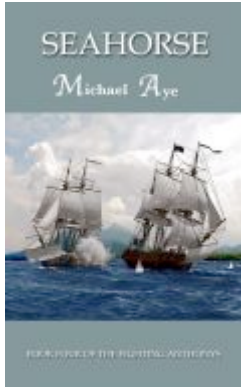


[An Interview with Michael Aye](#)

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Written by David Hayes

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Astrodene's Historic Naval fiction is pleased to have obtained an Interview with [Michael Aye](#) who's new book *SeaHorse* is now available worldwide.

Your new novel in the Fighting Anthonys series, *SeaHorse*, has just been released. What can you tell us without spoiling the plot for the readers?

First of all *SeaHorse* is somewhat of a tribute to the World War II hero, who was a first mate on a crash boat, *SeaHorse*, in the Pacific. The original title was to have been HMS *Peregrine* (which is a type of Falcon). When I read an article on this amazing man I knew I had to pay tribute to his memory, so the focus of the story changed to include his character. (My next book will be entitled *Peregrine*.) *SeaHorse* begins with the Anthonys back home in England. Gil is enjoying time with his wife and little girl. Gabe is facing a conflict of emotion. His ship is suddenly found to be unseaworthy, which is depressing, while at the same time he's preparing to wed Faith and begin a new life with his love. Then a needful nation calls. Admiral Lord Anthony has just returned from Gabe's wedding when the Admiralty's messenger arrives. Lord Anthony has been given command of His Majesty's ships in the Windward Islands. He and Gabe set sail with a new squadron to face old enemies, personal tragedies, daring privateers, and the French, who have signed an alliance with the determined American colonies. The book continues to provide action, romance, and humor. Critiques thus far have been positive with a number of them stating that they like the interpersonal relationships of the characters.

What is next in the Fighting Anthonys series?

The next book is tentatively titled *Peregrine* and begins with the French Fleet arriving in America. It ends with the British occupation of Savannah. It will be full of familiar characters and a few new ones. It will contain action, adventure, humor and a touch of romance.

Where did your interest in the sea originate?

First, I joined the Navy at the age of 17. My first ship was the USS Newman K. Perry DD883. Immediately upon becoming part of the Ship's Company I found out first hand the meaning of "haze gray and underway." While at sea there was little to do when not on watch so I visited the ship's library. My first sea fiction novel was Douglas Reeman's "A Prayer for the Ship." My second was Alexander Kent's "Command a King's Ship," from that time on I've been a naval fiction fanatic. Since then I have been influenced by such great authors as Kent, Forrester, and Pope. Second, while on a couple of med cruises we visited England. During my time there I was able to visit Plymouth, Portsmouth and London. While visiting these ports and cities I was overwhelmed by the rich Royal Naval history. Our Navy also has a proud heritage but for the periods in which I intended to write (1775-1815) the British Navy was the obvious choice.

What drew you to write Naval Fiction set in the Age of Sail?

The love of the genre is the quick answer. Being in the navy was also a big factor in my choice of genres. I think it authenticates it. Being at sea in all types of weather allows me to describe first hand "The bow dipping in a

trough” ... “The crash of a wave over the bow” ... “The sting of the ocean spray as the mist hits your face” ... “A rough wave coming inboard and water running down the scuppers.” There are many senses a sailor experiences: the feel of a ship being tossed around as something insignificant in a bad storm; the many sounds, groans and creaks a ship makes, especially when lying wide awake in a canvas “rack” after the 8-12 watch; the sinking feeling of a going to General Quarters or battle stations when it’s not a drill. And there are the shipboard accidents that occur, the antics of a few jokers, the sea lawyers who are always trying to find a way to get over. A special joy is seeing your wife or girl standing on the pier as your ship anchors after a long cruise. I can’t imagine a landsman writing a book about the sea. Alexander Kent wrote in one of his books, “A seaman would know, but never a landsman.” I would love to bring Age of Sail back to the mainstream and not have it considered a niche genre. Thank God Kent, Stockwin, Lambdin and others are still willing to write this type of book.

How do you undertake your research?

I have looked at actual events that took place during the period, and built my story around those events. When researching for events I try to find interesting areas that have not already been used by other authors. I try to use real characters to be more historically accurate, and have been surprised by the number of emails I’ve received from fans/readers commenting on this practice. The placement of real people at real events is sometimes more interesting than fiction. You only have to read a few Jim Nelson’s books to discover this. However, while I try to be historically accurate, with me the storyline has to come first. After all, this is fiction for pleasure reading. When finding an interesting event, I usually spend months in research, going thru my Library, using the Internet and talking to experts in the field. I have on occasion visited places such as Antigua and Culebra just to get a feel for things. When you’ve walked the deck of the HMS Surprise or the Rampart of some early fort it is easy to put yourself in that era. You can hear the cannons roar, and taste the spent gunpowder.

Is there a time of day that best suites your writing?

My day job is medicine. I’m a Physician Assistant with a specialty in Allergy and Asthma. I’m a partner in a practice that has several offices across South Georgia. I mention this only because it limits my time for writing. Once I get an idea I spend a great deal of time in research to be as historically accurate as possible. This is not to say I haven’t taken certain liberties. Once the research is complete I start to write. I usually try to plan writing sessions when I can have three hours at my desk. This is generally between eight and eleven PM and often from four AM to seven AM. I write in long hand and my wife turns my scratch into manuscripts. Reading my work she continues to provide encouragement.

Do you have other projects under way in addition to the Fighting Anthonys series?

Yes. I have completed a book entitled *Malachi Mundy – Book One: Birth of a Nation*. It was turned down by several publishers, who felt that combining two small genres – the Age of Sail and a Christian setting – would limit the marketability and not be cost effective. However, Father and Son Publishing disagreed and plan to go forward, encouraged by a positive critique from Dr. Jim McBride, of *Facing the Giants* and *Fireproof*. (These movies were produced by Sherwood Pictures of Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Georgia and distributed by Sony Pictures.) I have planned nine books in the Malachi Mundy Project. Three deals with the Revolutionary War, three feature the Civil War, and three focus on World War II. The series will be written under a new pen name Michael “Doc” Fowler.

Is there anything else you would like to share with readers?

Thanks for being loyal readers. I enjoy your emails and will continue to answer each and every one. It is these emails that give me the spark to continue. I invite each reader to visit my website: michaelaye.com. I would also like the reader to know the sales of my books are donated to a trust fund, in my grandson, Michael Fowler's name, for spinal cord injuries. I feel it is important that the readers know their dollars are being funneled into a worthwhile project. I would also like to thank Astrodene for keeping readers informed about what is happening in the genre. I would also like the readers to know that behind every successful man is a good woman: in my case an angel who has put up with me for forty years in December. Without her efforts, there would not be a Fighting Anthony's Series.