



LOVE CHAT NEWS

from Abigail Dane

History happily ever after™

The Pirate and the Virgin— 366 Years from Fact to Fiction

News of Special Interest:

- December 2015
The Pirate and the Virgin book launched
- February 5-25, 2016
Abigail Dane artwork on exhibit at CFABS
- February 13, 2016
"Romance is in the Air"
Miromar Outlet book signing/reading
- March 11-12, 2016
"Hearts in the Sand" Conference
for romance writers
- February 26 and March 18, 2016
"Confessions of a Romance Writer"
workshop for romance writers

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The Pirate and the Virgin, my first historical romance novel, is in print at last. The book was two years in the making. Then again, one could say it took 366 years for the book to come to life. That's when the factual history behind my fictional version of the story began to unfold.

The hero of this labor of love (pun intended) is my real 9x great-grandfather, Richard. In the 15+ years I spent doing genealogical research, I discovered that Richard and his older brother, John, were the first of my direct line of ancestors to arrive in the New World. Royalists from Cornwall, the brothers were forced to flee England at the end of the English Civil War (1649 A.D.) to avoid Cromwell's purge of the late king's supporters.

I found the brothers' true story so compelling I decided to add more of the details to the family history I had compiled for my family reunion the previous year. The 50-page booklet traced over 830 years of our history from the first mention of our family surname in the *Domesday Book*—commissioned in 1085 A.D. by William the Conqueror—to the birth of my grandfather and his eleven siblings in the late 1800s.

As I wrote, the story evolved into something beyond a sterile history of people and events. As if I were merely their scribe, the characters compelled me to tell more of their story, making up some missing details along the way. The result was my first historical romance novel.

The *Pirate and the Virgin*
Cover design and artwork by Abigail Dane

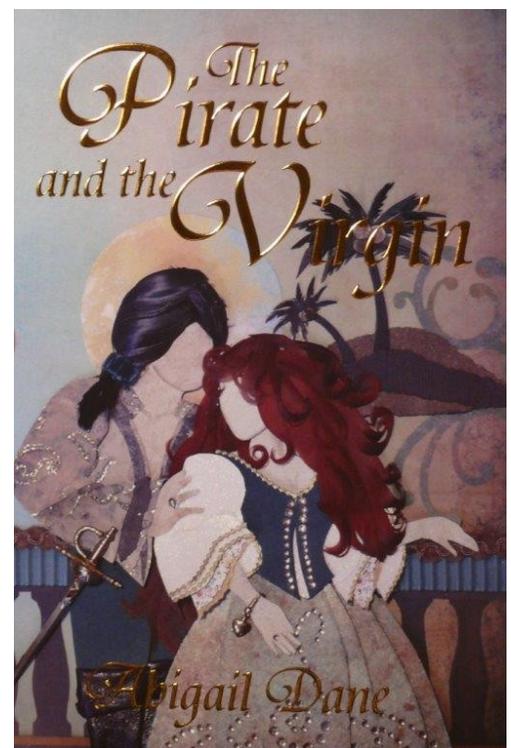
I launched *The Pirate and the Virgin* in December 2015. One person who received it as a Christmas gift from a friend reported:

Started the book yesterday and am three-fourths finished. Stayed up until 1:00 a.m. reading it. This is not the typical genre I read but was pleasantly surprised. Loved it! Wish I had another of her books to read...

I can't help thinking my ancestors would be amused to know modern readers are enjoying their life story 366 years later.

Purchase *The Pirate and the Virgin* online at:

<http://store.transitionsunlimited.biz/>



The Pirate and the Virgin
Mixed-media collage created
as a wrap-around cover
for my romance novel

“How hard can it be? And so what if I mess it up? It’s only paper, scissors and glue!”

I’m indebted to friend and fine artist Bill Kreutz for suggesting I create my own book cover—and for convincing me I could do it...

See Bill’s work at:
<http://billkreutz.com/>



Abigail Dane Artwork in CFABS Exhibit

Q. What do you do when you can’t find an artist able to execute your vision for a book cover?

A. Do it yourself.

Q. What do you do when you’re not a painter or graphic artist?

A. Create a mixed-media collage.

Q. What do you do with the artwork when you’ve finished it?

A. Enter it in a Member Exhibition at the local Art League.

I designed this collage as a wrap-around cover for my novel, *The Pirate and the Virgin*. The original art piece will be on display in the gallery at the Center for the Arts of Bonita Springs until February 25th.

The collage itself is made mostly of paper, embellished with accents of ribbon and rawhide cord (railings); leather (boots); metal (compass, bracelet and sword); and feathers (hair). A few jewel and vellum stickers completed the picture, which took two weeks from concept to creation.

I wasn’t sure I could do it, but couldn’t resist the challenge. As I worked, I had to keep reminding myself: “How hard can it be? And so what if I mess it up? It’s only paper, scissors and glue!”

A few of my art projects: art dolls, collages, cards, mini-books, jewelry, wall art and more

I love working with paper and textiles, and especially enjoy paper engineering and doll-making. I work without a pattern. Though I may start with a vision of the project, I’m invariably surprised by the result. That’s the real joy of the creative process for me.

Because I have such a low boredom threshold, my studio is filled with one-of-a-kind art doll “creatures” (mostly Santas, angels and pixies); handmade books, 3-D mixed-media collages, jewelry, cards, scrapbook albums, flower arrangements, quilling, crochet, calligraphy, etc. Hence my nickname: *The Empress of Piddle*. I sell some pieces or give them to friends. I also teach art classes sometimes, but art is primarily therapy and a link to serenity. Hence my company name: *Serenity Art*.

CFABS’ Opening Reception and Campus Open House Friday, February 5, 6:00-8:00 p.m. The event—open to the public and free of charge—will feature not only the artwork in the gallery exhibit, but also artist demonstrations and displays throughout the complex. CFABS is located at:

26100 Old US 41 Rd., Bonita Springs
Phone: 239-495-8989

<http://www.artcenterbonita.org/>



“Romance is in the Air” at Miromar

The day before Valentine’s Day is the perfect time to indulge in romance...books.

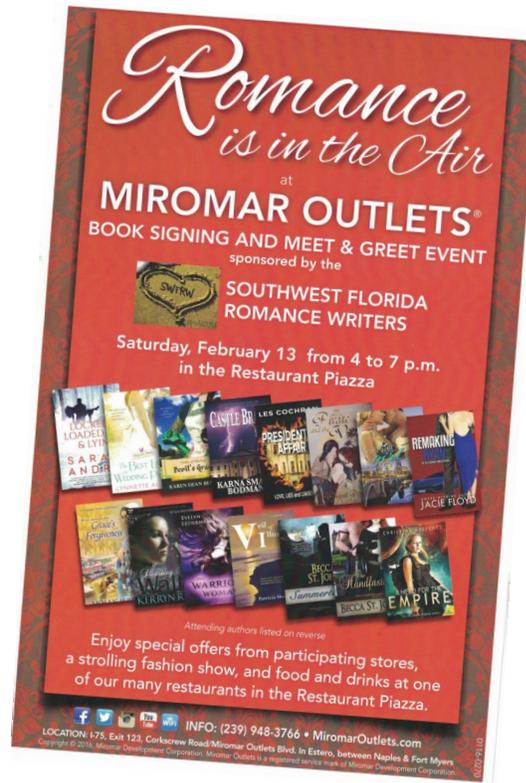
And the perfect place to go to indulge is the “Romance is in the Air” Book Signing and Meet & Greet event at the Miromar Outlet Mall in Estero.

WHEN: February 13th, 4:00-7:00 p.m.

WHERE: Miromar Outlet Mall
I-75 at Exit 123
Corkscrew Road, Estero, FL
in the Restaurant Piazza

In addition to buying books for yourself or that special someone, you’ll be able to meet and talk with the authors. At least sixteen members of the local SWFRW chapter will be there to talk about romance writing and to read from their work.

The event, sponsored by Southwest Florida Romance Writers, will also feature special offers from participating stores, a strolling fashion show, and food and drinks at one of the restaurants in the Restaurant Piazza.



For more information or a map, go to:
MiromarOutlets.com.

Excerpt from
The Pirate and the Virgin

Richard stepped inside the inn. Motioning for the barmaid, he said something to her, then handed her a coin and the armload of parcels. The giggling girl dropped a little curtsy as she ran off.

Turning back to Lucy, who still waited at the door, Richard announced: “I do apologize, my lady, but it’s clear I shall have to take matters into my own hands if I’m to save you from yourself.”

Sweeping the startled girl into his arms, he stepped back into the inn and strode purposefully toward the steps that led upstairs.

Upstairs...

To the bedrooms beyond...

Book available online at
<http://store.transitionsunlimited.biz>



Have you always dreamed of writing a novel? Not sure how to start? Need help polishing that first draft you just finished? Then the “Hearts in the Sand” Conference, sponsored by the Estero-based Southwest Florida Romance Writers, is for you.

This day-long Book-in-a-Day Workshop will feature Debra Dixon, who is the nationally-recognized editor and publisher of Belle Books and author of twenty-two books. Her popular “GMC: Goal, Motivation and Conflict” workshop, inspired by Joseph Campbell’s “Hero’s Journey,” spawned a book that has become a how-to bible for writers.

Find out how to conceive and create strong plots and compelling characters at Debra Dixon’s intensive

BOOK-IN-A-DAY WORKSHOP

Saturday, March 12
9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Bonita Springs Elks’ Lodge
3231 Coconut Rd, Bonita Springs, FL

SWFRW members: \$65
Other RWA members: \$75
All others guests: \$85

BONUS EVENT:

Fri., March 11—6:30-9:00 p.m.
Hyatt Place Coconut Point
23120 Via Villaggio, Estero, FL
Cost: \$20

Debra Dixon will read anonymous submissions from attendees, and explain what does and doesn’t compel her to ask for more. This session will help writers understand what an editor looks for in a manuscript.

For more details or to register online, please visit the SWFRW website:
<https://swfrw.org/hearts-in-the-sand-conference/>



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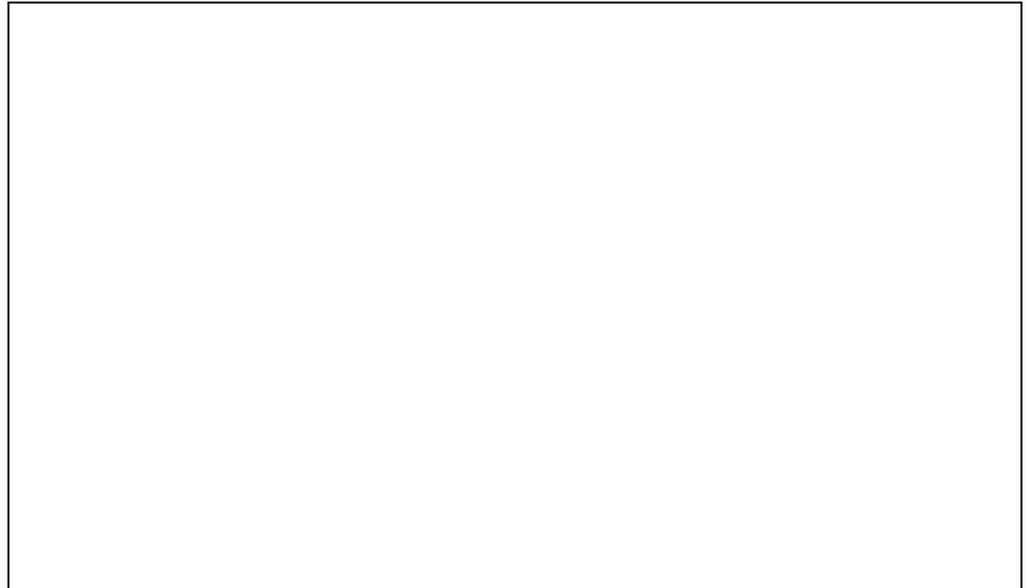
Abigail Dane strikes a pose



TRANSITIONS UNLIMITED, launched in 1991 by Rosanne Vrugtman, PhD, is a multi-service organization:

- 1) a training arm for customized personal and professional development programs;
- 2) a consultancy for individual, group and corporate clients; and
- 3) a publishing agency.

Dr. Vrugtman has earned five university degrees and her professional background includes careers in business, social services and education. She holds many certifications and is a Certified Brain Dominance Profiler, utilizing the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument® (HBDI®). Incuriably curious, an insatiable reader and an avid dabbler in the creative arts, she now writes historical romance as Abigail Dane.



“Confessions of a Romance Writer” at Renaissance Academy

“We teach best what we most need to learn.”

—Richard Bach, *Illusions: The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah*

My undergraduate degree was in English/ education and, for more than fifteen years, I taught under-graduate and post-graduate courses in business, academic, technical and creative writing. When I completed the first draft of my first historical novel, however, I realized how little I knew about what it took to get my book into my readers’ hands. I’ve had a crash course in romance writing and publishing over the past two years and am ready to share what I’ve learned with fellow writers who dream of being published.

During the FGCU Renaissance Academy winter 2016 term, I will offer two sessions of “Confessions of a Romance Writer”:

FGCU’s Naples Center
Friday, February 26, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Atrium, Ft. Myers
Friday, March 18, 10:00 a.m.-noon

Course Description: Romance writing, a \$1.5 billion-dollar/year industry, is driven almost exclusively by women. So why are the women who write—and read—romance novels so reluctant to admit it? This session will use presentation, discussion, readings, and stories to answer this question, along with participant questions about launching a romance writing career. Handouts and lots of practical information. Whether you’re just curious about this fascinating field or want to become a romance writer yourself, this session is for you.

Other sessions I’m offering this term are:

“Jumpstart Your Intuition”

“Success from the Inside Out”

“Zane Grey: Legend and Legacy”

Register for any of these classes (presented by my alter-ego, Dr. Rosanne Vrugtman) at:

<http://tinyurl.com/Vrugtman-Sessions>