

# Something Wicked

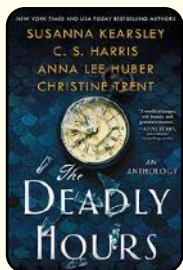
this way comes... 2021 • Vol 2 • Issue 1



## What's Coming Up At a Glance...

### *The Deadly Hours Virtual Event*

*Sunday, February 28 • 3:00 pm*



We are excited to have all four authors of the novel **The Deadly Hours** joining us for a live Zoom event on February 28. Each author wrote a "chapter," or part of the story-line, and will be discussing the novel in this event. These authors

include: C. S. Harris, Anna Lee Huber, Susanna Kearsley and Christine Trent. Author Bill Peschel will be the interviewer for the event. To register for the event, please go to: <https://www.mysterybooksonline.com/the-deadly-hours-virtual-event>

We will record this event. If you can't join us on the day of the event or lack an electronic device on which to view the event, please let us know and we can set up a viewing of it for you here in the shop. A limited number of book plates signed by the authors will be available if you purchase the book.

## 2020...The Year that Was

We had a whole year of great events planned...and then pandemic hit. Follows what happened at the shop.

- 2020 starts off with a bang. We had events through March. COVID shuts us down by April.

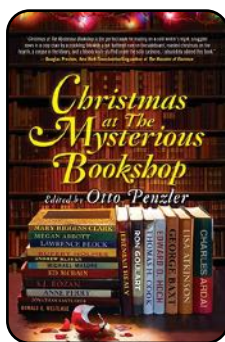
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## Thank You for Your Patronage!

Each year I am grateful for all of our wonderful customers. I was trying to come up with a few sentences to express my sincere appreciation to all of you for your support, not only through the 30 years we've been in business... but especially through 2020. I have failed. However, Otto Penzler, publisher, editor, owner of The Mysterious Bookshop says it best in the **Christmas at the Mysterious Bookshop** anthology. Below is a portion of a paragraph from the Acknowledgements section...these are my feelings and I would guess the feelings of all independent bookshops everywhere:



*"While it is a great source of emotional joy and pride, The Mysterious Bookshop offers little in the way of financial benefits; just ask my valued but underpaid staff! Like most independent bookshops, it engages in a mighty struggle against the chain store behemoths, the 800-pound online gorilla, and the newest attacker of old-fashioned bookstores, electronic books. Nonetheless, if we don't quite flourish, we endure, and it is largely due to the friendship of our loyal customers and the generosity of the mystery writing community." ... Otto Penzler, Christmas at the Mysterious Bookshop*

In the back of the book, there is a recipe for Christmas Goose. Even if you don't make the goose, reading the recipe is great fun. All recipes should be written as such.

If you haven't read **Christmas at the Mysterious Bookshop**, I encourage you to do so. It doesn't have to be Christmas to enjoy this wonderful collection of mysteries. They are by such renowned mystery authors as Anne Perry, S. J. Rozan, Ed McBain, Rupert Holmes, Jeremiah Healy, Mary Higgins Clark, Lawrence Block and more. Each year, Mr. Penzler would ask an author to pen a short story...the only "rules" were that the story take place during Christmas time, some of the story must take place in The Mysterious Bookshop and it must involve a mystery. Then they would be published into booklets and given to his customers as a Christmas present. This book is made up of those stories.

The fact that this book has been in print since 2010 speaks volumes. I couldn't agree more with BookReporter.com—"The glory of this book is not just the excellent writing, but the fact that it runs the spectrum of mystery writing genres...Mystery lovers will not be disappointed."

## Temporary Shop Hours

See page 2 for shop hours.  
Thank you.

Newsletter of the  
Mechanicsburg Mystery Book Shop  
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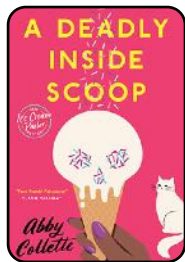


## Book Reviews

These books are available for sale on our website or by stopping in at the shop.

### **Deadly Inside Scoop - Ice Cream Parlor 1** *by Abby Collette*

**Type: Cozy/African American Woman Sleuth/Culinary - \$16.00**



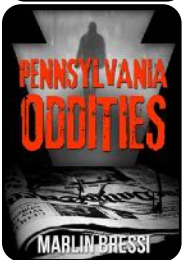
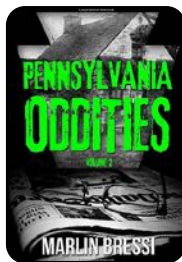
Recent MBA grad Bronwyn Crewse has just taken over her family's ice cream shop in Chagrin Falls, Ohio. Wyn is renovating Crewse Creamery to restore its former glory, and filling the menu with delicious, homemade ice cream flavors—many from her grandmother's original recipes. Unexpected construction delays mean she misses the summer season, and the shop has a literal cold opening: the day she opens her doors an early first snow descends on the village and keeps the customers away. To make matters worse, Wyn finds a body in the snow, and it turns out the dead man was a grifter with an old feud with the Crewse family. Soon, Wyn's father is implicated in his death. It's not easy to juggle a new-to-her business while solving a crime, but Wyn is determined to do it. With the help of her quirky best friends and her tight-knit family, she'll catch the ice cold killer before she has a meltdown.

Be prepared to crave your favorite ice cream flavor while reading this bright, vibrant book. Collette crafts a rather likeable main character in Win Crewse – she's charismatic, kind, and her deep devotion and enthusiasm for her family's business is very touching. Add a cast of characters that range from the sophisticated to the very adventurous, and you have a winning start to what I hope to be a long series. The ice cream recipes, found at the back of the book, sound divine. Do not let the length of the book fool you – at nearly 400 pages, it is a tad longer than the traditional cozy mystery, but this is a captivating, fun, engaging cozy mystery, and the pages will fly by. Collette sets up a mystery with several suspects and a few red herrings; I had not guessed the killer until the end. Chagrin Falls sounds peaceful and delightful, despite Win finding the body of a dead man at the base of the falls. Highly recommended for those who devour Joanne Fluke's "Hannah Swensen" series and Jenn McKinlay's "Cupcake Bakery" series.

...Reviewed by Jessica

### **Pennsylvania Oddities Vol 1 & 2** *by JoMarlin Bressi*

**Type: Non-fiction - \$14.95**



Researcher/author Marlin Bressi has compiled a panoply of unsolved mysteries and unusual events throughout the history of the Keystone State. Stories include The Lamb's Gap Murder Mystery, Allison Hill's House of Mystery, The Headless Horseman of Lawrence County, The Ticking Tombstone, The Secret Indian Tomb of Pleasant Hall, and many, many more.

Anyone who likes unsolved mysteries, true crime, weird and unusual "stuff"... these books are great! Most of you who attended Mechanicsburg Mystery Bookshop's "Susquehanna Mysteries Alliance" and PROMM meetings will love them.

Bressi writes a short chapter on each story and includes photos or sketches of the people and places involved. There are several stories from our own local area making the books even more interesting.

I'm looking forward to a Volume 3 if he publishes additional material.

...Reviewed by Sandy

### **Murder Under a Green Sea - Martha & Max 1**

*by Phillip Hunter*

**Type: Detective/Historic - \$14.95**



It's 1936 and British newspaper journalist and WWI veteran, Max Dalton and his wife Martha, daughter of a wealthy family, are coasting through life. Max is notified that members of his old platoon are being murdered. One of the victims is a fellow officer with whom Max has just spent a long, drunken evening. To complicate matters, Max has no memory of the evening's events which naturally makes the police suspicious of Max and skeptical of his memory loss.

Max and Martha decide to conduct their own investigation declaring themselves to be just like Nick and Nora Charles. To be sure, lack of experience will not deter them, but it will slow them down until they get some unexpected help from some very illustrious persons.

Fans of British cozies of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century should be very happy with author Phillip Hunter's new husband and wife amateur detectives.

...Reviewed by Jay Catherman

## Temporary Shop Hours

Wednesday through Saturday 12:30 pm til 5:30 pm - Walk-In Option  
1:00 pm til 5:30 pm - Drive-By Service

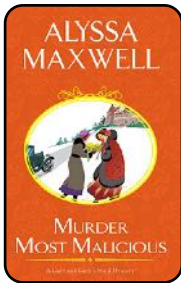
Sunday through Tuesday Closed except for special events

Please wear a mask while inside the shop. We also ask that you wear disposable gloves, that we will provide. Hand sanitizer is available. We have extra masks if you don't have one. We ask visitors to "social distance" while in the shop. The number of shoppers inside the shop will be limited to 4 folks at a time. Please note that we will accommodate appointments if you find it more desirable. Please call us to let us know if you would like an appointment. If you prefer "Drive-By Service" please call us and let us know in advance. Our number is 717-795-7470.

**Murder Most Malicious - Lady & Lady's Maid 1**

by Alyssa Maxwell

Type: Traditional/Historical - \$18.00



Due to war, this time-period represents a change in British society. The setting is 1918 with lady Phoebe Renshaw and her lady's maid Eve Hunsford, stepping out of their comfort zone to solve murders.

The Renshaw family is adjusting to the war after-effects. The men have come home shell-shocked, wounded and affected by the loss of their friends. Some of their issues are so troublesome that they cannot function in society social settings. At the Renshaw Christmas gathering, Henry Leighton, Marquess of Allerton is missing. His jewelry and fingers show up in Christmas gifts. Lady Phoebe and Eve begin looking for clues to find the missing Marquess.

Inspector Perkins and Constable Brannoch question family members and servants who received a gift box with Henry's jewelry and fingers. The plot deepens when war issues enter the mystery mix. It seems the dead Henry was a shady character who committed many atrocities both in war and at home. His most recent was the Victory War Bond fraud. Many people, especially servants, lost their life savings. The plot's twists and turns lead Lady Phoebe and Eve in a series of searches to find a missing Marquess and solve the murder mystery.

It will be an adventure to see these characters develop their detective skills in the following books: *A Pinch of Poison*; *A Devious Death*; *A Murderous Marriage*; *A Silent Stabbing* and coming out this year *A Sinister Service*.

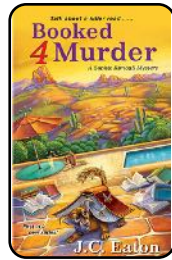
The author also writes the "Gilded Newport" mystery series.

...Reviewed by Bernie

**Booked 4 Murder - Sophie Kimball 1**

by J C Eaton

Type: Cozy - \$7.99



Sophie "Phee" Kimball is not a cop. She's a divorced, middle-aged mom who works as an account clerk for the police department in a small city in Minnesota. But her retired mother, Harriet

Plunkett, is convinced Phee is the only one who can solve the mystery of a cursed book. According to Harriet, four members of her book club have already succumbed to the deadly curse. Harriet insists Phee catch the next plane to her retirement community in Sun City West, Arizona, to investigate.

Is her mother just bored and lonely? She does have a new pet—a long-haired chienne (half Chihuahua, half Dachshund)—for company and a host of pals (although that number is admittedly dwindling). Phee is certain that their book club selection isn't cursed, but is somebody really knocking off the ladies? Phee starts to uncover dark secrets hidden in plain sight under the blazing Arizona sun. She'll need to read between the lines before it's someone else's final chapter.

*Booked 4 Murder* is attention getting right from the start. Concerned Sophie visits her mother and tries to convince her there are no such things as curses. Current technology aids Sophie with research and keeping in touch with a police detective, from her hometown, who helps and encourages her.

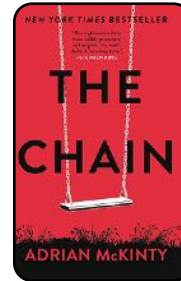
In this likable story, the author makes Sophie a believable character by showing she really is an amateur detective needing to improve her skills. The plot has many characters with hidden secrets, leaving you to wonder if those secrets are enough to warrant a crime. Answers come in stages to reveal whether the deaths are natural, murder, or just coincidences used to hype the sale of the "cursed" book being read by the book club.

...Reviewed by Marcia

**The Chain**

by Adrian McKinty

Type: Thriller - \$16.99



Rachel Klein drops her daughter at the bus stop and heads into her day. But a cell phone call from an unknown number changes everything: on the line is a woman informing her that she has Kylie bound and

gagged in her back seat, and the only way Rachel will see her again is to follow her instructions exactly...pay a ransom, and find another child to abduct. This is no ordinary kidnapping: the caller is a mother herself, whose son has been taken, and if Rachel doesn't do as she's told, the boy will die. "*You are not the first. And you will certainly not be the last.*" Rachel is now part of The Chain, an unending and ingenious scheme that turns victims into criminals and is making someone else very rich in the process. The rules are simple, the moral challenges impossible; find the money fast, find your victim, and then commit a horrible act you'd have thought yourself incapable of 24 hours ago. What the masterminds behind The Chain know is that parents will do anything for their children. Kidnapping is only the beginning.

The premise for this book is unusually original. As if Rachel, a philosophy professor battling cancer and her marriage going to pieces, doesn't have enough to worry about, her child is kidnapped. They are making it into a movie. I read the hardcover in 2019 and it is now available in trade paperback.

It won the Barry and Macavity Awards. It was named one of the best books of 2019 by *Time*, *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Post*, *Booklist*, *Kirkus* and *The Strand Magazine* and International Thriller Writers Association. While I don't usually pay attention to reviews, I couldn't agree with them more.

...Reviewed by Deb

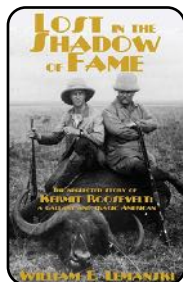


## Book Reviews • continued

### Lost in the Shadow of Fame

by William E. Lemanski

Type: Non-Fiction - \$16.95



Kermit Roosevelt, son of Theodore and cousin to Franklin, influenced each in a major way—as protector to one and a major risk to the other. He accompanied his father on two dangerous and demanding expeditions to remote regions

of the world and later become a major threat to Franklin's administration. His story with its mysterious ending has never been published. He managed major shipping companies, discovered new and rare animal species while traveling the world, and even organized an amateur spy organization for FDR as the Fascists rose to power in the 1930s. There was a darker side to Kermit Roosevelt. At the behest of FDR, the FBI watched him for over a month while he lived in a hotel and had an affair with a shady woman. Alcoholism began to rule his life. His indiscretions became a problem for the War Department and the Roosevelt Administration. For 20 years, the circumstances of his death were concealed by the government. His supposed manner of death is highly improbable. Although a President's son, and a well-known figure in his own right, the coroner's report stated: "parents unknown."

I really knew nothing about Kermit Roosevelt, especially his mysterious death. Then I met William Lemanski who was a guest author at the Mechanicsburg Mystery Bookshop "Murder As You Like It" conference. While talking to him I became interested in his story of Kermit Roosevelt.

He led an adventurous life from big game hunting and exploring with his father to his military career. His death raises a few questions: did he commit suicide or was it something more sinister?

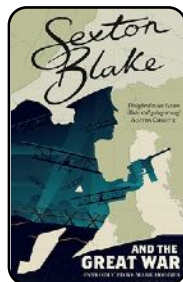
This is a good read for history buffs and mystery/crime lovers. There are maps and photos of journeys to Africa and the Amazon jungle.

Lemanski himself has led a pretty adventurous life. I'm now reading about some of his exploits in another one of his books.

### Sexton Blake and the Great War

Collected/Introduced by Mark Hadder

Type: Detective/Historical - \$7.99



Some of my favorite characters in books and movies are the gentleman adventurer crime fighters such as Sherlock Holmes, The Lone Wolf and Simon Templar. Recently I found another new, or rather very old hero, by the name of Sexton Blake. Blake is British to the core, ever the gentleman upholding fair play, a stiff upper lip and "all that rot". Created in 1893 by Hal Meredith the stories have been written by an ever changing list of authors somewhat like the Nancy Drew and Ellery queen books except that the Sexton Blake authors all wrote under their own names rather than a shared pen name. Mark Hadder's introduction is an interview with Sexton Blake and gives the reader a great insight into both the character and the authors who perpetuated him. In "Sexton Blake and the Great War" Hadder has collected three Blake stories by three different authors showcasing Blake's adventures during World War I and showing the contrast between the authors different styles. In these stories Blake is asked by the British government to not enlist. Hence he'll be available to pursue cases he thinks are important and still be available for special assignments that can be handled only by someone of his expertise and reputation. These stories include British naval manoeuvres, the Kaiser sneaking into England, hanging from Zeppelins, escaping from a firing squad, spying in Belgium, racing against time and the Germans and always winning out against all odds with the aid of his loyal friends.

There are other Sexton Blake collections, and all promise derring do and crime fighting in the best British tradition.

...Jay

I believe this book could be a wonderful addition to public libraries although I don't feel it's appropriate for young readers.

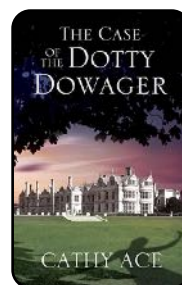
...Reviewed by Sandy

### The Case of the Dotty Dowager -

WISE Enquiries Agency 1

by Cathy Ace

Type: Cozy - \$17.95



The setting is September at the Duke of Chellingsworth's home near the Welsh village of Anwenby-Wye. His mother, Althea, calls him late one night to report a body in the Dower house. The Duke's investigation finds nothing

but a bloodied bobble hat. Frustrated by the local police, he calls upon the WISE Enquiries Agency to investigate this mystery.

The WISE Enquiries Agency consists of four women: Annie Parker is of Carribean heritage and is over 50 years old; Carol Hill is a young computer expert; Mavis Macdonald is a 22 year old Scottish retired Army nurse; and, Christine Wilson Smythe is of British/Irish aristocracy and knows the Duke of Chellingsworth

As the women set out to investigate the mystery, two issues surface: problems with public tours of the Duke's house; and, a missing collection of dentures.

Annie Parker also disappears while investigating the village pub for illicit activities. The plot becomes more complicated when a dead dental technician's body is found. Also the village is housing a group of crooks that are traced to London with the missing dentures. The WISE Enquiries Agency detectives follow clues to London to solve the mystery.

The author writes additional WISE Enquiries Agency Books including: *The Case of the Missing Morris Dancer*, *The Case of the Curious Cook* and, *The Case of the Unsuitable suitor*.

...Reviewed by Bernie

Ah, there's nothing like tea in the afternoon. When the British Empire collapses, historians will find that it had made but two invaluable contributions to civilization - this tea ritual and the detective novel.

Ayn Rand

## Book Reviews • continued

### Next to Last Stand - Longmire 16

by Craig Johnson

Type: Detective/Western - \$28.00



After a friend of Sheriff Walt Longmire dies of a heart attack at the Veterans Home of Wyoming, Walt finds a small piece of canvas in his friend's room. The canvas appears to be an artist's study and seems to match a very famous and very large painting depicting Custer's Last Stand. Oddly, the painting itself was reportedly burned in a building fire many years before, and even more odd, Walt also finds a box with one million dollars in cash.

Walt and his posse, Henry Standing Bear, Under Sheriff Vic Moretti and Dog set out to find out about the the painting and the cash. Slowly they put the pieces together and get a big assist from a group of veterans in a very unusual final chase.

If you're a Longmire fan, this installment will give you everything you want from Walt and company, including great wit and a lot of humor. If this is your first Longmire story, I'll bet it makes you want to read all the previous books.

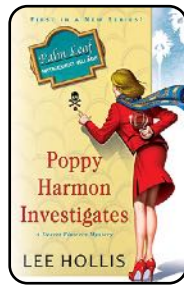
...Reviewed by Jay

### Poppy Harmon Investigates -

Desert Flowers 1

by Lee Hollis

Type: Cozy - \$7.99



Once a successful young star, Poppy Harmon finds herself a penniless retiree thanks to her late husband's misdeeds and debts. Needing a job, Poppy starts a detective agency with her friends, Iris and Violet.

Even in today's world, women detectives, especially older women detectives with diverse personalities, are not well received. Poppy and her friends adapt and persevere to prove they're capable of solving cases. A well-known actress hires them to investigate a theft. During the investigation, the client's arch rival is murdered. Are the theft and the murder related?

Lee Hollis really brings these characters alive. Their interactions, the way they sift through multiple suspects, and the final surprising revelations all make this an endearing and entertaining book.

I'm anxious to read the next book in the series, *Poppy Harmon and the Hung Jury*.

...Reviewed by Marcia

### Six Cloves Under - Garlie Farm 1

by Gin Jones

Type: Cozy/Women Sleuths - \$15.95



Mabel doesn't know a stinkin' thing about garlic farming. She knows how to develop an app and how to code. But when her aunt, Peggy Skinner, dies suddenly, Mabel inherits her Stinkin' Stuff Farm in western Massachusetts. She arrives during peak harvest time-with three days to bring in the entire crop before rain can destroy it.

But Mabel has an even bigger problem: she suspects her aunt's "accidental death" was murder. As she digs for both garlic and clues, Mabel must contend with a mysterious crop thief, a rival garlic grower her aunt was suing, and a farmer who was after Aunt Peggy's green-thumb secret. It's up to Mabel to crack the code on a killer, before she joins the garlic bulbs six cloves under.

*Six Cloves Under* is an enjoyable read. The easy flowing writing captures you and makes you feel like you are by Mabel's side. Mabel, a loner who feels most at home working with computers, evolves into someone who learns to feel comfortable around others. Mabel believes the thefts at the garlic farm are related to her aunt's suspicious death and feels she owes it to her aunt to find out who is behind all of this.

A long list of possible suspects keeps Mabel and you guessing until the end. I look forward to the second book in the series, *Rhubarb Pie Before You Die*.

...Reviewed by Marcia

## 2020...The Year that Was - continued

- With our friend and author Bill Peschel we started a Video/Audio Pod Cast series with various authors.
- By July one of our Book Discussion Groups was ready to start meeting. They donned masks and we sat them at tables that were 6' apart. Our other 2 groups started not long after the first group did.
- Our web manager, Sarah, built up our website by adding more than 300 items including games, puzzles and more books.
- We had our first Zoom author event with Craig Johnson. He invited Lou Diamond Phillips to join him for the Zoom event. We sent Craig's books to him to sign after the event...they got lost on their way back but found their way to us within a few weeks. We sent Lou Diamond Phillips's books to him to

sign...they were lost on their way back to us for a very long time.

• In late November, we actually did get 3 of the signed books. We were SO excited when we saw the box but excitement turned to horror when we found 3 signed books along with a piece of exercise equipment.

• Over the next 8 weeks Sherry spent approximately 5 hours on and off the phone with the postal service trying to track down the 57 missing books. We finally got all but 4 of them in mid-January.

• Our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary party in the parking lot was a hit. It sure wasn't what we were thinking of last February when we started planning. But, it was a beautiful, sunshiny day...almost like summer. And the 75 people

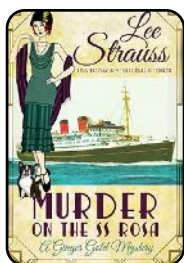
who drove through the parking lot picking up a goody bag and food coupon for use at the Potato Coop food truck at the end of the line all seemed to have a great time. We had NO idea that we would get that many people.

You were all kind and patient with us while we made sure we were following all of the guidelines for businesses to be open during the pandemic and when we couldn't get books that were supposed to be published but delayed due to COVID. Thank you.

## Book Reviews • continued

### Murder on the SS Rosa - Ginger Gold 1 by Lee Strauss

Type: Cozy/Historical - \$12.99



The setting is the 1920's after the Great War. Ginger Gold, a young war widow, leaves America on the S. S. Rosa. Her destination is London to settle her father's estate. Accompanying her is Ms. Higgins, who is studying to be a doctor. Another companion is Ginger's beloved dog, Boss, who travels with her.

As the trip progresses, esteemed lady's man SS Rosa's ship Captain Walsh is found dead in a pickle barrel. The plot thickens when the investigation is given to Chief Inspector Basil Reed of Scotland Yard. Lady Gold attracts the Chief Inspector's attention when she questions passengers. The Chief Inspector teams up with Lady Gold and Ms. Higgins trying to solve this murder. Lady Gold is very experienced in solving problems because of her wartime skills. The detective team finds Ms. Nancy Guildford, an actress, implicated in the murder.

The S. S. Rosa is set to dock in England, when Ginger Gold finds herself in a dangerous situation. Her wartime skills come in handy when she helps to capture the murderer.

This book is the first in the Ginger Gold Mystery Series. These books are a fun read. If you're a fan of historical 20th-century authors such as Agatha Christie and Dorothy L. Sayers, or contemporary authors like Rhys Bowen and Frances Brody, you're sure to like Ginger Gold!

Enjoy!

...Reviewed by Bernie

## Word Search

I J H A M C E I T S I R H C A H T A G A  
E T N C F N B N O I T A G I T S E V N I  
C H J H U N C H N H A H I M M I T C I V  
G R N E R O W O L F E I E H H D J H U W  
R I J S N Y Z T E G L B Y G X Y R A D C  
D L J U P A E W F V J I Y V L T R L E Z  
E L O S K C A V W O R L K R T E O W T E  
M E V P V B C R O E R A Z E L C W L E U  
O R X E R U Y P X B Y E M D K U W K C L  
T R Q N O V F S Y F F M N E Y W V T T C  
I G G S H B T N Q Y A A D S H G K Y I Q  
V Q T E T O J M S H H R R C I T B H V W  
E E G A U O A S L C O E E C X C U C E W  
E I V T A R E L D O D T D R E N S E G X  
G U I O Y N E N M K C G R I K C S A L W  
S O U T T I O S A E S P U M E O K Y F S  
W V P I H M X S P D I H M E P W T J L J  
J Z W S Y H P S L P W O D A H S E R O F  
Z A A A U M U G N I L G N I T E N I P S  
S D R T L S R E D H E R R I N G L J E C

LOCKED ROOM

THRILLER

VICTIM

FORENSICS

SLEUTH

MURDER

AGATHA CHRISTIE

WITNESS

DETECTIVE

ALIBI

SUSPENSE

REX STOUT

FORESHADOW

RAYMOND CHANDLER

SUSPECT

CLUE

AUTHOR

NERO WOLFE

RED HERRING

INVESTIGATION

SPINE TINGLING

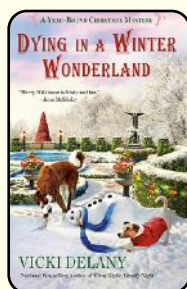
HUNCH

CRIME

MOTIVE

DASHIELL HAMMETT

## Latest Pod/Video Cast (#6)



Vicki Delany is the latest author interviewed for us by Bill Peschel. In this episode, long-time bestselling author Vicki Delany (a.k.a. the "One Woman Crime Wave") talks about her home on a Canadian littoral on Lake Ontario, her multiple book series including *Dying in a Winter Wonderland* in her "Year-Round Christmas Mystery" series, and her upcoming series set in the Catskills, and Canadian crime writers you should check out. Find these interviews at: <https://www.mysterybooksonline.com/mechanicsburg-mystery-presents>

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