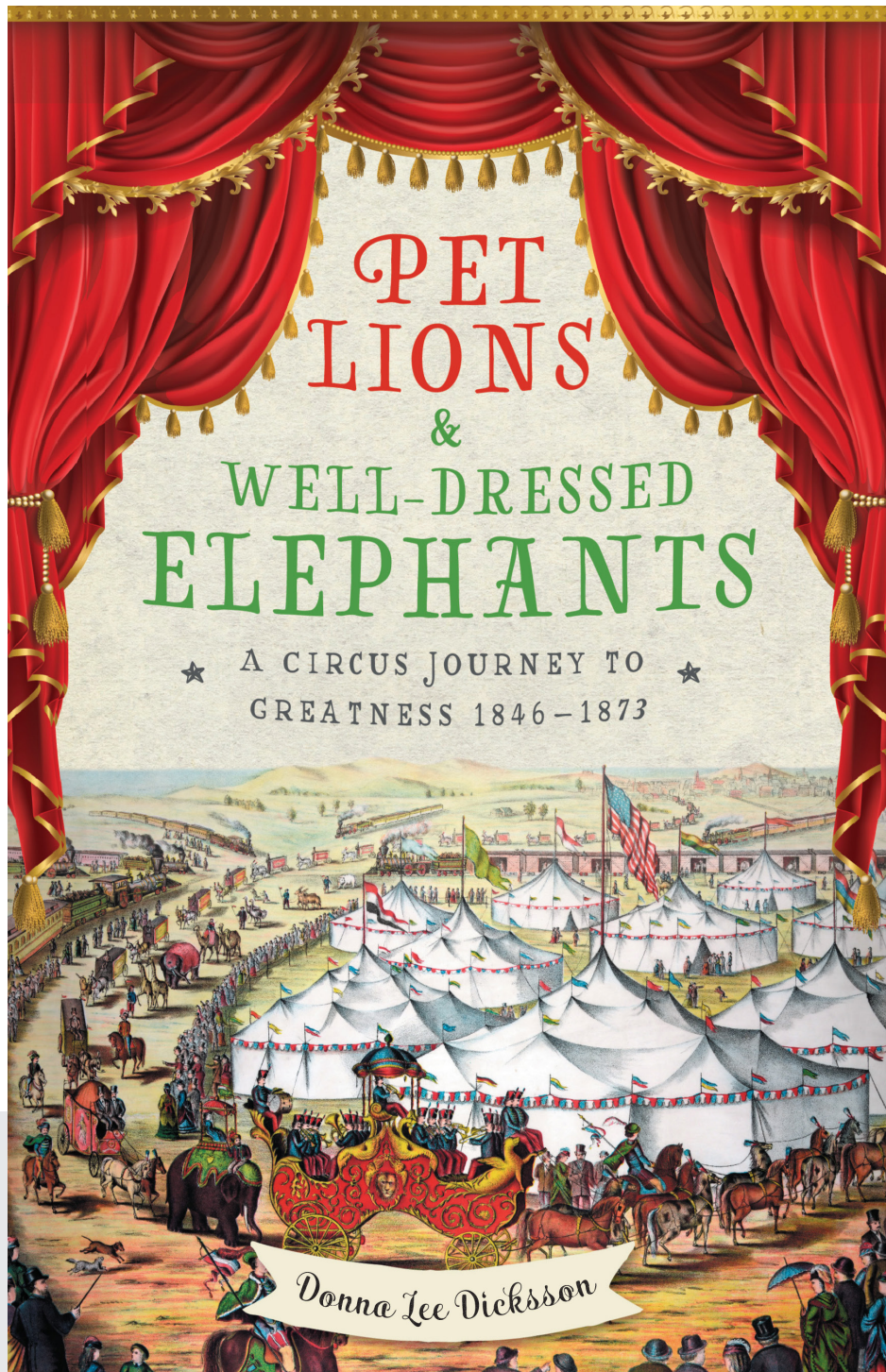


DONNA LEE DICKSSON



PET LIONS & WELL-DRESSED ELEPHANTS | MEDIA KIT

01

Author Biography

Donna Lee Dicksson is a woman who was born with insatiable curiosity and a compulsive need to share life's extraordinarily glorious moments in both writing and photography.

Donna Lee Dicksson was born with insatiable curiosity and a compulsive need to share.

While researching her first book, *Mattie Lee Price, the Forgotten Georgia Wonder*, she stumbled across two intriguing historical circus characters. Pulling on that little red thread of lost history, she found a world of resilient and fascinating people and a story that needed to be told. Thus began the quest to uncover and tell the story of Anna Matchett and Alasco Charles White.

She lives in Texas with her husband and two African Grey parrots. She is the mother of two grown children, has three granddaughters and one great granddaughter. When not researching and writing, Donna is an avid photographer, gardener, and homemaker. Training her own birds and dogs has helped her build great relationships with her pets. She is a volunteer photographer for a service dog organization.



Donna Lee Dicksson

BIO CONTINUED

At eight I wanted to be a clown. My teachers were concerned and asked why. My answer: People take themselves too seriously. They need to laugh more.

*20% of royalties will be donated to 501C3 organizations that care for retired circus animals.

To find out more information about her book, please visit her website at:

dicksson.com

02 Book Details

AUTHOR: Donna Lee Dicksson ~ **CATEGORIES:** Historical Fiction

ISBNs: 979-8-9861747-0-9 / 979-9861747-1-6

Raised on opposite shores of Lake Ontario in the mid-19th century, two talented young adults begin their journey toward becoming key players in the birth and success of P.T. Barnum's "Greatest Show on Earth."

A young man's destiny

When fourteen-year-old Charley White stops to help with a crippled circus wagon in upstate New York, he has no idea that his act of kindness will alter the course of his life forever. He joins the show for just that one summer, intending to go home again at the end of the season, but he never does.

As the boy grows into a man, he will go from commanding animals to commanding men in a war within a torn nation. But, as the country recovers, Charley's own journey toward healing comes from returning to the life he loved not so long ago.

A young woman's search for a new life

Newly un-engaged eighteen-year-old Anna Matchett is determined to start afresh in the US. As she sets off from Canada West for New Orleans, little does she know her journey will be derailed in Cincinnati as rumors of war begin to spread.

Low on funds, the young woman uses her talent for sewing to make a living, until one day she fashions a costume for a handsome blue-eyed acrobat. Falling madly in love, Anna finds herself traveling off with her new husband and the little circus, earning a reputation as a talented seamstress.

The dawn of "The Greatest Show on Earth"

Planning a new circus unlike any other, revolutionary showman P.T. Barnum is determined to recruit the industry's best talent. And with that, Charley White receives a telegram, Anna Matchett gets a referral, and the rest is history.

03

Main Characters

Alasco Charley White - joined the circus at the age of fourteen in 1846. He learned to train the animals in traveling shows. His main point of focus was to learn to train the animals in his care using kindness and reward methods. He volunteered during the Civil War and was badly wounded. He struggled to overcome his injuries and eventually bought some lions and began showing them. In 1871 he became a manager in Barnum, Coup, and Castello's show which would become "The Greatest Show on Earth."

Anna Margaret Matchett - born in what is now Ontario, Canada in 1842. She met and married an acrobat in Cincinnati and traveled with him and the circus throughout the American Civil War. When her husband died in 1869, Anna needed to provide for herself and her young son. She did so by sewing costumes for circuses. In 1871 she became employed in the Barnum, Coup, and Castello's show.



04

Chapter Excerpt

EXCERPT FROM CHAPTER 6

Charley was lucky. Although no one had ever said it out loud, he was accepted as one of the insiders. It hadn't been because of his years with them or because of his fine work that got him in. It was because John-John trusted him...and everyone trusted John-John. The blue-eyed bird man had grown up on a chicken farm and was the kindest, gentlest fellow on the lot. He looked like he could bend iron with his bare hands and yet he got downright sissy when he started talking about his birds. He'd been working for the American Museum at Broadway and Ann Street taking care of Mr. Barnum's exotics when Mr. Lent talked him into coming to work for him. Now he took care of all the exotic birds in the hall, cleaning pens and feeding them all by himself. It wasn't unusual to see him sitting on a stool in a bird pen with a fancy chicken perched on his knee. "Birds are downright affectionate," he would say as he stroked its head. You had to agree with him when you saw just how relaxed that chicken was, eyes closed and making noises that sounded a lot like a cat purring. Neither was it unusual for John-John to take off on his free time to trot over to Barnum's to visit his old flock. One day he had taken Charley with him. John-John knocked on the back door of the museum and the door-guard waved him in without paying. When the guard moved to stop Charley from drafting in behind him, John-John put his big hand on the guard's shoulder and said, "He's with me, Mike. He's one of us."



05

Target Audience

READERS OF HISTORICAL FICTION

Readers who enjoy travelling back to bygone eras will easily become immersed in the lives of Alasco Charley White and Anna Margaret Matchett. Pets Lions contains writing so vivid, that readers will easily come to envision themselves right there amongst the circus crew as their lives unfold on the road and in-between shows.



06

Sample Interview Questions

01

Why did you choose to write this story?

02

What kind of research went into writing this book?

03

Why did you choose to publish the lives of these characters as fiction rather than nonfiction?

04

Do you have a personal connection to the circus?

05

What do you think it was about circus living that allowed people to forge such deep bonds?

06

What's the one thing that you learned during your research that surprised you the most?

07

What is the one thing that you wish more people knew about life in the circus?

08

Do you have any plans to write more books?

09

Beyond writing, what sort of pastimes do you enjoy?

10

You mention that you're planning on donating a portion of your profits to charity. Can you tell me more about that?

07

**Connect with
Donna Lee Dicksson
via email**

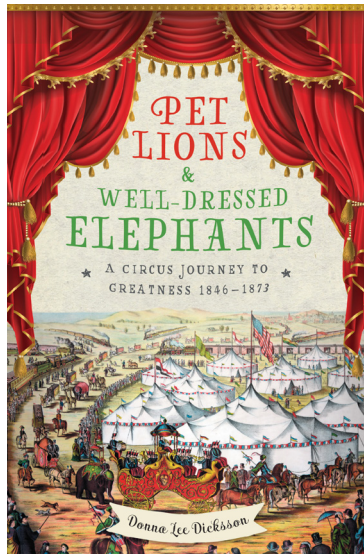
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Downloadable Cover Image



Contact the author at Donna.Dicksson@Gmail.com to request a copy of their cover image for usage in articles and other various media coverage.