



1. What would you say was the most fun about writing this book?

Bill Wilson is the villain in *The Handfasting*. During the final re-write, one of the goals became to show him clearly as the despicable person he really was. Don't get me wrong, he already was bad, really bad, and I thoroughly enjoyed writing supporting scenes to highlight his character.

2. Give us some insight into the main character. What does he/she do that is so special?

In *The Handfasting*, Katherine Jackson and Steven Richardson meet while they are touring Great Britain during the summer after Katherine finished high school. They fall in love and become engaged to marry. Circumstances cause them to be separated for the next ten years

In those ten years, Katherine finishes college, completes med school, and becomes a doctor. For a decade, she waits, hopes, and prays that Steven will keep his promise to find her, and, on her birthday, he does.

Steven, though, is not Katherine's only suitor. Bill Wilson has known her since they were in high school. He has long planned to wed her, and he finally decides to stake his claim. His methods leave a lot to be desired, and the conflict turns vicious.

Katherine is a strong woman who finds herself in an impossible situation, and she is forced choose the future that she wants.

3. What are you working on right now?

Tentatively titled, *To Love Again*, I am working on the story of Drew and Amy, two people in their mid-fifties. After their spouses die, Drew and Amy meet and fall in love. Adolescents may face parental opposition when they fall in love, but all sorts of people - children, grandchildren, friends and acquaintances - have strong feelings about this relationship! Not all of those feelings are positive ones.

What happens when one becomes involved in a program designed to help a person discover what she really wants out of life? In *Masquerade*, a sequel to my first book, *The Reunion*, Allison Bannister, one of the main characters from that book, finds that a lot of unexpected things can happen! I am not completely satisfied, however, with how Allison copes with the surprising outcomes, and it will be interesting to see whether *Masquerade* or *To Love Again* is published first.

4. What genre are your books?

I don't set out to write a particular genre. I write the story and the genre develops. My first two books have been romances.

5. What draws you to this genre?

I cannot imagine that anyone would not like a good love story. It makes me feel good when people find true love and overcome obstacles that threaten to keep them apart.

6. What is your favorite color?

Blue. I wear blue clothes – shirts, ties, pants, suits, sweats and sweaters. I use a blue mouse with my computer. I once lived in a blue house, I drive a blue car, and I have a wife, a cat (named Bonnie Blue), and two daughters, all of whom have blue eyes.

7. What is your favorite food?

I have to choose one??? Bread wins, hands down: loaf bread, rolls, bagels, pretzels, biscuits, muffins, pancakes, waffles, flat bread, banana bread... I like white bread, whole wheat bread, potato bread, and multigrain bread.

I bake bread, usually rolls of some kind, almost every Sunday. I bake biscuits and muffins during the week. I once came across a "bread diet," and neither my daughter nor I could think of anything that could possibly be better.

8. Are you a cat or dog person? Why?

Cats. Cats are small, cuddly (when they want to be), and independent Priscilla and Pawley (the "Gray Ghost of Pawley's Island," a reference to her color and to a spirit that walks the beach before storms strike Pawley's Island on the Carolina coast), Boule do Neige (French, snow ball) and Jenny have all lived at the Burnett house over the years. Our cats tend to have long lives: Priscilla and Neige each saw their eighteenth birthdays. Bonnie Blue (If you have ever read *Gone with the Wind*, you will understand the reference) lives with us now. She is pure white with deep blue eyes. She is also deaf. Once she was lying on my wife's cell phone when it rang. Bonnie did not even move! Of course, we tend to forget that she is deaf, and we talk to her as if she could hear every word we say.

9. How are you published (*i.e. indie, traditional, or both) and why?

My books have been independently published. Traditional publishing requires me to find an agent who likes my book, who can find a publisher who likes my book, who *may* help me find readers who will like my book. By publishing independently, I skip the two initial steps.

10. Do you have any amusing stories from your adventures in the writing world?

When my daughter was in college, I would tell her to find a quiet place to study, and I objected when she began to take her schoolwork to the coffee shop of one of the bookstores in town. When I began to write, in what "quiet" location did I choose to work? Starbucks, of course! I do some of my best work while sipping coffee at Starbucks. When writing a first draft, I aim for one thousand words a day, and it generally takes me about one hour, and one tall cup, to meet my goal.

11. What is your favorite motivational phrase?

"All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well." - St Julian of Norwich

12. What is your favorite book and why?

I do not have a favorite book. However if you look at what I have read over the past few years, you'll find several authors to whom I have turned several times.

Susanna Kearsley's time-slip romances are captivating and the methods by which people pass between times are always different and interesting. Michael Wallace writes about a fundamentalist Mormon group in southern Utah. His action scenes are gripping. Christopher Reich is a master of the spy novel. Michael Baron places his characters in impossible, heart-rending situations

I loved the Harry Potter books. I read the first volume after hearing a member of our State School Board ranting about how evil it was. I wondered how it could possibly be as bad as the woman claimed. Well, I was hooked. My daughter gave me the last two volumes, with delivery on the day of release.

Finally, Harper Lee is one of the master story-tellers of all time. It is a shame that *To Kill a Mockingbird* was her single book.

13. What advice would you give to your younger self?

When I went to college, I was planning to study journalism. I changed my major to psychology. I would tell my younger self not to stop writing.

14. To end: Give us three Good to Know things about you. Be creative.

1. I enjoy history. When our children were little, we took them everywhere –Charleston, Williamsburg, New Orleans, Boston. Once, after we toured several battlefields in Virginia, my daughter Carrie told us that when you have seen one battlefield, you've seen them all: video, monuments, empty fields, trees, maybe a creek...

2 I attended the University of Georgia. "Go Dawgs! Sic 'em!"

3. I have a PhD in educational research, and I spent thirty years as a statistician/ data analyst. I was director of research at our state's department of education. Talk about "doing things by the numbers"! Having forsaken the "certainty" of math, I'm happy, now, as I write.

Buried Under Books