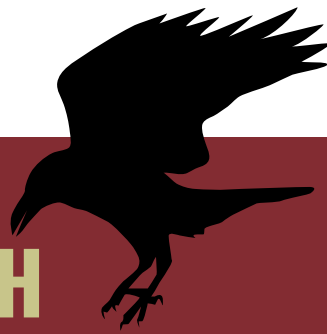


MAY 2025

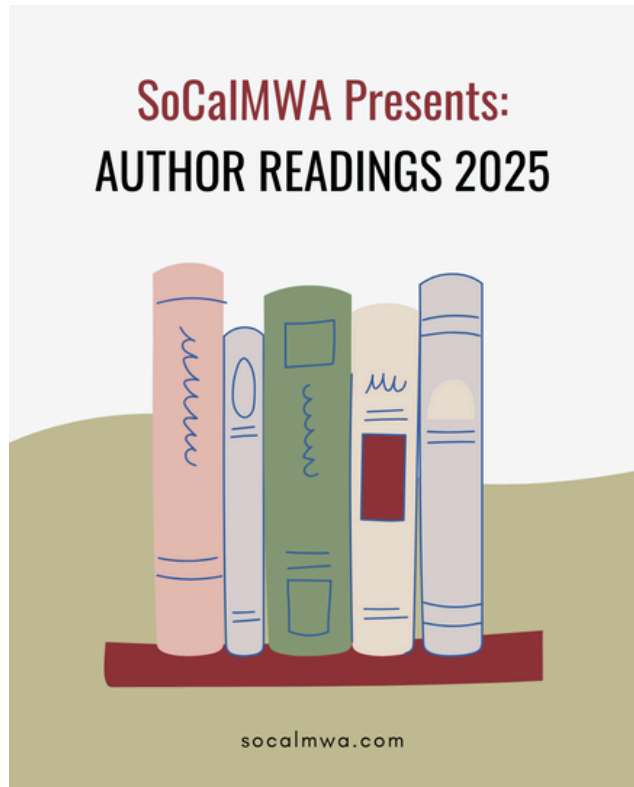
# THE MARCH OF CRIME

SoCalMWA's monthly newsletter.



## SoCalMWA Author Readings

May: Historical Mysteries



SoCalMWA is excited to continue the Author Readings 2025!

Get ready for a journey into the mysterious past with SoCalMWA for an evening of Historical Mystery readings.

Thursday, May 29, 7–8:30 PM, PT. Our historical mystery author lineup will be announced soon!

**REGISTER NOW**

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## LATFOB Re-Cap

BY LESLIE S. KLINGER



The 30<sup>th</sup> annual *Los Angeles Times* Festival of Books is behind us, and what a bonanza of the mystery world it was! It's the ultimate expression of the mission of MWA, combining the primary goal of educating the public about the mystery genre with vital networking opportunities for writers and readers. It's my favorite book event of the year!

On Friday night (April 25), the annual Book Prizes were awarded. Two of our Chapter members, **Attica Locke** and **Michael Connelly**, were nominated, and my friend Danielle Trussoni won for her brilliant novel *The Puzzle Box*. Then there were panels: I'm not sure of the count, but I think that there were three mystery panels, featuring many MWA members, including Chapter Board member **Gary Phillips**, past Chapter President **Naomi Hirahara**, and others. **Robert Crais**, also a local hero, was featured in an interview as well.

And then there was our Chapter's booth! Despite a few hours of torrential rain, we had almost two dozen people signing their books at the booth over the weekend, and scores of other writers and readers who stopped by to say hello, buy books, and learn about MWA.

We sold out of SoCalMWA book bags (probably two dozen)—they were a big hit and raised some money for the Chapter. Most importantly, we made many valuable connections with writers or persons on the path to publication, young and old, and tried to impress on them the benefits of membership. I was also interviewed about SoCalMWA by the USC student radio station, which was broadcasting live from the Festival. "Hang out with famous mystery writers!" is my pitch!

Many thanks to **Ona Russell** for handling the tedious job of scheduling the signers. Once again, however, the biggest thanks must go to **Debbie Mitsch** of Murder Ink, who hauled tons of books to the Festival and sold them, as well as selling books on consignment for signers. Our booth would be much less successful without the books to draw in readers.

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## Disconnect to Reconnect

BY HOLLY WEST

Exactly one week from today, my husband and I will be on a plane to Hawaii for a much-needed break. To say I'm looking forward to it is an understatement; lately, I've pretty much been thinking of nothing else.

I have an ambitious plan for my week away. There will be the usual beach-going, hiking, kayaking, and vacation-eating, but beyond that, I want to disconnect from technology as much as possible. For me, that means deleting all social media apps on my phone, leaving my laptop at home, and relying on a good old-fashioned notebook and pen for writing. Because as much as I need a respite from online life, I have no desire to pause my work.

I'm in that giddy, love-struck phase of a new project, when everything seems possible and all I want to do is work. Okay, that's not strictly true—I am struggling a bit with self-doubt and fear that I've bitten off more than I can chew. I've published two historical mysteries that required loads of research and a healthy imagination, but I've always been intimidated by writing a novel set in the here and now. So, of course, I picked a project that is not only set mostly in the present, but it's also partially set in the tech world, which, laughingly, I know nothing about. That's what I get for asking my computer-programmer husband to help me brainstorm.

I'm at a point with the project where I need to forgo my researching to actually write the story, so while I'm in Hawaii, I want to do just that. Betting on the fact that I know more than I think I do, I'm simply going to write. Doesn't matter if it's bad at this point; it's time to tell the tale.

I hope you all have a wonderful, productive month.

Holly

## The March of Crime

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

Editor: Holly West

Opinions expressed herein are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Mystery Writers of America Southern California Chapter.

Contact us at:  
[themarchofcrime@gmail.com](mailto:themarchofcrime@gmail.com)

Join the SoCalMWA  
Discussion Group

[groups.io/g/MWA-SOCAL](https://groups.io/g/MWA-SOCAL)  
(members only)

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t. 212.888.8171  
[mwa@mysterywriters.org](mailto:mwa@mysterywriters.org)  
<http://mysterywriters.org>



## Changing of the Guard

SoCalMWA has a new Treasurer

Our long-time Treasurer, **Sarah M. Chen**, stepped down from the role. SoCalMWA would like to thank Sarah for her service and introduce **Aimee Kluck** as our new Treasurer. Welcome, Aimee!

## Anthology Writers Conference

Saturday, May 10 in Mesa, AZ



SoCal MWA and SinC Desert Sleuths (Sisters in Crime) will present panels and workshops at the first Anthology Writers Conference on Saturday, May 10, at Benedictine University, 225 E Main St, Mesa, AZ 85201.

Registration is \$69 for the full day, with access to all panels and presentations. The panel/workshop schedule is [here](#).

For more information and to register, [visit the conference website](#).

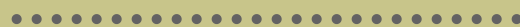
## 2025 Barbara Neely Scholarship Winners

MWA Grants

Mystery Writers of America is proud to announce the 2025 recipients of the Barbara Neely Grants: Aime Austin and Grace Wynter.

Barbara Neely was the author of the “Blanche” series, one of the first crime fiction series to feature a Black woman as the protagonist. In 2019, MWA named her a Grand Master. Sadly, she passed away before she could accept the honor in person in 2020. In 2021, MWA established a scholarship program in her name for Black crime fiction writers, offering one to an already published author and another to a writer just getting started.

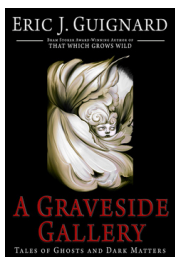
The grant comes with a \$2000 award to assist each recipient with any aspect of their career as they see fit. The grants will reopen for applications in the summer of 2025.



**Elaine Ash**, who served as developmental editor of *Children of the Stars* by Neil V. Young, reports that the YA novel will be taught in classes at the U.S. Naval Academy starting in 2025.



Gary Phillips's story, "Bif-Bam, The Magic Man," appears in *Dark Yonder* #9. It's about a former drug lord who now drives a school bus for special needs kids. When one of them goes missing, he fears his nefarious past has caught up with him as he desperately searches for the youngster.



**Eric J. Guignard's** *A Graveside Gallery: Tales of Ghosts and Dark Matters* is now available. From hauntings and oblivion to monsters, murder, and anthropomorphism, this collection explores the literary odd and macabre.



**Barbara Pronin's** *Winter's End* launches May 15. Set in Amsterdam during the Hunger Winter of 1944, it pits three brave women of the Dutch Resistance against a Nazi army determined to starve the Dutch into submission.



**Elle Jauffret's** debut novel, *Threads of Deception*, is a 2025 Agatha Award nominee for Best First Novel and winner of the 2025 PenCraft Seasonal Book Award for Best Mystery Sleuth.

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## LATFOB Re-Cap continued from pg.2

Sadly, Ann Binney, who has masterfully steered the Festival for seventeen years, is retiring from the *Times*, and I understand that the contract with USC has also expired. I have high hopes that the Festival will continue for many years, but I'm delighted to announce that we've already committed to a full booth at the Tucson Festival of Books next March—and that Debbie Mitsch will sell books for us there, so that we can have member signings there as well. Plan on attending! It's March 14 and 15, 2026!

This week: The Edgars®, the annual ceremony awarding the Oscars® of the mystery genre. I'm happy to be a presenter this year, in my favorite Best Critical/Biographical category, so look for a full report in my next Rap!


Les

# APPEARANCES & EVENTS



Jeri Westerson has started a new blog on her [website](#) and is offering up spaces for author guest posts. [Contact Jeri](#) for details.

David E. Knop writes Southwestern mysteries featuring Native American police officer Peter Romero, who struggles against the power of the unseen world of his ancestors. Knop's daughter, Molly, a licensed private investigator, navigates the equally imperceptible world of the dark web. They'll combine these worlds during their visit to [Crimecon](#) in September.



**L.A. Sleuths:**  
Detective Fiction in the City of Angels

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7 at 6:30 FABLES & FANCIES  
50 W Sierra Madre Blvd, Sierra Madre



AARON PHILIP CLARK LAWRENCE ALLAN ALEX KENNA



HOSTED BY  
NAOMI HIRAHARA



Lawrence Allan, author of the Jimmy Cooper mysteries, will appear with Alex Kenna and Aaron Philip Clark at Fables & Fancies, a new bookshop in Sierra Madre, to chat about Los Angeles PIs. Hosted by Naomi Hirahara. May 7, starting at 6:30 p.m.

At the Anthology Writers Conference on Saturday, May 10, Susan Cummins Miller will participate in three panels: "Protagonists' Day Jobs," "The Pesky Problem of Pacing," and "Mysteries Set in AZ or the Southwest." [More info here.](#)



**LOVE AND LOSS:**  
FICTION BASED ON TRUE CRIME

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM  
PASADENA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PENTHOUSE



GEORGIA JEFFRIES



JERVEY TERVALON

Join Georgia Jeffries (*The Younger Girl*) and Jervey Tervalon (*Dead Above Ground*) for "Love and Loss: Fiction Based on True Crime" as they discuss the family history that inspired their novels on May 2, 8–9 p.m., at Pasadena Presbyterian Church, 585 E. Colorado Blvd.

On May 10, Sheila Lowe will be at the College of the Canyons Book Festival in Valencia, where there will be workshops, readings, and signings. A Book-a-Thon will benefit students of CalArts, College of the Canyons, and The Master's University.



Elle Jauffret was a panelist and a moderator at this year's San Diego Writers Festival and Wondercon, and one of the "New Authors of Malice" at Malice Domestic 2025.

Donis Casey's Tell Me Your Story guest for May 2025 is Canadian author Barbara Fradkin, her award-winning Inspector Green series. [Read Barbara's story](#) starting May 20. Donis will also present "How to Commit Murder: Techniques for Writing a Compelling Mystery Novel" on Saturday, May 10, at 10 a.m. MT. [Email the Arizona Authors Association](#) for more info.

# CRIME CALENDAR



2025

May 1: 79th Annual Edgar® Awards Banquet, New York, NY

May 14–18: Sleuthfest, St. Petersburg, FL

May 29: Author Readings: Historical Mysteries, Crowdcast

June 8: Event with Adam Sikes, former CIA Paramilitary Officer, Los Angeles, CA (more info soon!)

June 17–21: Thriller Fest XX, New York, NY

September 3–7: Bouchercon, New Orleans, LA

If you know of an event that belongs on the Crime Calendar, email [themarchofcrime@gmail.com](mailto:themarchofcrime@gmail.com) with the info.



# THE LAST WORD



“Mabel Monahan had never been famous in life, but her bizarre, lurid death made her an overnight celebrity.”

*Trial by Ambush: Murder, Injustice, and the Truth About the Case of Barbara Graham*  
by Marcia Clark