

MARCH OF CRIME

MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA-SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

Cissy and Ray's Final Wish

by Jill Amadio

A disturbed grave. Wrenching separation. An unfulfilled desire. A literary detective's discovery of a "hidden truth," the granting of a wish after death, and gin gimlets to finalize the deal.

A murder mystery? Hardly. Instead, the real-life granting of mystery author Raymond Chandler's fervent wish for his beloved wife, Cissy, to be buried with him. Since she died in 1954 her ashes have lain in storage in a mausoleum that abuts the Mount Hope Cemetery in San Diego where Ray is buried.

For decades Ray has waited for her to join him. Were it not for Chandler historian Loren Latker who's delving into the Chandler archives revealed the writer's intention for him and his beloved to share the same grave, the historic event this year would never have taken place. Before he died in 1959, five years after Cissy's death, Ray expressed his wishes regarding burial but he never completed the legal paperwork.

A court order was needed to move Cissy's ashes. Aissa Wayne, John Wayne's daughter, took up the challenge, and on the sunny morning of Valentine's Day, February 14, 2011, Ray and Cissy were reunited in a ceremony presided over by Reverend Randal Gardner.

I drove down from Dana Point vowing not to miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be present at one of literature's most poignant moments. When I arrived at the cemetery, which sprawls over a hundred and ten acres, many of the hundred or so invited guests were already seated on folding chairs beneath a canopy of trees facing a podium. It was a gloriously sunny day, the kind Ray longed for when he lived in rainy England.

Chandler's grave is located in a semi-isolated spot among the rolling hills and marked by a humble plaque in the ground next to a small evergreen bush. After I expressed disappointment that no impressive headstone marked the icon's final resting place, Pastor Gardner said plaques are for the convenience of the maintenance crew riding lawnmowers. Then I remembered how private a person Chandler always tried to be and how self-effacing. He would have approved.

I also mused that there was plenty of burial space all around him, and wondered if any local writer would have the temerity to request to be his neighbor when the time came.

After being directed to parking areas we were handed a program and a sheet printed with The Lord's Prayer and Beethoven's Hymn to Joy. Everyone, it seemed, preferred to honor the man in a sartorial manner. Several gentlemen wore 1920s- and 30s-era pin-striped suits, fedoras, Oxfords-style black and white shoes, and to top it off, a pipe clenched between the teeth. The women were splendid in authentic crepe dresses, a few wearing split skirts and black stockings with seams running up the back. Platform shoes were the order of the day and many wore plate-shaped hats of the era tilted saucily to one side. Others favored crushed velvet and felt Robin Hood caps. In THE BIG SLEEP Chandler wrote: "Her black hair was glossy under a Robin Hood hat that might have cost 50 dollars and looked as if you could have made it with one hand out of a desk blotter."

Three classic 1920s roadsters and sedans arrived, their drivers attired in vintage suits and straw boaters. In one of the cars, a 1929 Graham Paige, was Loren Latker bearing the urn that contained Cissy's ashes. As Loren walked over to the small table next to Ray's grave, the Crown Island Jazz Band played Dixieland music. I didn't get emotional about any of the goings-on until they struck up "When the Saints Go Marching In." It was a seminal moment, the New Orleans funeral procession music bringing home that this was a jubilant occasion.

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The President's Rap Sheet



Gary Phillips

Well true believers, I could go on lamenting the demise of the Mystery Bookstore (see farewell pics in this issue) and that Borders is on the ropes -- rather, let's celebrate that Flintridge Bookstore, after a harrowing incident in which a truck plowed through their store, has re-opened. Whether it's hardcopies or e-books or whatever else is coming down the pike, people still want stories and we're about honing our craft and providing such. With that in mind, the following is a round-up of upcoming activities your chapter is engaged in to benefit members and raise our profile.

As always, the board and I welcome your involvement and suggestions.

Gp

Tucson Festival of Books

Board member Darrell James will be helping our So Cal MWA booth at the Tucson Festival of Books the weekend of March 12. If you're in the area and can volunteer an hour or so in the booth, please let Darrell know.

Knife to the Page: Writing Crime Graphic Novels

Saturday, March 19, 1-2:30 pm, Meltdown Comics, 7522 Sunset Blvd.

From the movies *The Road to Perdition* to the recent bloody romp, *Red*, both based on comics, "funnybooks" are making a larger impact in the digital age. On Saturday, March 19, at Meltdown Comics on the Sunset Strip, we'll be doing a panel on the writing and production of crime comics. Panelists are: Doselle Young (Gangland), Deborah Vankin (Poseurs) and Joshua Hale Fialkov (Tumor), moderated by Gary (The Rinse) Phillips.

Bar Nite

Thursday, March 24, 6:00 pm or so, while the bar is no-host, we will buy some appetizers at a casual meet and greet at the original El Cholo's, 1121 S. Western Ave., Los Angeles.

Festival of Books Reception at Skylight Books

But Friday, April 29, we do have hosted libations and munchies at a reception for members and book lovers in honor of the L.A. Times Festival of Books, 6:30-8:30 pm at Skylight Books 1818 N. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027. Come on down.

Mass Signings at Festival of Books

Saturday April 30 and Sunday, May 1, we have a booth at the Festival of Books near the Mysterious Galaxy, Mystery Ink and Sisters in Crime/L.A. booths. We need volunteers for one hour stints to sell our swag and just be lovely to the public. Previously you were sent an e-blast to let Mysterious Galaxy and/or Mystery Ink know if you were interested in participating in a mass signing in their booths.

California Crime Writers Conference

Speaking of nuts and bolts, don't forget to tell your friends and neighbors about the California Crime Writers Conference, June 11-12, Pasadena -- <http://www.ccwconference.org/> -- that we're putting on together with the Los Angeles chapter of Sisters in Crime.

Further Adventures: On Writing Novelizations and Media Tie-Ins

Saturday June, 18, Sportsman's Lodge, 12833 Ventura Blvd.

We're back to our old stomping grounds as board member Christa Faust facilitates a media tie-in panel and lunch at the fabulously redone Sportsman's Lodge. Ever wonder what it's like to play with other people's characters? From novel versions of popular movies to licensed original fiction featuring franchise characters from film, TV or even video games, media-related work-for-hire novels are the new 21st century pulp fiction. Five veteran pulp slingers will discuss the drama, the deadlines and other unique challenges of this often misunderstood genre. With Doug Lyle (Royal Pains), William Rabkin (Psych), Lee Goldberg (Monk) and Nathan Long (Warhammer), moderated by our Christa (Snakes on a Plane) Faust.

Raymond Chandler Bus Tour

Sunday, July 19, in conjunction with the Orange County Sisters in Crime, we're planning on having a Raymond Chandler bus tour. It's a four hour tour with snack stops (yea!) and there will be some subsidizing of the cost, but more on that soon -- watch the skies, er, website.

Bar-B-Que and Beer Summer Bash

Sunday August 21 will be our inaugural afternoon Bar-B-Q & Beer Summer Bash for members and one guest. If someone has a lovely backyard or access to such, please let me know and of course we'll be responsible for set up and clean up.



Your Editor Speaks

Jeri Westerson

We're looking at so many changes these days. Yeah, I know. It's starting to sound like a broken record. (A broken *what?* asks our younger members.) Okay, let's just say we keep seeing the same things being said. We are in a transitional state in publishing. Where will it lead? With ebooks proliferating, what does it mean to be out of print these days? We lost a major bookseller in Borders. Yes, there are still a few stores open, but with a company that never really addressed e-business, can even their few remaining stores survive in the ever-shifting landscape? Have you queried an agent lately? It's all online now. Well, at least you save on paper, ink, and postage. And we see the change of the LA Times Festival of Books from its longtime UCLA venue going downtown to the campus of USC. Our chapter will join forces with SinC-LA, Mysterious Galaxy Bookstore, Mystery Ink Bookstore with some additional help from Sisters in Crime Orange County. Crowded together, shivering, authors gaze out tentatively to this brave new world. Are you ready? We will have more presentations at our meetings that might help us equip ourselves for the Next New Thing. As always, if you've got something to say, email me themarchofcrime@gmail.com.

Save the Date

Further Adventures: On Writing Novelizations and Media Tie-Ins

With Doug Lyle ("Royal Pains"), William Rabkin ("Psych"), Lee Goldberg ("Monk") and Nathan Long ("Warhammer"), moderated by Christa ("Snakes on a Plane") Faust.

**Saturday, June 18
11:00 am**

Sportsman's Lodge
12833 Ventura Blvd.
Studio City

Fresh Blood

Natascha N. Jaffa, affiliate,
Henderson, NV

Carol M. Tanzman, active,
L.A., CA

Ryan David John

Paul Guyot, reinstated,
active

Shaun Moray, Affiliate



Killer Quotes

"The minutes went by on tiptoe, with their fingers to their lips." -- Raymond Chandler, *The Lady in the Lake*

The Crime Calendar

March 3-6, 2011: SleuthFest, Deerfield Beach FL www.sleuthfest.com

March 12-13, 2011: Tucson Festival of Books, Tucson AZ
www.tucsonfestivalofbooks.org

March 24-27, 2011: Left Coast Crime, Santa Fe NM www.leftcoastcrime.org/2011

April 9, 2011: Literary Orange, Irvine, CA <http://literaryorange.org>

April 29-May 1, 2011: Malice Domestic, Bethesda MD www.malicedomestic.org

May 19-22, 2011: Crimefest, Bristol, UK www.crimefest.com

May 26-28, 2011: Mayhem in the Midlands, Omaha NE

June 3-5, 2011: Bloody Words, Victoria BC www.bloodywords2011.com

June 3-5, 2011: Mayhem in the Grove (formerly Murder in the Grove), Idaho,
www.murderinthegrove.com

June 11-12, 2011: California Crime Writers Conference, Pasadena CA, sponsored
by SinC/LA and SoCal MWA www.ccwconference.org

July 6-9, 2011: Thrillerfest, New York, NY www.thrillerwriters.org

July 14-17, 2011: Public Safety Writers Association, Las Vegas NV
<http://www.policewriter.com>

September 15-18, 2011: Bouchercon: Spirit of St. Louis, St. Louis MO
www.bouchercon2011.com



Chapter News

~ **Percy Spurlark Parker's** story, "Sweet Thing Going," will be in the April issue of AHMM. And UntreedReads.com has released Parker's latest story, "An Unrefusable Request."

~ **John Morgan Wilson** has a new story, "One-Hit Wonder," inspired by the Box Tops' 1967 hit "The Letter" ("Give me a ticket for an airplane..."), in the March/April issue of Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine. Meanwhile, John is writing a regular feature about people (including authors), places, organizations and businesses with a West Hollywood connection for West Hollywood Patch (www.westhollywood.patch.com), one of the hundreds of AOL community newspapers across the country. Pitch ideas to John at jmwwriter@aol.com.

~ Llewellyn Worldwide/Midnight Ink recently contracted with **Sue Ann Jaffarian** for books 4 and 5 in her popular Ghost of Granny Apples mystery series. The tentative release dates are February 2013 and February 2014. ~ On February 22, Neil Russell's WILDCASE, the second novel in his Rail Black series will be released by HarperCollins.

~ **Linda Palmer**, using the pen name **Melinda Wells**, just signed a new contract with Berkley Prime Crime to continue her series of "culinary mysteries." Book number 4, titled PIE A LA MURDER, will be published on July 5, 2011. Number 5, SEVEN LAYER DEATH, is scheduled for publication in 2012.

~ Sunday, April 3. **Laura Levine**, G.A. McKeveitt, and Misa Ramirez will be speaking at the 16th annual Anaheim Public Library Foundation's Mystery Authors Luncheon. For more information: <http://www.anaheimcolony.com/Calendar/Tmp31.html>
Or call (714) 765-1810.

~ **Joanne Fluke** has won a Pioneer Award from the editors at RT Book Reviews. She will accept her award at the RT Booklovers Convention in Los Angeles on Thursday, April 7.

~ **Diane Emley** will be at the following locations this month: Tucson Festival of Books University of Arizona Campus Saturday, March 12, 10:30 – 11:30 pm, Signing – Desert Sleuths Sisters in Crime Booth; 12:00 – 1:00 pm signing - Clues Unlimited Booth; Panel 2:30 pm followed by book signing until 4:00 pm "Blood & Guts: Violence in Crime Fiction" With Rebecca Cantrell and Cara Black, Moderator – Zoe Sharp; Sunday, March 13, Panel 10:00 am "Against the Odds: Women in Jeopardy" – MODERATING with Libby Hellmann, Wendi Corsi Staub, and Juliet Blackwell; Panel 1:00 pm followed by book signing until 2:30 pm; "The Seamy Side of Paradise: California Crime" with Thomas Perry and T. Jefferson Parker, Moderator - Patrick Milliken from the Poisoned Pen; Literary Orange U.C. Irvine Student Center, Irvine, CA, Saturday, April 9, Panel 1:00 – 2:00 "Mystery: California Beat" Miles Corwin, Dianne Emley, Nadia Gordon, John Shannon, Moderator: Mary Menzel.

~ **Joan Blacher** is pleased to announce the March 2011 release of LETHAL LAKE by Zumaya Publications, the second book in her Ardis Jensen series. Also, Joan will be one of the authors at the CALM Celebrity Authors' luncheon at Fess Parker's Double Tree Inn in Santa Barbara on March 19.

~ **Deborah J Ledford's** latest thriller SNARE is a nominee for The Hillerman Sky Award at Left Coast Crime 2011.

~BEAGLEMANIA, the first in **Linda O. Johnston's** new Pet Rescue Mystery Series, will be in bookstores on March 1. The Pet Rescue Mysteries are a spinoff from Linda's Kendra Ballantyne, Pet-Sitter mysteries from Berkley Prime Crime. Linda is participating in the "Mystery Night" in conjunction with the celebration of the Flintridge Bookstore's Grand Reopening on March 3 at 7:30 PM. She is also planning signings at Mystery Ink on March 5 at 3:00 PM, Mysteries to Die For on March 12 at 12:00 noon, and Vroman's on March 19 at 1:00 PM in conjunction with the Pasadena Humane Society's adoption event.

~ Recently, **Donald W. Moore** signed a contract with Upton and Sons for the publication of his new book UNDERMANNED AND OVERWHELMED: The Reno Valley Fight. This is a nonfiction book about the Little Big Horn.

Chapter News Continued

~ **Les Klinger** was busy with two anthologies *IN THE SHADOW OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: A COLLECTION OF VICTORIAN DETECTIVE TALES* and *IN THE SHADOW OF DRACULA: A COLLECTION OF VICTORIAN VAMPIRE STORIES* Both to be published this spring. Also, *A STUDY IN SHERLOCK: STORIES INSPIRED BY THE SHERLOCK HOLMES CANON*, co-edited with Laurie R. King, to be published by Random House, Christmas 2011. The latter has stories from 17 major writers, including our own Jan Burke, Gayle Lynds, Tom Perry, and Jackie Winspear (as well as Laura Lippman, S. J. Rozan, Neil Gaiman, Phillip Margolin, Charles Todd, and others). Also, vol. 1 of *THE GRAND GAME: A CELEBRATION OF SHERLOCKIAN SCHOLARSHIP* (also co-edited with Laurie R. King) was published by The Baker Street Irregulars in January; volume 2 will be published later this year.

~ **Eric Stone's** short story, "The Lunch That Got Away," will appear in the anthology *BANGKOK NOIR*, to be published in March. <http://www.bangkoknoir.info/> All four of Eric Stone's Ray Sharp detective thrillers, set in Asia and based on true stories, as well as his true crime / sports biography – *WRONG SIDE OF THE WALL* - are now available as ebooks from Amazon, B&N, Lulu and other cyber book-purveyors.

~ **Robert Ward's** *THE BEST, BAD DREAM* will be published by Atlantic/Grove Press under Otto Penzler's imprint.

~ New from **Carol Costa**, the third book in the Dana Sloan Mystery Series published by Open Books Press, *WHEN NOTHING ELSE WAS RIGHT*, available Feb 14. The first book in this series has just been released as a mass-market paperback by Worldwide Mysterics.

~ In March, **Christopher Farnsworth's** novel, *BLOOD OATH*, will be released in paperback by Berkely. (It was hardback by Putnam last May.) And the sequel, *THE PRESIDENT'S VAMPIRE*, will hit shelves April 28.

~ **Karen Cote** recently signed a book contract with MuseItHOT Publishing (her first!). The name of the novel is *EROTIC DECEPTION*. ~ In March, Sheila Lowe will be at the Tucson Book Festival, signing at Mostly Books, as well as SinC and will volunteer for MWA.

~ **Jeri Westerson**, writing as **Haley Walsh**, signed with MLR Press for her second gay romantic mystery with amateur sleuth Skyler Foxe, in *FOXES HUNT*. Jeri will be talking as herself about her Crispin Guest Medieval Noir series at the following locations: Mar 3, 7:30 pm Flintridge Bookstore 964 Foothill Blvd. La Canada Flintridge, CA 91011; Mar 19, 10:30 am Yosemite Romance Writers, in Fresno. Marie Callendar's 3602 W. Shaw Ave., Fresno, CA 93711; Mar 23, 2011, 6:00 pm Perris Public Library 163 E San Jacinto, Perris, CA (951) 657-2358; Apr 7, 6:30 pm Buena Park Library 7150 La Palma Avenue, Buena Park, CA 90620; Apr 9, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Literary Orange at the Irvine Student Center UC Irvine. Historical panel "The Past Unraveled" at 2:30 pm with Barbara Hambly and Moderator Jill Patterson; Apr 16, 2 pm Burbank Library panel "The Grim Reaper-Lies, Sex, and the Dark Side of Murder." Sponsored by Sisters in Crime LA 300 North Buena Vista Street, Burbank, CA 91505; Apr 25, Lecture/reading at San Antonio College, Pomona, CA; Malice Domestic, Mystery Fan Convention in Bethesda, MD. Panel on Sat, Apr 30 at 1:45 pm "Taboo Subjects" with B.K. Stevens, Joanna Campbell Slan, Tomi K. P. Kelner, and Julie Hyzy.

~ **Douglas Corleone's** *NIGHT ON FIRE*, the second novel in the Kevin Corvelli crime series, will be released by St. Martin's Minotaur on Apr 26. Corleone's debut novel *ONE MAN'S PARADISE* won the Minotaur Books/Mystery Writers of America First Crime Novel Award. The official launch of *NIGHT ON FIRE* will be held at the Barnes & Noble bookstore located at Ala Moana Center in Honolulu, Hawaii, on Saturday, Apr 30, beginning at 1 pm.

~ **Aileen Baron** will be signing *THE SCORPION'S BITE* at the newly reopened Book Carnival on Saturday, March 5 at 3:00 pm.

~ **Gay Tolti Kinman** had two short short stories published as an insert in her church's bulletin! Yes! "The Mystery of the Missing Advent Candle" and "A Name Has Meaning."

Chapter News Continued

~ **D.P. Lyle** will be discussing Understanding the Science of Crime Workshop at the RT Booklovers Convention in LA, Wednesday, Apr 6, 1:00 to 3:00 pm

Info: <http://www.rtbookreviews.com/convention-home> and an on line class for members of RWA's Kiss Of Death Chapter: Historical Forensics: This class will cover the late 19th and early 20th centuries, an era that gave birth to so many forensic techniques: fingerprints, blood typing, firearm's examinations, toxicology, and the expansion of the autopsy into the forensic arena. This will give the writer of historical fiction the accurate information needed and will give all crime writers a firm foundation for understanding the world of modern forensics. Info: <http://www.rwamysterysuspense.org/coffinClass.php?classdetail=m1.mar>

~ **Andrew Kaplan** has signed a multi-book contract for world rights with William Morrow/HarperCollins for a featured spy thriller series. The series is based on a revival of Kaplan's Scorpion character (previously published in multiple hardcover and soft editions by Macmillan and Warner Books), an independent ex-CIA agent. The first book in the new series, SCORPION BETRAYAL will be published later this year.

~ The peripatetic **Paul Levine** will appear on several panels at "Sleuthfest" in Deerfield Beach, FL, March 4 & 5 and at "Left Coast Crime" in Santa Fe on March 25. The Sleuthfest panels include: "Perfect Protagonists & Vile Villains"; "Series, Standalone or Both"; "How Ebooks Are Changing Publishing"; and "Just for Giggles, Dying is Easy, Comedy is Hard." The Left Coast panel is "It's the Law! Legal Eagles."

~ **Susan Goldstein** will be signing her mystery HOLLYWOOD FOREVER on Thursday March 3 at 7:00 pm at Book Soup in West Hollywood at 8818 West Sunset Blvd. She will be appearing on panels at Left Coast Crime in Santa Fe from March 24-27.

~ On May 5, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt will publish THE INFORMANT, the third installment in the series that began with **Thomas Perry's** Edgar-winning debut novel THE BUTCHER'S BOY in 1982 and continued with SLEEPING DOGS in 1992.

~ **Elizabeth Gunn** will be speaking on two panels and an interview at the Tucson Festival of Books, on the U of A campus March 12 and 13. She's flogging her new procedural, KISSING ARIZONA, featuring homicide detective Sarah Burke.

~ **Joan Blacher's** March release of LETHAL LAKE by Zumaya Publications, is the second book in her Ardis Jensen series. Also, Joan will be one of the authors at the CALM Celebrity Authors' luncheon at Fess Parkers Red Lion in Santa Barbara on March 19.

~ **Mike Gerrard's** crime novel STRIP TILL DEAD, set in the sleazy world of London's strip-tease pubs and clubs, was published in February on the Kindle and the Nook by Knife Edge Crime. The paperback follows in March.

~ **Susan Cummins Miller's** fifth Frankie MacFarlane, Geologist, novel, FRACTURE, has just been released from Texas Tech University Press. Susan will be participating in three panels at the Tucson Festival of Books, University of Arizona Mall, March 12-13, and in panels at Left Coast Crime-Santa Fe, March 23-27.

~ DEVIL WIND, by **Deborah Shlian MD** and Linda Reid MD is due out on April 4 from Oceanview Publishing.

~ Upcoming from A.S.A.P. Publishing is the release of WATCHING EAGLES SOAR: Stories from the Wind River and Beyond by **Margaret Coel**.

~ **Robert S. Levinson** will be especially active at Left Coast Crime later this month (Mar 24-27) moderating a panel, doing a solo presentation about film's greatest icons of the past, adding commentary at Joan Hansen's special "Men of Mystery" presentation, and hosting an awards dinner table.

The Expanding World of Audiobooks

By Pamela Samuels Young

Just a few years ago, audiobooks were primarily the province of big publishers who only produced them for their best-selling authors. But as two veterans of the audiobook industry recently shared with MWA SoCal members, advances in technology now make audiobooks within reach of even self-published authors.

Scott Brick, award-winning audiobook narrator, and attorney Jessica Kaye, noted audio book producer and director, held a frank and informative discussion about the fast-growing world of audiobooks at the February SoCal MWA meeting on February 19 at Tom Bergin's Tavern in Los Angeles.

While print book sales are steadily decreasing, audiobooks, like ebooks, are growing at a constant pace. Already a billion dollar-a-year industry according to the Audio Publishers Association, audiobooks offer flexibility to booklovers who are often too busy to sit still long enough to read a book. We can now multi-task and "read" an audiobook while stuck in traffic, exercising or working around the house. Audiobooks also open up a new world to the visually impaired, who are no longer limited to reading books in Braille. This change in our "reading" habits, translates into more opportunities and financial rewards writers.

Producing an audiobook, Brick and Kaye told the audience, is no longer cost-prohibitive. The internet and advances in technology—such as digital downloading—make it both easy and cost-efficient to produce an audio version of a book.

Brick, for example, has a recording studio in his home where he does much of his recording. He has recorded over 500 titles in ten years and has been proclaimed a Golden Voice by AudioFile magazine and was the 2007 Narrator of the Year by Publishers Weekly. Brick's love of books prompted him to purchase the rights to several books he admired as a kid. He will be releasing the books in audio format.

As with a self-published book, distribution can be a challenge, Kaye cautioned. A partner in the Beverly Hills law firm of Kaye & Mills, Kaye is an entertainment attorney who specializes in publishing. She is also the founder of The Publishing Mills, an audiobook publishing company, and runs Big Happy Family, LLC, a digital distribution company for audiobooks. Kaye has produced several Grammy-nominated audiobooks, including Crank Calls by Jonathan Winters, which won for Best Comedy Recording in 1996.

Kaye explained that her distribution company aggregates audiobooks from several small publishers in order to sell them to digital download distributors, including Audible.com, the biggest seller of down-loadable audiobooks. Without a company such as Big Happy Family, smaller publishers might not otherwise be able to secure access to Audible, which is owned by Amazon.

For the writer who wants to produce his or her own audiobook, both speakers stressed the importance of producing a quality product. The authors must decide whether to hire a narrator or do their own narration. They can also purchase relatively inexpensive digital equipment to do the recording or hire a more costly production company to ensure a professional product.

The insightful presentation, which was narrated by SoCal MWA Board member Richard Brewer, offered valuable and practical information for those authors ready to take the leap from print to audio.



Scott Brick and Jessica Kaye at the February SoCalMWA meeting in Los Angeles.

NYT Bestselling Author T. Jefferson Parker, S.J. Rozan to Keynote California Crime Writers Conference Event to be Held June 11-12 in Pasadena

Registration is open for the 2011 California Crime Writers Conference, organized by Sisters in Crime/Los Angeles and SoCal Mystery Writers of America. The two-day event on June 11 and 12 at the Hilton Pasadena will offer bestselling keynote speakers, four tracks of workshops, an agents' cocktail party and manuscript critiques.

Two top mystery writers will serve as keynote speakers – New York Times bestselling author T. Jefferson Parker and bestselling Edgar, Shamus, Anthony, Nero and Macavity award-winner S.J. Rozan. In addition, four tracks of workshops led by a stellar faculty will help writers hone their craft. The agent cocktail party, which was a major hit at the 2009 conference, will be back to let attendees and agents mingle in a relaxed setting.

To register, visit the conference website at www.ccwconference.org. A list of the four tracks and participating agents is available on the website. Registration fee, which includes breakfast and lunch meals and an agents' cocktail party, is \$300 (March 1-May 31); and \$350 (walk-in).

The Hilton Pasadena is offering discounts for overnight hotel rooms for those who request the special CCWC rate when they book their rooms.

Registration: www.ccwconference.org

Soho Press Has New YA Line

Soho Press is excited to announce a new line of Young Adult mysteries for 9th - 12th grade readers. Proposals can be thrillers, traditional mysteries or simply have elements of mystery or suspense. Paranormal, fantasy and science fiction are okay, but plots should be essentially mystery. We are looking for books with young characters, strong plots and romantic interest that fit in well with Soho's reputation for sophisticated, intelligent fiction. Submissions should have a cover letter with a synopsis of the book, a list of previous publishing credits, and the manuscript attached as a Word document. Send to rtodd@sohopress.com.

Farewell Mystery Bookstore



After years at their tony location in Westwood Village, the Mystery Bookstore closed its doors for good on January 31. A blowout party of mystery authors from all over the country came to say goodbye. "We simply cannot compete with the Amazons of the world and the impact of the economy," owners Kirk Pasich and Pamela Woods wrote in an email letter to friends and fans. Below are a few pictures of the event. Pictured left, Patricia Smiley, Diane Emley, Bobby McCue, Harley Jane Kozak.

RT Convention Discount

The Romantic Times Book Lovers Convention scheduled for April 6-10 in Pasadena, is offering a program for mystery, suspense and thriller writers. The programmers are offering day rates. They point out that on Wednesday, April 6, there will be a "mega session" with D.P. Lyle on forensics and one in the afternoon put together by Andrew Peterson, LOS ANGELES FIELD DIVISION OF THE ATF COMES TO RT!

They are also offering a 10% discount on the full registration if this is their 1st RT convention.

To purchase a day pass contact Jo Carol Jones JoCarol@rtconvention.com or, when they register, click on the "Day Pass" option on their website.

<https://ssl4.pair.com/rtbook/register.php>



From Left, Dick Lochte, Diane Emley, Pasich, Robert Crais.



Left, Gary Phillips, Diane Emley, Naomi Hirahara.

Sisters in Crime Los Angeles & So Cal Mystery Writers of America Present

California Crime Writers

CONFERENCE 2011



June 11-12, 2011

At The Hilton Pasadena, 168 S. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA



**Come Join Us for a Weekend of
Crime Writers, Forensic
Specialists, Editors, and Agents!**

The conference attracts attendees and presenters from across the country and offers four tracks of classes geared to writers from the beginner to the multi-published. Come meet your future agent!



**Special Guest Saturday Keynote
T. Jefferson Parker**

**Special Guest Sunday Keynote
S. J. Rozan**

Registration Rates are:

\$265 now until Feb 28

\$300 from Mar 1 - May 31

\$350 June 1 to day of event (on-site registration only)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail (required to confirm registration) _____

Pen name (if applicable) _____

MWA Member SinC Member Non Member

Food choices:

Saturday: Chicken Beef Vegetarian

Sunday: Chicken Fish Vegetarian

Conference fee _____

Manuscript critique _____ \$50

Total enclosed _____

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, pay via PayPal, and for more information visit

www.ccwconference.org

Entering the Aviary (for Beginners)

by Jackie Houchin

"All the little birds on J-Bird Street, Love to hear the robin goin', tweet, tweet, tweet...."

Thirty plus years ago Bobby Dee popularized the song Rockin' Robin. But today there's a plump little Bluebird "tweeting" in the world's tree tops, via a mobile micro-blogging network called Twitter. For writers, Twitter can be a powerful tool to market yourself and your books, and stay connected to your readers. Here are a few tips for "Newbies" who want to "try their wings."

Building your nest

Go to www.Twitter.com and set up a user profile which includes your user name (best to use your actual name or pen name), location, a website URL, and a short bio of who and what you are. Be sure to upload a photo or image. (Absence of a bio or photo could say "spammer" to perspective followers.) You can also customize your background.

Finding your flock

You will be prompted to see if your friends are on Twitter (it may surprise you how many are already tweeting). But be aware that Twitter does this by importing your email address lists and you must enter your email passwords to do it.

You can also click on "Who to Follow" for Twitter recommendations, or fill in a name or topic in the "Search" field. If you find an interesting "bird of a feather" click on the "Follow" button.

Tweeting is basically writing (and posting) tiny chirps of information (140 characters or less) that people want to read. Following someone (or their tweets) is simply reading what they say on a regular basis. Re-tweeting is passing on tweets that you like to your followers. You can also Reply and Message.

Be succinct and abbreviate; think text messages. There are also URL shortening sites such as tinyurl.com or bit.ly that will take your 56-character page address and shrink it to just 20-26.

What to Tweet

Introduce yourself, your writing, your website. Announce releases, signings, reviews, updates. Be interesting. Be funny. Share a joke, a fact, a useful tip, an inspiring quote, a recommendation, a pet peeve, an article you liked, even a recipe! (Yes, it can be done, see: <http://twitter.com/#!/cookbook>)

Be helpful. Write about others more than yourself. Do a little teaching. Send holiday greetings. Review a book/film/product. Write a haiku poem. Comment on other people's tweets. Share someone's (or your own) website or blog. Re-tweet a good tweet. Ask for recommendations or favorites. Ask a provocative question. Ask for prayer.

What NOT to Tweet

Rude, useless, degrading, incendiary things.

Who to Follow

Those who follow you (see exceptions below). Interesting, fun, inspiring, informative people/organizations/businesses. True friends. People with similar interests and values. People with dissimilar interests.



"Chandler" continued

After a prayer and a singing of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy," we were welcomed by Dr. Annie Tiel-Latker who, with Loren, had arranged the reuniting of Ray and Cissy. It took two years of courtroom pleadings, finding Ray's will and codicil, and filing petitions before Chandler and his wife would finally be laid to rest in the same burial plot.

As Marine helicopters from Camp Pendleton droned overhead, the actor who played Philip Marlowe in the HBO television series, Powers Boothe, brought to life excerpts from Chandler's writings, especially his masterful metaphors and similes that stopped you cold and forced you re-read them: "[he] was as inconspicuous as a tarantula on a piece of angel food cake." Los Angeles "had the personality of a paper cup," and many, many more. Boothe's performance was so exciting his publicist called him shortly after dawn the next day.

Judith Freeman, who wrote *THE LONG EMBRACE*, read movingly from her 2007 book about Raymond Chandler and the woman he loved. She wrote: "Cissy... kept him sane. She watched over him, cared for him, worried about him," and remarked on the fact that Ray burned all of Cissy's letters to him after she died, probably to keep their love private.

It was time for Raymond's wish to be with his wife even in death to be fulfilled. A rectangular hole about three feet deep and measuring around 8 x 14" had been cut from the middle of the grave. Rev. Gardner took the small, square casket that held the ashes and placed it in the space. The deed was done.

Two TV crews covered the event, two documentary film makers, the local PBS station reporter, and a several still photographers. Boothe concluded the ceremony with, "I'm not going to say goodbye. In the tradition of Raymond I'm going to say, 'I need a drink and I'm going to have one.'"

Chandler's favorite gimlets were served at a hotel reception afterwards and at a gala dinner. I was so wiped out by the entire day I drove home in a daze, determined to read more of the master Chandler. "What a man wants and needs," said Chandler, "...is the tangible and ineffable sense that a life is shared." In death, it is now also shared.

**For pictures of the event, please go to these sites: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/10120350@N06/>
<http://homepage.mac.com/llatker/reunite.html#event>**



New grave marker at Mt. Hope Cemetery with both Raymond Chandler and wife Cissy's name engraved.



ALA Mystery Day

Among the many authors present at the American Library Association Convention in San Diego on January 8, four were caught for our camera: from left, Tim Hallinan, Ken Kuhlken, Diane Emley, and Jeri Westerson.

"Tweet" continued

Who to Follow

Those who follow you (see exceptions below). Interesting, fun, inspiring, informative people/organizations/businesses. True friends. People with similar interests and values. People with dissimilar interests.

Who NOT to Follow

People who don't post a bio or photo of themselves or image of their brand. People who never (or very seldom) tweet. People who follow too many people (compared to how many follow them: another sign of a spammer). People with websites that don't exist.

Who to Un-follow

Deadbeats, salespersons. (You can also Block offensive Tweeters from following you.)

How to find stuff

Use hashtags (#) to look for something specific. Type a hashtag and the topic in the search field: #thrillers #noir #pets #musicals.

How to plug stuff

Use hashtags to announce a new book, blog post, or interview: (Linda O Johnston, author of Kendra Ballantyne #cozies #mystery #books on Killer Hobbies <http://bit.ly/ffQQro>), (Ghost A La Mode now available on #Kindle #ghosts #mystery <http://amzn.to/e3sHRm>), (A true #lovestory that stretches back to #WorldWar2, Marion Green's "A #Valentine Story" <http://bit.ly/fXLroC>)

To search hashtag topics go to <http://hashtags.org/> and type your #topic.

Sing like a Canary

Post at least 10 tweets per day. (It's okay to repeat your most important tweets more than once in a day, but change them slightly or Twitter will nix them. Read other people's tweets. Visit interesting websites/blogs (and comment if you have time). Be an early bird and a night owl. Count on spending 20-30 minutes a day for good "presence." For more info, check out Twitter's updated online tutorial (<http://tinyurl.com/39s27bs>); request "Twitter Basics" from author Avery Aames (www.AveryAames.com); or buy the latest "Twitter for Dummies" books (<http://tinyurl.com/24tt7sc>).



Mystery Writers of America, Inc. (MWA) was established in 1945 by a dozen or so like-minded mystery writers for the purpose of promoting and protecting the interests and welfare of mystery writers and to increase the esteem and literary recognition given to the genre.

www.socalmwa.com

Member Benefits

- ❖ Monthly meetings at which members can network and enjoy the company of other writers.
- ❖ The March of Crime, a monthly newsletter full of publishing industry and market info, member updates, and chapter news. [E-mail us](#) to submit material or to get the fax number or postal address for doing so.
- ❖ An online mailing list through which any MWA member with Internet access can ask questions and trade information with others on a daily basis. Past messages are archived, and the service also includes a calendar, shared files, and a list of Internet bookmarks. [Click here to join the list.](#)
- ❖ A speaker's bureau, where members can volunteer to participate in speaking engagements and other opportunities to be in front of the public. It's run by Naomi Hirahara; [e-mail her](#) to submit your name.
- ❖ A library of members' works, housed at California State University, Long Beach. Any member may donate submit or produced work in for inclusion.

Ad Space Available in CCWC Program

Get yourself noticed! Ad space is available in the program for the California Crime Writers Conference, a joint sponsored conference with Sisters in Crime Los Angeles and the southern California chapter of Mystery Writers of America.

AD SPECS:

Final Artwork due May 15. Rates listed are for camera-ready art only. Camera-ready: send a jpg image (black & white) to Jeri Westerson at: jeriwesterson@gmail.com

Graphic Design is available for an extra charge, ad copy and images are due by May 1, contact: jeriwesterson@gmail.com for additional fees.

DIMENSIONS:

Full Page Ad: 7.25" x 10" -- \$100

Inside Back Cover, Full Page: 7.25" x 10" -- \$150

Quarter Page Ad: 3.5" x 4.75" -- \$50

Half Page Ad: 7.25" x 5" -- \$75

Eighth Page Ad: 3.5" x 2.25" -- \$30

Ads may be submitted as:

Any hi-res Photoshop tif, or jpeg (300 dpi), hi res PDF, or Adobe Illustrator EPS (Always include hard copy and all fonts/graphics used in files collected for output. Embed all fonts in PDFs.)

RT Convention Offers Booth Space for SoCalMWA



On Thursday April 7 at the RT Convention, SoCal MWA members can sign up for an hour shift (10 am - 6 pm) to staff our table in their Club RT room, gaining members a free one day admission to the convention. You can hand out our membership brochure and sell your own books – you are responsible for transporting your books to and from the convention and for handling purchases. If interested, email no later than March 7 at: contact@socalmwa.com

MWA University Needs Instructors

MWA University is a one-of-a-kind opportunity for anyone who writes mysteries. A day-long series of writing seminars taught by successful MWA authors, the in-depth sessions cover plot, dialogue, editing, setting structure, and even the writing life. The traveling series is brought to various cities by the local MWA chapters. Fees for attendees are \$50 per person. MWA-U is looking to recruit two active status members from each chapter in order to fill out the faculty of MWA-U. In order to qualify, these local chapter members would have to meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Active status
2. Teach Creative Writing and/or English at a college level. (Retired or former teachers would qualify as long as their experience was college level)
3. Have a flexible travel schedule

All travel expenses, including door to door transportation, hotel, and meals, will be paid for by MWA National, and a hundred dollar honorarium will be paid to each faculty member for every teaching session.

Please consult with our chapter president Gary Phillips at GDogg855@aol.com. For further information on the project, contact Hank Phillippi Ryan at hryan@whdh.com or Reed Farrel Coleman at reedcoleman@optonline.net.

MARCH OF CRIME



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

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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:

Knife to the Page: Writing Crime Graphic Novels

A panel on the writing and production of crime comics. Panelists are: Doselle Young ("Gangland"), Deborah Vankin ("Poseurs") and Joshua Hale Fialkov ("Tumor"), moderated by Gary ("The Rinse") Phillips.

Saturday, Mar 19, 1-2:30 pm

Meltdown Comics
7522 Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90046

This meeting is FREE of charge.

Light refreshments available.

www.socalmwa.org

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

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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

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LAST WORD



I suppose the "truly last word:" Plaque at Mt. Hope Cemetery in San Diego on the grave of Raymond Chandler and Cissy Chandler.