

# MPM

a bulletin on the doings and undoings of  
Barbara Mertz/Elizabeth Peters/Barbara Michaels  
Issue 46  
Spring 2005  
Kristen Whitbread, Editor

## The Amelia Peabody Books By Elizabeth Peters

In chronological order:  
Crocodile on the Sandbank  
Curse of the Pharaohs  
The Mummy Case  
Lion in the Valley  
Deeds of the Disturber  
The Last Camel Died at Noon  
The Snake, the Crocodile, and the Dog  
The Hippopotamus Pool  
Seeing a Large Cat  
The Ape Who Guards the Balance  
The Falcon at the Portal  
He Shall Thunder in the Sky  
Lord of the Silent  
The Golden One  
Children of the Storm  
Guardian of the Horizon  
Serpent on the Crown

also look for:

[mpmbooks.com](http://mpmbooks.com)

**MPM: Mertz ● Peters ● Michaels**

*The official Barbara Mertz/Elizabeth Peters/Barbara Michaels website*

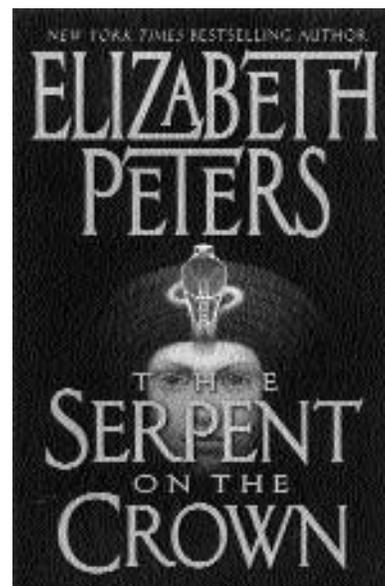
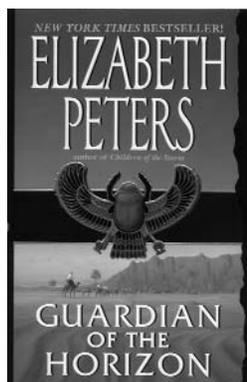
by Margie Knauff & Lisa Speckhardt

## PUBLISHING

### The Serpent on the Crown

April 2005    hardcover    WilliamMorrow

**Guardian of the Horizon**    March 2005    paperback    Avon Suspense



|   |              |           |               |
|---|--------------|-----------|---------------|
| <b>Children of the Storm</b>                | April 2004   | paperback | Avon Suspense |
| <b>The Golden One</b>                       | April 2003   | paperback | Avon Suspense |
| <b>Amelia Peabody's Egypt, A Compendium</b> | October 2003 | hardcover | WilliamMorrow |

## PUBLIC APPEARANCES

Friday, April 22    ARCE    12pm talk, discussion, and booksigning  
Hyatt Regency    Advance registration for tickets: [www.arce.org](http://www.arce.org)  
575 Memorial Drive    A limited number of tickets will be available at the door.  
\$10 for tickets (\$5 for students).

This is part of the Annual Conference for the American Research Center in Egypt. This event will be a fundraiser for the Annual Best Student Paper Award, a cash award presented each year by the Chapters of ARCE to a graduate student presenting a scholarly paper at the conference.

## THE SEED-PUSHER KDW

I have earned this nickname from friends and wear it quite proudly, I'll have you know. Each time I introduce a new gardener to the delights of the little known Delicata Squash, the crisp and mild Kohlrabi, the beautiful gold and red splashes hidden within the Pineapple Tomato with its lovely acid-sweet flavor, I feel that perhaps I will have made some positive impact on the dwindling diversity of vegetable species. A new flavor discovered is often an heirloom recovered. And I, too, am always on the lookout for varieties of vegetables that won't grace grocery store shelves but which will flourish in my hand-tended garden. Still I'll admit, I am a weak imitation of the real seed pushers.

During those winter months when I was planning my vegetable garden, ordering seeds, and then coaxing my tender new seedlings along, the "weeds" of my garden were hard at work applying every chemical intelligence which has evolved within their repertoire. When I was huddled next to the wood stove, and my seedlings protected with light and heat, weed roots were disregarding dreary days and cold weather, sinking deep into the soil and then forking and branching, attempting to outpace my ability to pull them out when Spring arrived. In some cases, seeds were selecting the perfect micro-environment so that by Spring: cinquefoil has suddenly materialized amongst established strawberry plants and my eye skips right over these look-alikes; ground ivy has crept in amongst germander - its leaves taking on the deep green color and thick leaf texture of the mound it has joined; grasses have beautifully mimicked a mound of dianthus so that by the time I'm through pulling out the one, most of the other will be gone as well. Their resourcefulness surely is frustrating when, after ten hours of weeding, I happen to retrace a spot only to notice out of the corner of my eye an entire clump of dandelions amongst the daisies. And yes, I've cursed more than my share of burdock, with its "velcro" burrs carrying it everywhere I don't want it to be! But then again, the lessons they teach can be exciting - show a classroom full of kids a "velcro" burr and they immediately comprehend how simple and yet amazing is that adaptation - an adaptation we have borrowed with great success. Share the idea that plants can select and grow with an intelligence, an intelligence shared by the animals which coexist with them, and where we have learned to grumble (after all - adults are usually stuck with the weeding) children will still delight. And the lessons weeds teach can be humbling. No matter how hard I try to eradicate them - they will return. They are survivors. Sometimes, when I look around at the development in my county, at the ever-spreading carpet of chemically enhanced perfect green, I find myself heartened by the real seed pushers - while many native species of plants will disappear unless we help them to survive, there will always be those plants who refuse to give up the fight; those tenacious few who will keep growing and adapting in spite of everything we do to keep them down. I am somewhat reassured by this lesson. Now, if you'll excuse me, I see a clump of Sheep Sorrel I overlooked.

Sunday, October 2, Michael C Carlos Museum 4pm “ A Conversation with Elizabeth Peters”  
Emory University Tickets required and only available to  
571 South Kilgo Circle members of the Carlos Museum or  
Atlanta, Georgia 30322 Friends of Emory University Libraries  
Call 404 727-0519 for membership and tickets  
<http://carlos.emory.edu/COLLECTION>

## MPM

In my garden it isn't the voice of the turtle that announces the coming of spring; it is the voice of the frog. I'm told that the Old Testament reference is to a turtledove, which certainly makes better sense, since to the best of my knowledge actual turtles don't have voices. Frogs do, though; in April, they sing, and an entrancing sound it is, especially when several of them join in a melodious chord of longing. I like to sit on a bench by the pond in those cool green evenings and listen.

To be honest, that's as close as I care to come to a frog. My grandchildren love them, though. They catch them, carry them around for a while before releasing them, croon to them and occasionally (ugh) kiss them. Naturally I do not express revulsion. One does not wish to discourage a child's interest in nature.

On a grislier note, Tutankhamon's mummy is back in the news. Egyptian authorities hauled the poor boy out of his coffin and subjected him to a number of new tests, including a CAT scan. To the surprise of some they found he was not murdered by a blow on the head. It didn't surprise me; I've always thought that a chancy method of murder, especially when one has safer means, such as poison, at hand. Tutankhamon is in bad shape. He's in pieces, actually. Howard Carter practically dismembered the mummy getting it out of the coffin. (For description of the process, see the Appendix, "Abusing Pharaoh," in Dennis Forbes's book **Tombs. Treasures. Mummies.**)

This seems to be the year of Tutankhamon. An exhibition of some of the objects from his tomb opens this summer in Los Angeles. It will go on to several other cities. I hear there is also a National Geographic special in the works, due to appear in September.

Which leads me, by logical progression, to the latest book, **The Serpent on the Crown**. I presume some of you have read it by now. Those who haven't may want to skip the next paragraph.

The Emersons don't discover Tut's tomb in **Serpent**. Neither does Howard Carter. **Serpent** takes place just before the great discovery, in the spring of 1922, but as you may suppose, Emerson is already on the trail. Aficionados will, I hope, enjoy some of my broad hints. I'm already working on the next book, **The Tomb of the Golden Bird** (you heard it here first), which will describe the actual discovery and the Emerson family's part in it.

Readers who are familiar with the extensive literature on the subject may wonder why Carter didn't mention the Emersons' contribution. Apparently they aren't the only ones he did not acknowledge. A news story from a mid-eastern newspaper reached me a few days ago, and it is too good to keep to myself. I wish I could quote it in full, but I'd probably be guilty of plagiarism or copyright violation, or something.

The real discoverer of the tomb, it seems, was an obscure British corporal. Working undercover, he had been responsible for exposing a plot by Egyptian nationalists and was sent to Luxor to save him from their vengeance. Carter, who knew his real identity, employed him as a secretary. (Don't ask me to explain the logic of this, I'm just telling you what the story said.) Early one morning, while at the dig in the Valley of the Kings, Corporal X saw the workmen uncover a step, and hastily cover it up again. He managed to get a photograph, however, and showed it to Carter.

The premise, that Carter would not have excavated that particular spot since his firman was within days of expiring, is pure nonsense. This is one of those fantastic tales that is endemic to Egyptology. An even more entertaining tale, which doesn't pretend to be anything but fiction, is a book I heartily recommend to all Egypt buffs--**The Egyptologist**, by Arthur Phillips. I won't say anything about it,

except that it takes place during the period when Carter was looking for Tut, and that it is a wonderful read. I should warn the faint of heart that some of the details may not be to their taste, but the lunatic inevitability of the ending is brilliant.

I'm pleased to announce that Avon has acquired the rights to many of the old Michaels books and is putting them back in print. Mystery Guild will be doing an omnibus volume of **Ammie Come Home** and **The Dark on the Other Side**, under the title "**Mistress of Shadows**." I guess that's me!

Thanks to those of you who turned out for my signing in Frederick on March 29. I love my readers. I really do. I love meeting you and hearing from you. But please don't be hurt if you remind me of a past encounter and my face goes blank. Over the past ten years I've been in more than twenty cities and met literally thousands of people. Add to this the fact that my memory isn't what it used to be and forgive me if a previous meeting fails to impress itself on my aging brain!



### **Time to reassess our newsletter list!**

It has been years since the last assessment and the list has expanded rather frighteningly of late. I know many people now access the newsletter on the website, MPMbooks.com, and simply may have not gotten around to informing us. I want to make certain the newsletter you receive is not simply another piece of paper to throw in the trash or the recycling bin! Between now and the next newsletter that goes out (Fall 2005) I must hear from you to keep you on our list. **If you wish to be purged from the mailing list, don't bother to respond - I only need to hear from those of you who wish to continue receiving the newsletter in your mailbox.** Do not email the website - send your response to the post office box listed on the newsletter. Thanks so much in advance for your help toward our efforts!

### **Important! Urgent! Critical!**

**MPM does NOT autograph photographs of herself either as "Elizabeth Peters" or "Barbara Michaels." Any such offers for sale on the Web (or any place else) are fakes!**

FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF MPM'S READERS IN OTHER COUNTRIES...

MPM has numerous contracts with overseas publishers from Italy to Istanbul. Therefore, in order to make the search for her books easier, we include here a list of her books recently translated/published in other countries. For the **complete** list, including those books that are out of print, please check the MPM website where Margie and Lisa have included a full reference list of all books by overseas publishers. If you have difficulty finding the book you want, you may wish to check [www.wonderbk.com](http://www.wonderbk.com) which has a number of the foreign editions (including out of print editions) available. Good luck!