

A Historical Writer with Imagination

Dr. Florence Byham Weinberg

Biographical Info

Born in Alamogordo, New Mexico, Florence traveled extensively with her military family. Married to the late Kurt Weinberg, she and her husband traveled and worked in Canada, Germany, Spain and France.

Her professorial career in Departments of Modern Languages and Literature included the study of history. She spent 4 years at the University of Rochester, 22 years at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York and 10 years at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. She has four scholarly books to her credit, as well as many articles and book reviews, doing research in the U. S. and abroad.

Retiring from academe in 1999, Florence has since written eight books, seven of which are now in print in the following genres: fantasy, historical romance and history.

An avid researcher, Florence grounds many of her publications in historical fact. She spends hours combing through web sites, books and periodicals, and historical archives to enhance her writings with authenticity.

Florence also serves as Lector at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in San Antonio, Texas, as well as appearing as a guest lecturer to various groups throughout the country.

Current Publications

Apache Lance, Franciscan Cross, Twilight Times Books, 2005. In the year 1731, three Franciscan missions struggle to establish themselves on the San Antonio River despite Apache raids. The story explores a crucial time in San Antonio history, featuring courageous settlers, missionaries, Indian converts and fierce Apache attacks.

*"If you like historical novels, you will love **Apache Lance, Franciscan Cross**. But even more, if you appreciate a fine historical novel built on absolutely faultless research, **Apache Lance, Franciscan Cross** will draw you in as surely as a hummingbird is drawn to its blossom. This is a fine example of the genre, one of the best of its kind."* -- The Midwest Book Review.

Seven Cities of Mud, Twilight Times Books, 2008. This powerful historical novel is closely based on the scribal report by Hernán Gallegos, a literate Spanish soldier who recorded his version of the entrada, designed to gain him the governorship of the territory he named Nuevo México. The novel is written from two points of view, the Spanish and the Pueblo Indian...constructed through research into the early Pueblo culture and into contemporary Hopi religion and culture.

"Delightful...I loved this book. It's not too hard to write about a period for which many original documents, such as newspapers exist. To write credibly about an event in the sixteenth century from only one surviving document is brilliant. The characters were well developed and believable, and the conflict between the priests, the soldiers, and the pueblo people was fascinating and explored thoroughly. Highly recommended. Ruth Rymer."

The Storks of La Caridad, Twilight Times Books, 2005. Father Ygnacio Pfefferkorn, a missionary stationed in northwestern Mexico, is expelled with all Jesuits in 1767. After ten years of prison, eight in Spain, he is incarcerated in La Caridad Monastery and befriended by Brother Eugenio, scribe, Father Plácido, choirmaster, and Father Leopoldo, instructor of boys. La Caridad is locked in conflict with the bishop of Ciudad Rodrigo to determine jurisdiction over Robledillo, a rich parish. Two murders are committed and an ancient charter, granting the monastery perpetual jurisdiction over neighboring lands and villages, is stolen. The abbot recruits Ygnacio to solve the murders and recover the charter.

"Brilliantly written and thoroughly researched, this book explores the complexities and contradictions of the Church during this time period. The political struggles in the monastery ring with realism, as do the actions of the characters. The age-old struggle between good and evil is evident, but the division between the two is muddled by ulterior motives." -- Reviewed by Joyce Handzo for In the Library Reviews.

"'La Caridad' works on two levels. First, it's a rollicking mystery, full of plot twists based on real events, interesting characters modeled after historical figures and more than its share of red herrings, mostly invented by Weinberg. Second, it's a scholarly recreation of 18th century from the dress to the architecture to the food, thoroughly researched and seamlessly written. And let's just say that Weinberg knows her Spanish Inquisition and her colonial Catholicism." -- Reviewed by Steve Bennett, the San Antonio Express-News.

Professional Tributes

Professor Emerita, Trinity University, San Antonio, TX
Alumna of the Year, Park University, Parkville, Mo., 2008
Finalist, 2006 WILLA [Cather] Literary Award **Finalist**, 2007-8, New Mexico Book Award for Best Historical Fiction and for Best Book on the S.West. **Finalist**, 2009 Eric Hoffer Award, Excellence in Independent Publishing **Finalist**, 2010 Indie Book Award in Historical Fiction

Guest Lecturer

(Partial Listing)

4/25/09, Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies in Binghamton University, NY, In Vino Veritas...the symbolic use of wine in Rabelais.

4/3-6/08, Renaissance Society of America, Chicago, IL, 16th and early 17th century Jesuit scholastic theater as foundation for the great French Classical Theater of the 17th century.

8/26-9/1/07, Centro de Estudios Guadalupanos, Monterrey, Mexico, Los Jesuitas en Sonora.

11/18/07, Friends of the Coronado State Monument and the Sandoval County Historical Society, Bernalillo, NM. Background research for *Seven Cities of Mud*.

11/20/07, Los Vaqueros, local chapter of The Westerners, San Antonio, Background research for *Seven Cities of Mud*.

11/27/07, San Antonio Historical Association, San Antonio, Texas. Background research for *Seven Cities of Mud*.

4/21-23/06, The Historical Society of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

Discrepancies in Scholarly Accounts of the Chamuscado Expedition, 1581-1582.

Longs desirs: Louise Labe, Lyonnaise, Editions Lyonnaises, 2002.
(Translated by Miriam McGuinness)

Sa vie est un roman! Ces pages évoquent la vie de Louise Labé, Lyonnaise, à travers les voix de ceux qui l'ont connue et qu'elle a touchés par son amitié ou son amour, par son inimitié aussi. Leurs voix, leurs souvenirs ajoutés aux siens constituent aussi un mémorial du destin de Lyon. Au XVI^e siècle, la prospérité de Lyon attire les esprits les plus subtils et les plus créateurs de France.

"Florence Weinberg reconstructs Lyon's spiritual, cultural, literary, and economic life with painstaking attention, with gusto, refinement and credibility. We can call this interesting and original book whatever we want: fictional biography, love story, the history of a poetic passion. What is certain is that this novel is captivating, well-constructed, serious, at times brilliant, well-anchored historically in a period rendered with meticulous care, illuminated by characters brimming with life, power and passion. I can attest without fear of contradiction that in publishing this book, Editions Lyonnaises showed both flair and inspiration." -- Valeriu Stancu, Editor-in-Chief of **Cronica, Revista de Cultura**, a Romanian literary review, of June, 2004.

Sonora Moonlight, Twilight Times Books, 2008.

Sonora, 1761-62: Father Ygnacio Pfefferkorn, SJ, suffering from acute malaria, is transferred to a new mission, Guevavi in present-day Arizona. Healed by a Pima medicine man: Jevho and his half-Pima, half-Irish nurse-assistant Patricia O'Meara, he becomes obsessed with converting Jevho to Christianity. A grisly murder by beheading and crucifixion is discovered near the mission, and Ygnacio sets about solving the crime, fearing his mission Indians will be blamed.

Sonora Wind, Twilight Times Books, 2009.

Sonora, 1766-69: threatening clouds gather in Europe as political, commercial and even clerical powers conspire to destroy the all-too-successful Jesuit order. When the captain sent to inspect the Jesuit missionary Andres Michel's books is murdered, the priest becomes the prime suspect. He in turn calls on his neighboring missionary Ygnacio Pfefferkorn, S.J. to investigate. Nearly losing his life when captured by Apaches, Pfefferkorn's efforts are cut short by the expulsion of all Jesuits from Spain and her colonies by King Carlos and their march across Mexico ending in captivity in Spain.

Often Requested Speaking Presentations

- "Why Five Franciscan Missions in San Antonio? The History, 1698-1731."
- "The Second Expedition up the Rio Grande in 1581-1582: an Encounter with Coronado's Ghost."
- "Utopia in the Desert? Jesuit Missions in Sonora and Their Destruction."
- "Hearing the Dead Speak: Encounters in the Archive: Researching the Historical Novel."

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