

# KeyNotes

December 2008



Ideas, Inspiration, and News You Can Use to Write and Publish Your Book

## *Hello, Authors and Publishers ~*

Does anyone out there know what happened to 2008? Seems to me it was just January, and now I understand that another new year is barely a month away. Before we can sing Auld Lang Syne, there are family gatherings, parties with friends, endless buffets, and the lovely cold snap of frosty, moon-bright nights to enjoy. Whatever else you do during the holidays, be sure to take few moments to soak up the feelings of good will that fill the air.

Welcome to December's issue of **KeyNotes**. It's been a memorable year for The Silloway Press, capped by the publication of our first title, **Real Estate the Rome Way**. There are several exciting projects in the pipeline that you'll read about a bit later. For now, on to the regular features, with warm wishes for a spectacular holiday season and a healthy, happy new year!

## *Can I Quote You on That?*

How to find a quote that encompasses the season without focusing on Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or none of the above? I think this works:

*Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love!*  
- Hamilton Wright Mabie

## *A Peek at 2009*

After a fine 2008, we're looking ahead to a very busy – and frankly fun! – year in 2009. First we'll celebrate the publication of **Real Estate the Rome Way**. Before the champagne loses its bubbles, we'll be getting ready for the release of a book that will prove valuable to small business owners who are ready to sell and move on to the next adventure. Watch for more about this in the January KeyNotes. On the heels of that business book will be the **Writer's Book of Days**, a year's worth of daily inspiration for every writer you know.

Our newest project is **Clan McFrugal**, a book and a website that will launch in the spring of 2009. We're all looking for ways to save money and conserve resources while the economy finds its equilibrium. Clan McFrugal will include the collected wisdom and creative problem-solving gleaned from generations of all of us who are Scots at heart, whatever our nationality. Look for more about this in your next KeyNotes.

## *My Word!*

I just learned this word: absquatulate (ab-skwatch-u-late), meaning to leave in a hurry. It's a word with substance; it fills your mouth and gives your jaw a good workout. Can't wait to use it in conversation.

## ***It Happened This Month***

December 1 - The first installment of Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* was published in 1860. Dickens was in the middle of his own economic crisis and needed money. Along with some personal situations, he had started a magazine called *All the Year Round* that was beginning to founder. So he wrote a new novel and published it in serial form in the magazine. By the final installment, he had sold more than 100,000 copies of *Great Expectations*.

December 3 - Agatha Christie disappeared from her home in England in 1926. Huge search parties combed the countryside after the mystery writer's car was found in a chalk pit seven miles from her house. The story was top news throughout England until 11 days later when she was found staying in a luxury hotel under another name. Christie claimed she didn't remember anything. Whether she truly had amnesia, or whether it was a publicity stunt, no one really knows.

December 19 - Benjamin Franklin began publishing *Poor Richard's Almanac* in Philadelphia. The Almanac was filled with useful information like tide tables and weather reports, but it was the witty proverbs that made his Almanac so popular. Much of what he wrote has become part of our language, such as "Haste makes waste" and "Well done is better than well said." Ben had worked in his brother James' print shop as a teenager; *Poor Richard's Almanac* was a direct competitor to his brother's *Poor Robin's Almanac*. Robin's was first, but it's Richard's we remember.

December 21 – If you love crossword puzzles, this is your day to celebrate. On December 21, 1913, the very first crossword puzzle appeared in *The New York World*. Journalist Arthur Wynne invented what he called a "Word-Cross," but a typesetter made a mistake and printed the game as "Cross-Word" and the name stuck.

A famous crossword puzzle in London's *Daily Telegraph* for May 1944 included the words Utah, Omaha, Overlord, Mulberry, and Neptune. These were highly classified code names linked to D-Day, June 6, 1944, but a later investigation by military intelligence concluded it was coincidence. Do you believe in coincidence?

## ***Featured Article – Oh, Those Dreadful Resolutions!***

Do you make New Year's Resolutions? If you do, how does it work for you? I'm one of those who gave up after years of fine resolutions and less than fine implementations. Now, when pressed for a resolution, my favorite is, "I resolve to include dark chocolate in my diet regularly." This meets the requirements of being something that is good for me – we all know that dark chocolate is healthy, right? – and being a goal I can easily attain.

For my writing, rather than make resolutions that don't have a chance ("I will write 500 words a day every day"), I prefer to list reminders – those things that I forget when deep in a project or feeling as if I haven't accomplished anything beyond being frustrated. Rather than "I will write every day" it will be "Do something for a writing project every day." That allows me to include finding articles in the newspaper, or clipping something from a Smithsonian magazine. It can be networking with other women business owners,

visiting a museum or craft show with a friend, or drafting an article to contribute to the local business journal. All of it feeds into the writing and publishing.

A reminder can also be, "Stand up and walk away." I don't know about you, but I tend to keep after something that isn't working, whether it's a sentence or a software program, until I'm ready to use my laptop as a Frisbee®. Persistence is good; dogged head-banging against brick walls is not. So I have to remind myself to put space between me and the nemesis du jour so that some fresh air can blow through. There's always something else that needs attention.

"What can I do that makes a difference?" That's an important one. Is there anyone who doesn't want to make a difference, to feel that the world (or some small corner of it) is better for you having been here? This is one that can easily get lost in busyness, which is why it's on my reminder board. It doesn't have to be a big thing; sometimes all it takes is a phone call or a card that says "I'm thinking of you."

One of the most important reminders is a question: "Am I still having fun?" Some days the answer is a growl, but I know that's situational and fleeting. Other days it's a chair wiggle, a grin, and a flip of the head; that's good. If the answer ever comes back a flat, battleship gray "No," there will be changes ahead. Because it just isn't worth spending what little time we have doing something that saps the spirit.

Am I still having fun? Absolutely! And I hope that you can say the same all through the year ahead.

## ***The Keeper of the Keys***

That's me, Peg Silloway. Lover of words and collector of books. Publishing is a natural outgrowth of my life-long love of writing, and now I'm pouring that love of wordcraft into creating books that have something to say, that can make a difference, and that help authors' publishing aspirations become reality. Mix that passion for the written word with a background steeped in business reality - accounting, project management, and small business management - and you have The Silloway Press.



Isn't it high time you published your book? Call me at 301-335-9368, or email me at [Peg@SillowayPress.com](mailto:Peg@SillowayPress.com). Together we can make it happen. **Write On!**

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