

MARCH OF CRIME

MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA—LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

PUTTING THE SOCIAL IN MARKETING

By Kassia Krozser

I have been hearing stories about the Golden Age of Publishing my whole life. It's a magical time. Books were revered, everyone was rich, authors and editors met for long lunches that were more martini than food, and marketing departments devoted their entire beings to hands-on, full-time, no-holds barred author promotion.

Yeah, I think the Golden Age of Publishing was as much a chimera as Oz.

The truth of the matter is that publisher marketing departments do work hard, but they're working hard for a lot of authors and books. So do the publisher sales reps. Even

your editor, that person who loves your book above all others, cannot play favorites. Your publisher will do everything possible to make your book a success, but "everything possible" means one thing to your publisher, something entirely different to you.

I like to think of it another way: your publisher is about the book, while you're about the career.

It used to be easy (ha!): postcards, bookmarks, stock signings, readings. Then they added this Internet thing. Websites, email, blogs, social media. Every time you turn around, it seems you have to deal with the Next Big Thing. Nevermind that you just wrapped your mind around the Last Big Thing. You were just

Continued on Page 8

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- The Prez—2
- Chapter News—3
- Fresh Blood—10
- The Editor—5
- Killer Quotes—2
- Transom Notes—9
- Save the Date—5
- Crime Calendar—5
- Articles—2, 8, 9, 10
- California Crime Writers registration form—6
- Joint SoCalMWA & SinC OC event—11
- Next SoCalMWA Meeting info—12
- Last Word—12

Chandler Events

SOMETHING MORE THAN NIGHT: Raymond Chandler, 50 Years Later

March 25, 2009, 7:30pm

USC University Club

**645 West Exposition Boulevard, University of Southern California
Los Angeles, CA 90089-1161**

On campus parking is \$8

Join leading LA noir experts for a lively discussion of Raymond Chandler's novels, films, and the future he foretold. Fifty years after his death, how have his perceptions and his portrayal of the City of Angels endured?



Judith Freeman

Moderator: **Judith Freeman**, author of *The Long Embrace: Raymond Chandler and the Woman He Loved*; Lecturer, USC Master of Liberal Studies Program

Speakers: **Leo Brady**, USC Leo S. Bing Chair in English and American Literature and University Professor, **Denise Hamilton**, author of "Eve Diamond" mystery series; editor, *L.A. Noir* anthology, **Kenneth Turan**, Los Angeles Times film critic; author of books on film criticism

6:30 p.m.: USC Master of Liberal Studies Program Admissions Open House

9:00 p.m.: Dessert reception with speakers and USC faculty

Free and open to the public. RSVP online: www.regonline.com/USCCollegeChandler50
www.usc.edu/mls or call (213) 740-1349 On-campus parking \$8 through Gate 3 on Figueroa Street

Interested in more? Register for **SOMETHING MORE THAN NIGHT: The novels and films of Raymond Chandler**

Study 3 Chandler novels and related films with Judith Freeman, and tour Chandler sites.

4 sessions – Tuesday, March 31, April 7, April 14, April 21, 2009, 7 – 9:30 p.m.

Course registration fee: \$250 (non-credit continuing education course)

Register online www.regonline.com/USCCollegeChandler50

The President's Rap Sheet

Leslie S. Klinger



Our SoCal Chapter is doing some things differently this year. We're continuing our programs aimed at exposing our members to talented writers. We had a pleasant evening in the company of best-selling author Val McDermid, and Judith Freeman will be our special guest in March, discussing her work on Raymond Chandler. We also will keep up our mission of informing our members about the marketplace, as we did at our January panel discussion on the future of publishing and bookselling. However, an important part of our purpose (some might say that our main goal) is to educate people who are *not* our members about mystery writing.

To that end, we've formed a partnership with Sisters in Crime, Los Angeles Chapter, to co-sponsor the California Crimewriters Conference, to be held June 13-14 in Pasadena. The Conference will be a school for writers and would-be writers, focused on the craft of writing. The organizers have assembled a stellar faculty, including our keynoters Laurie King and Robert Crais. The breadth

of the programs, covering short stories, novels, true crime, and screenplays, as well as discussions of selling and marketing the writer's work, assures that both novice and experienced writers will find the Conference to be of great value. The Conference will also include a cocktail party with agents and manuscript critique sessions. Coincidentally, the Horror Writers Association Stoker Awards weekend will be going on simultaneously in Burbank, and because we share many members, we're cross-promoting our events so people will be able to enjoy both conferences. Mark your calendars and sign up soon to assure your spot!

We've also taken a big step with the aid of the MWA National Board: Mystery Writers of America will be an official sponsor of the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books, to be held on the UCLA campus on April 25-26. In the past, our Chapter has provided a table in the Mystery Bookstore booth. This year, not only will MWA be the host of the Mystery Pavilion (Dodd Hall), we'll have our own booth, immediately adjacent to and shared with

the Mystery Bookstore. We'll be busy for two days bringing the word to the 130,000-plus visitors to the Festival, telling them how MWA supports the mystery genre and affords its members valuable educational and social opportunities. "Join MWA," I always pitch; "hang out with famous mystery writers!" As in the past, we won't feature book signings (but the Mystery Bookstore is scheduling plenty of those), and the opportunity to "work" our booth won't be limited to published authors. We're busily working up promotional ideas and welcome your contributions. It's great fun to meet the public and talk about MWA. Chapter Director Bill Fitzhugh will be coordinating the booth staffing for Saturday and Sunday and will begin taking volunteers shortly. Of course, we're again co-sponsoring a party on the Friday night before the Festival, at the Mystery Bookstore, for all mystery writers and fans attending the Festival. It's just prior to the L. A. Times Book Prizes, so you can attend both! We're going to have a very busy season, and your support and participation is critical!

Killer Quote

Mornings and money with Philip Marlowe.

"Next morning I got up late on account of the big fee I had earned the night before. I drank an extra cup of coffee, smoked an extra cigarette, ate an extra slice of Canadian bacon, and for the three hundredth time I swore I would never again use an electric razor."

"Big money is big power and big power gets used wrong. It's the system. Maybe it's the best we can get, but it still ain't any Ivory Soap deal."

— The Long Goodbye

Raymond Chandler and Me

By Jeri Westerson



It started as an idea. My idol, Raymond Chandler, spent a lot of time in my hometown of Los Angeles. He lived in five different locations in L.A. alone. But the only house he

purchased was situated in La Jolla about an hour away from where I currently live in the Inland Empire. His gravesite was there as well. I'd start in La Jolla, then, see a few sites, let the man's success and talent rub off on me a bit. Easy.

But what I didn't realize was how much the experience would get under my skin.

My first published novel was released last November. *Veil of Lies; A Medieval Noir*. You read that right. *Medieval Noir*. It isn't just a name. It's a new subgenre invented by yours truly. What is the saying? If you can't find the books out there you

want to read, write them? That's me. Blending my favorite genres, medieval mystery with noir, hard-boiled stuff, pulp. Dark, edgy, moody. It works. But at the launch of my career as a novelist, I needed all the help I could get. Short of channeling the man's ghost, I decided to go on a journey to see the places he lived...and the spot that became his final resting place.

San Diego was closer, so I went out to La Jolla first. It's a long, slow drive down the I-15 from my house in the Inland Empire. I was driving from what was expected to be a hot day in the eighties to the cooler climes of San Diego county. A perfect southern California day. The sun shined along the grey curving ribbon of freeway. Avocado groves climbed up the slopes on one side of the road while watered fairways of golf courses sparkled off the other. It was an hour's worth of driving to get to my friend Marie's house in Pacific Beach where we would begin this quest together.

We assembled our maps, hopped in my

Continued on Page 4

NEWS

John Morgan Wilson is writing a new column, Book Buzz, of news and tidbits about LGBT-related writing for the nonprofit Lambda Literary Foundation website. For a look at the column and how to submit LGBT-related items, go to http://www.lambdaliterary.org/resources/book_buzz.html. Meanwhile, John is back again as a planning committee member for the eighth annual West Hollywood Book Fair (www.westhollywoodbookfair.org/), which will be held this year on Sunday, October 4. Last year, more than 300 authors participated in readings and panels, including a dozen crime writers appearing for the first time at the book fair. For consideration for a Mystery & Suspense Pavilion panel, contact John at jmwwriter@aol.com with your most recent title or titles, publisher(s), pub date(s), genre or

sub-genre, awards, etc. Please keep in mind that available spots are limited.

Sisters in Crime/Los Angeles is presenting an evening with authors **Bruce Cook** and **Robert Fate** on March 16, 2009, from 7 – 9 p.m. at the Studio City Library, 12511 Moorpark, Studio City, CA. Bruce Cook is the author of the fast paced novel, *Philippine Fever*, which is being optioned for movies. He also wrote the highly acclaimed, *Blood Harvest*, under his pseudonym, **Brant Randall**. The second in the series, *Tommy Gun Tango*, will be out in July 2009. Robert Fate's novels have attracted a lot of attention since his debut novel in 2006. The first book in the series, *Baby Shark*, is being optioned for film. *High Plains Redemption* is the latest in the series.

Gay Kinman will present an

interactive program on how to write a mystery at the Monterey Park Library on March 10 at 3 p.m. Everyone is invited; and she will be doing two presentations on April 29th at El Camino High School in Woodland Hills. Kinman judged the manuscript entries in the Mid-Michigan RWA "Happily Ever After" Contest in which the contestants wrote a synopsis and the last chapter of their book. To try out as a program presenter for the Los Angeles Public Library Kinman had to 'audition' for six minutes. (She worked there as a Young Adult Librarian and then as the Head of the Police Library.) Kinman taught a class on Intermediate Writing for Alhambra Parks and Recreation in February, with an Advanced Writing class scheduled for April 4th, and a Beginning Writing class at the

Sierra Madre Public Library slated for March 14.

Events: "How to Write Believable Characters with **Darrell James**" held March 7, 2009, from 2 – 4 p.m. at the Altadena Library, 600 East Mariposa, Altadena. "How to Write a Short Story with **Gay Toltl Kinman**" held March 14, 2009, from 10 a.m. – Noon at the Sierra Madre Library in conjunction with the Sierra Madre Arts Commission, 440 West Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre. "Men of Mystery – An Evening with **Bruce Cook** and **Robert Fate**" held March 16, 2009, from 7 – 9 p.m. at the Studio City Branch Library, 12511 Moorpark St., Studio City. "How to Write Convincing Dialogue with **Gayle Bartos-Pool**" held April 11, 2009, from 2 – 4 p.m. at the Altadena Library, 600 East Mariposa, Altadena.

THE ANATOMY OF A SHORT STORY WORKSHOP

This will be an in-depth look at the elusive short story. Mystery writer, Gayle Bartos-Pool, will dissect Plot and Character, and examine Pacing and POV. The workshop will be March 21, 2009, at Hill Avenue Grace Lutheran Church, 73 N. Hill Ave., Pasadena, CA, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Cost: \$25.

A workbook will be provided, so bring the bare bones of your short story (or novel) to re-construct and perhaps bring your story to life.

Ms. Pool will put the first THREE pages of your story under the microscope for evaluation.

Your Mission: Make the opening a grabber and reveal what your story is about in those opening pages. Or just come to learn more about this mysterious animal.

Submit your 3 pages before the Ides of March - March 15, 2009. E-mail in WORD to: lillianpritchard@earthlink.net.

Pay via www.PayPal.com. Click on: Send Money, type in: sistersincrime@yahoo.com, type in \$25. Please add a note: March Workshop and your name.

Or pay by check payable to: Sisters in Crime/LA, 1107 Fair Oaks Ave. PMB 338, South Pasadena, CA 91030. Note: Workshop.

You may pay with cash or check at the door, but will not receive the three-page critique.

WEST HOLLYWOOD BOOKFAIR

The West Hollywood Book Fair will be held this year on Sunday, October 4, and John Morgan Wilson would like to hear from published crime writers who would like to be considered for a panel, including those who have not previously participated. For details, please visit www.westhollywoodbookfair.org/.

If you wish to be considered, please contact John at jmwwriter@aol.com, following these guidelines:

1. Your name and pseudonym(s) if different, and which name you would prefer for identification.
2. Your genre(s) or sub-genre(s).
3. A one-line description of your series or any specialties you might have as a writer.
4. A list of your most recently published books or short story titles, the date, and publisher (sorry, no self-published books please).
5. Any awards or other notable recognition you feel worth mentioning.
6. Memberships in crime writing organizations such as SinC or MWA.
7. If you would be willing to put together, coordinate and moderate a panel.

Please, no bios or other extensive information. If we are able to find a place for you, we'll ask for that later.

“Chandler” continued from Page 2

car, and wended our way through the narrow streets of the Bird Rock area, passing blond boys with surfboards tucked under their arms and girls with more tan than clothes. We were in La Jolla, a rich man's paradise of sun and surf along rocky cliff fronts. It was still an upscale area when Raymond Chandler bought his first house here at 6005 Camino de la Costa in 1946. But we're getting ahead of ourselves. Best begin at the beginning.

Raymond Thornton Chandler was born in Chicago in 1888. A child of divorce, he moved with his mother to England seven years later. He grew up to be quite the continental, studying in Paris, Germany, and other places. He became a British subject, got a job in civil service and briefly as a newspaper reporter. In 1912, he came back to the U.S. and moved to California, first to San Francisco and then in and around Los Angeles. He did a brief stint in World War I with the Canadian army before he returned to L.A. after it was all over. He had an affair with a married woman, Cissy Pascal, but she got a divorce and married him. She was 18 years older than Chandler, but it didn't seem to matter to him. By this time he became vice-president of the Dabney Oil Syndicate after his rise from bookkeeper, but it didn't last. Boozing and going awol took its toll and he was given the boot.

In the thirties he tried his hand at short stories and found success with *Black Mask Magazine* and *Dime Detective*. He was living in La Jolla at the end of 1939 but he soon left it for Arcadia, California. A string of houses and a string of hits sold to Hollywood followed: *Pacific Palisades* and *Farewell, My Lovely*; *Brentwood Heights* and *High Window*; *Idyllwild* and *The Big Sleep*. There was an Oscar nomination for his work on *The Blue Dahlia*, and now he was in La Jolla again.

In 1954, Cissy Chandler died. The La Jolla house held too many memories. He drank heavily, attempted suicide, and finally sold the La Jolla house and returned to England to live for a while. In 1956, he was back in La Jolla only a few neighborhoods away from the original house and took up residence in an apartment on Neptune Place. The successes kept on coming but the drinking didn't stop. He accepted the presidency of the Mystery Writers of America, but soon thereafter he succumbed to pneumonia and died on March 26, 1959, seventeen months before I am born. He was buried in Mount Hope Cemetery in San Diego.

There's a lot left out, a lot left unsaid. You need a book for all that. There are a lot of whys and wherefores in a book; motivations. For instance, was Cissy the woman who replaced his mother? Did she control his life or help him keep it together? Was she a driving force? Was it him? Why was he such a rolling stone? Maybe there are clues in the man's stories. Wayward women and tough guys. But was he all that tough?

We haven't got much in common, Chandler and me. An abiding interest in England, divorced parents, newspaper work. That doesn't add up to much. There had to be more.

Fast forward again to La Jolla. I drive down the winding streets of perfectly landscaped yards and houses way out of my league.

At a corner where the street opens out to a vista of crashing waves and rocky tide pools, we see it.

It's a rambling structure, a California ranch home gone nuts. Part of it ambles back up the hilly road while the rest lounges lazily along Camino de la Costa. A man in a t-shirt and shorts is staining one of the raw wood window frames with a paint brush. The house is stuccoed in a deep fawn, the kind of darker color the decorators like nowadays for houses. Some of the windows are probably the original size—you can tell from the bathroom window, a tall narrow thing with stained mullions—but I wonder if the picture window at the front was

original. Or the two little studios perched atop the flat roof, one on either tips of the house like bookends. The landscaping is picture perfect. The door is wide open.

I snap a few pictures as we wander in front of it, staring at the house. I don't know what to think. I like to visit historical places to get a feel for the people who used to inhabit it, perhaps sense something of that wayward past, grasp it, and splash it onto the page for myself. But this house has been redone, reworked. I can't help but think “desecrated”, but that thought is decidedly unfair. After all, nothing stays static in southern California. Not even the ground. Why should the subsequent owners some 52 years ago have kept it pristine like a shrine? Maybe they never even *heard* of Raymond Chandler, though it is hard to fathom such a thing.

My friend and I wander toward the cliff with its caution tape and warnings that the ground is “Unstable!” “Keep Away!” We skirt past oblivious lovers staring into the vista of sparkling water, white foam, and shoreline planted with expensive houses. No one seems to be at home, sitting out on their back decks or in their verbena-laced gardens. Perhaps they stand in their air-conditioned living rooms staring out alone from their picture windows, but it is a Friday afternoon, and most likely they are working hard to rake in more of that cash needed to afford their cliff house. It takes a lot of mud and spit for a mud swallow to make a nest. These cliff dwellers need a lot of mud.

We walked carefully down the steep concrete steps, gripping its rusty railing. I can't help but think that the rocky tide pools and cliff caves would make a great place to find a body. A perfect California day at the beach ruined by the bloated remains of some scantily clad woman, kelp clinging to her sun-bleached hair. Or maybe some gang-banger who partied with the wrong guys and ended up with a bullet through the bandana wound tight and wet round his head.

These are my musings.

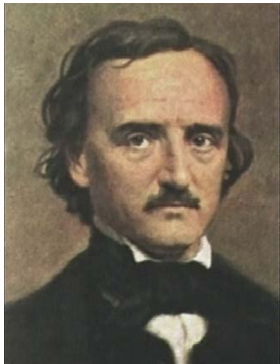
When we head back up the hill, I look at the house afresh and some passer-by mentions that they think the Chandler house is for sale. Really? Brilliant. I'll just write a check. You think they'll give me a 700 year mortgage?



But then the thought occurs. If it's empty, maybe we can go inside. We talk to the man with the paintbrush—Scott—and he tells us, yes, the house is for sale. There's a plaque in the front of the house explaining that the house belonged to Chandler and he says that the footprint of the house as well as the writer's office was kept pretty much the same. A beat. He asks if we want to come in.

YOUR EDITOR SPEAKS

JERI
WESTERSON



March 26 is the 50th anniversary of Raymond Chandler's death, and like any other saint's demise, we are commemorating and venerating the event in different ways. At USC, there are a host of activities you can attend (see the "Chandler

Events" on page one). There is also my own private journey to be found on page two called "Raymond Chandler and Me" complete with pictures of Chandler's house in La Jolla, which I was lucky enough to sneak into on one sunny day.

There is also a new "Save the Date" feature to the right, so...er...save those dates!

There are workshops, conferences and panels aplenty. And don't forget the LA Times Festival of Books.

This year, SoCalMWA is a sponsor! Members and nonmembers are invited on the Friday night before on April 24 at 6pm at the Mystery Bookstore in Westwood for a get together.

As always, we welcome your articles, news, and photos. Send any and all to TheMarchofCrime@gmail.com

Save the Date

Put these SoCal MWA dates and times on your calendar.

Sunday, March 22, 12:30 PM—Chapter Meeting, see back page for details

April 25-26, L.A. Times Festival of Books, UCLA
Help spread the word about the power of a great mystery and MWA during our sponsorship year!
<http://www.latimes.com/extras/festivalofbooks/>
Contact: Bill Fitzhugh, bfitzhugh@socal.rr.com

Sunday, May 17, 1 pm—Discoveries of the Black Dahlia Steve Hodel, author of *Black Dahlia Avenger: The True Story* in conversation with author and forensics expert D. P. Lyle—a joint program with Sisters in Crime Orange County Irvine Ranch Water District, 15600 Sand Canyon Ave., Irvine. A light buffet will be served. Admission is Free but reservations are required. Please contact Rob at secretary@ocsistersincrime.org

June 13-14—California Crime Writers Conference
Hilton Pasadena, www.socalmwa.com/ccwc.htm
Contact: Naomi Hirahara, bachi@naomihirahara.com

Saturday, August 15, 6pm—It's gumbo time!
Fitzhughs' Gumbo Party, San Fernando Valley
Contact: Bill Fitzhugh, bfitzhugh@socal.rr.com

Sunday, September 13, 2 PM, Salon at Gary Phillips' Pad
Contact: Gary Phillips, gdogg855@aol.com

Sunday, Oct 4, 10am – 6pm—West Hollywood Book Fair
<http://www.westhollywoodbookfair.org/>
Contact: Bill Fitzhugh, bfitzhugh@socal.rr.com

November—Interview with a Very Important Author, More details to come.

December—Holiday Party, More details to come.
Contact: Les Klingler, mail@lesliesklinger.com

The Crime Calendar

Malice Domestic—May 1-3, Arlington, VA, <http://www.malicedomestic.org/>

Bloody Words—May 7-9, Ottawa, ON, Canada <http://www.bloodywords2009.com/>

Daphne Du Maurier Festival—May 6-13, Fowey, Cornwall, UK, <http://www.dumaurierfestival.co.uk/index.php>

Crimefest—May 14-17, Bristol, UK, <http://www.crimefest.com/>

Mayhem in the Midlands—May 21-24, Omaha, NE <http://www.omahapubliclibrary.org/mayhem/>

Book Expo of America—May 29-30, New York, NY, <http://www.bookexpoamerica.com/>

American Library Association Annual Conference—July 9-15, Chicago, IL, <http://www.ala.org/ala/confservices/upcoming/upcomingconferences.cfm>


PulpFest 2009—July 31-Aug 2, Columbus, OH, <http://www.pulpfest.com/>

Bouchercon 39—Oct. 15-18, Indianapolis, IN, <http://www.bouchercon2009.com/>




*Sisters in Crime/LA and Mystery Writers of America/SoCal
Present*

California Crime Writers Conference



June 13-14, 2009
The Hilton Pasadena
168 South Los Robles Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91101



*Don't Miss Our
Keynote Speakers,
Best-selling Authors
Robert Crais and
Laurie R. King!*



**Whether you're a new author or established
writer, this conference has something for you!**

- Two days of workshops and breakout sessions
- Top-flight faculty, including best-selling authors, literary agents, legal and forensic experts
- Sessions on PR and book marketing
- Manuscript critiques *(limited to first 30 registrants)*
- Goodie bags, giveaways and raffles
- Agents cocktail party
- Book-seller and vendor room
- Luxury hotel setting



Registration Rates

(Registration fee must be received by cutoff date.)

December 7 thru Feb. 28	\$265
March 1 thru June 12	\$300
On-site registration	\$325
Manuscript critique <i>(5-page submission)</i>	\$ 50

*For more information, visit
www.sistersincrimela.com/ccwc.htm
www.socalmwa.com/ccwc.htm*

Please print clearly

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone _____

Email address* _____

To register and pay by check: Make check payable to "Sisters in Crime/LA" and mail with completed form to Sisters in Crime/LA, 1107 Fair Oaks Avenue, PMB 338, South Pasadena, CA 91030.

To register online and pay via PayPal: Visit www.socalmwa.com/ccwc.htm.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conference fee _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> MWA member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript critique \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> SinC member |
| Total enclosed _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-member |

* Required to confirm registration.

"Chandler" continued from Page 4

We do.

Up the front steps and we walk into a low-ceilinged space of new diagonally set African mahogany wood floors. I glance back at the picture window from the right direction this time and get the full view of the ocean looking like the best HD big screen there is.

The kitchen is modest with all new appointments. There is one seller sheet remaining. "The seller will entertain offers between 6,200,000 and 6,750,876." Where was my checkbook again? It's 4600 square feet of hallways and modestly sized bedrooms (six) with 6.5 baths.

"I can't let you wander around," says Scott. But he knows all we really want is to see the office. He leads us there down a hallway and around a corner. Tucked into the back of the house with a window overlooking a garden, this is it. They've left the built-in cupboards alone with their rounded doors and exposed plywood edges. On the bookshelf are a few copies of his books, left there, no doubt, for prospective buyers. A simple room with two windows opposite each other. There is a half-bath now with all the modern tile and fixtures that I suspect was originally a closet. It has that look about it.



We stand in the presence of greatness, I suppose, and I drink it in, straining my ears for distant echoes, but I can't hear the past in the empty house. I am excited, though. I know it is a fluke that I was let in here. It was my lucky day.

We linger as long as we can and then, so that Scott can get back to work, we leave the house, staying a while by the plaque outside. It is time to move on to our other destination. The apartment Chandler moved to not too far away when his beloved wife died. His last residence before his plot at Mount Hope. We'll see that today, too.

Back in the car and we are on our way down streets designed for few cars and even those would have been of the model-T variety. By the time many of these houses and apartments were built, however, cars had morphed into the bulging Detroit steel of Buicks and Packards. They'd still have to creep almost single file along this route; one side is the ice-plant draped cliffs overlooking the beach below and the other the houses staring mournfully into the horizon with picture window eyes. There were a lot of older apartments still along Neptune Place and I had hopes that Chandler's apartment house might have been spared the renovators hand. No such luck. Once we got to the 6000 block each place had been extensively redone or just plain bulldozed and rebuilt. But it was even worse when we got to 6925 Neptune Place. We got out and walked, looking for it. 6921, 6927, 6933...What the—? We were slowly growing to the conclusion that the apartment building must have been situated in the back but had been swallowed up by contractors and builders to make way for the massive houses that shoved against each other, competing for space amid the ice plant. It was gone. Along with 6929, 30, and 31,

to that oblivion of absorbed real estate, part of that ever-changing coastline that is California. It was disappointing. We stood for a while and looked out at the ocean in quiet disbelief. A tragedy.

The afternoon was getting on. Time to head on over to Mount Hope Cemetery, the last stop on Chandler's—and our—quest. We delved into the heart of San Diego and headed east, inland. When Raymond Chandler was struck down in March of 1959 with pneumonia he was sent to the Scripp's Clinic in La Jolla. He never left it alive.

Mount Hope was an old cemetery, established in 1869. A veritable Who's Who of San Diego's dead is resting beneath its hills of grass: Alonzo Erastus Horton, San Diego land mogul; Elisha Babcock, builder of the famous Hotel del Coronado and also it's most famous ghost is buried there, Kate Morgan; Sam Brannan an early Mormon pioneer and member of San Francisco's first city council; and Alta M. Hulett, America's first female attorney.

We made our way up Market Street and up over the hills until we passed through a rather humble gate. We arrived ten of four and the gates closed at four. We needed to get a move on. But where

to find him? There were no information kiosks but on our left was an innocuous building built in the sixties and looking like a misplaced track home. We parked and went inside. The employees were happy to give us a map. It was just up the road.

Back in the car we found the right area, got out, and started counting graves. The bigger monuments and head stones were near the front of the cemetery. Where we were lay countless plaques laid out like tiles. At first we couldn't find him, but with some re-working of the counting...there he was.

A dark stone plaque: "In Loving Memory, Raymond Thornton Chandler, Author, July 23, 1888 – Mar 26, 1959."



He would have been pleased by the brevity. I stood and looked at it for a while and then I sat and touched the sun-warmed stone. "Sorry I didn't think to bring you anything, Mr. Chandler," I told him, thinking that a drink shared between us might have been a nice touch. But then again, maybe not. No doubt the booze contributed to the pneumonia that got him planted in front of me. Instead, I asked for a little help, a little magic to launch my career. I felt the rough texture of the carved letters under my fingertips. But only a few ants appeared as I cleared away some of the overgrowing grass. No voices from beyond...except that of a park employee chasing us out since the gates were now closed.

I brushed the grass from my jeans and stood. "I'll be back, Ray," I told him. I breathed in the silent air of Mount Hope. Mount Hope. Well, that's a start.

Reprinted, with permission, from the May-June, 2008, issue of Crimespree Magazine



Jeri Westerson is the author of *Veil of Lies: A Medieval Noir*, inspired by the works of such venerable authors as Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammet. www.JeriWesterson.com

“Social” continued

fine on MySpace when they told you it was all about Facebook. Which is great except today, it's Twitter this, Twitter that, Twitter everything (and some people do!).

First, take a deep breath. You don't have to jump into the Next Big Thing just because everyone else is doing it. It's better to do one, maybe two things well instead of doing everything badly. But – monkey wrench! – you do need to be semi-conversant in all the latest toys.

Goal One: “Own” your fans even as you engage on various social networks.

Think of your website as the mothership. No matter where you are, where you go, everything should point back to your website. While you engage readers on the various social networks, you do not own those readers. You do not own your MySpace friends, your Facebook connections, your Twitter followers. If those services disappear – or go down for a few crucial hours – you have no access to those people. Get people to your website and get them on your mailing list.

Goal Two: Set up a Facebook profile.

There are many, many social networks out there. Big, small, focused, private, messy, noisy, professional, personal. Just like real life, huh? As author, you will need to engage on various levels (just like real life), but your number one focus needs to be on the writing. Decide where your efforts are best spent and use the other tools as supplementary efforts.

Right now, and in the foreseeable future, Facebook offers the best opportunities for authors to build and maintain a social network. It's growing rapidly and engaging a more mainstream audience than MySpace ever did. While it's not a perfect environment – no such animal exists – Facebook offers the best tools for social marketing.

Social networking is about building and maintaining relationships. Social marketing is about using that network to sell yourself, your book, or your business. It's a softer, more personal form of marketing. It's both the old-fashioned hand-selling approach and the new-fangled “reach the world” approach.

Facebook has the right tools to mix the personal and professional. Even if you don't choose Facebook as your focus area, should have a personal profile and a Page. Personal profiles must be real people, not products, books, or, ahem, pseudonyms, though authors break this rule all the time. Use this profile to reach out to your circle of real friends and to get comfortable with how Facebook works.

Pages are the Facebook application designed for marketing. They are separate from your personal profile, but generally have the same features and capabilities. You can be Karen Smith in your profile, allowing you to connect with personal friends, but your Page can be for Karen Author, allowing you to connect with fans you might not want involved in your personal business.

I strongly advocate separating these two sides of yourself.

You don't want fans to know the names of your children, where you work, your background, and, ahem, that your real-life persona isn't necessarily the same as your authorial persona. Even as fans demand increased access to authors, you can create a certain distance by using Facebook wisely.

(Note: on Facebook, unlike MySpace, it is considered the height of rudeness to friend people you don't know. Don't take it personally if someone rejects your friend request and don't take it personally if someone unfriends you. Everyone uses the site differently. Using Pages is a good way to shuffle those non-friends-but-fans to a safe place.)

Goal Three: Create a social marketing strategy.

Well, that sounds easy, doesn't it? And it is. I'll give you mine. Yours will vary. One thing I've noticed is that the target audiences for each of my efforts seem to be different, though there is some overlap. Knowing this, I don't repeat the same content/information from network to network.

My professional strategy revolves around three things. My website/blog which has a wide readership, and I put most of my efforts into regular content and building that brand. Through RSS and other tools, I reach out to a large audience.

I use Twitter as my second source. First, of course, I always make sure I link back to my current articles. Second, I follow the right people (I am very selective because I have limited time), which allows me to keep abreast of market news and trends. I admittedly spend a lot of time “tweeting”, dashing of 140 or less character posts.

Finally, I manage my Facebook profile and Pages. I spend about ten minutes a day on Facebook – by far the least time-consuming of all my efforts, but probably the most rewarding. I am able to manage a network of personal friends, including keeping them updated on my professional efforts, with fans of my various projects.

Social networking doesn't have to be hard – if you're not having fun your either doing it wrong or doing the wrong things. And since you *have* to market anyway, you should at least enjoy the process!

Kassia Krozser runs Booksquare.com and is launching BooksquareUniversity.com, a learning environment for authors. On Twitter, follow her at <http://twitter.com/booksquare>



Agents Galore at the California Crime Writers Conference June 13-14

Literary agents from areas as varied as San Diego, Santa Fe, and Houston will be participating in the inaugural California Crime Writers Conference at the Hilton Pasadena on June 13-14.



Jill Marsal of the newly launched Marsal Lyon Literary Agency in Solano Beach, David Hale Smith of DHS Literary in Houston, Texas, Irene Webb of Irene Webb Literary in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Claire Gerus of the Claire Gerus Literary Agency in Tucson, Arizona, are some of the agents who will be traveling some distance to lead workshops and be on panels regarding preparing query letters, pitching, and making the most of a writer-agent work relationship.

Also included in the conference is an agents' reception on Saturday from 5 to 7 p.m., in which more agents in the area will be attending to network and to hear about works-in-progress in an informal setting. Well-known literary representatives in Southern California, including Betsy Amster and Paul Levine, both MWA members, have confirmed their attendance. You must be registered for the conference to attend the agents reception (see page 6 for registration form).

With keynote speakers Robert Crais and Laurie King, the conference will also include writing craft class by award-winning authors like Gayle Lynds and Jerrilyn Farmer. A full forensic track will explore ways that writers can capture the authenticity of the field, whether it be watching a simulated crime scene unfold or learning about different kinds of firearms and weapons.

While sharpening their writing skills, established published writers can also benefit from workshops on new trends in publishing and presentation, including:

- Marketing your book online
- E-publishing
- How to maximize your relationship with your editor
- Keeping your books current and sellable (led by Poisoned Pen acquisition editor Annette Rogers)
- Make the best impression in media interviews (led by Kim Dower of Kim-of-LA)
- Setting up a book tour
- Book contracts (led by attorney Jonathan Kirsch)

Registration from March 1 to June 12 is \$300. Manuscript critiques, in which many of the agents will be participating, will be available to the first 30 sign-ups for an additional \$50. For more information, see the website, www.socalmwa.com/ccwc.htm

Transom Notes

True crime author **Gary C. King's** latest book, *Butcher*, will be published by Pinnacle Books in April 2009. The same book will be published in Canada simultaneously but under a different title: *The Pig Farm Murders*. The book is about the Robert Pickton serial murder case that occurred outside Vancouver B.C. a few years ago. King has also signed a new 3-book deal with Pinnacle.

Shelia Lowe was hired to analyze handwriting at a Golden Globes event called "Dewar's Signature Style" sponsored by Dewar's scotch. She was also interviewed by a reporter at the NY Daily News on the handwriting of President Obama.

Thugs and Kisses, the 3rd book in the Odelia Grey mystery series by **Sue Ann Jaffarian**, was recently nominated for a Lefty. The winner will be announced on March 11th at Left Coast Crime in Hawaii. Sue Ann Jaffarian invites everyone to attend the Launch Party for *Booby Trap*, the 4th book in the Odelia Grey mystery series. She will be at Barnes and Noble - Orange 791 S Main St Orange, CA 92868 on March 20 at 6pm, Flintridge Bookstore 964 E Foothill Blvd, LaCanada CA 91011 on March 26 at 7:30pm, and *Mysteries to Die For* 2940 Thousand Oaks Blvd, Thousand Oaks CA 91362 on March 28 at 3:00pm.

Jeri Westerson will be flogging her medieval noir *VEIL OF LIES* on panels in Hawaii at Left Coast Crime; she'll also be at a Literary Luncheon with the Laguna Beach Festival of Women Authors, Surf and Sand Hotel Laguna Beach, on March 14 at 11:00; the Brandeis Author and Boutique Luncheon at the Renaissance Esmeralda Hotel & Spa, Indian Wells, March 19, 9am; "Meet the Authors and Bookfaire" at the Shannon Center at Whittier College on March 28, 8:30am; Murrieta Library, Eight Town Square, Murrieta, on April 10, 1pm; "Girl's Night Out" panel Manhattan Beach Library 1320 Highland Ave, Manhattan Beach, April 22, 7pm; "Melody of Words" at El Camino Real High School Literary Fair, 5440 Valley Circle Blvd., Woodland Hills, April 29.

James Hynes' novel *A KING OF INFINITE SPACE*, will be released on April 2 by World Parade Books. It's the first in a series about Long Beach, California Homicide detective Danny Beckett.

Alan Cook's new mystery suspense novel, *RUN INTO TROUBLE* has been published. The next Kendra Ballantyne

Pet-Sitter mystery *NEVER SAY STY* by **Linda O. Johnston** will be an April release.

SCOOP! **Hannah Dennison's** second book in the Vicky Hill mysteries, will be released on March 3 (Berkley Prime Crime). www.hannahdennison.com



Uh...Just one More Question, Sir

By Robert S. Levinson

You would think a writer who has enjoyed unparalleled success and accumulated myriad major awards and honors over a career spanning almost six decades would finally be ready to retire, ease up, settle back and relax, while away the days poolside on the patio of his stately hillside home high above Sunset Boulevard, where on a clear day you might see forever, but most certainly the Pacific Ocean.

Yes?

Then you'd definitely not be thinking about William Link, one-half of the longest writing partnership in show business history, 43 years with Richard Levinson—a record that qualifies them for a spot in the *Guinness Book of World Records*—who went on to score a string of stellar solo accomplishment following Levinson's death in 1987.

Bill and Dick were boyhood best friends, a couple neighborhood kids from Philly who bonded over a mutual love of movies, formed their writing partnership in summer camp and sold their first story while seniors in high school, to *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*. Later, struggling after success in New York, squatting in the apartment of a friend at Broadway and 75th, they survived on the dollars earned through short story sales to *Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine*.

A hurry-up-and-write one-hour script for "The Chevy Mystery Show," NBC's summer stand-in for songstress Dinah Shore, proved their career-making turning point. Titled "Enough Rope," (later incarnated as "Prescription: Murder"), the live production introduced a wily New York police detective named "Columbo" and ultimately brought Bill and Dick to Hollywood.

However, it wasn't the deceptively soft-spoken, cheap cigar-chomping cop in the rumpled raincoat who gave the partnership its first big hit in 1965, but rather a slick Los Angeles private investigator named Mannix.

The "Mannix" series ran for eight years on CBS, and its first season recently became available on DVD.

Link and Levinson subsequently created fifteen other series that made it on-air, among them "Murder, She Wrote." It's a television record no one else has come close to approaching and helped provide Bill the wherewithal to line the walls of his home with museum-quality art and build a book collection of more than seven thousand volumes.

"Columbo," of course, remains the show instantly associated with Bill and Dick, the one that led to many of their awards—Edgars from the Mystery Writers of America, Emmys from the Television Academy (which also inducted the team into its TV Hall of Fame), a Writers Guild of America Paddy Chayefsky Laurel Award—alongside honors from the Producers Guild of America, the Golden Globes; an NAACP Image Award; a Peabody Award; and on and on and on, and—

The character has proven too beloved to go gentle into that good night.

Bill lately has been occupied writing the first-ever Columbo

short stories.

Eleven to date and others coming.

To be sold initially on the internet, the web launch currently scheduled for the fall.

Moreover, "Columbo Takes the Rap," one of 17 plays he's written or co-written, 15 of them mysteries, was staged last year at the inaugural RiverPark Center International Thriller Writers' Festival in Owensboro, KY, and is now scheduled for productions in the U.S., Canada and overseas. (It has a long way to go to match "Prescription: Murder," the first Columbo play, which in its debut year, 1961, was the second highest grossing play in the country, behind "A Man for All Seasons.")

And, here's a chunk of exclusive news—California State University-Long Beach is about to announce its 300-seat state-of-the-art theater will be named in his honor. The William Link Theater will open next year with a tribute built around all 17 of those plays.

When he's not writing, Bill reads. Of late he's been revisiting many of the authors he enjoyed or who inspired him or both over the years, e.g., Graham Greene, Raymond Chandler, Ross Macdonald, John Dickson Carr, Erle Stanley Gardner, Georges Simenon

("Over 200 of Simenon's so far...").

And, of course, he watches all those crime shows currently dominating network and cable television?

No.

Definitely not.

Uh, just one more question, sir—

Why not?

He's been there, done that, he says, observing, "They all use plots Dick and I did years ago."

He holds out one exception.

"The Sopranos' is the greatest series ever created for television," Bill Link says.

And that's it.

The master of mystery, mayhem, murder and suspense has spoken.

Reprinted, with permission, from the September-October, 2008, issue of *Crimespree Magazine*

Fresh Blood

Active

Thomas Streed (Phoenix, AZ)

Affiliate

Martha Blue (Flagstaff, AZ)
 Ronald L. Blunt (Beverly Hills, CA)
 Adrienne M. Byers (Los Angeles, CA)
 William Larkin (Newport Beach, CA)
 Linda Reid (Long Beach, CA)

Associate

Jill Marsal (Del Mar, CA)



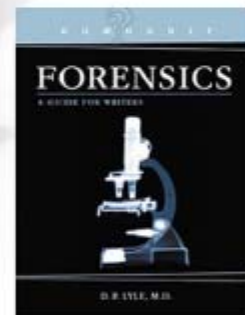
Orange County Sisters in Crime
& SoCal Mystery Writers of America
Presents

New Discoveries of the
Black Dahlia
Murder Investigation

Author **Steve Hodel** in Conversation
with author and forensics expert,
D.P. Lyle, M.D.



Join us for an exciting discussion on the latest evidence of the Black Dahlia murder case with author Steve Hodel, retired Los Angeles police detective and private investigator. D.P. Lyle, M.D., brings expert forensic opinion to the table in what is sure to be a lively forum. Who did it? Is the murderer as Hodel contends? Find out.



Sunday, May 17, 1 pm

A Light Buffet will be served

Admission is Free

Please make reservations with Rob at
secretary@ocsistersincrime.org

Meeting is at the Irvine Ranch Water District
15600 Sand Canyon Ave., Irvine, CA 92618
For further info visit www.ocsistersincrime.org

MARCH OF CRIME



MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA
Southern California Chapter
12021 Wilshire Blvd. #506
Los Angeles, CA 90025

The March of Crime is the newsletter of the Southern California Chapter/Mystery Writers of America

Editor: Jeri Westerson

To submit material for *The March of Crime*, email the editor at TheMarchofCrime@gmail.com

To advertise in TMOC, visit our website at www.SoCalMWA.com for information.

Any opinions expressed herein are those of each author and do not necessarily reflect the views of Mystery Writers of America or the local chapter.

Next Meeting:

**March SoCal MWA Meeting –Sunday, March 22
12:30 PM** (Note: Different time)

Lunch Event Buffet of L.A. International Foods–
Chop Suey Café and Lounge (formerly Far East
Café) 347 E. First St. Downtown Los Angeles
(Little Tokyo)

\$20, members, \$25, guests

**On the 50th Anniversary of Raymond Chandler's
Death: What His Life and His Work Mean for
Mystery Writers Today**



Judith Freeman, author of *The Long Embrace: Raymond Chandler and the Woman He Loved* interviewed by Dick Lochte, book reviewer and mystery novelist. For registration form, see

www.socalmwa.com To pay by

check, send payable to SoCal MWA to SoCal MWA, 12021 Wilshire Blvd., #506, Los Angeles, CA 90025. E-mail bachi@naomihirahara.com for parking instructions.

Mystery Writers of America Southern California Chapter

12021 Wilshire Blvd., #506, Los Angeles, CA 90025

323-319-6MWA (6692)

Email: info@socalmwa.com

The Web of Crime: www.socalmwa.com

President

Les Klinger

Board of Directors

Deborah Atkinson, Richard Brewer, Bill Fitzhugh, Naomi Hirahara, Kathryn Lilley, Kris Neri, T. Jefferson Parker, Gary Phillips, Pamela Samuels-Young, Jeri Westerson

Ex-officio: James Lincoln Warren



Mystery Writers of America

1140 Broadway, Suite 1507, New York, NY 10001

Phone: 212.888.8171 / Fax: 212.888.8107

Email: mwa@mysterywriters.org

Website: www.mysterywriters.org

The MWA logo and awards name "Edgar" are protected marks of the Mystery Writers of America, Inc., and are used in all issues of *The March of Crime*

LAST WORD



The powerhouse panel at the last SoCalMWA meeting at the Smokehouse in Burbank: from left Lisa Friedman, Carolyn Kellog, Denise Hamilton (moderator), Kassia Krozser.