

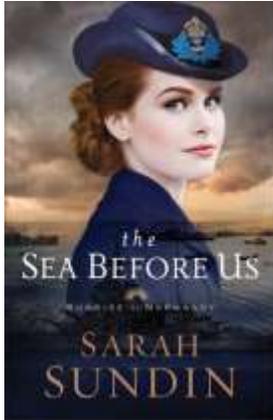


Publicity Contact: Karen Steele | ksteele@bakerpublishinggroup.com | 616.676.9185 x100

***World War II Novelist Introduces Readers to New Series
Based on the Invasion of Normandy***

“Sundin, exhibiting her usual flair for 1940s history and setting, will delight WWII buffs with this Waves of Freedom series opener.”

—*Publishers Weekly* on *Through Waters Deep*



Ada, Mich.—Award-winning author Sarah Sundin artfully blends emotionally rich romance with historical accuracy and heart-pounding scenes in book 1 of the new Sunrise at Normandy series.

In 1944, American naval officer Lt. Wyatt Paxton arrives in London to prepare for the Allied invasion of France. He works closely with Dorothy Fairfax, a Wren in the Women’s Royal Naval Service. Dorothy pieces together reconnaissance photographs with thousands of holiday snapshots of France—including those of her own family’s summer home—in order to create accurate maps of Normandy. Maps that Wyatt will turn into naval bombardment plans.

As the two spend concentrated time together, both Wyatt and Dorothy must resist their deepening feelings for each other. Dorothy’s bereaved father depends on her, and her heart already belongs to another man. Wyatt too has much to lose. The closer he gets to Dorothy, the more he fears his efforts to win the war will destroy everything she has ever loved.

Booklist stated that Sundin’s Waves of Freedom series was “an inspiring and triumphant labor of love.” The Sunrise at Normandy series will also blaze to life under Sarah Sundin’s practiced pen as she explores the tense days leading up to the monumental D-day.

The Sea Before Us

by Sarah Sundin

ISBN: 9780800727970 | 384 pages, paperback | \$15.99 | February 2018



About the Author

Sarah Sundin is the author of *Through Waters Deep*, *Anchor in the Storm*, and *When Tides Turn* in the Waves of Freedom series, as well as the Wings of the Nightingale and the Wings of Glory series. Her novels have received starred reviews from *Booklist* and *Library Journal*. Her popular *Through Waters Deep* was a Carol Award finalist and named to *Booklist*’s “101 Best Romance Novels of the Last 10 Years.” A graduate of UC San Francisco School of Pharmacy, she works on-call as a hospital pharmacist. Sarah lives in California. Visit www.sarahsundin.com for more information.

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Suggested Interview Questions

Can you please tell us about your newest book, *The Sea Before Us*?

In the Sunrise at Normandy series, the three estranged Paxton brothers fight on D-day from the sea, in the air, and on the ground. *The Sea Before Us* is naval officer Lt. Wyatt Paxton's story. In 1944, Wyatt arrives in London to prepare for the Allied invasion of France, determined to redeem himself with the brothers he has betrayed. Dorothy Fairfax serves as a "Wren" in the Women's Royal Naval Service, striving for the love of her bereaved father and of the man she's always adored. Wyatt and Dorothy work together on plans for D-day, but will family secrets, misplaced affections—and the seas off Normandy—separate them forever?

How did you become interested in the World War II time period?

Family stories piqued my interest from a young age. My grandfather was a pharmacist's mate (medic) in the Navy, my great-uncle was a B-17 pilot, and my grandmothers held down the home front. They were all storytellers, so I was blessed. The difficulties of the war helped shape them into strong and resilient people—people I long to be like.

What type of research was required for writing about D-day and the invasion of Normandy?

Plenty! To learn about the naval action off Omaha Beach, I read the action reports and war diaries of the American destroyers that served in that sector on D-day. For Dorothy's story, I read about the Wrens, including oral histories of some of the British ladies who served in the Royal Navy.

On the lighter side, I learned how to make a proper English pot of tea, found a recipe for Lord Woolton Pie, and discovered that colored pencils had been invented before World War II but weren't manufactured in Britain during the war.

Was there anything that you found particularly interesting in your research that you included in your book?

So many things! This novel was inspired by a little-known aspect of D-day—how the American destroyers supported the troops on Omaha Beach, charging dangerously close to shore to provide fire support just when the situation was most dire.

I also found out about the "Little Blitz," when the Germans returned to bombing London in early 1944. Since Dorothy lost her mother in the Blitz in 1940, this is particularly devastating to her—as it was to most Londoners, weary of war and its deprivations and hardships.

Are there any lessons that you hope readers can learn from *The Sea Before Us*?

In the story, Wyatt tells Dorothy, "When times are dark, it's hard to see the light, but it doesn't mean the

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light is less real.” Both of them are dealing with very dark times—war, air raids, shortages, and family crises—but Wyatt concentrates on the light and leans on God. I hope readers will learn along with Dorothy that God’s light is present at all times. As Psalm 139:9–10 says, “If I . . . dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there . . . thy right hand shall hold me.”

“Family” is a recurring theme in the Sunrise at Normandy series. How did this arise, and how is this theme timely today?

In this series, the three Paxton brothers are estranged—and don’t believe reconciliation is possible. Wyatt hasn’t had contact with his family in almost three years, and he misses them deeply. Meanwhile, Dorothy has lost three family members in the war, and her father is grieving poorly. Wyatt and Dorothy are drawn together as they try to adjust and to heal what’s broken.

In modern-day society, so many families are fractured, but this deep need for family remains. So how do we go about seeking forgiveness and reconciliation? And how do we satisfy that need for family when ours are broken by death, divorce, sin, or physical distance? I hope Wyatt and Dorothy’s story will inspire and comfort.

Both Wyatt and Dorothy long to protect those they love—but find it isn’t always possible or even good. When does this urge to protect become a problem?

I’m always amazed how God draws parallels between my life and my novels. While writing this story, I was adjusting to the empty nest as our youngest son joined the Navy and was deployed overseas. As a mom, I want to protect my children and hold them tight in my hands. In *The Sea Before Us*, Dorothy longs to protect her grieving father and Wyatt wants to protect his family and Dorothy too. But they each come to see that control is an illusion—their loved ones are in the Lord’s hands, not theirs. While we must provide reasonable protections for those we love, we also need to trust them in God’s hands, remembering He loves them even more than we do.

What are you working on next?

Currently I’m writing *The Sky Above Us*, the second book in the Sunrise at Normandy series, which features the middle brother, Adler Paxton, a P-51 fighter pilot, and Violet Lindstrom, a Red Cross worker serving at his airfield.

How can readers connect with you?

I love to hear from readers! Please visit my website at www.sarahsundin.com. There you can send me a message or sign up for my email newsletter. I’m also active on Facebook (SarahSundinAuthor), Twitter (@sarahsundin), and Pinterest (Sarah Sundin).

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