

Tim Weed's 'Will Poole's Island' full of mystery and history

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(submitted photo)

Tim Weed has a deep appreciation for the history behind the stories of how our forefathers first came to this land to become Americans. As he delved deeper and deeper into his own roots, the fascination about his ancestors' unique story spurred Weed to learn more. Weed also knew his story had the makings for a great novel.

Weed, who grew up in Putney, began honing his writing skills at the early age of 6. He acquired his Masters of Fine Arts in Writing from Middlebury College, and his short story "The Afternoon Client" won a Writer's Digest Popular Fiction Award, and an extended excerpt of his story "Tower Eight" was the Grand Prize winner for Outrider Press' "The Mountain" anthology. His collected works have been short listed for the New Rivers Press Many Voices Project, the Autumn House Fiction Prize, and the Lewis-Clark Press Discovery Award.

"Will Poole's Island" is Weed's first novel, inspired by what he learned while researching his own background.

He learned that his own forefathers were some of the earliest settlers who had arrived in America in the 1600s to what is now known as Connecticut as orphaned children accompanied by a corrupt servant. He also discovered his own Native American ancestry. As he squinted over our landscape trying to imagine what life was like when the colonies were in their infancy, he realized that there was a lot missing in what we know about our past and a lot of misunderstanding about the relationships between the Native American people and our Colonial ancestors. Little was known also about America's national mythology that was believed by both cultures. "Will Poole's Island" may be a fictional story loosely based on Weed's own ancestors, but his painstaking research paid off as the reader is drawn back to the 1600s when Will Poole makes a friend with an elderly Wampanoag shaman who has magical powers. As their friendship creates adversity due to the differences in culture, their journey together begins.

Tim Weed provided a brief description of his novel, "'Will Poole's Island' is set during a period in history that is overshadowed, for many Americans, by the Thanksgiving legend on one end and the patriotic triumph of 1776 on the other. But in my research I found some basic truths about the period are missing from our national mythology: the horror of a mostly unintentional but unquestionably convenient genocide, and the clash between two very different worldviews that were nonetheless both rooted in the visionary and the unseen. When it came time to write the novel, I began to get a feeling of accumulating energy, as if the story were telling itself. It was as if Will and Squamiset and their compatriots had an important message they wanted to communicate--a new way of thinking, perhaps, or a reminder of a very 'old' way of thinking--about the early colonial phase of the history of this place we have come to call America. But 'Will Poole's Island' is also, very simply, a story. A story about the friendship and shared adventures of a young man and an old man, the landscape they travel through, and the people they meet. I hope you enjoy it!"

He added, "It tells a good story, it's a fun book with serious underpinnings. It is pegged as young adult because the main character is 17-years-old, but is geared for all ages."

Joseph Monninger, National Endowment for the Arts Fellow and author of "The World as We Know It" said, "Tim Weed's "Will Poole's Island" is a doorway to an earlier world when the United States existed as a borderless tract of land whose dimensions could hardly be imagined. This is a superb novel, written with

truth and daring at its core."

To read more, visit Tim's website, www.timweed.net.

To hear more about his book and to meet the author in person, Tim Weed will be at Next Stage, Kimball Hill in Putney tomorrow, Sunday, Sept. 7 at 5 p.m. for a brief reading and a slide show walking the audience through the research that went into his creation of "Will Poole's Island." There is a \$10 suggested donation to benefit Next Stage educational programs.

There will be a wine, cheese and book signing at the Gleanery, in Putney immediately following the presentation.

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