



## AN INTERVIEW WITH BEVERLY STOWE McCLURE

by Donna M. McDine  
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Beverly Stowe McClure delighted me with a positive response to my email interview request. Beverly is a retired teacher and spends many of her days researching, writing and traveling. She has several published books and has quite a few more in the works. Her expert ability of submerging the reader from the onset brings you into the world of the characters seamlessly. She took the time out of her busy schedule to share her words of wisdom and a glimpse into her personal and writing worlds.

**Donna McDine:** Did you write while you were a teacher? Please share with us a memorable event while you taught.

**Beverly Stowe McClure:** I wrote a couple of magazine articles while I was still teaching. The first published article was about having fire drills in the home, based on a study of fire safety we did at school. I also turned one of the art projects my fifth-grade students did into “Fingerprints,” an article that was published in *Humpty Dumpty*. I guess this is what’s called “writing what you know.”

One event that stands out in my mind occurred when the fifth-grade teachers were preparing our students to read *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry. Many of the children knew nothing about WWII so we had them research—talk to parents, grandparents, read about—the subject. Two of my girls went to the local nursing home and interviewed a man who had been in the war. They taped his story. They also talked to a woman who told them what it was like having to ration sugar, gasoline coupons, and such. Then they played the tape for the class. It was awesome.

**DMc:** Where you an avid reader as a child? If yes, any particular author or series?

**BSMc:** Truthfully, I hated to read when I was a child, and I read only when necessary, like for book reports, which I hated, too. I did love to listen to a radio program called “Let’s Pretend” where they told fairy tales, like Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, and Snow White.

**DMc:** What is the best part about being a writer? What do you find to be the hardest part of writing?

**BSMc:** For me, the best part of being a writer is having a reader say she enjoyed my story and when does the next one come out.

The hardest part is getting the thoughts running through my brain down on paper where they make sense.

**DMc:** Whom or what gave you the encouragement to become a writer?

**BSMc:** My sons encouraged me when I started writing. I also discovered how much fun I had meeting characters that that whispered in my ears and wanted me to tell their stories.

**DMc:** What genre do you enjoy writing for the most? Why?

**BSMc:** Young Adult contemporary stories, with a touch of mystery, are my favorites. Why? I like to read these types of books. I also think the ages between 10 and 17 are full of wonder, learning, experimenting, and finding ones place in the world. I like to imagine what I would do in a particular situation, if I were that character. This makes me remember my teen years and relive them in a way.

**DMc:** Tell us about your latest project. Where did your inspiration come from?

**BSMc:** A paper found. A secret revealed. A girl’s life changes forever.

(Thank you for letting me practice the first line telling what my story is about.) My latest project is a YA novel about a girl who discovers she’s adopted and feels betrayed by the people she trusted the most, her parents. A newspaper article about sweethearts who had a child when they were young, gave the child up, went their separate ways, then years later reunited and found their son was the inspiration for this story.

**DMc:** What is your most valuable piece of networking material?

**BSMc:** I believe what’s helped me the most in networking is getting my name out there on the Internet: presenting at Lea Schizas Muse It Up Writing Conference, hosting writers’ virtual book tours, book reviews (thanks Donna), and my blogs.

**DMc:** What would you be if you were not a writer?

**BSMc:** A teacher. I loved the years I worked with children and would gladly do it again.

**DMc:** What advice would you provide to a newbie in writing for children?

**BSMc:**

- ✓ Study the types of books you'd like to write.
- ✓ Take a course on writing.
- ✓ Read, read, read.
- ✓ Join professional organizations such as the Society of Children's Books Writers and Illustrators.
- ✓ Sign up for message boards like Verla Kay's Blue Boards and Writing 4 Kids.
- ✓ Join a good critique group to get feedback on your work.
- ✓ If you truly want to be a writer, never give up.
- ✓ Have faith in yourself.

**DMc:** Please share with us a tidbit of information about your life that would surprise our readers.



**BSMc:** I was always a shy person, quiet, one or two best friends, never spoke up in class. But from the time I was a toddler, going to football games with my dad, I wanted to be a majorette. At the games, I waited for halftime when the band performed. I thought those girls in their short skirts, white boots, and silver batons were awesome. Well, in spite of my shyness, I did it. In junior high school, I joined the band, tried out for majorette, and made it. I also was a majorette in high school.

Visit Beverly at: <http://beverlystowemcclure.blogspot.com>, leave a comment on her most recent post, mention her interview and automatically enter to win a paperback copy of "Listen to the Ghost" or a PDF copy of "Secrets I Have Kept."

Donna's publishing credits include Stories for Children Magazine, Stories for Children Newsletter, Kid Magazine Writers, Long Story Short, Institute of Children's Literature Rx for Writers, SCBWI Metro NY Newsletter, and Once Upon A Time Magazine and a pending non-fiction article for Boys' Quest Magazine. She's also a children's book

reviewer for Musing Our Children Group, The National Writing for Children Center, and Stories for Children.

Learn more about Donna at: <http://www.donnamcdine.com>, sign her guest book, mention Beverly's interview and receive a FREE copy of "Write What Inspires You! Author Interviews," compiled by Donna M. McDine.