



August Blog Tour - Week # Two

My virtual office has been transformed into the bridge of the good ship Milford-Haven: charts spread out, compass guiding us to each new set of coordinates, a series of friendly ports behind us, and gleaming water ahead.

My crew and I hope you've been enjoying the sights and sounds, feasts and snacks, and many new friends we've all been meeting.

If you're just joining us, here's how this works. You come on board, sit at the Captain's table, and enjoy a delicious feast of words and ideas. Sometimes we're talking about mystery, sometimes about romance; sometimes we talk about creating, sometimes about sitting back to enjoy. Thanks to the variety of bloggers hosting us, we provide a mix of sweet and savory—humorous and serious. (To find out more about how the tour works, you can click here <http://marapurl.wordpress.com/2011/08/01/launching-the-blog-tour-boat/>)

So grab your straw hat, flip-flops, and sun screen, then head for the dock and climb aboard the sailboat Milford-Haven.

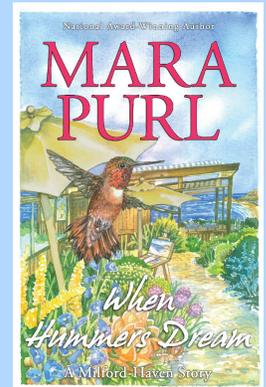


A Hummer Update

The first book in the Milford-Haven Novels series has a prequel—a short story that introduces protagonist-painter Miranda Jones, and the subject of her newest painting, a hummingbird.

When Hummers Dream is an e-book—free for your Kindle through Labor Day, and 99 cents for your Nook.

The story is complete unto itself, but it also leads right into **What the Heart Knows** and gives you an “edge” as you begin the series. Don't have an e-reader yet? We're offering a special pdf download for free. Visit www.BellekeepBooks.com/ Bonus. Enter the password BKbonus!



Blog Visit #4 – Flip Flops and FABS

Speaking of flip-flops . . . I had a fantastic time connecting with Kathy Holmes—a California girl who now lives in Las Vegas. (As you can tell from her blog image, you can take the woman out of California, but you can't take the California out of the woman.)

FABS, by the way, are Frosty Alcoholic Beverages. But I think what's FAB is the way Kathy has identified a key element in life that sometimes goes missing: fun!

She figured out this is a critical ingredient not only to life in general, but to our working life, so for her this has become a kind of compass check to see whether or not she's on the right track.

To read her insightful questions and the answers I gave, visit Flip Flops here. And to read my blog about Kathy, her own books, and her fantastic blog site, read my Flip Flop post.

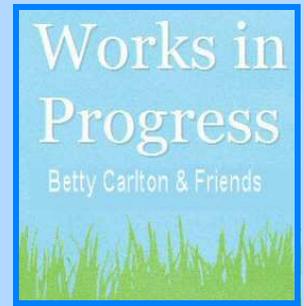


Blog Visit #5 – Works in Progress

You have to admire a person who worked at a steady job until she was within sight of a comfortable retirement, then was suddenly laid off, who then embarks on an entirely new career.

Betty Carlton is an author now, but not one who sits in an ivory tower. Instead, she asks questions of colleagues, and thanks them by creating her wonderful Works In Progress blog. She interviews all kinds of interesting people, learning along the way and sharing the wealth.

Her posting about me revealed such an unabashed enthusiasm that it made me feel as refreshed as if I'd just had a lovely swim. When I interviewed her in return, we got into an interesting conversation about genres. I keep discovering that "Romance" can no longer contain the richly multitudinous kinds and styles of books that make up Women's Fiction, and Betty's experience was another confirmation. Enjoy reading my blog about Betty.



Blog Visit #6 – Lady Killers

How does a group of successful, wickedly smart, mystery-writing women keep themselves amused, inspired and connected? By joining together to create The Lady Killers Blog.



Headed by Ann Parker, the group take turns blogging on themes, and inviting others as occasional guests. I got to choose the theme for my guest shot: When Smart Characters Do Stupid Things. This was great fun to write, but got at some important issues too . . . for characters, for writers, and for readers. See what you think by reading my guest post.

Read more about Ann and her wonderful historic mysteries on my Lady Killers blog.

Blog Visit #7 – Reading Group Choices

I've noticed that the women I've met who belong to book clubs value their membership and take it quite seriously. The commitment they make is not only to reading the agreed-upon books, but also to pondering what they've read deeply enough to participate in real discussions. There seems to be another aspect to their commitment too, a kind of fierce devotion to the special time carved out of busy schedules.



Reading Group Choices has become a major resource for anyone who runs or participates in a book club. They post reviews, reading guides, interviews, suggestions. They have a great database searchable by author, title, or subject. And they answer individual questions personally. They list the reading guide for my new book *What the Heart Knows*, and it's a superb springboard either for discussion with others, or just for your own thought-process.

Barbara Mead invited me to share an experience I had while being the guest at a dynamic book club, which I loved sharing with a wider audience. And to read more about Reading Group Choices, read my RGC Blog.

Blog Visit #8 – Art Biz Blog

Artists are people who work from the inside, rather than from the outside. We don't get paychecks from external sources like companies, but we do receive payment for the things we create.



How, though, shall we value our work? How present it to the world? How find the resonances that will bring that value into the lives of our readers, viewers, clients, customers? Alyson Stanfield has built a marvelous business coaching artists, teaching classes, and making it possible for artists to be living the artist life they're meant to live.

All this resonated with me both because, as a writer, I'm an artist in the broad sense. And also because my protagonist is a painter. When Alyson and I talked about what would be of value for her followers, I came up with the "Be's of the Artist Biz."

I held back Be #7: Be Whole. And I'll blog about that soon. Meanwhile, you can read more about Alyson and her terrific activities at my Art Biz Blog.

Full Tour Schedule in the Press Room!

The full blog tour schedule is posted and constantly updated. Enjoy finding out where I'll be day by day during the month of August.

<http://www.cisionwire.com/mara-purl/r/author-actress-mara-purl-touching-hearts-with-august-blog-tour,c9149149>



If you'd like to find out anything about the new book and the new book launch, join us in the Press Room! Here the media can find photos, press releases, and all the latest news about my books and events. The symbol is a link to allow you to subscribe via RSS feed to my news. We have some great new VIDEOS!

We're already getting a wonderful response from the press! Is there a newspaper in your town or city that you think might be interested in topics like: What do women read? What is Women's Fiction? Is there Men's Fiction? What's the difference between Women's Fiction and Romance? Is fiction relevant to today's world? And . . . many other related topics . . . let me know! My wonderful marketing team will be happy to schedule an interview. Contact Dianemarie or Doug DMProductionsLLC.

Blog Tour Second Lessons

Here's what I'm loving about this tour now that I'm two weeks down-river. What I love is that it's all about service. Can you imagine how boring it'd be if I did nothing but say "Blah, blah, blah, my books, my books, my books, buy them buy them buy them? This tour would hit the rocks and break up into kindling.

Instead, most of the time I spend is in studying the blog I'm about to visit, learning what *those* readers are interested in, and making sure to deliver what *they* need and want. Book Club members need guidance choosing books that match their groups interests; romance readers need to have an inkling as to *why* a book will actually deliver a satisfying read; artists need practical tips on how to market their work effectively. It's a challenge to expand my own awareness and a joy to be of service.



Are these intriguing blog sites piquing your interest and meeting your needs? I hope you'll sample some of them and let us know! And thank you for joining me and now hundreds of thousand of others on this journey through the blogosphere!

I would love to hear what you're thinking, or how you're feeling. If you'd like to share this part of my journey, you can read or subscribe at MaraPurl.WordPress.com I hope you'll join me and find yourself in . . . Milford-Haven!