

Kathryn Lang Slattery

Kathryn Lang Slattery is a published author of fiction and nonfiction for youth and has become an expert on many aspects of the Ritchie Boys of WWII.

Born during World War II and raised in 1950s Southern California, she enjoyed a childhood filled with reading, drawing, and long days at the beach. She graduated from the University of California at Los Angeles with a BFA, and then undertook graduate work in art and education at the University of the Americas in Mexico City. The years afterward were filled with teaching, travel, volunteer work with the Girl Scouts, and raising a family. Finally she returned to her early love of writing. Lang-Slattery has been published in several highly rated magazines for the youth market, including *Spider*, *Ladybug*, *Jack and Jill*, *Boys' Life*, and *Faces*.

As a child, Kathryn knew little of her father's story other than his childhood in Germany and sudden emigration to the United States in the mid-1930s. Then, at the age of seventeen, she discovered her father's Jewish heritage. This sparked an interest in World War II and the Holocaust. Ten years later, she finally met her father's brother, who lived in New York. ***Immigrant Soldier, The Story of a Ritchie Boy***, her first adult novel, is based on her uncle's World War II experiences. More than a decade spent researching, interviewing Ritchie Boys, and turning the true story of her uncle into fiction became an odyssey of discovery. "I wanted to tell his story," she says, "because it was different from any other Holocaust story I had read. The young Jewish hero is not a victim, but a young man who gradually grows from a frightened and frustrated teenager, looking for a place to belong, into a confident US Army intelligence officer who struggles with the conflicting emotions of hate and forgiveness."

Kathryn (who prefers to be called Katie) lives in Laguna Beach, California, only steps from her childhood home. She is a self-described "Renaissance woman" who expresses her creativity by writing, gourmet cooking, pastel painting, drawing, home decoration, and sewing. Besides her creative endeavors, she enjoys reading, travel of all kinds, but especially to places that require a passport, and time with family and friends. She finds tranquility simply by looking out the large windows of her living room toward a view of her garden and the natural hillsides beyond.



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