

**FRIENDS OF MYSTERY
MEETING
BLOODY THURSDAY
SEPTEMBER 27, 2007**

Phil Stanford, columnist and author, is our speaker at the first Bloody Thursday lecture. Phil writes a regular column in the *Portland Tribune* newspaper. Prior to joining the *Tribune*, he was a columnist with the *Oregonian*. His column often is an historical look at the vice, crime and political corruption in Portland's past. Phil's book, *Portland Confidential*, examines "sex crime and corruption in the Rose City" during the 1950's. He has also published articles in the *New York Times*, *Parade*, and several other periodicals.

Phil Stanford is recognized for his work in connection with the murder of Oregon Corrections Director Michael Franke and continues to investigate the case. He strongly questions the conviction of Frank Gable for the crime. Another case that has long held his interest is the 1960 Peyton-Allen murder. This case was never solved. New information concerning the case has come to his attention and he is once again looking into the mystery.

We hope you will join us for what promises to be an interesting presentation. The meeting will be held at the auditorium of Good Samaritan Medical Center, 1040 NW 22nd Avenue (corner of NW 22nd and Marshall.) The evening will begin at 7:00 pm with a reception and the program will start at 7:30 pm. The meeting is free and open to the public.

Free parking is available in the garage adjacent to the auditorium. The Portland Streetcar and Tri Met run on nearby routes.

**MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR
2007-2008**

Most Friends of Mystery memberships expire on August 31 of 2007. Current members receiving their *Blood-Letters* by mail can check their expiration date at the top of their address on the newsletter. The membership runs from September 1 to August 31 to coincide with our Bloody Thursday series. For another year we have been able to hold the dues to \$20 annually. Friends of Mystery is a 501(C)(3) non-profit organization. Your dues and (appreciated) donations are deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

Funds from dues are used for printing and mailing of the *Blood-Letter*, Web page Internet fees, State non-profit fees and speaker expenses.

Members receive a copy of our newsletter, *The Blood-Letter*, either by mail or electronically. They also receive a 10% discount on purchases at Murder by the Book.

Please send in your membership dues without delay to: Friends of Mystery, PO Box 8251, Portland, Oregon 97207.

THE 2007-2008 BLOODY THURSDAY LECTURE SERIES

The coming season promises to be outstanding, with a variety of speakers discussing various aspects of the mystery/crime world.

Phil Stanford, columnist for the Portland Tribune and author of *Portland Confidential*, will start off the season on September 27th. He will be speaking about crime, politics and corruption in Portland's recent past.

Kris Nelscott and Mike Doogan will accept their Spotted Owl awards at the November 15th meeting. Kris Nelscott won Best Mystery Novel award for *Days of Rage*. Mike Doogan won the First Mystery Novel award for *Lost Angel*.

Dr. Frank Colistro is a forensic psychologist and serial killer profiler for law enforcement agencies. He is scheduled to speak at the January 24, 2008 meeting.

The Bloody Thursday meeting on March 27 will feature a panel of newly published mystery authors discussing their debut novels and roads they traveled to get there. Authors will include Bill Cameron, Gregg Olsen, Doc Macomber, Ashna Graves and Bob Napier.

At the May 22 meeting, best selling author Steven Saylor will be discussing his new *Gordianus* novel, *The Triumph of Caesar*.

We hope you will mark these events on your calendar and attend.

OFFICERS OF FRIENDS OF MYSTERY

The officers of Friends of Mystery are volunteers who have committed to provide certain services to continuing the organization.

Currently serving as president is Elinore Rogers, who is also the Chair of the Spotted Owl Committee. John Walsdorf is the chair of Special Events. Jeannette Voss is the editor of the *Blood-Letter*. Carrie Richards serves as the Treasurer. Carrie and Jeannette are also responsible for refreshments at the Bloody Thursday receptions. Bill Cameron volunteers his time and talents as our Web Master. Nancy Thomas is the Membership Chair. Carolyn Lane serves as our Publicity Chair. Stan Johnson is a frequent contributor to the *Blood-Letter*. Jay Margulies provides master copies for the annual brochure and bookmark as well as welcome advice and support. Maggie Stuckey heads the Reading Group. Members of the Spotted Owl Committee are Pete Scott, Marlyne Stucky, Marilyn Katz, Carrie Richards and Jeannette Voss.

FRIENDS OF MYSTERY READING GROUP

Maggie Stuckey, Chair of the FOM Reading Group has announced the titles that will be discussed during the 2007-2008 year:

- **September** – *Snow Falling on Cedars*, by David Guterson
- **October** – *Dead Irish*, by John Lescroart
- **November (14th)** – *Case of the Missing Books*, by Ian Sansom
- **December** – *Sugar Cookie Murder*, by Joanne Fluke
- **January** – *In the Bleak Midwinter*, by Julia Spenser-Fleming
- **February** – *Dangerous Road*, by Kris Nelscott
- **March** – *Apothecary Rose*, by Candace Robb

- **April** – *Queen of the South*, by Arturo Perez-Reverte
- **May** – *Rules of Prey*, by John Sandford
- **June** – *Bone Hunter*, by Sarah Andrews

The group meets at 7:00 pm on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at Murder By the Book, 3210 SE Hawthorne in Portland. For information about the group, call 503-232-9995.

Book review

Raymond Chandler:
A re-consideration

By Stanley Johnson

New and recent mystery novels had piled up beside my reading chair, demanding attention – works by Michael Connelly, T. Jefferson Parker, and Alexander McCall Smith, among others, as well as books by northwest writers J.A. Jance and newcomer Bill Cameron awaiting review. I cavalierly pushed them aside and turned to the past and the novels of Raymond Chandler.

My long-standing interest in Chandler was re-awakened recently by the reissue of the film version of his novel, *The Long Goodbye*. Good as the film is, I realized as I sat through it that it left out much of the meaning and social criticism of the book. The only solution was to go back to Chandler himself and see how he holds up in 2007. For my reading I chose two of his books, a middle one, *The High Window* (1942), and his last completed one, *The Long Goodbye* (1954). Coincidentally, the two I chose are the two Chandler novels that H.R.F. Keating includes in his list of the 100 best crime and mystery books.

Chandler (1885-1959) had a relatively short writing career. Born in Chicago, he was educated mainly in England and served in the Royal Air Force in World War I. Back in the United States, he settled in southern California and worked in the oil business. He did not begin writing until 1933, when he was 48 years old. He had several short stories published in *Black Mask* and other pulp magazines before he turned to writing novels.

His total output was small: six novels in fifteen years, from *The Big Sleep* in 1939 to *The Long Goodbye* in 1954. A short novel, *Playback*, was published in 1958, but it was fragmentary and incomplete. He also wrote for the screen, and received Academy Award nominations for screenplays of *Double Indemnity* in 1944 and *The Blue Dahlia* in 1946. An anthology, *Raymond Chandler Speaking*, a selection of essays, letters, and notebook jottings, was published in 1962. Some of his short stories and novelettes were reprinted in *The Simple Art of Murder* (1950, 1968) and *Killer in the Rain* (1964).

Chandler's major work is probably not a specific title, but the continuing character of his private detective, Philip Marlowe, who appears in all the novels and many of the short stories. He established the quintessential character of many of the fictional detectives who followed him. In an essay, "The Simple Art of Murder," Chandler gave his concept of the character as he moved away from the dingy streets of Los Angeles to the wealthy suburbs of Pasadena, keeping personally remote from both extremes. He is a knight "in search of a hidden truth," Chandler says, and adds in a famous passage:

"Down these mean streets a man must go who isn't himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid...He must be a complete man and a common man and yet an unusual man...He is a relatively poor man, or he would not be a detective at all. He is a common man or he could not go among common people."

Above all, he is a lonely man. The circumstances of his work make it difficult or impossible for him to establish close relationships. Its perils make him disinclined to share his life with anyone else.

Marlowe changes and develops, of course, and it is this progress which might be the most absorbing feature of the Chandler novels as a whole. So it seemed to me on my recent re-reading. In the first book, *The Big Sleep*, he takes on a case for the dying General Sternwood, surrounded by all the trappings of wealth, but caught in a web of greed and blackmail.

From this point to the last novel, *The Long Goodbye*, in which Marlowe sends a friend of

his off to Mexico even though he believes he may have murdered his wife, Chandler shows him becoming increasingly distant from his society, pessimistic about their motives and fearful of their collapse. He still remained his own man, though, taking a couple of beatings rather than yield what he knows.

In this novel, he is more tired, more disillusioned, more vulnerable than he has ever been before. He has seen too much of a man-eating, soul-devouring society. He has only his own integrity to cling to, and the modest fee for which he strives to *“protect the innocent, guard the helpless and destroy the wicked.”* There in a single statement is the over-riding theme of the Chandler novels.

Is Raymond Chandler still as good as he ever was? Yes!

Is Raymond Chandler still our best detective novelist? Yes!

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Check our website
(www.friendsofmystery.org) for a
list of FOM author/members who
have recently published new books.
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