



INTERVIEW WITH MELINDA TALIANCICH FALGOUST

Where did you get the idea for *The Gubbins Club: The Legend of Charlie's Gold*?

The idea first came to me after I'd read an article in the paper in 2007. An old letter had shown up in an antique shop. It supposedly identified the location of the lost gold of Bonnie Prince Charlie. Buried treasure always makes me think of *Treasure Island* and the idea just sort of took off from there.

Did you always know you wanted to be a writer?

Since I was nine. Mrs. Gussman, my fourth grade English teacher, made me write a story from the point of view of a pencil. It just sort of morphed from there. I've been a lot of things in between, but I have scribbled character notes on coffee-stained napkins, snatches of dialogue scrawled on old bill envelopes and plot lines scratched out on paycheck stubs that all indicate I must be a writer.

When did you get published for the first time?

Ok. Now, you're making me think – and before my second cup of coffee! Let's see – the first time I saw my name in print was in *Reader's Digest*. I sent in a piece for their "Humor in Uniform" column. That was around 1993, I believe.

If your first writing was published in *Reader's Digest*, how did you become interested in children's books?

Oh, that's an easy one. I have a distinct Peter Pan complex. No, I do not go around wearing green tights and do not belong to a motorcycle gang called The Lost Boys. I just tend to find the fun in everything. That makes it easy to remain a kid at heart and I've always loved children's books. More adults should read them.

Do you have any plans for adult fiction?

In my head, at any one time, there are at least five stories going. My characters tend to be very vocal when they are ready to get their stories out on the page. Right now, I have two competing characters clamoring loudly for attention, so I expect their tales will be joining us soon – Hunter Despré in *The Devil She Knows* and Jake Riesen in *A Fetish for Murder*. Both are mystery/suspense novels.

***The Gubbins Club* has a definite mystery element as well. Are mysteries your favorite?**

Mysteries, puzzles, conspiracy theories...they all intrigue me. My DVR is chock full of stuff like that. I suppose I'll get around to watching them eventually – if I can ever get my writer's brain to stop asking the eternal question...what if?