

Former R-P editor, publisher Wallace pens mystery novel

By ROSEANN HERNANDEZ
FOR THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

APTOS — Combining an enduring love for mystery novels and fly-fishing, Michael Wallace — former editor and co-publisher of the Register-Pajaronian — has his first work of fiction, “The McHenry Inheritance,” available now as an eBook on Amazon.com.

Wallace, who started as a reporter for the R-P in 1972, served as editor and co-publisher from 1989 until he left the paper to form a public relations and publications consulting business in 1991.

He said the inspiration for the mystery — whose main character Quill Gordon is named after a trout-fly pattern developed by Theodore Gordon in the 19th century — has its roots in an eerie experience he had while fishing in a remote part of the High Sierra in California in the early 1990s.

While fishing a creek in the “middle of nowhere,” Wallace said, a rather suspicious-seeming man told him that his

gun-carrying party would be doing some “target practice” and he wanted to give Wallace a “heads-up.”

After hearing a volley of gunshots Wallace realized there was “no one there for miles around” and left.

Thinking about his quiet position and how a lonely fisherman can easily be a witness to or a victim of nefarious doings in such a vast, isolated area, Wallace began developing his story about a San Francisco stockbroker who, while on a fly-fishing trip in the Sierras, gets entangled in a family intrigue of murder, a contested will and a gun-crazy militia.

This was the early 90s after all, when citizen-militias were much discussed and the Waco attack and Ruby Ridge were front page news.

Self-employed at the time, Wallace said he “worked in bursts” and wrote the first draft of the mystery during a period of five months.

Before he decided to self-publish, Wallace said he went

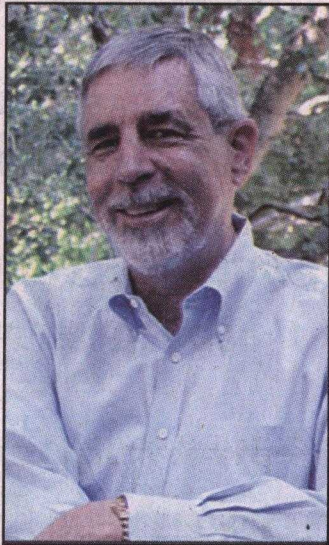


Photo by Greg Pio

Mike Wallace has published his first mystery novel.

the “agent and publisher route.”

One agent was intrigued and had a few suggestions for the new author.

“She asked for a rewrite and gave good ideas,” he said. Yet after the rewrite, Wallace found interest dried up.

Fast-forward 10 years and eBooks and Amazon make it easy for authors to get their book published and available to readers via Kindle and in print form.

Wallace said that before

ON THE NET
For more information on the novel or to buy it, visit www.quillgordonmystery.com or www.amazon.com/dp/B0080AODZ6

Amazon, which in addition to eBooks provides on-demand print publishing, “we’d (self-publishers) have to print books and drive around to book stores to take a couple copies.”

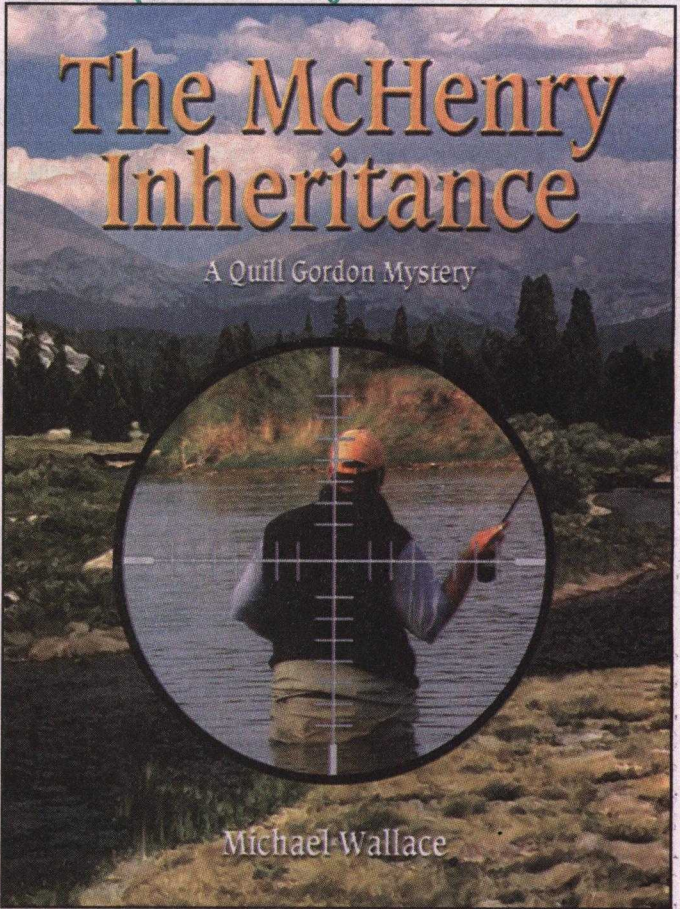
An avid reader of mystery novels for the last 50 years, Wallace is a fan of both contemporary and classic mysteries, with a soft spot for British authors such as Reginald Hill and Peter Lovesey.

“I read Sherlock Holmes from start to finish every few years,” Wallace admitted.

With his own work, Wallace said he tried to create a “believable, sympathetic character and build up to a good climax with a satisfying result.”

The agent who was so helpful during the beginning of his publishing journey asked him for outlines for further stories, and Wallace is looking forward to developing more Quill Gordon mysteries.

In the meantime, Wallace



said, if upon finishing his book while lounging on the beach or on a transatlantic flight a reader exclaims, “now that was a good story,” he will be very pleased. “The McHenry Inheritance”

by Michael Wallace is available as an eBook on Amazon for \$2.99. He’s known around town as Mike, but search for Michael Wallace on Amazon. Print editions coming soon.