



Annie's Stories

Cindy Thomson

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The year is 1901, the literary sensation *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is taking New York City by storm, and everyone wonders where the next great book will come from. But to Annie Gallagher, stories are more than entertainment—they're a sweet reminder of her storyteller father. After his death, Annie fled Ireland for the land of dreams, finding work at Hawkins House.

But when a fellow boarder with something to hide is accused of misconduct and authorities threaten to shut down the boardinghouse, Annie fears she may lose her new friends, her housekeeping job . . . and her means of funding her dream: a memorial library to honor her father. Furthermore, the friendly postman shows a little too much interest in Annie—and in her father's unpublished stories. In fact, he suspects these tales may hold a grand secret.

Though the postman's intentions seem pure, Annie wants to share her father's stories on her own terms. Determined to prove herself, Annie must forge her own path to aid her friend and create the future she's always envisioned . . . where dreams really do come true.

Annie's Stories Details

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From Reader Review Annie's Stories for online ebook

Bethany says

This was the second book that I read by Cindy Thomson, the first being Grace's Pictures, and I really enjoyed continuing the Ellis Island adventure! While I think that Grace's Pictures is my favorite of the two novels, I did enjoy Annie's Stories and really enjoyed getting to meet Annie as well as see how Grace was doing after her story came to a temporary close in Grace's Pictures.

While there are many similarities between Grace's Pictures and Annie's Stories (book one and two in the Ellis Island series), they are both stand-alone novels that don't have to be read in order. While it's nice to know Grace's background from reading the first book, it's completely optional, and not necessary in order to enjoy Annie's Stories.

The Ellis Island novels focus on Irish immigrants who have recently traveled to Ellis Island in hopes of a better life, and Annie Gallagher is no exception. Following these young women's journey in this new land, it highlights their joys and trials experienced while living in a new place. In Annie's case, there is some "baggage" from her past in Ireland that she has to deal with and heal from, and seeing that journey unfold on the pages was very inspiring. As a woman who unjustly suffered abuse in her past, the healing process is very detailed and tedious, but when she meets a fellow boarder who is going through the same trials, she is able to offer an understanding hand brought up by experience, and is able to make a difference. While there is a bit of sensitive content in this portion of the book, I don't think it ever got inappropriate, and was handled well. However I did wish to mention it so readers are aware of this before diving into the story.

The Wizard of Oz, which was really becoming quite popular during this time that the story takes place, in the early 1900s, had a big role in this story as Annie read it and related with a lot of the themes. I always love books based on characters who also share a love for books, or those that have a thread of books themselves in the novel, and really felt like there was a lot of The Wizard of Oz in this novel, which I loved!

One of the things I love about this author is the writing style that often reminds me of Janette Oke in the simplicity of a slow romance that is very clean and doesn't clog up the story-line. The main story-line focuses on Annie's story in Ellis Island, so her budding romance with the mailman wasn't the main focus. That makes for a good book choice for those who don't like as much romance in their reading material, however on the flip side, it probably wouldn't be the first choice for those who like lots of romance and a suspenseful story. Unlike a lot of novels, this book focuses on Annie and her journey in a new land and her relationships with her friends, versus a romance. But the down side to this is the fact that often times I felt like this novel was slow, and while it never really bothered me all that much, it was still something I noticed. The story-line was very good and interesting but I felt like it was somewhat dragged out at times.

In all, I really enjoyed this heart-felt novel following one Irish immigrant's journey to healing. While sometimes a bit dragged out, it was still a very pleasant read, and is on my bookshelf of novels that I am definitely keeping despite space restrictions. Fans of Grace's Pictures should read this second installment in the Ellis Island novels!

D I S C L A I M E R :: I received a free copy of Annie's Stories through the publisher for the sole purpose of this review. I was not paid to write this review, and all thoughts expressed are my own, completely honest and unbiased.

Amy says

Annie's Stories is a perfect example why Cindy Thomson is such a talented writer. This is book two of the Ellis Island series. Right from the start, I could not stop turning the pages. Cindy captures how early nineteenth century New York City was with so many different cultures and immigrants. Of course, being of Irish descent, I enjoyed Annie being an Irish immigrant and learning more of the Irish culture. I loved how Grace from the first book of series, Grace's Pictures makes many appearances. I loved catching up with her and still continue with her story, as well. I really thought using The Wonderful Wizard of Oz as a theme of the story to be quite interesting and refreshing. This book is rich in historical detail. Many of the details I did not know before. I, also, loved how there was an addition of mystery and suspense that kept me reading and not want to put it down. There are many twists and turns that I did not see coming.

Great Book! Well done, Cindy Thomson, you really have outdone yourself this time.

5 stars and up.

Kris says

What a wonderful story! This book is proceeded by Grace's Pictures but stands alone as well. It has mystery, romance and history all in one book. I loved the characters and how real they seemed! At one point Mrs. Hawkins, aka The Hawk, says, "Some people think Shakespeare is just for the university types, but just because a woman hasn't been to university doesn't mean she can't read, love."

Annie is a new immigrant to the United States and has been hired as housekeeper at a boarding house. Mrs. Hawkins, the owner, treats her as a daughter. But will the Pinkerton detectives shut the house down for the supposed illicit activities of one of the boarders? And what secret is Mrs. Hawkins keeping? Annie's stories are the stories her dead dad has left her and pose quite a problem for Annie – should she seek to get them published or keep them for herself? After all, with the publishing of The Wizard of Oz, which everyone seems to be reading, there is a demand for children's stories. But Annie is not the only one with a dilemma – Andrew, the mailman, does not seem to ever be able to pay his debts and ends up in a bad situation, making very poor financial decisions. But both learn to listen to God's still voice and learn from their mistakes. It was also very enlightening to learn about times that morality seemed so very high, yet so many abuses occurred by people who ought to be trusted, with the truth then kept very quiet. Very good book and I really enjoyed it. I received this book from TBCN in return for my honest opinion.

Faith says

A good historical novel will take you back through the years and let you remember a time you never experienced.

Cindy Thomson's Ellis Island series is doing just that.

A great historical novel won't stop there, though, it will also give you characters to befriend while you're in its pages.

Cindy Thomson's books do that as well.

In 2013, I met Grace McCaffrey, Irish immigrant and boarder at Hawkin's House. Grace's story was one of self-discovery and mystery- including a run-in with one of New York's gangs.

Now, in 2014, I got to go back to Hawkin's House and have tea again with the matron whose keen-eyed compassion earned her the name Hawk. This time she introduced me to another boarder, Annie Gallagher.

Where Grace fell in love with photography, Annie's passion is stories. Especially because the stories are the last physical gift from her departed father. Smooth, faded pages, carefully treasured manuscripts bearing delightful children's tales. That is her one inheritance. Annie keeps them in her desk, and lets them inspire her heart. They wouldn't mean much to anyone else, but they remind her where she came from.

Annie is a dreamer, and she strives to live with confidence in herself and her abilities. She has experienced terribly adverse circumstances and she isn't giving in to despair. Instead, she is channeling her energy: Annie wants to build a library and dedicate it to the education and improvement of young girls like herself.

In the meanwhile though, there are myriad challenges to overcome before that dream can be made of brick and mortar.

A strange man is investigating Hawkin's House, a new boarder is in grave danger, and a postal worker seems quite smitten with our Annie.

What's a girl to do?

Stephen Adams, the postal employee, is a lovable and rather lovestruck character. He's a mailman back when a mailman might deliver three times in one day, and he's proud of his profession. He's also a bibliophile, and it's the shared love of stories that draws them together.

And he's got a few troubles: unpaid bills, a slightly slick opportunist of a landlord, and a terrible case of Tongue-Tie around a certain Miss Gallagher.

Watching Stephen fumble his way around Annie adds some gentle comedy to this novel.

Watching Annie stand up for herself and discover her own capability, that makes Annie's Stories an excellent choice for girls to read. We need as many heroines as possible. Annie Gallagher and Grace McCaffrey are fine ones.

Thank you to Cindy Thomson for the opportunity to be a first reviewer of her new book. I hope it finds an enthusiastic readership!

Angelica Dimeo says

I won this book on goodreads.

Annie's Father has died and she moved to America from Ireland. Annie lives at Mrs. Hawkins home

as a housekeeper, lives with Grace and Kirsten and Aileen her cousin.

Mr. Adams is the postal worker who delivers mail and has a tragic past.

This book is a historical Christian with mild romance.

It was pretty good a little slow at points but not bad.

I enjoyed the book and the ending.

Thanks for the opportunity.

Nancy says

A Visit With My Ancestors

The introduction to Annie, Mrs. Hawkins and the other Irish ladies was like riding through the serene tunnel of a roller coaster and being lulled in by the gentle banter among them. Then the climb up each step of the storyline that would soon plunge into a free fall of loops and twists you could not have seen coming. And what a fun and exhilarating ride it was. As a McCall, I now know more about my Irish heritage and truly want to learn even more. The magical story of Annie's beloved father's stories was masterfully woven in with the lessons of one of the great classics. I look forward to backing up a little to the first book in the Ellis Island series. Highly recommended reading, regardless of your family history.

Tammy G. says

I enjoy stories written by Cindy Thomson. I loved Grace's Pictures. And Annie's Stories is in somewhat.of.the.same. venue but yet, it's its own story.

Annie must find work. She finds a rather good job in the housekeeping area at a boarding house, Hawkins House. But when one of the tenants is accused of wrong doing and the authorities threaten to shut the House down Annie knows she may have to find another job. Not an easy task. Then there's the "over friendly" postman who show way to much interest in Annie. Annie knows her father's unpublished stories may hold a secret...does the postman know? Are some secrets worth holding onto? And is her father's secret worth enough to hold onto. Annie only knows this is her way to make a tribute to her father.

Annie only knows that she must help her friend who is accused of wrongdoing. Stories that have a moral and a christian theme that show integrity and kindness are few and far between...that's why this is such a great read! Loved this great story! Mystery and history . . . what a way to spend a summer afternoon reading about lives of past ages! A great read for mystery and history fans!

(This review is based upon a copy of this book which was provided free of charge from Tyndale House Publishers. These opinions are my own; I was not required to write a positive review, nor was I compensated for this review.)

Lindsey (Books for Christian Girls) says

About this book:

“The year is 1901, the literary sensation The Wonderful Wizard of Oz is taking New York City by storm, and everyone wonders where the next great book will come from. But to Annie Gallagher, stories are more than entertainment—they’re a sweet reminder of her storyteller father. After his death, Annie fled Ireland for the land of dreams, finding work at Hawkins House.

But when a fellow boarder with something to hide is accused of misconduct and authorities threaten to shut down the boardinghouse, Annie fears she may lose her new friends, her housekeeping job . . . and her means of funding her dream: a memorial library to honor her father. Furthermore, the friendly postman shows a little too much interest in Annie—and in her father’s unpublished stories. In fact, he suspects these tales may hold a grand secret.

Though the postman’s intentions seem pure, Annie wants to share her father’s stories on her own terms. Determined to prove herself, Annie must forge her own path to aid her friend and create the future she’s always envisioned . . . where dreams really do come true.”

Series: Book #2 in the “Ellis Island” series { You can see my review of book #1, “Grace’s Pictures”, [Here!](#)}

Spiritual Content- Annie thinks God can’t be bothered, that He abandoned her and that “If God was not with the president, then how could Annie ever expect he would protect her?” (*Spoiler* She becomes stronger her in Faith at the end. *End of Spoiler*); Father Weldon helped Annie a lot & talks about God to her; Stephen has a firm Faith; Church going; Many Scriptures & Psalms are quoted; A hymn is sung; a “for the love of St. Michael”; Many Talks about God.

Negative Content- Minor Cussing including: two ‘stupid’, two ‘idiot’s, two ‘what the devil’s, two ‘get a backbone’; Stephan calls his cowlick hair ‘cursed’; Suicide is mentioned (how the man did it, nothing else); Cigar smoking (not-detailed, not the main characters); Annie has nightmares/flashbacks of her time at Magdalene Laundry.

Sexual Content- A flashback to Annie at Magdalene Laundry and a boy kissing her & a doctor lingers while giving her a check-up (just how she felt, not-detailed/semi-detailed); A 2nd character tells Annie that she tempted a man, that he forced himself on her, violated her (she calls herself soiled) and *Spoiler* she has a miscarriage after all that. *End of Spoiler*; a hint about a girl who was raped (no detailed); Love & Falling in love.

-Annie Gallagher
-Stephen Adams

P.O.V. switches between them.

Set in 1901

382 pages

Pre Teens- One Star

New Teens- One Star (and a half)

Early High School Teens- Two Stars

Older High School Teens- Three Stars

My personal Rating- Three Stars

{Because of the Magdalene Laundry and what Annie went through there = lower ratings}

I really liked how “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz” played such a major role and how Annie really grew in her Faith. I also liked how both characters loved books. This quote made me crack up!

‘He was an average-looking, hard working fellow who was more comfortable reading about people in books than socializing with them.’

Link to review:

<http://booksforchristiangirls.blogspot.com>

*BFCG may (Read the review to see) recommend this book by this author. It does not mean I recommend all the books by this author.

*I received this book for free from the Publisher (Tyndale House Publishers) for this review.

Anita Morrison says

Really enjoyed this book. I loved that she referenced books that were current at the time the story takes place. The characters were interesting and I loved that Annie had dreams of owning her own library.

Emily says

A sweet novel set in 1900 NYC, based around new Irish Immigrant Annie Gallagher, who has arrived in America after the death of her father. Annie wants to put her traumatic past behind her, but she's not sure if she can do it, alone and in a new country.

Christy says

My personal reading preference just did not care for this story. I found it quite boring; but it has really good ratings so this is just my opinion. I think all reviews can be helpful even negative ones. Mrs. Hawkins drove me batty calling every one "love." Stephen and Annie's reflective thoughts were very repetitive; we continuously read of their hardships over and over again. It was somewhat stale for me; just not enough

going on. On the positive side I prefer my historical reads to be without all the love fanfare and this book was low romance and I liked that aspect. This was just not a keeper for me.

Melissa Henderson says

Very interesting story. From family history to life adventures, this story takes the reader on a journey of turmoil, devotion, love, faith and courage. Great read.

Sharon Wilharm says

Annie's Stories is a fun little story from the turn of the century. Since it takes place in New York City and focuses on an Irish immigrant, it reminded me of Brooklyn. But it has its own unique style. I really enjoyed the tie in with The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, showing the response of readers when it first came out. I look forward to reading the other books in the series.

Lorrie says

What a wonderful story this was! The characters were positively delightful! And the dialogue was beautiful. The women were ladies and the men were gentlemen. There is Scripture quoted throughout the story, so it is told from a Christian perspective.

I would highly recommend this book. I enjoyed it immensely.

I received an e-copy of this book from Net Galley in exchange for an honest review.

Paula Vince says

Annie Gallagher is a young Irish woman who immigrated to New York around the turn of the twentieth century. She leaves behind a volatile extended family situation and some traumatic experiences, but does manage to hold onto her beloved father's stash of children's stories. He was a hedge school master, who used to try to make a living traveling around, teaching under his own terms in the great outdoors for barter. Annie lives at a boarding house run by the loving Mrs Hawkins, who treats all the young women beneath her roof as if she's their mother.

Stephen Adams is the friendly postman, who has lost everything, including his family, but still tries to stay optimistic. He finds himself in a bind when his landlord, who is also a publisher and a bit of an opportunist, threatens to kick him out for his debt, unless Stephen can find a great children's manuscript for him to publish. Given the title of this book, it's not difficult to predict where the story is heading.

A great chunk of Annie's back story jams up the first few chapters, making me wonder if there's a prequel. It turns out there is (I haven't read it), but not necessarily the sort I would have expected. It's about Grace, one of the other girls who lives in the boarding house, and I don't know how much of Annie's story is revealed in

it. I just finished wading through her back story, when another great block, this time her friend, Kirsten's, is introduced in the next chapter! It all made the movement grind off to a slow start, deferring the start of this novel's plot.

I never really got over this feeling of dragging, even though the premises of the story were so good. We have the backdrop of interesting, early 1900s America, and the sensation the publication of L. Frank Baum's 'The Wizard of Oz' was making. There's also Annie's dream of building a library to bless and cheer poor folk like herself. Maybe it's because the plot seemed to move like clockwork in several ways, with things falling into place, reminding me of a High School drama performance. I couldn't get over the feeling that an author was pulling the strings for these characters.

I did appreciate the evidence of Annie's wounds from her past, which she found hard to shake off. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder wouldn't have been named in 1901, but it was happening. Even though Annie had been rescued from the trauma of her past, she was still grappling with the memories of betrayal and dread feelings. I looked up Magdalene Laundry, and discovered that such a horrible place really existed under that name. How human, to be insecure and worried that something awful might happen again, even in new and cheerful surroundings.

Overall, though I wanted to love this book with its appealing blurb and cover, it wasn't really my cup of tea.

I received a copy from Net Galley and Tyndale House in return for an honest review.
