



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the series about?

The series is unique because each book focuses on a different gemstone. I've woven gemstone history, legends and lore throughout the plots, giving readers insight into fascinating new worlds.

Set in a small town located on Maryland's Chesapeake Bay, the books feature a strong female sleuth, realistic secondary characters, a fast pace, challenging puzzles, suspense and romance.

Two precocious dogs add touches of humor.

2. What got you interested in gemstones?

Like my main character, Kimberley West, I could never afford to buy jewelry even at my jeweler grandfather's discount. But I quickly learned that the gemstones themselves, their history, legend and lore, were absolutely fascinating.

Take amethyst, for example. During the height of the Roman Empire – a period known for its decadence – people believed that wearing amethyst would protect them from getting drunk. After all, wine is purple and so is amethyst...

As I looked around, I realized that gemstone lore often revealed more about human psychology than the gemstones themselves.

3. How did you get the idea for the Jeweler's Gemstone Mystery series?

I'm a big fan of books that not only tell a good story, but pull you into new worlds. Everything I know about horse racing, for example, comes from mystery author Dick Francis. Beverly Connor (archeology), Robin Burcell (forensic art), Julie Moffett (computer hacking) and Elizabeth Peters (Egyptology) also incorporated their specialized knowledge into their books.

Thanks to my jeweler grandfather, I've long been interested in gemstone history, legend and lore. Like Kim, my main character, I tend to wax poetic whenever I discover a new gem story. People seemed surprised and intrigued by these tales.

The jeweler's gemstone mysteries give me the chance to combine my love of mysteries with my interest in gemstones.

4. Why did you decide to set your series in Maryland?

I love the friendly people in Maryland. We have all the cultural activities one could desire. But we also have gorgeous natural areas from the mountains to the shore. The ambiance of the

Chesapeake Bay and its beaches is different from other beachy areas. When my husband and I moved here, I felt instantly at home.

5. What part of *The Carolina Emerald* is your favorite?

I do extensive research for all of my books. Readers tell me they really enjoy the gemstone legends and lore, but also the local history. In *The Pirate's Ruby*, for example, I weave in stories of pirates along the Chesapeake Bay.

For *The Carolina Emerald*, I took my main characters to dig for gems in North Carolina. The research was so much fun because I toured a real, honest-to-goodness American emerald mine. It was a fascinating experience, one that I share with readers of the book.

6. What part of writing is the most fun for you? The most stressful or the hardest?

The most fun and the hardest are actually two sides of the same coin. I love that moment in a story where the characters start helping the plot by behaving true to their natures. They'll often move the story in unexpected but delightful directions.

But that's also stressful because they'll sometimes paint themselves into a no-win situation or cause other plotting headaches.

In *The Carolina Emerald*, for example, the character I'd originally slated as the victim grew so charming that I didn't have the heart to kill him off. So I had to introduce a new character to play that role.

7. Tell me about the first moment you knew you were an author.

I've been a writer my entire life. But "author" carries a loftier meaning.

I never felt like an author until one summer day when I was sitting in my car in front of the Dunkirk, MD, post office waiting for a friend to mail a package. A woman came out of the post office, glanced in my direction and suddenly stopped to stare at the two dogs in my backseat.

Now this wasn't unusual behavior. Dash, my standard poodle, and Bogie, my friend's longhaired dachshund, are both uncommon breeds. People often stop us to ask about them. Seeing the two best buddies trotting side by side – one tall and elegant, the other short enough to drag his fur along the boardwalk – usually produces comments.

So I wasn't particularly surprised when the woman approached the car.

"Excuse me." She offered a shy smile. "Can I ask you a silly question?"

I smiled back and prepared to offer a brief history of the two dog breeds.

Instead, she said, "Are you Lynn Franklin, the author?"

My mouth fell open and I stuttered an answer.

"I recognized the two dogs from your books." She gestured to Dash and Bogie, then smiled. "I love your books!"

We chatted for a few minutes. After she left, I noticed the two dogs staring at me.

“No,” I told them. “This does not mean you get a commission.”

8. What do you most like about being an author?

Meeting readers. My goals as a writer are to entertain readers and encourage them to view the world in new ways. The feedback from readers not only helps me improve my writing, but also spurs me on to write, write, write.

9. What has been the hardest part of the book/series writing process?

Juggling real life with my writing schedule. You can measure the intensity of my writing by the number of dust bunnies in our house!

10. What's next?

Kim, Rory and the gang will be coming back to Southern Maryland. One of the scenes will occur at a poodle hunting trial. Yeah, I said “poodle,” as in those brilliant, curly-haired dogs with the wicked sense of humor. I recently attended a poodle hunt trial. It was a cold day and I couldn't help laughing as some of the poodles found creative ways to retrieve their ducks from an island without getting their paws wet. With guns firing and dogs barking and people milling about – what better place to stage a murder?

11. You mentioned poodles. Are the dog behaviors in your books real?

Absolutely. Anyone who's lived with a dog of any breed will recognize some of these behaviors. As members of our human families, dogs contribute so much to our emotional well being – including providing comic relief when life grows too intense.

12. How do readers find out about your next book?

Sign up for *The Diamond Digest*, my occasional email-only newsletter. I use the *Digest* to give readers insider information about the series and, of course, let them know when a new book is available. You can find the sign-up form – as well as other information about the books – on my web site.

www.LynnFranklin.com