

BUSINESS



PHOTO BY JULIE BARSAMIAN

JoAnn Ainsworth at her desk in her San Leandro home where she writes her novels.

Book Publishing Goes Online

Local author e-publishes her first book at 69

By Julie Barsamian
San Leandro Times

As a student at UC Berkeley during the famed free-speech movement, JoAnn Ainsworth rode a motorcycle to class past the national guard and under the watch of military helicopters.

But this experience isn't highlighted in any of her novels; in fact, reading her work, you might think she came from an entirely different time and place.

"I chose to write romance because it is a billion dollar industry," says the San Leandro author. "And I chose the setting, in Medieval Europe, because of my last name, it bears Anglo-Saxon ancestry."

At age 69, Ainsworth — who holds a master of arts degree in teaching, and a master's in business administration — is proof that it is never too late to pursue a dream.

Out of the Dark and the prelude, *Mathilda's Song* were written shortly after Ainsworth entered retirement.

"Actually, I was out of a job, at 64, a few years before I had intended to enter retirement," says Ainsworth. "It was a bad economy."

Ainsworth also knew that the barriers for entry were high for an aspiring author, so she published online. She has been writ-

ing and marketing her work since 1998, and *Out of the Dark* is her first book to be e-published. It will be available for purchase in book stores in the spring of 2009.

"It took 10 years of marketing, as a beginner, to get my foot in the door," says Ainsworth. "E-publishing is widespread and it has less costs upfront."

The prolific author is also working on several other books, some Western, some paranormal, all wrought with detail and careful research of the time periods, which range from 1895 to 1943.

Now, as she writes her sixth book, Ainsworth draws inspiration from her two published novels, as well as the other stories she hopes to share with readers.

When it comes to knowing if

a story is book worthy, Ainsworth says you have to have courage.

"You really don't know. You just have to walk off the cliff and accept change," she says. "Most importantly, it takes a while, so choose something you like to write about, or you'll ruin an entire month or year writing about something you don't like."

Out of the Dark is available online now at www.samhainpublishing.com/authors/joann-smith-ainsworth, and *Mathilda's Song* will be available online in September.

Out of the Dark bookmarks are available at A World of Books in Pelton Center, and readers can sign-up to be notified next spring when autographed copies of the book arrives in stores.