

☆☆☆ LOVE. LIBERTY. LEGACY. ☆☆☆

PETTICOATS & Patriots

VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 2

SPECIAL EDITION

THE AMERICAN JOURNEY 1863–2026

★
LOVE STORIES
THAT HELPED SHAPE
A NATION

COURAGE
BUILT A NATION.
LOVE MADE IT
WORTH FIGHTING FOR.

★
SOLDIERS, SACRIFICE,
AND SERVICE –
THE HEARTBEAT
OF FREEDOM.

★
THE LEGACY OF
UNSUNG HEROES.

★
HEROES. HEARTS.
HOPE FOR TOMORROW.

CELEBRATING
AMERICA'S
250TH
ANNIVERSARY

EXTRA! • EXTRA! •
Celebrating
AMERICA'S
250th
ANNIVERSARY!
LET FREEDOM RING!

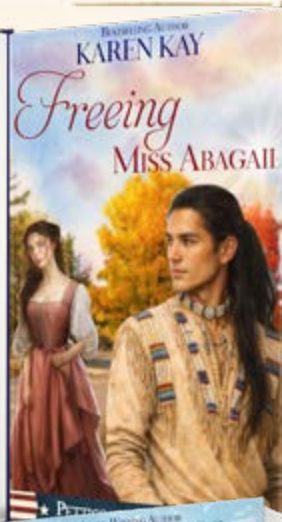
★
SWEET ROMANCE
INSPIRED BY REAL PATRIOTS



PETTICOATS & PATRIOTS

PRESENTED BY PETTICOATS AND PISTOLS

One Legacy of Love.



250 Years of Sweet Romance

COURAGE BUILT A NATION. LOVE MADE IT WORTH FIGHTING FOR.

★ 1776 - 2026 ★



Welcome



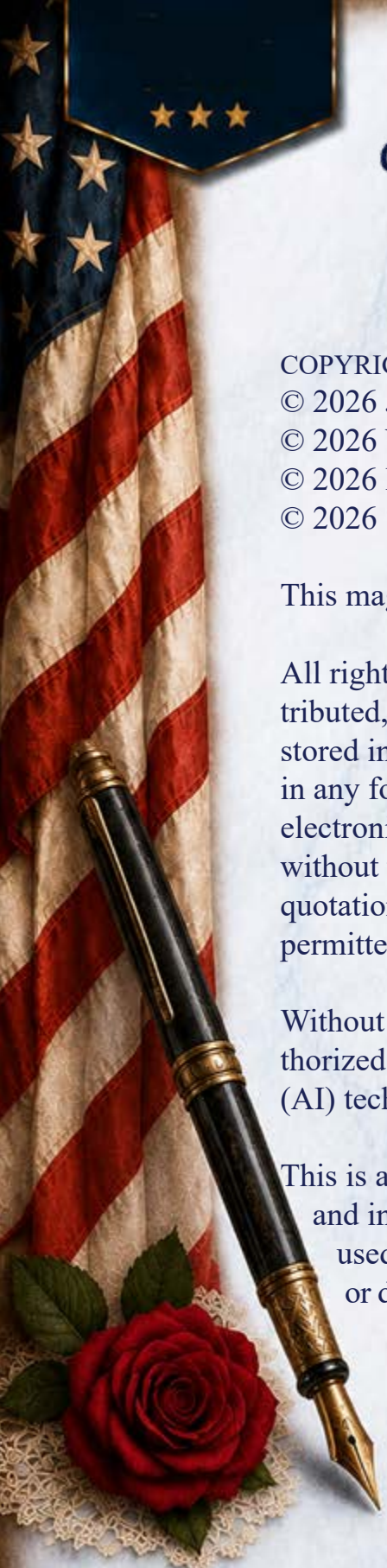
Welcome to our second and final issue of The Petticoats & Patriots Magazine!

We hope by now you've had a chance to read the first four books in our series, written by Shanna Hatfield, Karen Kay, Kit Morgan, and Sarah Lamb. Readers are loving our romantic and patriotic premise, just in time for our nation's 250th Birthday. Each book so far has been set in the Revolutionary War.

But in the last four, the special locket that connects the series will be sailing through time and touching upon the Civil War with Jo-Ann Robert's *HER REBEL HEART*. Winnie Griggs' story, *THE HEART OF HONOR*, is set during our nation's Centennial, and Pam Crooks delves into the Korean War with *THE SKY BETWEEN US*. Shanna Hatfield wraps up the series with her modern-day *DECLARATION OF LOVE*.

As before, each book will be coming out a week apart, on Tuesdays. In the meantime, join us every day in our Facebook Reader Group to play Bingo, which showcases that week's release with fun and prizes—which you can't win if you don't play, right?

Until then, we invite you to sit back and enjoy this beautiful magazine and keep the love going with Petticoats & Patriots!

An American flag is draped vertically on the left side of the page. A fountain pen with a black barrel and gold accents lies diagonally across the lower left, resting on a white lace doily with a red rose. The background is a light blue and white marbled paper.

★ PETTICOATS & PATRIOTS

PRESENTED BY PETTICOATS AND PISTOLS

One Legacy of Love.

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© 2026 Winnie Griggs

© 2026 Pam Crooks

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THREADS THROUGH TIME

Across every story,
certain truths remain:

Love requires courage.

Freedom demands
sacrifice.

Hope is never lost.

*No matter the century,
the heart remembers.*

IN EVERY ISSUE

- ★ COURAGE
- ★ HOPE
- ★ SACRIFICE
- ★ LOVE

*"If this locket finds
its way to you, know
that it carries more
than memory.
It carries courage.
Guard it well—
and trust your heart."*

★★ COURAGE BUILT A NATION.

Love

MADE IT WORTH FIGHTING FOR. ★★

Corpus Christi, Texas
October 1845

My Dear Julia:

...After an engagement of sixteen or seventeen months ought we not to thinking of bringing that engagement to an end, in the way true and constant lovers should?

I have always expressed myself willing you know my Dear Julia, to resign my appointment in the army for the sake of overcoming the objections of your parents, and I would still do so; at the same time I think they mistake an army life very much. No set of ladies that I ever saw are better contented or more unwilling to change their condition than those of the Army: and you Julia would be contented knowing how much and how dearly devoted I am to you — I cannot help writing thus affectionately since you told me that no one but yourself reads my letters...

*Yours most affectionately,
Ulysses*



Julia Dent met Ulysses S. Grant when her family welcomed him as a West Point classmate of her brother, Frederick. During their years together, he wrote over 100 love letters, often declaring her his greatest motivation and regularly sending for her to join him at military encampments.

THE KEEPERS OF THE LOCKET

From one brave heart to the next.



1865 — HER REBEL HEART

She was labeled a traitor. He swore to defend the Union. In a nation torn apart by war, they must decide whether love is worth risking everything they've ever believed.



1875 — THE HEART OF HONOR

She wants to preserve the past. He wants to forget it. But as Mercy Owens uncovers the hidden story of veteran Wilson Porter, both must learn that healing old wounds may be the first step toward a future filled with love.



1950 — THE SKY BETWEEN US

For two years, Jackie Sinclair has carried the burden of a mistake that changed a soldier's life. When she finally meets Beck Archer, both discover that the greatest courage isn't found in war—but in learning to trust, forgive, and love again.



2026 — DECLARATION OF LOVE

Grady Guthry has built a dependable life in Holiday, Oregon. But when free-spirited Air Force veteran Kate Barton arrives in town carrying a family heirloom and a restless heart, an unexpected friendship blossoms into a love that could change both their lives.

A LEGACY PASSED ON

As the locket journeyed through the Revolution, it carried more than a memory. It carried what makes a nation—and a family—unbreakable.

★ COURAGE

★ HOPE

★ SACRIFICE

★ LOVE

"Each keeper leaves a little more heart behind."

LOVE • LIBERTY • LEGACY



My Dearest Girl,

*This locket would not exist but for my beloved.
He entreated a trusted friend to fashion it for me,
yet it is far more than a common ornament.
It was born of love, wrought in silver,
and shaped by steadfast devotion.*

*As you have now discovered, to awaken its wonder
one need only place the locket upon her heart,
and love shall surely find its way to you,
thus fulfilling the locket's true and intended purpose.*

★ *Love, like liberty, thrives when freely bestowed.
When the time comes that you no longer have need
of its guidance, pass the locket from one hopeful
heart to another, that its promise may endure.* ★

*May your days be filled with the joy that springs
from choosing love above all else.*

*And never forget that love, freely given,
is the truest liberty we may ever know.*

*Ever yours,
Martha Washington*



A SWEET CIVIL WAR ROMANCE

BESTSELLING AUTHOR
JO-ANN ROBERTS

HER *Rebel* *Heart*



★ PETTICOATS & PATRIOTS ★
Book 5

RELEASING

JULY 14

★ SWEET ROMANCE. HISTORIC HEART. ★



SHE WAS
LABELED A TRAITOR.

HE VOWED TO
UPHOLD THE UNION.

*Will love be
enough to overcome
their differences?*





HER Rebel Heart

an excerpt by

JO-ANN ROBERTS

Merciful heavens, the war had arrived at Roswell's door.

Men with fierce expressions crowded closer. The odor of sweat and filth on their wool uniforms robbed her breath as Kate followed the other workers into the blinding, blistering sunshine. Holding the baby tightly in one arm and the few possessions she managed to snag before a bearded soldier brandished a musket in her direction, she threaded her way through the workers and soldiers. Snatches of conversations flut-

tered and flew away. Rumors and speculation of what would happen rose as the crowd swelled. But some expressed their venomous dislike in a more vocal way.

"I'll remember every last one of you!" one woman shouted.

"What are they gonna do to us?" wailed another.

"They have no right to do this," said a woman Kate knew as Vernie. "Aren't there regulations about things like this?"

Kate veered to the left, searching for Alma. The horde surged around her. The mid-morning heat settled like a cloak over her shoulders and stifled her breath. Fighting to remain calm, she whirled in a circle, seeking to find the young woman who had tossed her a lifeline.

“Alma.” She raised her voice. “Alma Spencer!”

Out of the chaos, a voice called her name, and Kate turned to find Alma twisting her way through the throng of people, her basket with Timmy inside bumping anyone who got in her way.

“Thank goodness you got out.” Kate gave her an awkward embrace as the crowd pushed them along to the top of the hill that faced the mill. Although she’d known the young mother for only a few hours, she couldn’t shake the feeling of responsibility for her, more profound now that she was Jack’s source of sustenance.

Suddenly, a torch sailed through the air and disappeared into the mill’s top floor. Moments later, flames licked at the windows. Alma gasped and clutched Kate’s arm.

“My good gracious, Kate! They really are going to burn the mill to the ground!” she breathed, watching soldiers dip lengths of boards wrapped with wool into a barrel then set a torch to them before hurling them into the lower floors.

Black smoke puffed through every crevice, marring the summer sky, its acrid odor drifting across the hillside. With fascinated horror, she watched the building bow to the flames. Soon, the mill would crumble into a pile of blackened bricks and charred beams.

“What are we going to do?”

“First, we’re going to get you out of this sun, ma’am.”

Kate stumbled, hearing the Yankee’s deep voice at her side. Once they’d left the mill, she prayed he’d be gone. Instead, he’d followed them. With a kindness she hadn’t expected, he lifted Jack into his arms before taking Alma’s basket—baby and all—and gently led them to the rock wall and out of the sun’s glare.

“You stay put, ladies. I’m going to fetch some water.”

“Don’t bother, Yank. We don’t need your help.” Kate couldn’t help how harsh her voice sounded. But the sobs of the women and frightened faces of the children sent spirals of anger shooting through her. They were innocents in all of this.

Like a phoenix rising through the ashes, he straightened, removed his hat and wiped his brow with an already damp-looking handkerchief. It was then she noticed his unusual shade of vivid green eyes, fringed with shockingly long lashes. They were not blue, nor grey, nor hazel, but green, green as the medicine bottles on the shelf in her office. His well-formed brows were slanted with a very subtle curve at the tail, complementing the spidery creases around his eyes when he smiled, which he now directed toward her.

“As troubled as I am by your discomfort at the turn of events, Miss Kate, and that of your fellow workers, these babies are my first concern. Believe it or not, not all Union soldiers are the devil incarnate wearing blue serge as you’ve no doubt been told.”

Despite every instinct warning her not to, Kate couldn’t help but watch the Yankee jog away. Besides filling out his uniform to perfection, he possessed an inborn confidence that came with authority, making short work of the distance between her and a canvas tent so big a person could walk upright inside it.

A whooshing sound behind her shifted her attention. Flames licked at the mill, splintering the windows, and sending shards of glass and burning timbers onto the ground.

Her Rebel Heart
Coming July 14
on [Amazon](#)

Author Bio



Born and raised in western Massachusetts, Jo-Ann Roberts was fascinated by America's Old West. She always felt she was destined to travel on a wagon train following the Oregon Trail. With her love of history and reading, she began reading historical romance during high school and college. Victoria Holt, Jude Deveraux, and Roseanne Bittner were among her favorites. Influenced by her father, she fell in love with John Wayne, James Garner, and her all-time favorite, James Stewart, and grew up watching Wagon Train, Bonanza, and Rawhide.

When she isn't creating believable plots and relatable heroes and heroines, Jo-Ann enjoys spending time with her husband, children, and grandsons. She also enjoys baking, quilting, and eating way too much chocolate.

Connect her with online:

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[JO-ANN ROBERTS](#)

Red, White, & Blueberry Cake

A TASTE OF TRADITION

FROM THE KITCHEN OF

Jo-Ann
Roberts

For much of the 18th and 19th centuries, wild blueberries were known mainly in New England, where they were eaten fresh, dried, or used in puddings like Sautautig, a simple pudding made with dried, crushed blueberries, dried cracked corn, and water. Outside the region, they were largely unknown.

The turning point came during the American Civil War: Sardine canneries in Maine, which had relied on Southern markets, lost those markets when the war began. Unable to sell sardines, these canneries turned to berries for shipment to Union troops. The berries were valued for their sweetness, nutritional content, and ease of preservation, and they were shipped to help prevent scurvy. Today, we are fortunate berries are readily available.

Perfect for a July 4th celebration, a summer picnic, or whenever you have fresh berries, this Red, White, and Blueberry Cake is filled with fresh raspberries and blueberries and takes just a few minutes of prep time to get it in the oven.

DIRECTIONS

INGREDIENTS

½ cup salted butter softened to room temperature,
1 ¼ cup granulated sugar, divided
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 ⅓ cup all-purpose flour
1¼ teaspoons baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
½ cup full-fat sour cream
1 ¼ cup fresh blueberries
1 ¼ cup fresh raspberries
Plus whipped cream and more fresh berries for serving

- 1 Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a 9-inch round cake pan with cooking spray and set aside.
- 2 In the bowl of a stand mixer, whip together the butter and 1 cup of the sugar (the other ¼ will go on top) until pale and fluffy, about five minutes.
- 3 Add the eggs, one at a time, and beat well after each addition. Beat in the vanilla.
- 4 In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Gradually add the flour mixture to the butter mixture alternately with the sour cream, beginning and ending with the flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition.
- 5 Gently fold in the fresh blueberries and raspberries into the cake batter using a rubber spatula. Spread the batter in the prepared cake pan.
- 6 Sprinkle the remaining ¼ cup of sugar evenly over the top of the cake batter.
- 7 Bake 35-40 minutes, until the top is crackly and lightly browned and the center still jiggles just a bit.
- 8 Let the cake cool completely in the pan, slice, and serve the cake from the pan.
- 9 Top each cake slice with whipped cream and more fresh blueberries and raspberries.

"I'd rather be on my farm than be emperor of the world."
- George Washington

GET TO KNOW THE AUTHOR

Morning person or night owl?

Definitely a morning person! In fact, the earlier the better. My alarm goes off about 5:30 (a habit from my teaching/working days). I'll have coffee with flavored creamer, check my emails, and meditate/pray until 6:30. Then I'll either start the laundry, go to the pool/exercise class, pay bills, or dream up something for supper. By 10:00 a.m., I'm at the computer until 1:00 p.m. But come 4:00, I'm done in!

What's your favorite comfort food?

Anything chocolate! Cake, pie, dessert, ice cream...but it has to be gluten-free! My husband usually bakes a g.f. chocolate cake with chocolate frosting for my birthday each year.

But the funny thing is, as much as I love chocolate, I don't like chocolate with fruit...strange, isn't it?

Do you plot or write by the seat of your pants?

Some people, like me, call themselves "planters," which means we follow a little of both the plotter and pantser approach.

A planter is someone who—before starting the writing process—writes a synopsis and comes up with important details that drive their story ideas. I'm the kind of writer that enjoys planning out my subplots and character sketches and character arcs, but during the writing process, goes rogue for some chunks of the story. I like a taste of writing by the seat of my pants—but not all of it.

Personally, I think a great planting strategy is to look at story arcs and outline the big moments in my book. In other words, outline the elements of plot for the major parts of the book: the beginning, the middle (which has two parts separated by the midpoint), and the end.

What hobby do you enjoy outside of writing?

If you've been following me on social media, you already know that quilting is my second love. Each year a group of friends get together for a week of quilting, buying fabric, sewing, eating in the heart of Amish Country, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. What started as a long weekend morphed into a week and now extends to ten days. We work on individual projects, yet we offer "helpful!" suggestions on fabric color selection, square placement, and technique whether it is solicited or not. Quilting offers a sense of belonging and camaraderie, fostering friendships that can last a lifetime...in my case, these friendships span 53 years! We also do a quilting challenge each year. Some years we all make the same pattern in fabric of our choice or the same fabric line with a pattern of our choice. In 2027, the challenge is pattern of our choice, but the color scheme must reflect the first letter of our first and last names! Quilting is often a solitary pursuit, but it's also a deeply social activity with a cause. The quilts we make have been given to homeless shelters, hospitals, and nursing homes.

Do you have a favorite historical era to write or read about?

Since most of my books are set in the timeframe from the end of the Civil War (1865) to the late 1880s, I guess my favorite historical era is Victorian (North American style) that



include cowboys! Over time, the cowboys of the American West developed a personal culture of their own, a blend of frontier and Victorian values that even retained vestiges of chivalry. Such hazardous work in isolated conditions also bred a tradition of self-dependence and individualism, with great value put on personal honesty.

What is your favorite place to visit?

By far, my favorite place to visit is the Lancaster County in Pennsylvania. Aside from the many fabric and quilt stores I mentioned earlier, it is a peaceful retreat from the hustle and bustle of the fast-paced world we live in. My husband and I have been going there since the mid-1980s. We've gone the touristy route once or twice but truly enjoy just riding around the county looking at the farms, the pristine flower and vegetable gardens, clothes hanging on the line, horses in the pastures, and children running barefoot through the yard. This is truly our happy place!

Do you enjoy cooking or baking?

Baking! I enjoy the precise science of baking, the aroma of cinnamon, spices, apples, or chocolate. I've even adapted many of my family favorites to gluten-free to accommodate my g.f. sensitivity. Besides, after 53 years of cooking suppers, I've run out of ideas!!!!

Favorite holiday tradition?

The day after Thanksgiving has always been my favorite tradition. It began when my daughter moved to Alexandria, Virginia, just outside Washington, D.C. We would choose a destination and be tourists for a day. We've seen Mt. Vernon, the Marine Corps Museum, visited a Christmas Market, the National Portrait Gallery, the Smithsonian, Old Town Alexandria, the Torpedo Factory, antique bookstores, etc., and we always finish up the day with lunch!

What's one fun or quirky fact about you?

I've always wanted to dress up and play Mrs. Santa Claus at the holidays!

A SWEET HISTORICAL ROMANCE

AWARD WINNING AUTHOR
WINNIE GRIGGS

THE Heart OF Honor

★ PETTICOATS & PATRIOTS ★
BOOK 6

COMING

JULY 22

★ SWEET ROMANCE. HISTORIC HEART. ★

★
SHE WANTS
TO HONOR
THE PAST.

★
HE JUST WANTS
TO FORGET IT.

★
*Together,
they'll discover
what honor
truly means.*





THE Heart OF Honor

an excerpt by

WINNIE GRIGGS

Wilson shifted on the picnic blanket, studying Miss Owens more directly.

She patted her notebook. "I keep thinking how easy it would be for stories like these to disappear in another generation or two if no one records them."

"My father used to say folks spend too much time looking backward," he said.

She smiled. "And did you agree?"

"No." The answer came before he thought much about it.

She nodded approval. "Perhaps your father would be pleased to know you're helping preserve half the town's memories."

Wilson made a sound low in his throat. "That's stretching things a bit."

"Only a little."

Silence settled again, easier this time. Com-

fortable.

He set his cup down before the thought could wander any farther.

She looked up. "I realized something today."

Wilson mistrusted the way she'd said that. "What now? Painted shelves? Window boxes?"

That earned him a grin. "No. Though those aren't bad ideas." Her expression softened. "You live at the livery, don't you?"

He shifted. "I do. Helps me keep an eye on the place at night."

She nodded. "I must apologize. I completely overlooked you when I was doing the interviews of the families in town. Which means I don't have anything on your family in my notebooks yet. And that needs to be remedied."

Wilson shrugged. "Most of the family stories went to the grave with my folks."

Her expression turned sympathetic. "I'm sorry. But you're making my point for me." She dabbed the corner of her mouth with a napkin. "However, I imagine you remember a lot more than you think. That's how it is with most people."

"There's not much I care to have remembered about my life."

Some emotion he couldn't read flashed across her face. "That isn't quite the same as saying there isn't anything worth remembering. Something can be learned from the painful and unflattering as well as the good times."

Wilson looked toward the horse, watching as it flicked its tail against a fly. "I already told Colonel Briggs I don't aim to stand up in front of everyone so folks can applaud things they know nothing about."

"I know."

No argument. No correction. Just quiet acknowledgment.

Miss Owens continued carefully. "And I won't pretend I understand your reasons."

That brought his attention back to her.

"But this isn't only about your military recognition." She glanced toward the crate near the buggy. "The Nortons weren't only sharing about their sons' service—they were sharing their family. And the Halperns weren't only talking about the war. They were remembering Mary Alice." She held his gaze. "Aren't there things about your parents worth remembering? Things about your ancestors you're proud of? Your family belongs in Hawthorn's history too, Mr. Porter."

Something tightened in Wilson's chest.

Not because she sounded demanding. But because she didn't. Miss Owens spoke as if the matter were simple—the Porters still belonged somewhere inside the town's story despite the farm being long gone and his parents dead these past years.

Wilson circled his thumb around the lip of his cup. "My folks were good, solid people. Reckon there are some things I could tell you about them. And a few stories Pa used to tell me about his own folks. Not sure I remember them accurately though." He rubbed his chin. "Might be a few things packed away in Ma's trunk that'd help me remember."

She went still. "A trunk?"

He wished the words back. But it was too late. "Old papers mostly. Family Bible. Some letters maybe. Not sure what else. Ma kept things in there she thought important."

He hadn't opened that trunk since she passed. Maybe it was time.

For a moment Miss Owens said nothing. Then, very gently, "I'd be honored to see them if you're willing."

Not eager or triumphant. But careful. Respectful. The way she viewed all pieces of family history.

Wilson exhaled slowly. He realized then that she'd understood exactly what the offer cost him.

"Don't expect treasure," he said, trying for a lighter tone. "It's mostly everyday stuff."

She smiled. "Ah, but that's often where real treasure is found."

He'd mentioned the trunk without thinking. But she'd been right. His parents deserved to be remembered.

Just what had his mother tucked away in her trunk?

Miss Owens never seemed to look at something without seeing the story attached. What story might she find in his?

He suddenly felt oddly exposed.

The Heart of Honor
Coming July 21
on [Amazon](#)

Author Bio



Winnie Griggs is the award-winning author of historical romances filled with small towns, big hearts, and amazing grace. A former Romantic Times Reviewers' Choice Award winner and Publisher's Weekly bestselling author, she loves bringing history to life through stories of faith, family, community, and enduring love.

Raised in the bayou country of Southeast Louisiana and now living in a small town in Northwest Louisiana with her rancher husband, Winnie has always been fascinated by the people and stories that shape a community. That love of history—and the ordinary men and women whose lives helped build a nation—inspires many of her novels.

When not writing, Winnie enjoys browsing estate sales, where she can't help wondering about the lives behind the keepsakes and heirlooms she finds there. She also enjoys sampling new tea flavors and spending time with her four grown children and their families.

Connect with Winnie online:

[Website](#)

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[Amazon](#)

WINNIE GRIGGS

Washington Pie

★
A TASTE OF TRADITION★
FROM THE KITCHEN OFWinnie
Griggs
♡

Despite its name, Washington Pie is actually a simple layer cake filled with fruit preserves. Popular during the 19th century, it was often served at church socials, family gatherings, and patriotic celebrations. During America's Centennial year, a dessert like this would have been right at home at a community picnic as friends and neighbors gathered to celebrate the nation's history and the people who helped shape it.

The recipe below is a modern adaptation inspired by actual nineteenth-century Washington Pie recipes.

DIRECTIONS

INGREDIENTS

★
½ cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
½ cup milk
2 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup raspberry or strawberry preserves



- 1 Preheat oven to 350 °F. Grease and flour two 8-inch round cake pans.
- 2 Cream together butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs one at a time. Stir in vanilla.
- 3 In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and salt. Add dry ingredients to the butter mixture alternately with the milk, mixing until just combined.
- 4 Divide batter evenly between prepared pans. Bake 20–25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
- 5 Cool completely.
- 6 Spread preserves over one layer and top with the second layer. Dust lightly with powdered sugar before serving if desired.

Serves 8–10.

“A spoonful of honey will catch more flies than a gallon of vinegar.”
– Benjamin Franklin

GET TO KNOW THE AUTHOR

What's your go-to writing snack?

Hands down it's peanut M&Ms. The amount I consume when I'm closing in on a deadline is truly embarrassing.

Coffee, tea, or something else entirely?

Definitely tea. I was born in a family of gotta-have-it heavy coffee drinkers but somehow, I never acquired a taste for the stuff. But tea, ah, that's a different story. I love to try out different flavors and even experiment with mixing my own. I also try out different flavored honeys from time to time.

What's your favorite time of day to write?

I'm a certified night owl and usually don't get down to business until 10 p.m. or so. I'll often go until 4 or 5 in the morning.

Do you listen to music while writing? If so, what kind?

No, but I like to have the TV on in the background. For years I did a lot of traveling for my day job and wrote in airports, on long flights, and in coffee shops so I grew used to having conversation around me when I write.

What hobby do you enjoy outside of writing?

I've recently been introduced to mahjong and am really enjoying it. I'm still very much a beginner but really like the complexity and strategy aspects. My three daughters and I have started playing together on a regular basis.

Do you enjoy cooking or baking more?

Cooking. I like to experiment, adding and taking away ingredients, and you can't do that as easily with baking as you can with cooking.

What's something you've always wanted to learn?

How to play a musical instrument. The flute would be my instrument of choice.



I'm just in awe listening to the beauty that comes from someone who plays well.

What's one fun or quirky fact about you?

I was born on Friday, the 13th.

What's your favorite American landmark or place to visit?

A few years ago, I traveled to South Dakota. While I was there, I had an opportunity to visit Mt. Rushmore and the Crazy Horse Memorial. They were both awe inspiring, and I'd love to go back someday.

Then there's the Grand Canyon. Where Mt. Rushmore and the Crazy Horse Memorial are great man-made achievements, the Grand Canyon is a breathtaking testament to God's awesome power.

Do you enjoy small-town celebrations like parades or rodeos?

Most definitely. I grew up in south Louisiana, so parades were ever present during Mardi Gras. But unlike what you see portrayed on TV and in the movies, our parades were of the small town, family-oriented variety. I still remember arriving early to get a good spot, the adults pulling out lawn chairs, the kids running around visiting with friends--the time waiting for the parade to start was almost as much fun as the parade itself!

A SWEET HISTORICAL ROMANCE



AMAZON BESTSELLING AUTHOR
PAM CROOKS

THE *Sky*
Between US



★ PETTICOATS & PATRIOTS ★
Book 7

COMING
JULY 28

★ SWEET ROMANCE. HISTORIC HEART. ★



HE FOUGHT
FOR FREEDOM.



SHE FOUGHT
TO SAVE HIM.



*Together,
they fought
for love.*





THE *Sky* *Between* US

an excerpt by
PAM CROOKS

Beck slid behind the wheel, turned the key, and stomped the starter. The engine coughed once before roaring to life, and he put the flatbed into gear. Water sloshed in the big steel tank bolted in the back as he made a big turn out of the barn with more haste than caution, yelling out the window to Lonnie to lead the way.

They drove hard along the pasture's edge, bouncing over ruts. Beck stared hard through the haze, toward the north, suffering a raw fear from all that could be lost.

The timber stood dark against the yellowed grass, a long line of cottonwoods and pines climbing the rise beyond Archer land, some of it planted by his grandfather before Beck

was even born. He knew the forest, had grown up in it. Knew the deer trails and wildlife, the smell of fallen leaves on damp ground, the sound of wind blowing through the branches. God's beauty, all of it, and he couldn't let it be destroyed.

None of them could.

At the creek's bend, Beck bolted out of his truck with the others. Low flames licked through dead grass, hungry and quick. Smoke stung his eyes. Heat pressed against his face, like he'd just opened the door to an oven.

"Eli, grab a shovel and go wide," Joe, already there, yelled. "Lonnie, get that water up here. Beck, cut a line along the fence before it jumps."

His orders catapulted them into action. Each man spread out instinctively, wielding shovels, soaking sacks, digging, stomping, beating the flames back. Beck worked until his muscles burned, carving the shovel into earth, turning sod, making a bare strip the fire couldn't cross.

A sound intruded into his digging, above the crackle and hiss of fire, different than shovel hitting dirt. Instinct to identify the sound straightened his back and tilted his head toward the sky.

A small plane circled above the smoke, defying its threat. A light aircraft, a mustard yellow Piper Cub. It made another circle, dipping its wing as if the pilot needed to read the land, to familiarize it, not unlike Beck needing to read a fence line after a long winter.

Something inside him went tight and still.

He told himself it was nothing.

Just a plane flying over the Nebraska range.

Just an engine's vibration, like every other machine.

But the aircraft wasn't just passing. It was working. It held its circle over Muddy Creek,

then shifted slightly north, as if measuring where the fire wanted to go next.

Several yards away, his father stopped working, too, one hand lifted to shade his eyes.

The plane dipped lower. Unexpectedly low. It made a pass along the range, not directly over the men, but close enough that the wind from the propeller disturbed the smoke. Then it climbed a fraction, circled once more, and lined up with pasture.

Like the others, Beck stared. Riveted. What the pilot intended was anyone's guess, everyone's concern. It wouldn't be easy landing on the pasture. Had anyone ever?

The plane made another low pass, slower this time, as if inspecting for obstacles. Fence posts. Barbed wire. Cattle. The pilot knew what he was doing. How to keep the plane angled, the nose steady in the wind.

And then he landed, right there on the range.

Wheels touched grass with a soft bounce, tail low, rolling straight and true. It turned gently to avoid the fence line and came to a stop a safe distance from the men and the fire.

The engine cut. For a moment no one moved. Even the fire seemed to pause, hissing quieter in the wind.

The pilot pulled off his headset and opened the cockpit door. A boot appeared.

And a woman stepped down.



The Sky Between Us
Coming July 28
on [Amazon](#)

Author Bio



While expecting her first child (more years back than she cares to count), Pam Crooks read her very first romance novel, and she's been in love with them ever since. She grew up in the ranch country of western Nebraska, and it was inevitable she'd eventually write lots of books about cowboys. Pam still lives in Nebraska with her husband (who is not a cowboy), four married daughters, and a whole slew of perfect grandchildren.

Pam has written both contemporary and historical western romance. She is one of the founders of Petticoats & Pistols, a popular blogsite for western romance. She loves to cook and hang out at her lake cabin with her family.

Connect with Pam:

[Website](#)

[Bookbub](#)

Author Page on [Amazon](#)

[PAM CROOKS](#)

FEATURE RECIPE



RECIPES THAT TELL OUR STORY

Smoked Sausage Stir-Fry

A TASTE OF TRADITION

FROM THE KITCHEN OF

Pam
Crooks



The process of stir-frying began centuries ago in China. By cutting meat and vegetables into small pieces and tossing them into a hot wok/pan with seasonings, the food cooked fast while staying flavorful and crisp.

When Asian ingredients and cookbooks began to land in American stores in the 1970s, busy families embraced this mode of cooking for its healthiness and speed of preparation.

DIRECTIONS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound fully cooked smoked turkey or beef sausage cut into ½-inch slices
- 2 tablespoons oil
- ½ cup julienned green pepper
- ½ cup julienned sweet red pepper
- 1 small onion, sliced and separated into rings
- 1 ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 ½ teaspoon dried basil
- 1 ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 2 Roma tomatoes, cut into wedges (I've used cherry tomatoes in a pinch)
- 3 cups hot cooked rice (I use 1 ½ cups dry Minute Rice)

- 1 In a nonstick skillet or wok, stir-fry sausage in oil over medium heat until lightly browned, about 10 minutes.
- 2 Add the peppers, onion, and seasonings. Cover and cook for 10 minutes or until vegetables are crisp-tender, stirring occasionally.
- 3 Add the tomatoes; cook 1 minute longer.
- 4 Serve over rice.
- 5 Yield: 4 servings

"Food is strength, and food is peace, and food is freedom."

- John F. Kennedy



Made with Love



GET TO KNOW THE AUTHOR

What's your favorite time of day to write?

I'm a morning person, and mornings are when I use my computer time to get through all the emails, texts, news, tasks, etc, that need to get done. Then, by lunchtime, I'm free to concentrate on my writing. I'll grab a bite to eat, head out for a walk, and then go into my office to write. It's amazing how a little exercise, sunshine, and oxygen in my brain really helps me stay focused.

Favorite season—and why?

Definitely summer. (Or late spring and early fall.) We have a cabin at the lake, and those sunny days are when we can go out there. We close up the cabin in the winter, so we really try to take advantage of nice days while we have them.

What book has influenced your writing the most?

The Emotional Wound Thesaurus by Angela Ackerman and Becca Puglisi. I firmly believe every good book needs conflicted characters. Otherwise, if they're too happy, they're boring (to me, at least.)

Do you listen to music while writing? If so, what kind?

I do need soft music in the background. I especially love Gregorian Chants or a harp CD that I have. And a candle. Good fragrance only adds to the calm and concentration.

Describe your writing space in three words.

Pam's Personal Space. Ha!

Do you prefer a tidy desk or creative chaos?

See above! Since my husband has his own laptop, no one uses my office or desktop but me, so I have everything I need within inches, and it stays untouched. Including yummy chocolate-covered caramels from Aldi. I treat myself to one (or maybe two) to help get the creative juices going.

Favorite movie or comfort show?

Right now, I'm watching *Lone Star Law*. I



enjoy seeing the Texas game wardens interact with and save their wildlife. They arrest bad guys, too.

What's something you've always wanted to learn?

The piano. I've taken lessons, both in a group and privately, but I just have trouble remembering those darned notes! I have granddaughters who are so incredibly talented that I've come to believe you have to start playing young when your brain is young.

Do you enjoy small-town celebrations like parades or rodeos?

I lo-o-ve parades! I always have. The more noise and bands, the better. I especially enjoy going with the grandkids and watch them dive for the candy being thrown.

What's a song that makes you feel especially proud of your country?

"God Bless the USA" by Lee Greenwood. I tear up every time. It's hard to believe he recorded that in 1984! Since then it has been played at more places and more times than we can count. Its powerful message has become an iconic patriotic song that most people know the words to and can sing along with. I know I do!

A SWEET WESTERN ROMANCE



USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHOR
SHANNA HATFIELD

Declaration OF Love



★ PETTICOATS & PATRIOTS ★
BOOK 8

COMING

AUGUST 4



★ SWEET ROMANCE. STRONG HEARTS. ★



DUTY IS
HIS ANCHOR.



INDEPENDENCE IS
HER ARMOR.



*A declaration
of love will
set them both free.*





Declaration OF Love

an excerpt by

SHANNA HATFIELD

When the postcard guy opened the door into the lobby and left, it stirred the air and Grady caught a whiff of a light fragrance that made him think of wildflowers and summer breezes. Carol didn't wear perfume, so it had to be the woman who'd come in through the back door.

He inhaled another deep breath before he realized what he was doing and gave himself a mental lecture to get his act together. He refocused his attention on the envelope in his hands lest the woman

think he was some sort of creepy dude.

Likely, she was just passing through, because Holiday wasn't exactly a destination for people who were looking to relocate. Then again, there wasn't any reason for her to be behind the counter.

He supposed the woman could be one of the crazy tourists with no boundaries who passed through town in the summer and during the holidays, but those weren't people who set down

roots in Holiday and stayed.

Although, there had been a small increase in the population in the past few years. If rumors were true, Grady had heard Colt and Piper Ford would welcome a baby in the fall.

Apparently, his life had become so boring that the idea of the couple who owned the feed store expecting a baby topped the list of exciting news.

Barely suppressing a sigh, Grady took a step forward, catching another hint of the woman's inviting scent. He couldn't help but admire the shine the overhead lights brought to her long, wavy hair as it cascaded over her shoulders.

Unlike most of the tourists in town who dressed in T-shirts with jeans or shorts, she wore a pair of black pants and a sleeveless blouse with a tasteful print of pale pink flowers on a black background. She looked like a career woman, maybe someone who worked in a bank or real estate office.

The woman held something in her hand, and he watched as her fingers rubbed over a silver locket that looked old. He wondered if she was worried about something and found comfort in touching the locket.

Although she appeared calm, he picked up a vibe of nerves, which seemed odd for someone who had wandered in the back door and stood behind the counter at the post office.

Perhaps she was applying for a passport and was nervous about the documentation needed, but that didn't explain why she was on the wrong side of the front counter.

Grady owned a passport that was gathering dust instead of stamps. In fact, unless an occasional trip to Portland or Boise for construction-related business could be counted as a vacation, he never went anywhere.

He wondered when he'd become a homebody trapped in the rut of routine and responsibility. What would his great-great-great-grandmother Alex say? She'd traveled all the way from New York to Oregon and made her own way on pure spunk and intelligence. Whenever he thought of adventure, she came to mind.

It wouldn't hurt him to be a little more like Alex.

Then again, adventure was a luxury he abso-

lutely had no time to experience or enjoy. At least not now.

The woman straightened her spine and lifted her chin when Carol turned and smiled at her in greeting. Something about the stranger's posture made him wonder if she'd served in the military. Her bearing certainly suggested it.

Carol had worked at the post office for what seemed like forever. In reality, it had probably only been a decade or two.

"Good morning! How may I assist you today?" Carol asked the stranger in her usual cheery tone.

The woman reached out a hand. "Good morning, Carol. I wanted to stop in and introduce myself. I'm Kate Barton, the Officer in Charge beginning the first of June."

"Oh, my goodness! You're the new temp postmaster?" Carol took the woman's hand and pumped it with enthusiasm. "You are way younger than I was expecting." Carol glanced from Kate Barton to Grady. "Did you hear that, Grady? Our new postmaster for the summer is here!"

"I did hear that," Grady said, reaching out a hand to the newcomer.

"Hello," she said.

When she took his hand and centered her gaze on his, he felt as though someone had hit him in the chest with a two-by-four. Miss Barton was beautiful, with defined cheekbones, a wide smile, and bright blue eyes. She certainly wasn't what he was expecting, and he found his tongue tied in a knot.

Quickly yanking the knot loose, he managed to smile. "Welcome to Holiday, Mrs. Barton."

"It's Miss Barton, but I hope everyone will call me Kate."

"Kate," Grady repeated, thinking she looked like a Kate. Classy. Lovely. Down to earth.

Declaration of Love

Coming August 4
on [Amazon](#)

Author Bio



Shanna Hatfield is a *USA Today* bestselling and award-winning author celebrated for her heartwarming, wholesome romances. Growing up on a farm, she learned early to appreciate wide-open spaces, hardworking heroes, and the small joys of life—lessons that now breathe authenticity into her stories.

Her novels are known for their blend of hope, humor, and memorable characters—quirky neighbors, determined heroines, and down-to-earth heroes readers fall in love with. Shanna's books often showcase her love of rural life and her passion for writing stories that make readers smile, sigh, and believe in happily-ever-afters.

When she isn't busy writing, crafting, or baking up sweet treats, Shanna enjoys quiet moments at home in the beautiful Pacific Northwest with her beloved husband, whom she affectionately calls Captain Cavedweller. Together, they share a love of laughter, travel, and savoring life's everyday blessings.

Connect with Shanna through her [website](#), follow her on [Amazon](#), or sign up for her [newsletter](#)!

SHANNA HATFIELD

Patriotic Trifle

★
A TASTE OF TRADITION

★
FROM THE KITCHEN OF

Shanna
Hatfield
♡



★
The traditional version of trifle originated in England in the 18th century as a way to use stale cake. It was soaked in alcohol and layered with fruit and custard, sometimes jelly.

Today's version is so easy to make, and it can be made a day ahead of time! You can layer it in a trifle bowl, a big round bowl, or even dessert cups.

The basis for a classic American trifles are layers of cake, pudding, and fruit.

DIRECTIONS

INGREDIENTS

★
3 cups cake pieces
16-ounces whipping cream
1 cup powdered sugar, divided
1 large box vanilla instant pudding
2 cups cold milk
8 ounces cream cheese, softened
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
3 cups fresh berries



- 1 Wash, stem (and slice, if needed) berries. You can use any mixture you want, but I used raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, and strawberries for this trifle. If they are a little juicy, even better!
- 2 Whip cream, blending in 1 teaspoon vanilla extract and 1/2 cup powdered sugar. Set aside.
- 3 Mix pudding and milk and set aside.
- 4 Blend cream cheese with remaining powdered sugar and vanilla. Fold mixture into pudding.
- 5 Crumble cake into your serving dish (or individual cups - canning jars are fun for the 4th of July!). You can use pound cake, angel food cake, short-cake, or white cake. If your bakery carries Madeleines, they are perfect for this recipe.
- 6 Top with berries, then a layer with pudding mixture followed by a layer of whipping cream. Repeat layers until your dish is full. Smooth over a layer of whipped cream. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least four hours, overnight is even better (it gives the berry juices time to soak into the cake!).
- 7 When ready to serve, top with a fresh berries.

“All great change in America begins at the dinner table.”

- Ronald Reagan

GET TO KNOW THE AUTHOR

Share something about yourself most people may not know.

I love to bake and often make up my own recipes just to see how they turn out. I enjoy planning parties and decorating the house for holidays. In another life, maybe I would have been an event planner, or owned a B&B. I greatly enjoy making flower arrangements and find it both joyful and relaxing to wrap presents.

What made you want to become a writer?

Books have always been part of my life, and that love of books was a gift from my mom. She read bedtime stories to me, then listened when I was old enough to read them myself. The joy I got from books led me to want to create stories of my own to share.

Does Captain Cavedweller help you with your writing?

He does! He's a great sounding board and he'll see things from a totally different perspective than I do, which is wonderful. He is amazing, and I'm so blessed by his continuing encouragement, support, and willingness to listen to my crazy ideas.

Where do you draw inspiration from?

Everywhere! I can be standing in line at the grocery store, or flipping through a magazine and something will spark an idea. From there, a story or character begins to grow. I also love to take drives with Captain Cavedweller. I almost always come home with a new idea just from something we've seen and then brainstorm together. It gives him an opportunity to be involved in my stories in a way he otherwise wouldn't, and I love that we come up with such fun ideas together.



What do you love most about your writing process?

Creating characters that stay with readers. I love it when a reader tells me they have a book hangover. Or they reread a book (or an entire series) because they've fallen in love with the characters. That makes my heart so happy. I hope they'll fall in love with Grady and Kate, the characters in *Declaration of Love*.

As America celebrates its 250th birthday, what does that milestone mean to you?

As America celebrates its 250th birthday, I find myself reflecting on the incredible courage, faith, and perseverance of those who helped build this nation. Growing up in a rural farming area, I was raised to appreciate hard work, love of country, and the importance of family and community. Those values have shaped not only my life, but also the stories I write. This anniversary is a chance to honor the past, celebrate the freedoms we enjoy today, and look toward the future with hope. I'm grateful to be part of this moment in our nation's history and excited to share stories that remind us of the people and principles that helped make America the land of the free.



PATRIOT MATCHING GAME

Match each Patriot on the left with the achievement that best describes them on the right.

PATRIOTS

1.
★



Martha Washington

2.
★



Abigail Adams

3.
★



Paul Revere

4.
★



George Washington

5.
★



Benjamin Franklin

6.
★



Mercy Otis Warren

7.
★



John Hancock

8.
★



Nathan Hale

ACHIEVEMENTS

A. ★ Warned the colonists that British soldiers were coming.

B. ★ Commander of the Continental Army and first President of the United States.

C. ★ Signed the Declaration of Independence with his large and bold signature.

D. ★ Wrote letters urging women to support freedom and remember their rights.

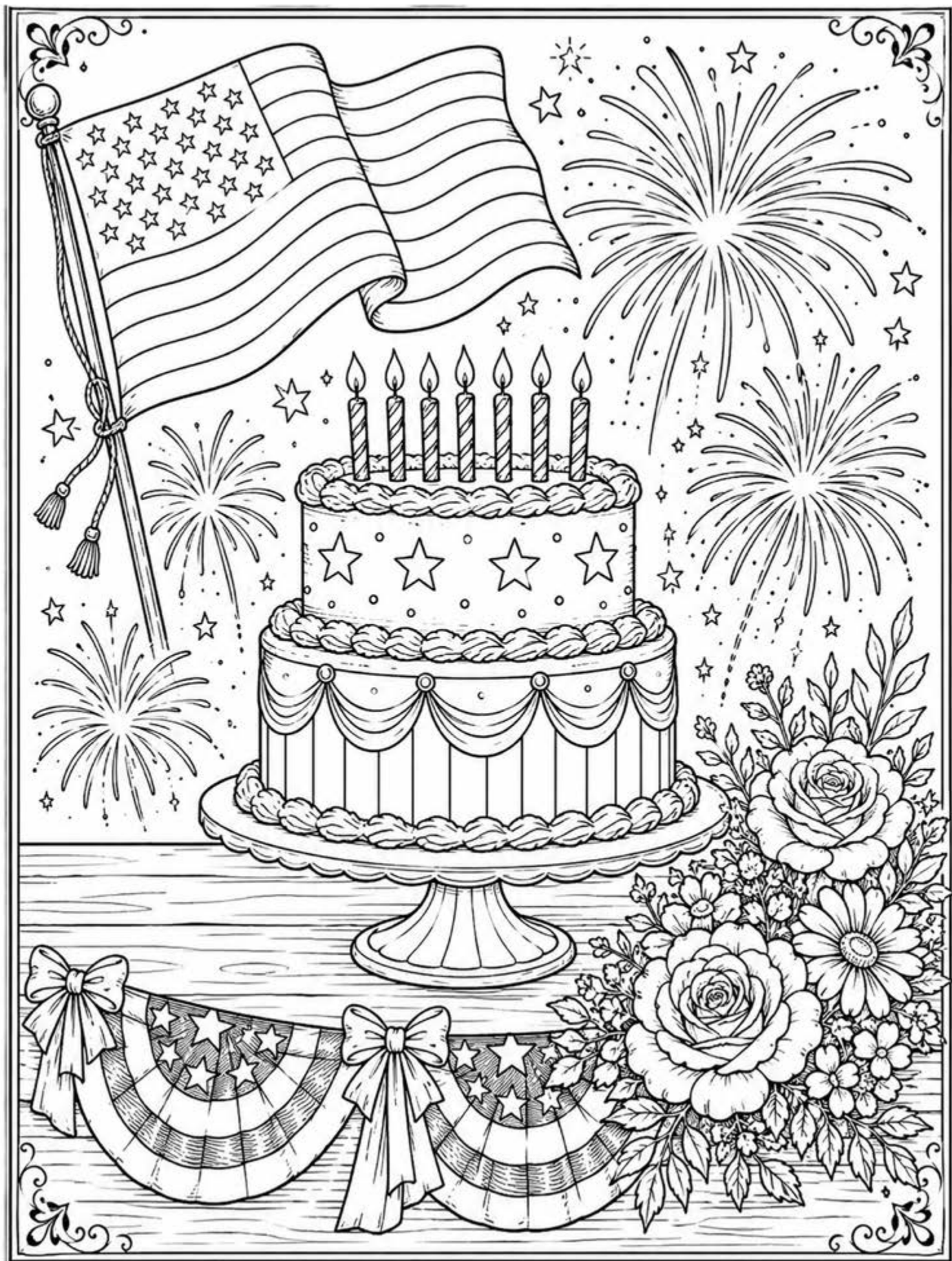
E. ★ Owned the silver locket that began the legacy passed through eight generations.

F. ★ Famous author, poet, and playwright who supported the American cause.

G. ★ Served as a spy for the Continental Army and said, "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

H. ★ Inventor, printer, and diplomat who helped shape America's future.

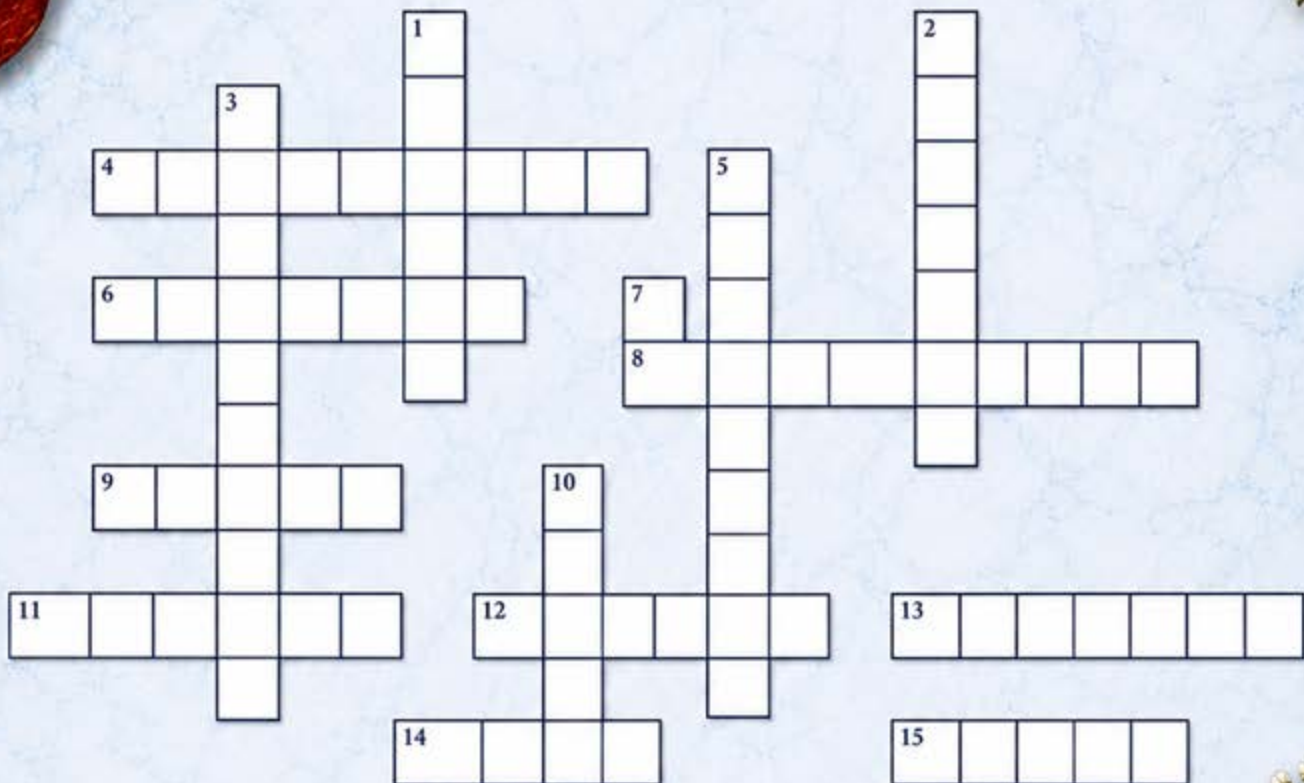






LOCKET LEGACY CROSSWORD

Complete the crossword using the clues below.
Words are inspired by America's story of liberty and love.



ACROSS

4. The document declaring America's independence.
6. The City of Brotherly Love.
8. Someone who loves their country and supports its freedom.
9. The right to live free.
11. The First Lady who owned the locket that began a lasting legacy.
12. A feeling of bravery in the face of danger.
13. The land of the free and the home of the brave.
14. A message sent secretly.
15. The pursuit of justice and independence.

DOWN

1. Passed down through eight generations.
2. A precious keepsake with a hidden story.
3. The young patriot in 1776 who heard the bells ring.
5. The man who read the Declaration of Independence aloud on July 8, 1776.
7. A person who defends freedom and stands for what is right.
10. The brave actions and sacrifices of those who came before us.

"Courage built a nation. Love made it worth fighting for."





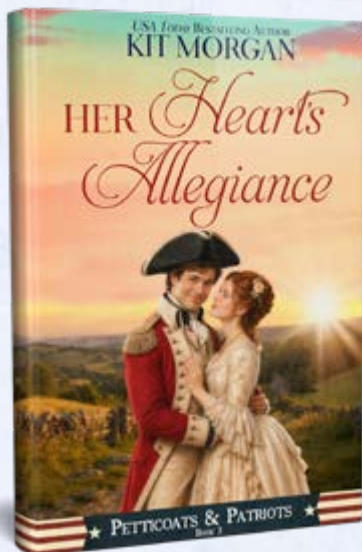
HOLIDAY
Oregon

HA
Neb

HAWTHORN
TEXAS

Follow the Locket's Journey





HER Heart's Allegiance

1778 — Long Island, New York

A courageous maid aiding the Revolution clashes with a mysterious British courier who could expose her or prove to be fighting for the same cause.

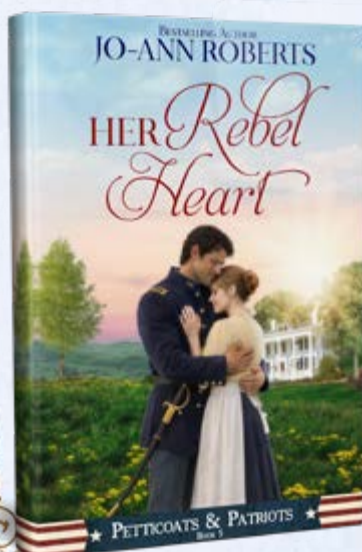
[Available June 30](#)

Whispers OF Treason

1781 — Charlottesville, Virginia

In a world where women are meant to wait and worry, Anna Randolph will ride into the heart of danger to prove that sometimes the most perilous mission requires not just courage, but love.

[Available July 7](#)



HER Rebel Heart

1863 — Roswell, Georgia

During the turmoil of the Civil War, a Southern woman's life intertwines with a Union major, forging an unlikely romance and a journey to forgiveness.

[Available July 14](#)

THE Heart OF Honor

1876 — Hawthorn, Texas

She wants to honor the past. He just wants to forget it. Together, they'll discover what honor truly means.

[Available July 21](#)



THE Sky Between US

1953 — Halsey, Nebraska

She makes a mistake that will haunt her forever. He comes home to heal after war. Together in love, they overcome the dangers that close in from every side.

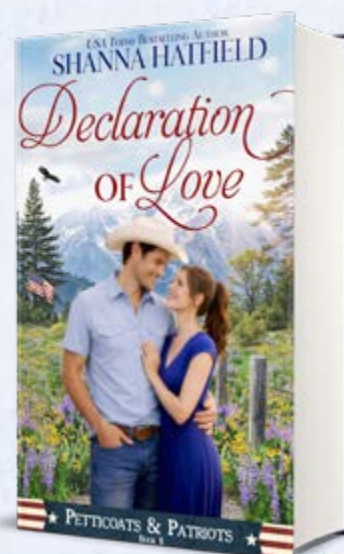
[Available July 28](#)

Declaration OF Love

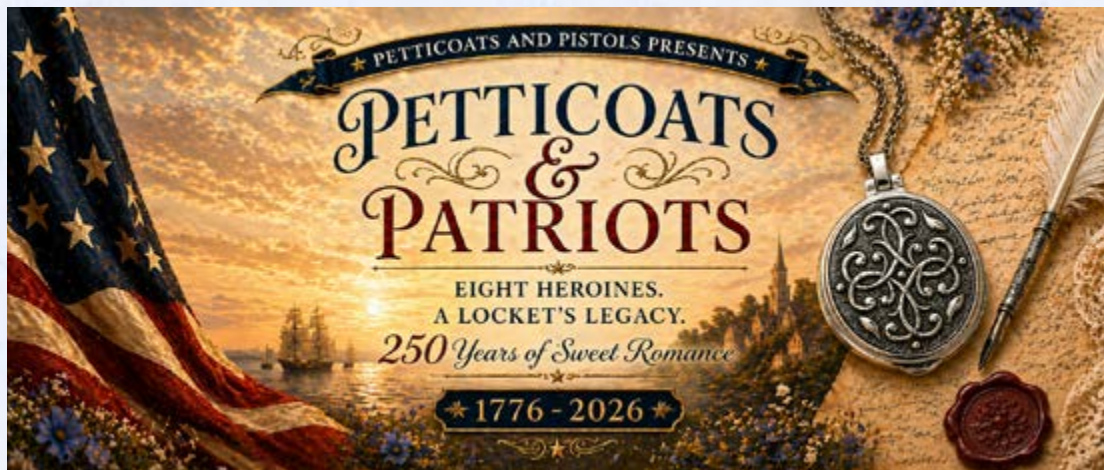
2026 — Holiday, Oregon

He's honoring a promise to the fallen. She's uncovering a legacy of 250 years of family secrets. Together, they're proving that while independence is a right, love is the greatest freedom of all.

[Available August 4](#)



PETTICOATSANDPISTOLS.COM



Watch our [Petticoats & Patriots](#) trailer, created by the talented Sarah Lamb!



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In case you missed the first issue of our [Petticoats & Patriots Magazine](#), be sure to download your free copy today! Or purchase a [keepsake print edition](#) from Lulu!

LOVE • LIBERTY • LEGACY

MEET THE FILLIES FROM *Petticoats & Pistols*

★
*Romancing
the West of
Yesterday
and Today*
★



LINDA BRODAY

★
2007
Founder



MARY CONNEALY

★
2007



PAM CROOKS

★
2007
Founder



WINNIE GRIGGS

★
2011



SHANNA HATFIELD

★
2017



KAREN KAY

★
2007
Founder



SARAH LAMB

★
2024



KIT MORGAN

★
2018



CATHY MCDAVID

★
2021



CHERYL PIERSON

★
2010



NAN REINHARDT

★
2025



JO-ANN ROBERTS

★
2023



JEANNIE WATT

★
2016



KAREN WITEMEYER

★
2011

ONE LOCKET.
EIGHT GENERATIONS.
Endless Stories.

From the dawn of the American Revolution
to the promise of tomorrow,
one precious locket holds the secrets,
sacrifices, and stories of those who dared
to fight for freedom—and love.

★ HISTORY REMEMBERS THE HEROES. ★
LOVE REMEMBERS THEIR HEARTS. ★

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- ★ Civil War History
- ★ America's Centennial
- ★ Mid-19th Century Life
- ★ Celebrating America
- ★ Recipes and more!

*Real history.
Timeless romance.
Unforgettable journeys.
Stories that linger
long after the final page.*

*"If this locket
finds its way to you,
know that it carries
more than memory.*

*It carries courage.
Guard it well—
and trust
your heart."*



★ THE PETTICOATS & PATRIOTS SERIES ★

Eight Novels. Eight Love Stories. One Extraordinary Legacy.



★ ★ ★
COURAGE
BUILT A NATION.
Love
MADE IT WORTH
FIGHTING FOR.
★ ★ ★

Throughout 250 years of American history, a well-loved locket finds its way into the hands of eight spirited heroines—each one standing at the crossroads of love and destiny. As it journeys from one heart to the next, these stories unfold with sweet romance, unwavering hope, and a deep love of country, proving that even in uncertain times, love is always worth the risk.

AMERICA
250

★ 1776–2026 ★

A CELEBRATION OF
FREEDOM, FAITH
& THE STORIES THAT
SHAPE US ALL.