

Fictional shore town includes Nazis and spies in former Mendham writer's book

By PHIL GARBER Managing Editor | Posted: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 1:00 pm

MENDHAM - It may be down the shore but Island Bluffs is hardly a relaxing place to vacation.

Island Bluffs is a fictional town similar to so many summer shore villages. It is the title of Alan A. Winter's newest novel and it combines the Holocaust, a ghostly home and the experiments of the notorious Nazi "Angel of Death," Josef Mengele.

Like his previous novels, "Islands Bluffs" has a significant basis in fact as a young couple seek the help of a fertility doctor while they also buy a house that offers some ghostly memories.

Winter, 66, is a periodontist with a practice in New York City who formerly lived in Mendham and now lives in Bernardsville. He said the idea for the book has been percolating for many years, ever since he was performing oral surgery on an older lawyer in 1993 who said his home in Brick was haunted.

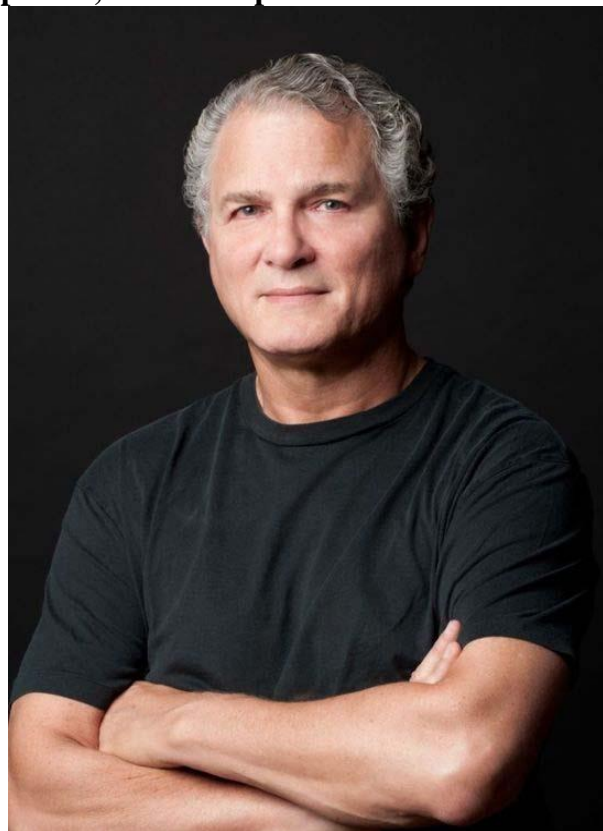
"I asked him more about it and he told me about how he bought his dream house in Brick and later found it was the home of a ghost," Winter said.

Staying with the real story, Winter said the patient explained that a strange man had offered a blank check to buy the house but that he refused to sell his dream home. The patient said he began researching the property and found that a German spy had supposedly lived in the home during World War II and fed information to a Nazi U-boat not far off shore.

In fact, there was evidence of significant German-American Bund activity in the area and the U-boat had sailed against orders from the Mediterranean before it was sunk by its own torpedo off Point Pleasant, before the sunken wreck was discovered in 1992.

The fictional and complex plot then takes shape involving the couple, fertility problems, Mengele and a great deal of excitement and suspense.

"I wanted to explore the concept of forgiveness and whether children and grandchildren are responsible for the crimes of their parents and grandparents," Winter said.



ALAN WINTER

Winter's last novel, "Savior's Day," traces the mysterious disappearance of the missing pages of the Codex of Aleppo, sanctified by Maimonides as the greatest Bible ever written. The book won acclaim from Kirkus Reviews as a Best Book Selection of 2013.

Winter said he wrote "Island Bluffs" simultaneously with "Savior's Day" and that both took about eight years to complete.

His next book, loosely based on real events, is about a dysfunctional family whose father fled the Nazis as a child and who becomes a master forger.

His other books include "Someone Else's Son" and "Snowflakes in the Sahara." His screenplay, "Polly," received honorable mention in the Austin Film Festival and is the basis for "Island Bluffs."

Winter graduated with honors from Rutgers College, New Brunswick majoring in history and has led a dual career in writing and the health profession, earning advanced degrees at both New York University and Columbia.

"Island Bluffs" is at www.amazon.com, hardback, paperback or e-book.