

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONTEXT

My Nose in a Book . . .

My passion for sharing conversation, stories, music, and simple, hearty food around a big table links directly to my Irish and Italian heritage—a spirited combination! Whatever the explanation, a reverence for libraries, bookstores, and reading is part of my DNA. Maybe growing up on the outskirts of Washington, DC, was a factor, too. Except for fleeting respites each spring and fall, the weather I endured as a child and adolescent was often . . . *miserable*. Detours to the local library, and long sessions at home with my nose in a book, afforded welcome respite from the slush of winter and the brutal humidity of summer. From the time I first hauled books home from the library as a child, I've been mystified to see them proliferate in the nooks and crannies of every perch I've called home.

The Write Path

I studied history and literature at **Middlebury College**, and also dabbled in drawing, painting, and design as an undergraduate. The combination of type and illustrations, photographs, and other graphic elements on a printed page has long intrigued me—as has the ingenious simplicity and beauty of a bound book. For more than 25 years, every professional job I've tackled has involved research, writing, and editing. Feature writing for national, regional, and local magazines; reporting and editing for a metropolitan daily newspaper; academic publishing; managing marketing and publicity for a pair of world-renowned wellness/fitness resorts; even a long stint as a restaurant critic—all those professional endeavors and others sharpened my writing and editing experience while also helping me forge strong interpersonal skills. Hands-on sessions at the **Radcliffe Publishing Procedures Course, Northeastern University** (certificate program in graphic design), and the **Stanford Professional Publishing Course** expanded my professional credentials.

Quality Trade Publishing

More than 15 years (ultimately as deputy publisher/executive managing editor of the children's books division) with **Harcourt Trade Publishers** in San Diego and four years with Seattle area-based **becker&mayer Book Producers** (ultimately as associate publisher of the book division) linked me directly to an extraordinary array of trade publishing luminaries, from authors and illustrators, agents, editors, designers, and production managers to marketing and publicity experts, sales professionals, and inventory, logistics, and customer service specialists.

Flying Solo

While holding down full-time jobs writing and/or editing for sundry newspapers, magazines, and book publishers, I also made time to collaborate as a freelance editor with authors and illustrators on select projects for readers of all ages. That close, mutually rewarding give-and-take has long been vital to me—and in late 2011 I launched my own consulting business to provide support to authors, illustrators, and others who have stories or other content to share. Collaborating in that capacity has been especially rewarding to me, both professionally and personally.