

## **Books In Sync Recognizes Author Carole M. Lidgold (Books In Sync Press Release)**

Carole M. Lidgold (nee Thomas) was born in Toronto, is married, mother of two, grandmother of two, and attended Winston Churchill High School in Scarborough. She inherited her voice from her grandfather and father, and has sung in The Canada Life Choralaires, various church choirs and has been a member of the Serenata Singers for eleven years. Carole is the author of *The History of The Guild Inn* and has eight other self-published books. She tried politics but lost out and has since worked as a secretary, currently retired as a church secretary.

### **Featuring: *Birds On My Brush* by Carole M. Lidgold**

In April 1763, unknown artist and naturalist, Elizabeth (nee Symonds) Gwillim was born in England. She accompanied her husband, Henry, to Madras, India, in the 1800s, where she died in 1807. In London, England, in 1924, a Dr. Casey Wood, surgeon and ornithologist, discovered in an 'out of the way shop of arts', Elizabeth Gwillim's watercolour paintings. Today, 2009, these painting, painted two decades before Audubon published his illustrious *Birds of America*, are part of the Blacker-Wood collection of Zoology and Natural History, at McGill University, Montreal, Quebec. Prints of several of her painting of India's birds are included in this novel.

### **About The Story:**

*Birds On My Brush* is a novel based on the few known facts of the life and untimely death of Elizabeth Gwillim. My character, Sarah Purcell, was born in the spring when birds were chirping the birth of their new offspring. As a child, and later as an adult, Sarah was obsessed with sketching precise details of the birds. She married William Cantwell, a barrister determined to live in the land of his boyhood hero, Robert Clive, and English hero in India's development. Sarah's younger sister, Rose Purcell, accompanied them on this journey. Rose's tortured dream of death in India hampered her enjoyment of this new life.

### **Birds on My Brush Book Review:**

A compelling account of an unknown artist's life!

The life and times of 18th-century wildlife artist Elizabeth Gwillim are shrouded in mystery and uncertainty. She was born in England in 1763 and moved to India with her husband in the early 1800s, where she worked diligently to perfect her art.

She never achieved public recognition in her lifetime and she died, an obscure, undiscovered artist, in her mid-40s; it appeared, for the longest time, as though her art may have gone to the grave with her.

Nearly two centuries later, Gwillim's wildlife watercolours were "discovered" in a London, England art shop. Today, in death, Gwillim has achieved what she could not in life; her wildlife art, notably her precision sketches of birds, has been widely praised as among the finest of its era. Gwillim's work now forms part of the Blacker-Wood

Collection of Zoology and Natural History at McGill University in Montreal, one of Canada's pre-eminent schools of higher learning.

Carole M. Lidgold, a Canadian writer fascinated with Gwillim's life and art, has painted a fascinating portrait of Gwillim's life in her new, fact-based fictional novel entitled *Birds on My Brush*. Lidgold has taken what is known of Gwillim's history and has built around the edges, crafting a fully-realized novel from the sketchy framework of Gwillim's remarkable life.

She has created a lead character, Sarah Purcell, utilizing the Purcell character as a standin for Gwillim, and producing a sweeping, engrossing tale that lovers of art and history will find both hugely enjoyable and dramatically memorable.

The story covers the artist's life from the early years in England, through the productive artistic period in India, to the point of the artist's comparatively early death. Along the way, this much is made very clear: author Lidgold's fascination with Gwillim's life and artwork shines brightly throughout the novel's 280 pages. A particular bonus for readers is that *Birds on My Brush* offers up not only some factual context of the details of Gwillim's life, but also some representative samples of her artistic work.

Lidgold is an accomplished writer, whose stories typically brim with life and vitality. *Birds on My Brush* offers something beyond that – an historic and artistic integrity that takes readers well back in time to contemplate the challenging life of an artist who produced first-rate work, but couldn't break out from the prison of artistic obscurity.

The novel is a well-constructed triumph. It is a triumph that the artist herself could imagine only in her dreams.

Reviewed By Anonymous Reader

**Book Details:**

Paperback: 280 Pages

Publisher: Self-Published (April 17, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0968938116

ISBN-13: 978-0968938119

Genre: Fiction

**Print List Price: \$16.95**

Amazon Purchase Link:

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[carole.lidgold@sympatico.ca](mailto:carole.lidgold@sympatico.ca)

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**Author's Webpage On Books In Sync:**

<http://www.booksinsync.com/authordirectory/lidgoldcarolem.html>

**Author's Email:**

[carole.lidgold@sympatico.ca](mailto:carole.lidgold@sympatico.ca)

**Submitted by Theodocia McLean**

**Owner of Books In Sync**

**Website:** <http://www.booksinsync.com>

**Submission Date: February 11, 2010**