



Those Who Forget History

Using Backstory to Enhance Your Novel

Cynthia Owens

Introduction

Greetings, writers! I'm Cynthia Owens, and I'm pleased to welcome you to my workshop, *Those Who Forget the Past: Using Backstory to Enhance Your Novel*.

About the Workshop:

Those Who Forget History: Using Backstory to Enhance Your Novel, is a four-week long, interactive on-line workshop. Using lectures, supplemental information, and specific tools, we'll examine how to use backstory effectively to enhance your stories using elements from a fictional's past. There will be assignments after each lesson, and I encourage you to submit your "homework" and ask questions.

Lessons will be posted twice a week, on Mondays and Wednesdays. Fridays will be kept for questions, assignments, and discussion.

Here's what the workshop will cover:

- Welcome and Introductions
- What is Backstory?
- Flashbacks and How to Use Them,
- The Five Ws —Who, What, Where, When and Why—of a fictional's past.
- Prologues—how to use a prologue to provide backstory.
- Dialogue—how to manipulate your readers by using a fictional's dialogue to hint at backstory.
- Weaving—how to weave backstory into your story.
- Inner Thought—revealing your fictional's backstory through inner thought.
- What Do They Want?—how your fictional's backstory can affect his goals.

About the Instructor:

I believe I was destined to be interested in history. One of my distant ancestors, Thomas Aubert, reportedly sailed up the St. Lawrence River to discover Canada some 26 years before Jacques Cartier's 1534 voyage. Another relative was a 17th Century "King's Girl," one of a group of young unmarried girls sent to New France (now the province of Quebec) as brides for the *habitants* (settlers) there.

A former journalist and lifelong Celtophile, I enjoyed a previous career as a reporter/editor for a small chain of community newspapers before returning to my first love, romantic fiction. My stories usually include an Irish setting, hero or heroine, and sometimes all three. My three best holidays were my visits to Ireland in 2009, 2017, and 2018.

I'm the author of The Claddagh Series, historical romances set in Ireland and beyond, and The Wild Geese Series, in which five Irish heroes return from the American Civil War to find love and adventure. To date, I've had 12 novels and three novellas published.

I'm a member of the Romance Writers of America, Hearts Through History Romance Writers (Secretary), and the Quebec Writers' Federation. A lifelong resident of Montreal, Canada, I still live there with my own Celtic hero. I have two adult children.

Cynthia Owens

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