

DEBORAH O'TOOLE

Spring Newsletter, April 2024

TOPICS:

In the Shadow of the King / Native American Cuisine

In Progress / Leisure Activities / Until Next Time



Hello dear readers,

Spring has sprung! *Or has it?* The local weather ushered in another snowstorm - along with what is known in these parts as "thunder snow" - as late as March 24th. As of this writing, it is still cool and cloudy, but I'm not complaining as I love it.

I took an unplanned six-month "sabbatical" from September-October 2023 onward. It proved to be a much-needed respite, a recharging of mental and physical batteries, if you will. Jerry and I also had a few medical issues between us, which are currently being treated successfully. Not having to report to a day job also certainly aided in our collective healing. I was able to read quite a bit, and happily caught-up on several favorite television programs.

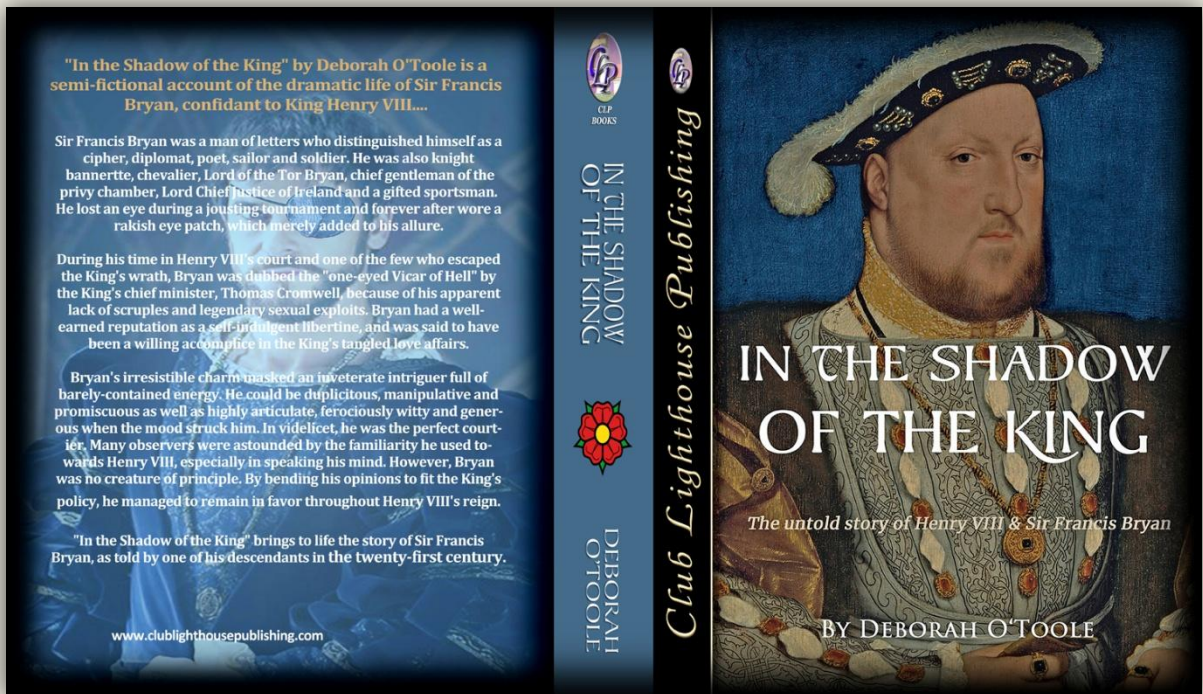
Everything aside, I'm happy to be back in the full swing of things.

~ IN THE SHADOW OF THE KING ~

In the Shadow of the King was released by Club Lighthouse Publishing on July 19, 2023. The paperback edition is now available on Amazon, while the e-book is available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble and on the Club Lighthouse Publishing website.

Needless to say, I'm thrilled! :)

I'm also very happy with the final back and front covers, especially the inclusion of the "Tudor Rose" on the spine.



Definition of the Tudor Rose from [Wikipedia](#):

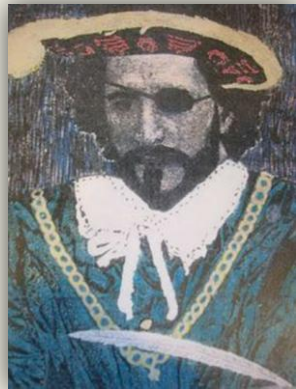
The Tudor rose (sometimes called the Union rose) is the traditional floral heraldic emblem of England and takes its name and origins from the House of Tudor, which united the House of Lancaster and the House of York. The Tudor rose consists of five white inner petals, representing the House of York, and five red outer petals to represent the House of Lancaster.



While there are no known likenesses of Sir Francis Bryan - allegedly because he was self-conscious about his eye patch and refused to have his picture painted - I decided to include an existing fictional portrait, which was located at Butler Castle in the storyline. Because I'm a visually inspired author when it comes to descriptions of people and locations, I based his looks on one source: a sketch of a 16th-century man

wearing an eye patch, credited to John Wilhite at the website [Find-A-Grave](#) (*pictured below left*).

Then my publisher also came up with a rendering of the man (*pictured below right*), which hits the nail on the head, in my opinion. Tall and swaggering, Bryan simply had to be handsome in order to earn his reputation as a rake in the court of Henry VIII.



Hopefully, I was able to do him justice - however he may appear in the reader's mind.

I first began writing [In the Shadow of the King](#) in 2002. It seems like another lifetime ago, but there you have it. I pecked at the novel off and on for many years, along with the sixteen other books that were published before it. There were several occasions when I was convinced I could never pull it off, yet my perseverance served me well in the long run. I'm delighted with the finished tome, and would gladly do it all over again.

As I've stated before, I felt somewhat bereft when [In the Shadow of the King](#) was complete. I lived and breathed the story for so long, it was disconcerting to be without it once it was finished. I was literally ensconced with the book morning, noon and night for more than a year. Letting go was difficult, but now I'm all good.

My fascination with the Tudor period of history remains intact, despite the hundreds of hours of meticulous research I undertook to bring [In the Shadow of the King](#) to

life. I now have at least one hundred books containing research material, which I fully intend to keep on my bookshelf.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who made In the Shadow of the King possible.

I'm eternally grateful to Club Lighthouse Publishing, in particular Terrie Lynn Balmer, Palvi Sharma and James Wason. Their welcome input and assistance has helped me through more than one book. A special nod also goes to video-master extraordinaire, Barbara Cerda.

Heartfelt appreciation is given to my friends and family, who remained supportive even while I was basically incommunicado during much of the past year as I worked on In the Shadow of the King: Sulaiman Av, Barry & Bobbi Barber, Karen Bittleston, Kami Corry, Ken Davies, Krista Davis, Terri O'Toole Denham, Sheila Domon, Jeff Dorsey, Shaun "Retribuse" Ferguson, Phil Foster, Brendan Gallagher, Jen "Talia" O'Toole, Kathy O'Toole Holley, JoAnn Huber, JoAnn Kaiser, Debbie Lanier, Bernadette McGirk, Mike & Kim Miner, Mike Mortimer, Anne O'Halloran, Rheata O'Hare, Ben & Sharon Opfermann, Caineach Ciaran O'Siofra, Karen O'Toole, Nancy O'Toole, P.J. Peterman, Dawn Ashley Phillips, David Policansky, Tracy John Powell, Marie Spencer Russo, CoCo Saltzgeber, Patricia Schneck and John Whiting.

I also have a close-knit community of online friends who have remained supportive throughout, including Nathan Baxter, Diane Best, James Bieurke (*along with the comedic antics of his Ginger & Bella*), Francine Tyson Boness, Kerry Ross Boren, Kandace Bryan, Greg Campbell, Pam Diane, Keri Elkington, Pauline Jamias, Jon Leythorne, Karen Lindquist, Maria Martinez, Eleanor Wood Mason, Francesco Mele, Denis McCloskey, Steeven Prabakar (*along with his adult children, Sushma and Sun Deep*), David Michael Ryan, Rick Simonson, Daniel Timothy and Wilson Rodriguez Vacca. I see and read all of your comments and emojis, which frequently offer me inspiration.

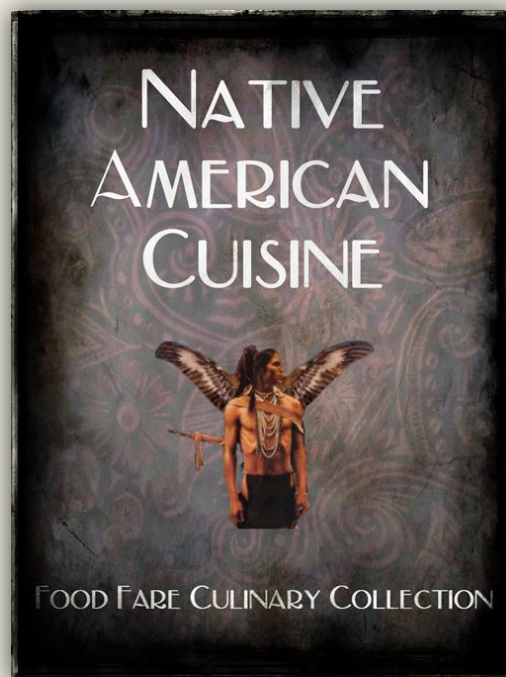
I definitely want to give a shout-out to all of my readers, many of whom contact me on a regular basis. Your input is much appreciated, even when it is critical.

And last, but not least, much love and thanks to my significant other, Jerry Dalton. His sense of humor and calming influence kept me from going over the edge several times as I wrote [In the Shadow of the King](#). In addition, his observations and offhand remarks sometimes found their way into the storyline, but it's up to the reader to guess where.

I couldn't have brought [In the Shadow of the King](#) across the finish line without all of them.

~ NATIVE AMERICAN CUISINE ~

It's been quite a few years since I've added new titles to the [Food Fare Culinary Collection](#), but I'm happy to report I was finally able to finish [Native American Cuisine](#) in July 2023. The book - which is #41 in the collection - is now available at [Amazon](#) and [Kobo Books](#).



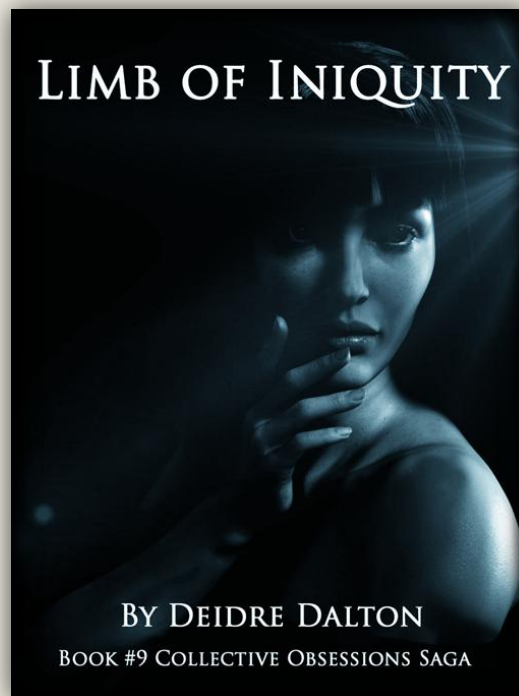
Native American Cuisine contains a brief history of Native American Indians and tribes, traditions, authentic Indian recipes, and resources for further study. Some of the dishes include *Acorn Bread*, *Catfish with Pine Nuts*, *Cornmeal Cookies*, *Crawfish-Shrimp Pot with Sweet Potatoes*, *Huckleberry Bread* (Cherokee), *Indian Frybread* (Navajo), *Juniper Tea*, *Kanuchi* (Hickory Nut Soup; Cherokee), *Piki Bread* (Hopi), *Pine Nut Milk*, *Poyha* (Native American Meatloaf), *Pozole* (Hominy Pork Stew; Navajo), *Roasted Trout*, *Sunflower Cakes* (Apache), *Three Sisters Soup*, and many more.

The recipes are also freely available online.

~ IN PROGRESS ~

I've had to push back release dates for my historical essays about Lizzie Borden and Michael Collins yet again. I've shifted both essays for conclusion sometime in 2025. The reason being? My recent six-month sabbatical and the immersion of writing one book, which is currently in progress:

❖ Limb of Iniquity (2025)



During my self-imposed respite, I decided to change the beginning of the novel, which I'm currently re-writing. I'm estimating it will take me at least one year - or maybe more - to finish the book, therefore leaving me little time to work on the half-completed essays until 2025.

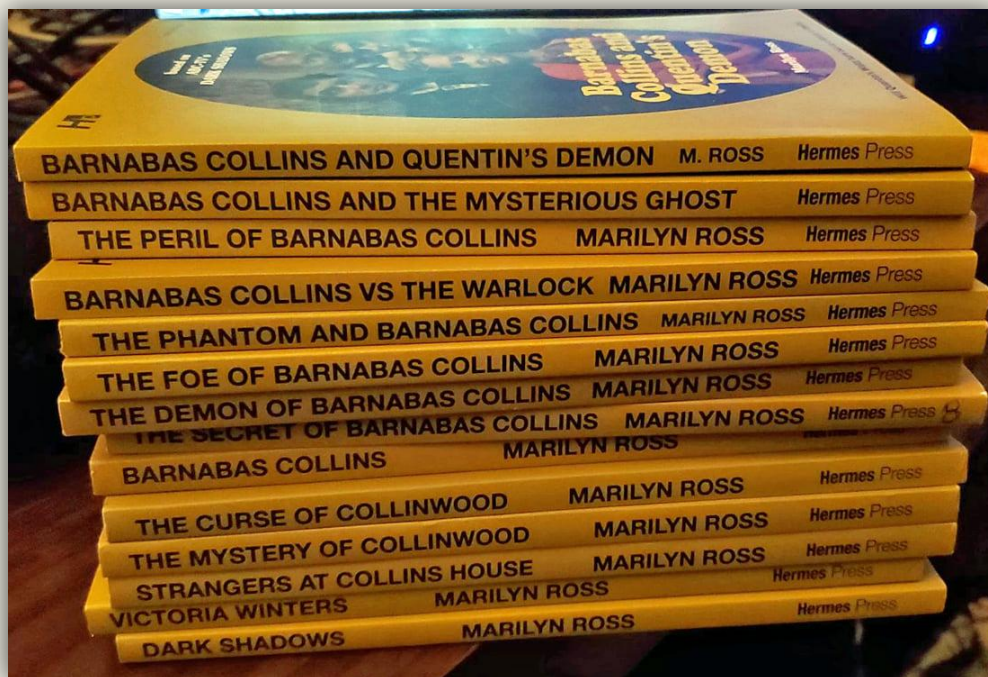
Other novels in the works:

- ❖ Celtic Fragments (*sequel to Celtic Remnants; 2026*)
- ❖ Spirit of the Ossuary (*prequel to The Crypt Artist; 2026*)

As per my usual notation, storylines, estimated release dates and book cover designs may be subject to change.

~ LEISURE ACTIVITIES ~

I was finally able to complete my collection of the Dark Shadows gothic novels late last year. The reads total thirty-two books in total. Needless to say, I'm very happy with the acquisition. Much thanks to Hermes Press for making the novels available as reprints with the original cover art in place.



I also read [Gone with the Wind](#) for the first time. I've seen the movie many times over the years, but had never read the novel by Margaret Mitchell. In addition, I tried to read its sequel - [Scarlett](#) - by Alexandra Ripley, which was published in 1991, forty-two years after Mitchell's death, I was not impressed with Ripley's work. Frankly, I could not even finish the book because it bored me to tears.

We had a plentiful vegetable garden last year, which yielded acorn squash, bell peppers, pumpkins, tomatoes and zucchini. The garden produced so much zucchini, we had to give some of it away to friends and neighbors. I also had to devise ways in which to prepare it, including [Shrimp & Zucchini Pasta in Creamy Lemon Sauce](#)



(pictured above). [Bundt cake](#), casserole, feta roll-ups, zucchini fries, fritters, grated zucchini with shallots (*recipe created by Julia Child*), griddle cakes, loaded baked potatoes, quiche crust using zucchini, pesto, scones with feta and thyme, spaghetti with zucchini, stew with Italian sausage and zucchini, turkey and zucchini meatballs, zucchini shells stuffed with sausage and couscous, and - of course - the standard [zucchini bread](#).

Bon Appétit!

~ UNTIL NEXT TIME ~

Another newsletter will likely be coming your way in late autumn/early winter of 2024, so keep your eyes peeled.

Meanwhile, visit my [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages for updates, or go to my blog [Irish Eyes](#) to view recent posts.

Until next time - *happy reading . . .*

Deborah O'Toole 🍀

Friday, 29th March 2024



Newsletter font: *Adobe Garamond Pro.*