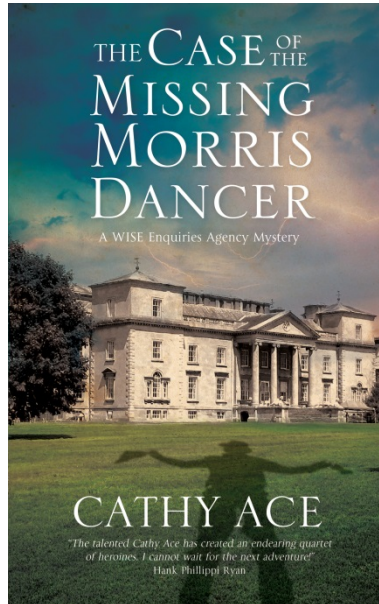


BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

The Case of the Missing Morris Dancer

by Cathy Ace



GENERAL:

- 1) In this book you met the four women who staff the WISE Enquiries Agency. With whom did you most readily identify, and why? Do you think the women have a good group skill-set for their chosen occupation? What about their “additional member”?
- 2) These women are at different stages in their lives and come from very different backgrounds. They also have differing family responsibilities and relationships. Do you think that women have to juggle family, life, and a career in a way that differs from men? Why/why not?
- 3) Are any members of your group Welsh, Irish, Scottish or English? Any ancestry from those areas? Each woman has a different sense of her own “national” identity – do you? What influences that for you? Do you think that differs between men and women, or does age and background play a more vital role? (How about having a meeting with distinctly Welsh, Irish, Scottish or English food and drink?)
- 4) There’s an interplay in these books between old traditions and new technology. By their nature traditions tend to remain the same, whereas technology brings new challenges. How do you find that new technology has changed your own life? What traditions do you adhere to?

5) The class structure in Britain is quite unique to that world. If you're a British group, how do you think that affects your lives, if at all? If you're not a British group, what takes its place?

6) These women all display some measure of strength, and some measure of vulnerability or weakness in the books. What were the most noticeable to you?

7) If you were to cast actors (dead or alive) to play these roles, who would you choose, and why?

Question relating specifically to "The Case of the Missing Morris Dancer"

1) Have any of you seen, or maybe even taken part in, Morris dancing? What did you think of it? There's a lot of information about it on the Internet and many video clips of dances. Check it out before your meeting, and maybe have a go at it together?

2) Where you live, is there something similar to Morris dancing in terms of folk dancing? Does folk dancing play a part in your family background or heritage at all? If so, how? Do you think you're able to teach your group a folk dance that means something to you?

3) Weddings around the world have different traditions associated with them. If you're married, what traditions did you observe at your wedding, and which did you avoid? Why? If you're not married, which wedding traditions appeal to you, and which do you think you'd give a miss? Why?

4) In the county of Powys – which is large, and mainly rural – there are a good number of isolated farms. Have you ever lived in such an environment? Know someone who has? Do you think isolation can change family dynamics, and the power that a matriarch or patriarch can have over other family members vs family dynamics in urban or suburban settings? If so, how?

5) This book, on occasion, considers the concept of "women as property". Is that something with which you are familiar? Is it something you've thought about in terms of your own life, or as an historical issue?

6) Parents sometimes do things on the basis that "they want the best for their children"; children often think their parents' decisions are anything but "best for them". Have you any experience of this – either as a parent or a young person? How have such decisions affected your life?

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Author: Cathy Ace

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Thanks for choosing to read this book!