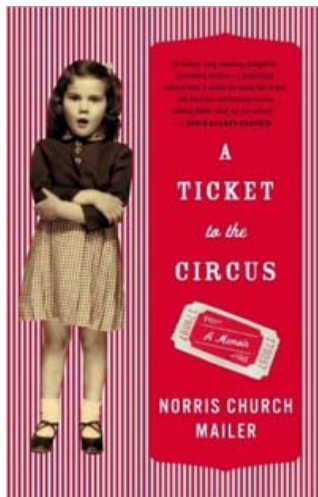




Recommended Memoirs

Book Reviews by Pat Bertschy



A Ticket to the Circus, by Norris Church Mailer, 2010

A Ticket to the Circus is the story of Norris Church Mailer, the sixth and last wife, she reminds us, of Norman Mailer, one of the most well known authors of the twentieth century.

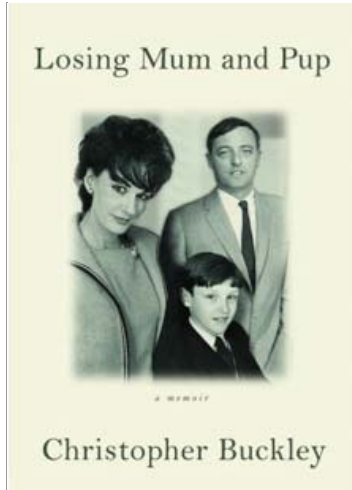
Norris grew up in Arkansas where she met Mailer at a book signing. She was twenty-six, he was fifty-two. She sent him a love poem, followed him to New York, and married him. What followed was a roller coaster ride.

In *A Ticket*, we get to know the man Norman Mailer, as well as the writer. Mailer wrote plays, screenplays, and over thirty-nine books between 1948 (*The Naked and the Dead*) and 2007 (*The Castle in the Forest*.) He founded the *Village Voice* and wrote for 75 different magazines and journals. One biographer describes Mailer as the most celebrated and reviled writer since Edgar Allen Poe.

With surprising candor, Norris tells how she coped with his fame, his temperament, his seven children by five other wives, her child from a prior marriage, and a child of their own. She worked tirelessly to bring their children together and be a good wife to Mailer.

We hear first-hand what life was like to be married to him and move in his circle. Norris and he divided their time between homes in New York City and Provincetown, Massachusetts. If only for the circus, the book is worth reading. It is pure entertainment.

Both books are available at www.Amazon.com



Losing Mum and Pup, by Christopher Buckley, 2009

Losing Mum and Pup, Christopher Buckley's memoir of William F. Buckley, Jr. and Patricia Taylor Buckley is well written, moving and even-handed.

Christopher Buckley explains his reasons for writing the memoir: "When the universe hands you material like this, not writing about it seems either a waste or a conscious act of evasion." Also losing both of his parents within one year left him bereft, but his father had taught him "Industry is the enemy of melancholy." Now he could put this adage to use. He wrote.

Even as an adult, Christopher was in awe of his parents, and rightly so. William F Buckley, Jr. wrote over fifty books and some 5,600 National Review columns in addition to his weekly TV news program "Firing Line." WFB was perhaps the most famous political conservative of our time, but quite daring, almost reckless in his private life, sailing in storm conditions and flying a plane solo with only one and a half hours experience.

Patricia Taylor Buckley was a leading member of New York society and counted among her friends Jerome Zipkin and Truman Capote. She was referred to by Women's' Wear Daily as the "chic and stunning Mrs. Buckley." She was well known for her candor and humor in the most "delicate" situations.

With affection, sincerity and self-effacing humor, Buckley takes us into their lives and captures his parents' public and private personas.

Pat Bertschy is an avid reader who lives on Cape Cod.

She was recently awarded a scholarship to attend this summer's *Cape Cod Writers Center Conference*, held at the Craigville Conference Center, for her nonfiction story "*Discovery*."

Pat was also named one of five finalists in the *Norman Mailer Cape and Islands Community College Writing Awards* for a work of non-fiction titled "*The Long Walk*."