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# PRESS RELEASE

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**Memoir + True Crime + Historical Fiction: Book Release Set For Sunday May 19th. Whatever happened to Rosemarie? A novel based on a true story.**

## **ABOUT THE NOVEL**

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ROSEMARIE? is a novel based on a true story by author Vera Christa Doederlein Hastie, with an afterword by Christa Hastie, and includes 50+ never-seen-before photos. The book is set to launch on May 19th for sale worldwide.

At the end of 1954, just a handful of weeks after emigrating from a small village in Germany to Montreal Canada, Rosemarie Döderlein just turned 14 years old when she vanished on the way to a bakery a few doors down from the family apartment, never to be seen or heard from again.

After 68 years of fruitless searching and wondering, in 2022, Rosemarie's youngest sister Vera finally learned the truth of what happened to her. It is a remarkable story about unconditional love, DNA, and investigative genetic genealogy.

Reporting on the story and the details of Vera's final search made the covers of Reader's Digest Canada, Reader's Digest UK, and in Reader's Digest Germany, at the end of 2023.

Vera's novel tells the story of her family's life in Germany: the impact of war, the hope for a better life in Canada, the crushing reality of a tragic loss, and how it is that a family moves forward afterward. Publishing this novel represents the final act of closure on this lifelong arc.

Vera Christa Doederlein Hastie is excited to release her first novel, **WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ROSEMARIE? A NOVEL BASED ON A TRUE STORY** on May 19, 2024.

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The novel is a mixed genre of historical fiction, memoir and true crime. Paperback, hardcover, and eBooks will be available in both English and German language versions, and a 12 hour 21 minute audiobook version of the novel, narrated by storyteller Dick Wilson, is available for those who prefer to hear the novel.

After 70 years, the fate of Rosemarie Döderlein is at last known.

For more information about the story, please visit [www.MissingGermanGirl.com](http://www.MissingGermanGirl.com)

## **NOVEL BACK COVER**

In 1954, the lights went out...  
I was 11. She was 13.  
Unsophisticated. Innocent.

We emigrated from Germany leaving familiar cobblestone streets and meadows to a new vision of flashing neon signs, new languages and cars driven by thousands on the streets of Montréal. A few weeks later, Rosemarie vanished on the way to our neighborhood bakery.

Where did she go? Was she hoodwinked? Kidnapped? Murdered? How could she not hear our pleading words or know how to reach our outstretched arms?

For almost 70 years her red play purse, prayer books and 50's play jewelry were at my fingertips waiting for that special ring at the door, only to be left with the tragic, cold sound of silence and restless dreams. In 2022, sophisticated DNA-based tools and research revealed shocking truths of what happened with Rosemarie.

Some scenes are fictionalized.

Some names have been changed to protect the innocent.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Vera is 81 years of age and is "proud as a peacock" to have published this one novel in her lifetime that she considers an honor to her entire family. She is grateful to have been a recipient of the UCLA Extension Writers' Program Scholarship in 2015, which helped jumpstart the writing of this

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novel. In Vera's younger years, she worked as an executive secretary in Southern California. She was married to her late husband for almost 20 years, is the mother to two children, and "Oma" (grandmother) to four grandchildren. She enjoys movies, cooking, gardening, sewing, knitting, and crossword puzzles in her free time.

## **Vera's Favorite Authors**

Vera has had a few favorite authors over the years.

- James Michener - "His details make his stories and characters come alive." Her favorite Michener novel is *The Source*.
- Agatha Christie - "In my younger years, I couldn't get enough of Agatha Christie novels. I'd fall asleep reading each one." One of her many favorite Christie novels is *And Then There Were None*.

## **Vera's Favorite Songs**

Vera has always loved these songs.

- *La Paloma Ade* by Mireille Mathieu, a German love song, because it reminds Vera of everyone she's ever known, loved, and lost. Originally written and composed by Sebastian Yradier in 1896.
- *A Walk In The Black Forest* by Horst Jankowski. This peppy instrumental piece reminds Vera of the joy she experienced as a child in her hometown village of Birkenfeld Germany.
- *Sound of Silence* by Paul Simon. Vera left Canada to build a new life in California in 1963. Her memories and experiences are fully intertwined with cultural touchstones of the time. *The Sound of Silence* is a song that helped her sit with her loneliness, heartbreak, and loss. The lyrics hold a profound meaning for her.

## **Vera's Favorite Quotes**

Vera has always loved these quotes.

- "The wound is the place where the Light enters you." By Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi
- "Time only moves forward." Said by Junta, Vera's last living elderly cousin in Birkenfeld Germany

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

SEVERAL EDITORIAL ANGLES

- Vera's novel is part of the current "Mixed Genre" novel trend: Memoir + Historical Fiction + True Crime

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- A first time published author at 81, currently recovering from lung cancer chemotherapy and radiation treatment reminds us all that now is always the time!
  - Vera and her youngest daughter Christa are now helping other families of missing people, including one of Toronto's oldest missing persons cases, Helga Katherine Kaserer, who went missing almost 64 years ago ([www.HelpUsFindHelga.com](http://www.HelpUsFindHelga.com)) (the novel features 2 pages on Helga in the back of the book)
  - Learn more about Vera and Christa's Grassroots PR movement
  - Vera and Christa have created a simple online resource for people to learn about how home DNA kits (Ancestry, 23andMe, Family Tree DNA, myHeritage) can help others solve other life mysteries [www.DNASuperHero.org](http://www.DNASuperHero.org)
  - Vera's novel tells the story of her family's life in Germany: the impact of war, the hope for a better life in Canada, the crushing reality of a tragic loss, and how it is that a family moves forward afterward. Publishing this novel represents the final act of closure on this lifelong arc.
  - The Afterword in the novel, written by Christa, touches on important takeaways from working on a missing persons cold case.
    - A physical review copy of the novel or PDF of the Afterword is available upon request. Please email or call with requests.
  - A book launch event will take place Tuesday May 21 4:30-6:30pm in Coronado, CA with Survivor Pearl Islands guests Rupert and two-time winner Sandra Diaz-Twine flying out just to help support Vera and Christa (also a former contestant on Survivor Pearl Islands)

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