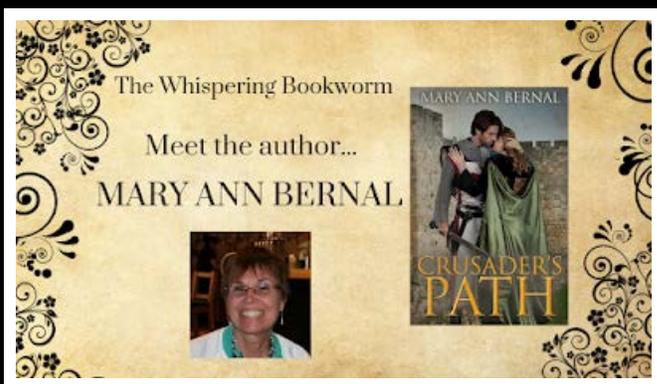


The Whispering Bookworm

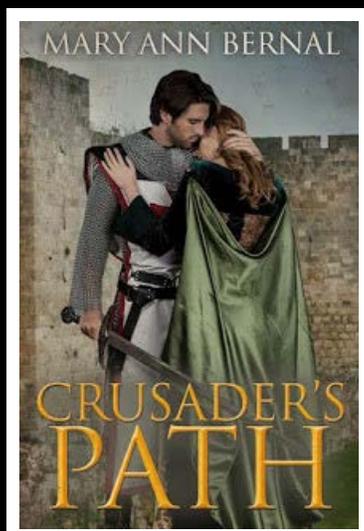
Tuesday, December 15, 2020

Meet the author, Mary Ann Bernal #HistoricalFiction @BritonandDane

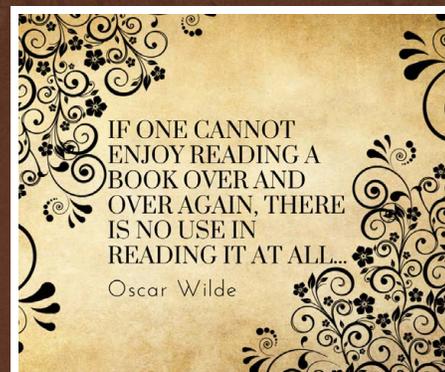


I am excited to introduce you to historical fiction author,

Mary Ann Bernal



From the sweeping hills of Argences to the port city of Cologne overlooking the River Rhine, Etienne and Avielle find themselves drawn by the need for redemption against the backdrop of the First Crusade. Heeding the call of His Holiness, Urban II, to free the Holy Land from the infidel, Etienne follows Duke Robert of Normandy across the treacherous miles, braving sweltering heat and snow-covered mountain passes while en route to the Byzantine Empire. Moved by Peter of Amiens' charismatic rhetoric in the streets of



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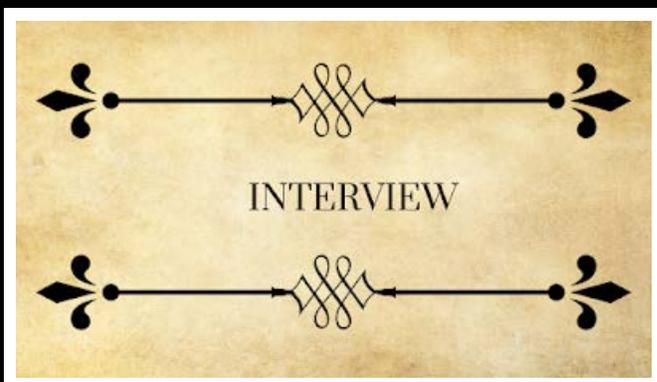
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the Holy Roman Empire, Avielle joins the humble army of pilgrims. Upon arrival in Mentz, the peasant Crusaders do the unthinkable, destroying the Jewish Community. Consumed with guilt, Avielle is determined to die fighting for Christ, assuring her place in Heaven. Etienne and Avielle cross paths in Constantinople, where they commiserate over past misdeeds. A spark becomes a flame, but when Avielle contracts leprosy, Etienne makes a promise to God, offering to take the priest cowl in exchange for ridding Avielle of her affliction. Will Etienne be true to his word if Avielle is cleansed of the contagion, or will he risk eternal damnation to be with the woman he loves?



What inspired you to start writing?

Whenever I read a novel or saw a movie, I would ponder different endings, especially if I was not satisfied by how a story ended, whether in print or on the big screen. I would envision the characters behaving one way or another, which, of course, had different consequences for all the characters. My favorite thought has always been, "what if? I became enamored with knights in shining armor, Viking conquest, Crusading armies, Ancient Egypt with its mummies and pharaohs and emperors and gladiators of Ancient Rome.

What was the hardest part about writing this book?

It was a challenge to keep the intricate storylines true to the paths followed by Robert Curthose, Duke of Normandy, Peter the Hermit, and Princes' Army. Three separate routes met in Constantinople before the march onto Jerusalem. It was a difficult journey filled with hardship, disease, famine, and death. The prize was freeing the Holy Land, a victory bought with blood. Warfare is not glorified but realistically portrayed.

Does one of the main characters hold a special place in your heart? If so, why?

Etienne is a flawed knight of the realm, loyal to his overlord despite the personal cost. His inner conflict within the confines of the mores of his time is relatable today. I wanted him to have it all, unrealistic, of course, especially in such a violent time. Etienne's journey towards enlightenment gives us hope, living life to its fullest. He is not perfect, and that is why he is special.

If your book was to be made into a movie, who are the celebrities that would star in it?

Etienne: Tom Cullen; Robert Curthose: Henry Cavill; Gideon: Travis Fimmel; Peter the Hermit: Anthony Hopkins; Pope Urban II: Jude Law.

Avielle: Emma Stone; Isabella: Freya Allan; Rebecca: Annabel Scholey.

What do you hope your readers take away from this book?

Understanding warfare, which is not glamorous but deadly. Also, a working knowledge of how the Crusades came into being and how Pope Urban II's decision created a conflict that continues to this day.

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Mary Ann Bernal attended Mercy

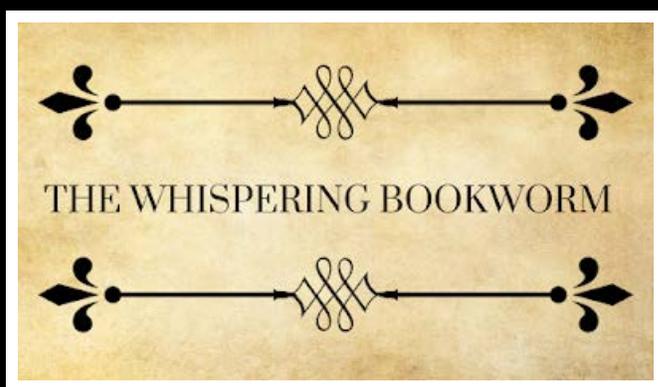


College, Dobbs Ferry, NY, where she received a degree in Business Administration. Her literary aspirations were ultimately realized when the first book of The Briton and the Dane novels was published in 2009. In addition to writing historical fiction, Mary Ann has also authored a collection of contemporary short

stories in the Scribbler Tales series and a science fiction/fantasy novel entitled Planetary Wars Rise of an Empire. Her recent work includes Crusader's Path, a redemption story set against the backdrop of the First Crusade, and Forgiving Nero, a novel of Ancient Rome.

Since Operation Desert Storm, Mary Ann has been a passionate supporter of the United States military, having been involved with letter-writing campaigns and other support programs. She appeared on The Morning Blend television show hosted by KMTV, the CBS television affiliate in Omaha, and was interviewed by the Omaha World-Herald for her volunteer work. She has been a featured author on various reader blogs and promotional sites.

Mary Ann currently resides in Elkhorn, Nebraska.



at December 15, 2020



1 comment:



Mary Ann Bernal December 15, 2020 at 5:20 AM

Thank you for having me. Your support is greatly appreciated.

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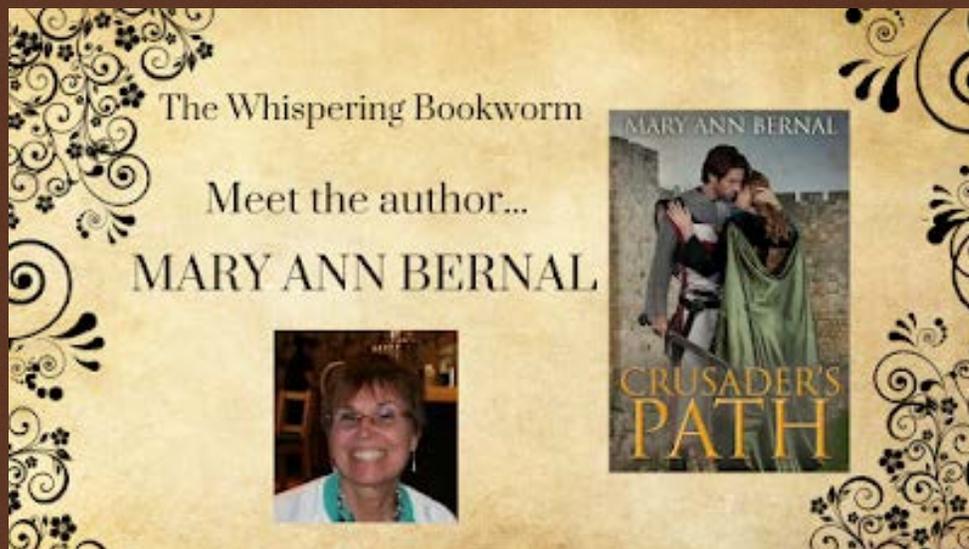
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