

LOCAL AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT:

Karen White

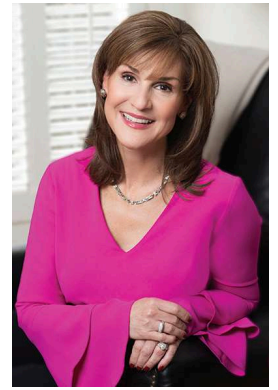
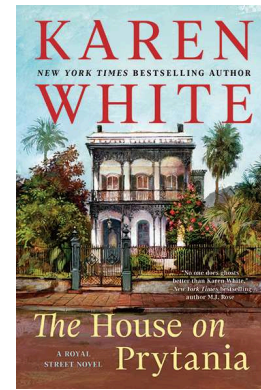
BY MIRANDA WILEY

Georgia is home to a number of outstanding authors. *Our Milton Neighbor* and Poe and Company Bookstore are excited to share these local authors and their published works with our readers.

Karen White has been an avid reader since she was a young girl, but never expected to become a writer. After reading Diana Gabaldon's *Outlander* series, she fell into a "book hangover" and could not pick up another book to read. So, she chose to do the thing that her teachers had always told her she should do – write a book. "I was mentally kicking and screaming when I sat down at my computer one day and just started typing out the kind of book that I would want to read," says Karen. She never expected to finish it because she was not a "real writer" and felt she had no idea of what she was doing. But to her own surprise, Karen did finish it and sent it on to a writing competition only because entries who reached the final round would be given a written critique by author Diana Gabaldon. After sending in her manuscript and the \$35 entry fee, she was surprised to not only receive the critique but ended up winning the contest. The finalist judge was a New York literary agent who ultimately

would offer to represent her – and that is how she sold her first book! She is now a *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author of 34 books, including the Tradd Street series, *The Last Night in London*, *Dreams of Falling*, *The Night the Lights Went Out*, *Flight Patterns*, *The Sound of Glass*, and *A Long Time Gone*. She is the coauthor of *The Lost Summers of Newport*, *All the Ways We Said Goodbye*, *The Glass Ocean*, and *The Forgotten Room* with *New York Times* bestselling authors Beatriz Williams and Lauren Willig.

While both of her parents are from Mississippi, Karen grew up all over the world due to her father's career with Exxon. Attending middle and high school in London, England, she returned to the US for college where she graduated from Tulane University in New Orleans with a BS in Business. Karen worked in the business world until her first child was born and her husband's job with Bank of America moved their family to Georgia in 1992. Karen and Tim have lived in three different houses in the Alpharetta/Milton area where both of their children, Meghan and Connor, were raised. Now empty



nesters, they currently reside in Milton with their spoiled Havanese dog, Sophie. When Karen is not reading or writing, she spends her time birdwatching and avoiding cooking.

Karen writes around themes of family and home and finding strength within to overcome life's obstacles and struggles. She shares, "I use a lot of emotion in my stories, and hope that my readers are crying and laughing as much as I did while writing." As for ideas – she finds them everywhere! She often listens to true-crime podcasts as those are the very best examples of family drama to the extreme. Just listening to conversations around her at the grocery store or jury duty or wherever she may find herself, she finds the world around her is a wonderful inspiration.

Her goal in writing a book is primarily for entertainment. But she has discovered over the last 23 years of writing that her stories have helped people not only as a distraction



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from some of life's troubling moments, but they have also taught, comforted or inspired many – which she says, “humbles me, but also encourages me to keep writing.”

Because Karen writes Southern Women's Fiction, she prefers to read outside of her genre. Her go-to genres are historical fiction and domestic thrillers (like *Gone Girl* and *Girl on a Train*). Her favorite authors of all time are Pat Conroy, Harper Lee, Margaret Mitchell, and Diana Gabaldon. Authors that she likes to read now include Liane Moriarty, Kate Morton, Ruth Ware, and Kristen Hannah.

For Karen, the best part of writing is “the period of time before the writing begins when the story ideas begin to drift into my head, and I get to play with the idea of the book.” The worst part for her is actually writing the book. She continues, “There are periods of pure joy followed in rapid succession by moments of pure agony which makes the whole process a bit daunting. My second favorite part of writing is typing THE END.”

Next up is another collaboration with bestselling authors Beatriz Williams and Lauren Willig to be published in 2024. Karen is currently contracted for two more books in her Royal Street Series, the first of which is due out in 2025, along with another single title Southern Women's Fiction novel also due out in 2025.

To find out more about Karen and her books, please visit her website at karen-white.com. Links can be found there for her social media accounts, too.



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