarity. Transition to and out of past memories: Use the key word, object, or thought to transition the to the past. At the end of the reflection, use the same key word, object or thought to bring the reader back to current story time. The little things, use of the senses: Using the senses allows the reader to evoke strong images. It's the little things you insert in your manuscript, the intimate touch, the attention to detail that creates a visual picture in your reader's mind and emotionally moves them. A hole in a sock? A tear in the screen? How about a field filled with butterflies? The smell of pie on a hot summer day?

**Eight senses:** Eight senses? Surely you mean five? No, for writers, there are eight senses that we deal with when we write. They are:

Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight, Hear, Sense of time, Sense of space, Sense of the unknown

**Words of impact:** You salt your story with impressionistic words for a reason; to create a mood, to evoke emotion into the reader. If the moment calls for a storm and mayhap tempers are high, use words that unsettle the reader. They won't realize that you're manipulating their feelings, but this is exactly what you're doing.

Before: Thunder echoed from above.

After: Thunder ripped through the heavens. Hard blasts that shattered the earth with a merciless bite.

The new sentences contrasts ripped and heavens—opposing aspects. Then you underline your emotional effect by throwing in the descriptors blasts, shattered, and merciless. This should leave the reader a bit unsteady, frazzled perhaps, but you've evoked emotion which aids the story moment. Active words versus was: There are times in every story to use the word was, but often, we can find active words that will work as well and increase story impact.

New paragraph for impact/stand alone lines - White space: Gives reader a split second to absorb, a shifting of gears.

### **Show don't tell:**

Before: He was angry.

After: He shoved away from the table and stood. His eyes narrowed as he scanned the hall in search of one. Where are you! He'd find them, then they would pay.

**Dialogue tags:** When feasible and the communication within the scene is clear, omit dialogue tags. If you can incorporate an action verb vice he or she said, do it. Your story will move faster.

Before: "I don't know," John said. He stood and paced the room

After: "I don't know." John stood and paced the room.

**Contrasting words:** To enhance a moment in a scene, you can use contrasting words or opposing words. This unique blend enhances the scene moment.

Examples: Silence clattered between them. The crowd fell into a frantic calm.

**Contrasting words:** To enhance a moment in a scene, you can use contrasting words or opposing words. This unique blend of opposing words enhance the scene moment.

*This article from Diana Cosby's website was used with her permission.*

*To read additional articles and get more information about Diana Cosby go to:  
[www.dianacosby.com](http://www.dianacosby.com).*

*His Captive/Alexander MacGruder*

*His Woman/December 08/Duncan MacGruder - 4 star Romantic Times review!*

## Six Ways to Give Your Favorite Authors a Boost

### By Cheryl Alldredge (aka Charlie Allden)

*The following was originally published in the Fall 2011 issue of Coastal Connections newsletter for the First Coast Romance Writers.*

One of the great joys of being a member of RWA® is that you get to know lots of writers—many of them published. You might be thinking that there is little you can do to help your published author friends, but there are actually a lot of really easy things you can do. We all know that it is hard for books to make a splash in the very crowded book market. Why not throw a few pebbles to help improve the odds for your favorite authors? Here are a few quick and easy things you can do.

**1. View their book on Amazon!** Did you know that just by viewing a book while you're shopping you're contributing to the vast data Amazon uses to recommend books to other Amazon customers? It's true. As you're shopping Amazon notices what books you view and recommends similar books you might like. No one knows all the secrets of the Amazon algorithms but it is safe to say that the more data they have on a book, the more likely it will show up in their recommendations. One of those data points is what books people are viewing.

**2. While you're shopping, like a book!** Do you shop at Amazon or Barnes & Noble? Online retailers now represent a huge chunk of all book sales. If you're already there and shopping then you have an account. If you have an account, you have the power to like a book. You don't even have to have read it (though it would be best if you at least liked the premise). Just click the like button. You will also have the option to share that like using Twitter or Facebook, but that isn't required. The down side of using the like button is that it is also used to shape the recommendations YOU receive, so liking books you don't actually like could make your own recommendations less accurate.

**3. Or vote for a favorable review!** As a registered customer at an online retailer you can help move favorable reviews up to the top of list by clicking YES beneath the review to indicate that it was helpful. Again, you don't have

to have read to book. You can also like reviews on GoodReads. Liking the review will make it appear in your update stream and might encourage people who follow or friend you to check it out.

**4. Create a list!** This one takes a little more thought and time, but creating lists that include a book with similar books on Amazon or GoodReads is another way to help expose a book to more readers. Make sure your title is catchy, clear, and likely to be relevant to the target readers for the book. Include more established books on the list so the list has a better chance of appearing to browsers more often.

**5. Consider rating or reviewing any books you have read and enjoyed.** Amazon, B&N, GoodReads, Fictionwise—whatever booky places you hang out online, they probably allow reviews and/or ratings. You don't have to write a lengthy review. Just a few positive words and a rating can be a big help. Ratings and reviews can help others decide whether or not to buy the book and, on Amazon, they are also believed to factor into those recommendation algorithms that can propel a book to a higher level of sales and recognition.

**6. Talk it up!** Authors have to be careful about talking up their own books, but you can spread the word with more credibility. Twitter, Facebook, blogs—anywhere you can mention a book is a plus. Mention it on release day. Mention it when you've read it. Mention it when it wins the RITA®! No author expects all of her writer friends to read all of her books. Nor does she expect them to sign up for the street team. In fact, anything you choose to do will likely be enthusiastically appreciated. Give it a try. You might find it is fun and painless to send some positive energy out into the booky universe!

*Cheryl is a fan of love, adventure, and happily ever afters. Her short novel, Ladybugs and Fireflies is out now from Highland Press. She blogs about writing, Florida, and books at [www.cherylalldredge.wordpress.com](http://www.cherylalldredge.wordpress.com) and about all things SciFi at [www.smartgirlsscifi.wordpress.com](http://www.smartgirlsscifi.wordpress.com). She is also active in RWA® and is currently president of First Coast Romance Writers.*

## Between the Lines with... Tessa Dare!

By Brenna Aubrey

*The following article was first printed in the September 2011 Orange Blossom, newsletter for Orange County Romance Writers.*



Tessa Dare is the award-winning author of seven historical romance novels and one novella. She has twice been awarded the RT Book Reviews Reviewer's Choice Award, and has twice been a finalist for Romance Writers of America's prestigious RITA® award. Recently, Booklist magazine named her one of the "new stars of historical romance."

Mixing wit, sensuality, and emotion, Tessa strives to write Regency-set romance novels that feel relatable to modern readers. With her new "Spindle Cove" series, she's had great fun creating a fictional seaside community populated by women who defy the conventions of their time—engaging in such unladylike pursuits as medicine, geology, and artillery. And she's had even more fun dreaming up the strong-willed, unsuspecting men who'll find their hearts ensnared by these "spinster" heroines.

Tessa makes her home in Southern California, where she shares a cozy, cluttered bungalow with her husband, their two children, and a big brown dog.

**Welcome to Spindle Cove, where ladies with delicate constitutions come for the sea air, and men in their prime are...nowhere to be found. Or are they?**

Spindle Cove is the destination of choice for certain types of well-bred young ladies: the painfully shy, young wives disenchanted with matrimony, and young girls too enchanted with the wrong men. It is a haven for those who live there.

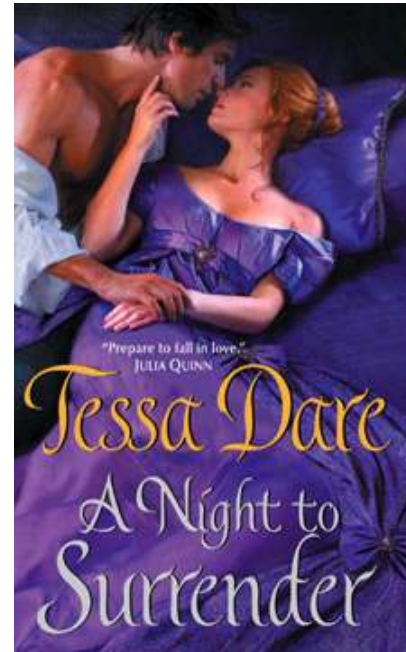
Victor Bramwell, the new Earl of Rycliff, knows he doesn't belong here. So far as he can tell, there's nothing in this place but spinsters...and sheep. But he has no choice, he has orders to gather a militia. It's a simple mission, made complicated by the spirited, exquisite Susanna Finch--a woman who is determined to save her personal utopia from the invasion of Bram's makeshift army.

Susanna has no use for aggravating men; Bram has sworn off interfering women. The scene is set for an epic battle...but who can be named the winner when both have so much to lose?

*A Night to Surrender* will be available August 30, 2011 (Avon Books).

**Your new trilogy centers around an invented setting. What gave you the idea for Spindle Cove and how did you develop that idea into a viable setting?**

Like so many of my writing ideas, the seed came from Jane Austen. I was thinking about the way the Bennet sisters and all Meryton were worked into a fervor by the encampment of the militia nearby. Then I had the thought, "What if a hero were charged with raising a militia in a town where there were virtually no men?" I saw a lot of possibility there, and that's where the idea for Spindle Cove originated. From there, it was a matter of researching and selecting an approximate location, and envisioning just why and how this village would come to be dominated by clever young women.



**Is there a real place or places on which you based Spindle Cove? What elements did you borrow from the real world to develop this place?**

Last August I went to England, to research the real locations that would inspire the Spindle Cove setting. I spent about a week exploring the Sussex coast and downlands, and when I came back and started to build the village in my mind, I took all my favorite bits and pieces--church, tea shop, houses, castle--and squashed them into one fictional place.

**Many writers state the importance of making setting a character in your novel. Since setting is so important in SURRENDER, how did you go about making it a supporting character?**

My goal was to create a place that readers would want to re-visit, so I tried to make it an appealing little village. But like any small town, it has plenty of quirks. The primary plot of the book is a battle of the sexes between Bram, the hero working to raise a militia, and Susanna, the leader of this progressive, ladies-only enclave. So I let some parts of the village become

"bones" that they could tug at from both sides. For example, there's no tavern in Spindle Cove. There used to be one, but now it's become a ladies' tea shop called The Blushing Pansy. Bram and his men find this utterly unacceptable, so they stage a tavern takeover one night and rename the place The Rutting Bull. By the end of the book, the men and women in town are working together - and the tea shop/tavern is renamed The Bull and Blossom as a compromise. That's just one example of letting the setting tell part of the story.

**What are your methods for novel planning? Do you draw maps, complete character charts or any of those "planning" activities?**

Not...really. Usually, the more of that I try to do, the more confused I get! But I do get a notebook and just ramble in it freeform, jotting down everything that occurs to me. Character background, scraps of dialogue, setting, and so forth. I find I'm very linear, when it comes to writing. I don't have anything against charts and diagrams, but they just don't click for me.

**What is your one "go to" writing tool that gets you over a block or dead end while you are writing?**

I go out to coffee with a good friend (\*cough\*The Interviewer\*cough\*) and talk it through! Or sometimes, I get on video chat with one or two of my long-distance critique partners.

**Your books are always very well researched. Sometimes beginning authors find it hard to leave the research phase and begin writing. In your opinion, what is the point between not enough research and too much research? Do you research before you even write or as you go along?**

Why, thank you. Among historicals, I don't think my books are exactly known for their richly faceted historical detail, but I do actually do a lot of research. I'm a librarian, so I enjoy it. I don't know that I can pinpoint an ideal medium between "not enough" and "too much" -- I think each writer has to find that for herself. Sometimes the story drives the research, and sometimes the research drives the story. I will say this: The hardest thing about research is resisting the urge to use all of it.

**Another thing you have become known for is your amusing book trailers using your children's toys. How did that idea develop?**

Well, that was one of those "work with what you've got" things. In 2010, I wanted to do a book video, but didn't want to spend a lot of money on it. And I wanted it to be fun to make and fun to watch. I can't remember exactly where the idea to use the toys came from, but when the idea came to me, I couldn't stop giggling. That seemed like a good sign. So I made the thing, and I figured, if no one watched it it wouldn't be a big loss of time and investment.

But it actually ended up doing really well. For a while, I think I was getting more fan mail about the video than the books! This year, I offered up a video for a charity auction - Maya Banks bid a lot of money to win it, and I had so much fun making her video.

**Last one: What one piece of advice do you give a beginning romance author?**

When beginning writers email me and ask for advice, I always encourage them to join RWA and find a local chapter. Supportive friends I've made through OCC were just invaluable to me as I wrote *A Night to Surrender*, in particular, and I've learned so much through RWA as a whole. I'm very grateful to all of you!

*Brenna Aubrey is an aspiring author of Historical and Fantasy Romance. When not dreaming up people and worlds and writing them down, she is also a mom, wife, teacher, avid reader, a French-speaking Francophile, and lover of nature and beautiful sunsets.*

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## Editor's Message

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### Write a Love Knot Article

I am actively seeking article submissions from ORWA members. Since the Love Knot is electronic, there are no specific word count requirements. An article can be as long or as short as the topic requires. **Our articles are shared with all RWA chapter newsletter editors so writing an article is a good way to get free publicity.** Be sure to include a short signature line with the address for your website or blog.

If you have any articles or announcements you'd like included in our newsletter please forward them to me at [ykarenes@yahoo.ca](mailto:ykarenes@yahoo.ca) by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Thank you!

Karen Smock, Editor



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