

Author Biography for **SUSAN MEISSNER**



Susan Meissner



Susan Meissner is a multi-published and award-winning author with a background in community journalism. She is the wife of a pastor and chaplain in the Air Force Reserves, and a mother of four young adults. *Publisher's Weekly* says "Meissner's prose is exquisite and she is a stunning storyteller." When she's not writing, Susan directs the Small Groups and Connection Ministries program at her San Diego church. Find her online at www.susanmeissner.com.

In Her Own Words

I cannot remember a time when I wasn't driven to put my thoughts down on paper. I attribute this love for writing to a creative God and to parents who love books and more particularly to a dad who majored in English and passed on a passion for writing.

I was born and raised in San Diego, California, and am the second of three daughters. My first writings are a laughable collection of oddly worded poems and predictable stories I wrote when I was eight. My second-grade teacher gave me the journal I in which I recorded these poems and stories. To my knowledge I was the only student in her class that she gave a journal to; she must have seen promise in me. In high school my freshman composition teacher found all kinds of ways to encourage me to develop my skills as a writer. Without telling me beforehand, he read the first composition I ever wrote for him aloud to the class. That's how much he liked it. I have never forgotten how it felt to hear him begin to read something to the entire class and realize it was something I had written.

I didn't do a lot of writing in the years my husband was on active duty in the Air Force, when we were living overseas, or when we were raising our four children. When we moved to rural Minnesota in 1993 after seven years in the Air Force—five of them spent in Europe—I became aware of a gnawing desire to write a novel. I ignored it while the children were young, choosing to try writing articles for magazines. Nothing ever got published however, so I began to think my best days as a writer had already happened in high school with Mr. Barone.

In 1995, I was offered a job as a part-time reporter for my county newspaper. The publisher gave me my own weekly column. In 1998, I was named editor of the Mountain Lake/Butterfield Observer Advocate, the town's weekly paper, after the county newspaper purchased it. I was honored to win several awards over the years, but the best part of my four years as editor was having



my paper named the Best Weekly Newspaper in Minnesota by the Minnesota Newspaper Association in 2002.

That year became a rather pivotal one for me as a writer. My beloved paternal grandfather died in July 2002—my Papa—and his passing had a profound effect on me. I suddenly had an incredible urge to write a book; a novel. I knew I didn't want to come to the end of my life having only dreamed of writing one. I resigned as editor of the newspaper, which was a very hard decision to make, and set out to write *Why the Sky is Blue*. It took four months to write and ten months to be accepted by a publisher and I've been writing novels ever since. My favorite genre is contemporary fiction with a historical thread running through it.

Currently, my husband is an associate pastor at a church in San Diego, and a chaplain in the Air Force Reserves. When I'm not working on a new novel, I am directing the small groups ministries at The Church at Rancho Bernardo. I also enjoy teaching workshops on writing and dream-following, as well as spending time with my family, listening to or making music, reading great books, and traveling.