

# Green: 'The Devil at Genesee Junction' a gripping story

**Christine Green** 12:38 a.m. EST February 2, 2016



(Photo: File photo)

On June 25, 1966, Kathy Bernhard, 16, and George-Ann Formicola, 14, left their Chili homes to swim in Black Creek.

The girls never made it home.

Almost a month later, they were found brutally murdered and mutilated. The perpetrator was never apprehended.

## What to read

*The Devil at Genesee Junction* (<https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781442252332/The-Devil-at-Genesee-Junction-The-Murders-of-Kathy-Bernhard-and-George-Ann-Formicola-6-66>) is a gripping and poignant mix of true crime and childhood memoir.

Author Michael Benson grew up with Kathy and George-Ann, and he remembers the horror of that hot summer when they went missing. It was the summer when evil came to his neighborhood.

Writing about the girls' disappearance and subsequent murder helped Benson cope with the frightening memories of 1966.



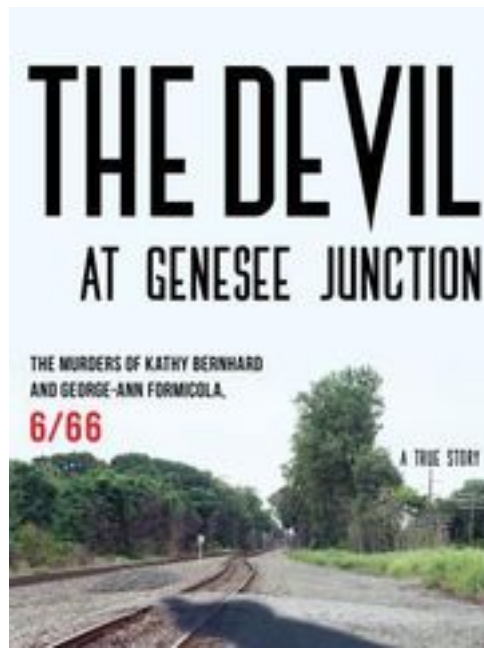
Author Michael Benson pictured with private investigator Donald Tubman. (Photo: CHRISTINE GREEN)

"I feel relief because what was largely an inner nightmare is now an external celebration of the truth," said Benson.

He worked closely with Kathy's mother, Alice Bernhard, and private investigator, Donald Tubman. Together they uncovered new clues and meticulously re-examined evidence gathered by the Monroe County Sheriff to present the reader with a satisfying if not haunting conclusion.

In fact, Tubman, a former Wheatland police officer and New York State investigator, believes there is enough new evidence to warrant re-opening the case. He and Benson think that the latest DNA testing can enable cold-case investigators to finally provide closure to the Formicola and Bernhard families.

"The book was very respectful," said 90-year-old Alice who still resides in the same Chili home where she served the girls dinner before they left for their fateful swim. Her greatest wish is simply that the public remembers Kathy, and she believes Benson did a wonderful job relating the sad story of her short life.



**"The Devil at Genesee Junction"** (Photo: Rowman & Littlefield)

A recent book signing at the RIT Barnes and Nobles attracted a crowd. The majority of the audience hailed from the Chili/Scottsville area and remembered either the girls or the case from their youth. That day, several people from Benson's old neighborhood provided even more clues. Just one more reason, Benson says that "the book is finished, the investigation goes on forever."

Benson is a prolific true crime writer and a regular commentator on Investigation Discovery's "Evil Twins" and "Evil Kin." He has also been featured in "On the Case with Paula Zahn."

### Who to Watch

Sisters Sheilah and Katrina Randall are quirky in the best sort of way.

The Fairport pair host a monthly YouTube show called *The Quirky Book Sirens* (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2i0s1InBh9oXpJJCJeM4Yg>), during which they discuss books, authors, and all things literary.

Katrina is a fantasy-fiction and paranormal writer who has published several books with [Booktrope](https://booktrope.com/book_authors/k-m-randall/) ([https://booktrope.com/book\\_authors/k-m-randall/](https://booktrope.com/book_authors/k-m-randall/)) where she is also an editor. Sheilah produces video book trailers, although big sister Katrina notes, "She's a fantastic writer. I'm hoping one day she'll finish writing a book, or collaborate on one with me.'



**Katrina and Sheilah Randall** (Photo: Sheilah Randall)

The idea for the YouTube show came to the duo while discussing how to share their life-long chat sessions about the books they love with others who might be interested.

They decided on a video platform rather than an audio-only show, because they felt that video would provide a more dynamic connection with their audience.

"More and more these days people would rather watch than read — even bookish types like us. It allows for more engagement with our readers and allows for a more personal touch," said Sheilah.

Topics on their show have included a discussion of strong and confident heroines in their most beloved books as well as their favorite quotes from several new and classic works of fiction.

The sisters not only work well together because of their relationship as siblings, but their different media skills allow them to complement each other. Katrina is comfortable and adept at social media and graphic design, and Sheilah is a wiz with video and the technical aspects of recording the show.

You can find out more about the Quirky Book Sirens by visiting [Katrina's website \(http://www.kmrandallauthor.com/quirky-book-sirens.html\)](http://www.kmrandallauthor.com/quirky-book-sirens.html).

### **What not to miss**

Kitty Jospé has hosted the Poetry Oasis discussion group at Rundel Library since 2013.

She chooses a selection of poetry and guides a discussion every Thursday at noon. The discussion takes place in a welcoming and friendly environment and is free and open to the public. No writing or other experience with poetry is necessary to attend.

Jospé organizes and hosts Poetry Oasis because, "I want poetry to be accessible, and free, just like getting books out of a library. I believe in the strength of community through many-sided sharing of poetry and art."

Jospé is a seasoned Rochester area poet with many publications under her belt including her book of poems, *Mosaicq* ([https://finishinglinepress.com/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=1710](https://finishinglinepress.com/product_info.php?products_id=1710)). Her most recent poetry collection is entitled, *Golden Smoke*. She has published two books and has also been featured in several literary journals.

### **From my inbox**

Webster resident Eileen Hopsicker was a finalist in the *Saturday Evening Post's* (<http://www.saturdayeveningpost.com/sections/post-fiction>) 2016 Great American Fiction Contest. Her story, "Five in the Fifth," is a heartfelt tale of friendship, aging, and thoroughbred horses.

She was shocked when she got the news about being a finalist: "I was ecstatic," she said. Hopsicker was one of five prize-winning finalists in the fiction contest, won by Celeste McMaster.

Hopsicker's first novel is slated for a 2017 publication by North Country Press. *The Balance of Justice* is a fictionalized account of a famous 1872 murder case in Utica.

*Christine Green is literary arts columnist. Contact her at [christinejgreenwrites@gmail.com](mailto:christinejgreenwrites@gmail.com) (<mailto:christinejgreenwrites@gmail.com>). Follow her on Twitter @christinejgreen.*

### **If you go**

**What:** Poetry Oasis discussion group.

**Where:** The Literature Study Room at Rundel Library 115 South Ave.

**When:** Noon to 1 p.m. Thursdays through April 30.

**Contact:** [carol.moldt@libraryweb.org](mailto:carol.moldt@libraryweb.org) (<mailto:carol.moldt@libraryweb.org>).

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