

The Renaissance

2008-09: volume 20



***Magic Tree House: The Musical* performs at the Renaissance Theatre
November 28, 2008, 2:00 & 7:00 PM**

The Magic Tree House Series

Magic Tree House is a book series for young children written by Mary Pope Osborne and illustrated by Salvatore Murdocca. The series features two children--Jack, the serious, intelligent bookworm, and his adventurous, excitable, and imaginative younger sister, Annie--who travel to historical places using a magic tree house. The magic tree house belongs to Morgan le Fay who, in this series, is King Arthur's sister and a librarian who travels through time and space to collect books using the magic tree house.

In the first series, consisting of the first 28 books, Morgan sends Jack and Annie on numerous adventures and missions in order to help free Morgan from a spell, solve four ancient riddles to become Master Librarians, and save four ancient stories from being lost forever. After the first series, Mary Pope Osborne started a second series called the Magic Tree House "Merlin Missions." In these missions, Jack and Annie have quests from the ancient wizard Merlin the Magician. These books are longer than the previous 28, and some take place in fantasy realms like Camelot.

All together, there are forty (40) fiction books named. In addition, a number of Magic Tree House Research Guides (nonfiction companions to the series) have been written by the author, her husband Will and her sister Natalie Pope Boyce. These books contain more information about the historical places and events Jack and Annie visit in the Magic Tree House Series.

There is also a Magic Tree Passport that is available on the Magic Tree House Website (www.magictreehouse.com).



Mary Pope Osborne

Mary Pope Osborne, author of *The Magic Tree House*, talks on her web site about when she began to write...

"... one day, out of the blue, I began writing a story about an eleven-year-old girl in the South. The girl was a lot like me, and many of the incidents in the story were similar to happenings in my childhood. The first draft was crudely written, but it must have communicated something to an editor, because shortly after I finished, it became a young adult novel called *Run, Run as Fast as You Can*. Finally I knew what I wanted to be when I grew up.

Now twenty years and more than fifty books later, I feel I'm one of the most fortunate people on earth. I've been an elegant spider detective who plays jazz clarinet, and a small girl travelling on the back of a moonhorse. I've journeyed through Greek mythology, Norse mythology, medieval stories, and American tall tales. I've "met" George Washington and Ben Franklin, without even leaving my home. I've traveled around the globe, learning about the religions of the world.

Most recently, I've taken journeys through space in *The Magic Tree House*, visiting the times of dinosaurs, knights, mummies, pirates, and ninjas, and traveling to the rain forest, the Ice Age, the moon, a coral reef, the Wild West, Africa, and the Arctic.

The Magic Tree House has also whisked me to schools all over the country, and the contact I now have with children has brought overwhelming joy into my life. I love the letters I get from them and I love reading countless Magic Tree House stories that they've written. I feel as if these kids and I are all exploring the creative process together, using our imaginations plus our reading and writing skills to take us wherever we want to go. This, I tell my small fellow authors, is true magic."

For more, go to www.marypopeosborne.com

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