

# ABOUT LARKIN

*Guide to the Collective Obsessions Saga*

By Deidre Dalton



## *About Larkin*

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## ABOUT COLLECTIVE OBSESSIONS

The *Collective Obsessions Saga* by Deidre Dalton chronicles the extraordinary loves and intricate obsessions between two families sweeping a span of more than 150 years, all set against the backdrop of a Gothic seaside mansion in Maine.

Follow the twists and turns of the Larkin and Sullivan families, who settle in America in the mid-1800s. John Larkin builds his vast business empire while daughter Molly and lighthouse keeper Colm Sullivan establish a connection that will endure for generations.

Amidst murder, madness, perverse self-indulgence and avarice the two families struggle to free themselves from a dark legacy of secrets and obsessions.

More than twenty years in the making, *Collective Obsessions* is a unique family saga set in the combined genres of mystery, the paranormal, historical romance, and dotted with a touch of the macabre and hints of classic Gothicism.

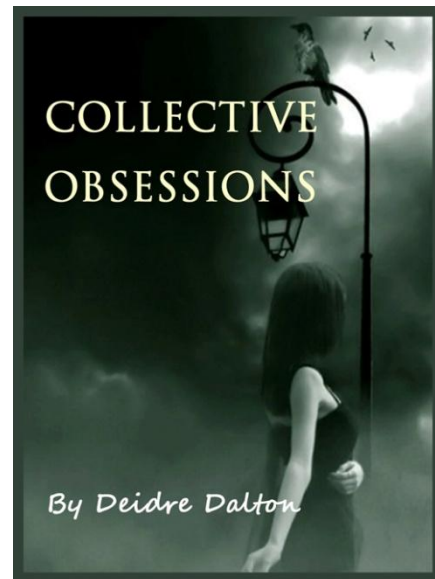
All titles in the *Collective Obsessions Saga* were released by Club Lighthouse Publishing.

The series of books include:

1. **The Advent**
2. **Quixotic Crossings**
3. **The Twain Shall Meet**
4. **Enthrallment**
5. **The Keeper's Journal**
6. **Hearts Desires**
7. **The Twilight**
8. **Megan's Legacy**
9. **Limb of Iniquity** (*coming in 2025*)

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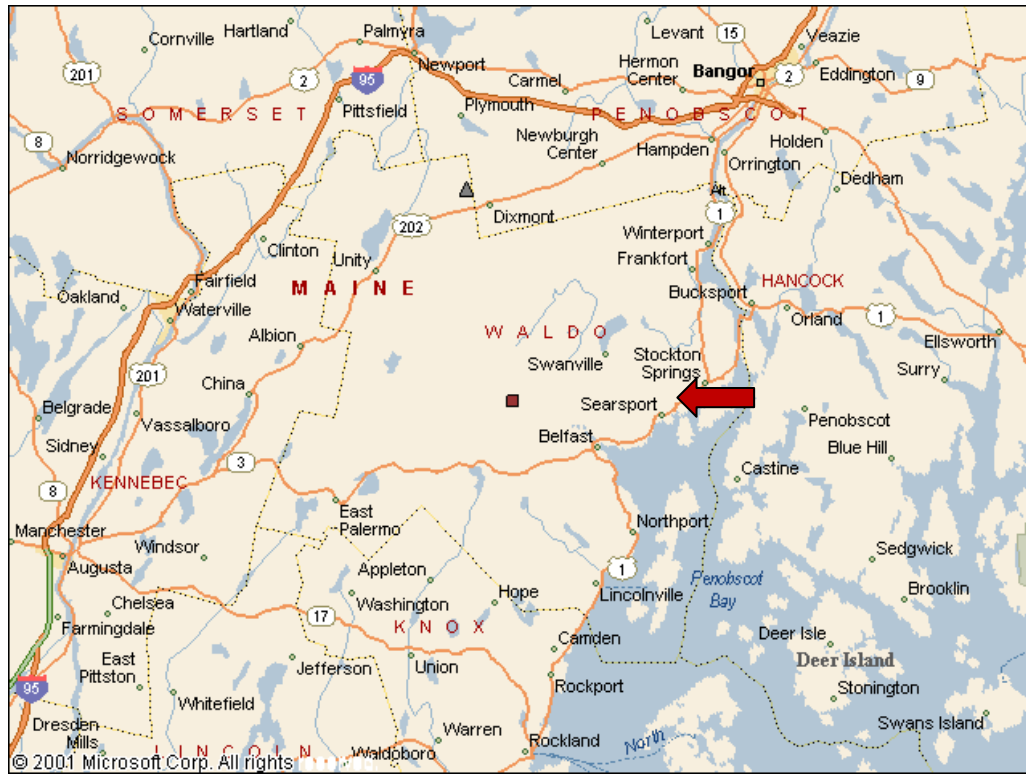
<https://deborahotoole.com/collective/>



## ABOUT LARKIN CITY

Larkin City, Maine is a fictional harbor town featured in the nine-part *Collective Obsessions Saga* by Deidre Dalton.

Irish immigrant John Larkin settled a twenty-two mile stretch of Maine coastline between the villages of Searsport and Stockton Springs in Waldo County (see red arrow on the map below), where he formally established Larkin Village in the spring of 1867.



John razed an entire section of dense pines to begin building his village. He collected small pebbles from the beaches and laid the stones to create a cobblestone main street. It gave the impression of entering a quaint old village, complete with gas lamps high on poles above the streets. John hired German men to keep the boardwalks and streets clean, sweeping them free of dirt and debris, and washed when it rained. By 1880, the village was home to just under one thousand people. Most of them were Irish immigrants, but there was also a scattering of Italians, French, Canadian, English, and a few Germans. The main street was a hub of activity, with cottages and larger houses spread out on the side streets.

The main part of the village was comprised of the Larkin Grocery Store, Quinn's Forge, the red-bricked city hall, and a small cottage that served as the sheriff's office. Larkin Village

Hall housed the jail, although the small court room had yet to be used. John made a sign for the government building, carved into a huge rock and painted green.

By the time John passed away in 1926, natural population growth through the generations changed the name of his town from Larkin Village to Larkin City.



By 1995, the population of Larkin City swelled to 26,350. More than a decade later, a surge of big-city dwellers moving to Larkin enlarged the township to nearly 40,000 souls. Many came to settle in the beautiful harbor town from New York, Connecticut and New Jersey. The population increase was also aided by the student community at Larkin City University, the influx of medical and legal professionals, and job opportunities with the Banshee Point Hotel, golf course and winery.

While there are considerably more residents of Larkin City in the present day, the main part of town remains the same. There is the *Amber Whale Tavern*, *Bruno's Café*, *Larkin Lumber & Hardware*, the *Wee Book Shop*, an arcade, *Larkin Cinema*, and *Larkin Grocery & Mercantile*.

The *Larkin Co-Op* sells reasonably priced souvenirs to tourists: postcards, dolls, needlework, wooden crafts, locally made blueberry preserves, fish pastes, steaming accessories for cooking shellfish, ceramics, rugs, wreaths and tin-ware. Next door is the *Nook & Cranny*, which deals exclusively with local pottery, mainly tea services and trays, with a wide selection of teas, pastries and savories. A few blocks down is the *Larkin Fish Shop*, which produces more than thirty varieties of smoked seafood, including salmon, whitefish, herring, trout, sturgeon, mackerel and sablefish. Next door is *Clyde's Billiard Hall*, once a favorite haunt of local fishermen.

Several other shops line Main Street, including eateries that sell fish and chips or steamed mussels in brown paper wrappers, soaked in vinegar and salt; a breakfast takeaway that specializes in blueberry scones and ham with blueberry biscuits, and a tourist shop that arranges for group windjammer rides on the harbor and bike rides through the valley. There are also several produce stands open in the summer featuring home-grown Maine staples: fresh meats, blueberries and blueberry products, smoked seafood, teas, beer, pine nuts, maple syrup, and a vast array of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Just before Main Street turns onto the entrance of US Highway 1, a right turn leads to Bench Road. The paved street slopes toward the Larkin City Cemetery.

## MORE ABOUT LARKIN CITY:

- **Amber Whale Tavern & Lodging House** (est. 1870): Located on Main Street in Larkin City near the harbor, between a haberdashery and the *Sea Wharf Cafe* and one block from the grocery store. The Amber Whale is set back from the boardwalk on Main Street, with the sign over the door depicting a whale slicing through blue waves. The first owner of the Amber Whale was Edward Bisiker. After his death in a carriage accident in 1875, his widow Lizbeth became the proprietor with the help of their son Adam. Lizbeth was also the mistress of John Larkin, founder of Larkin City. Adam Bisiker went on to establish the *Suds Pub* after the Amber Whale burned down in 1904. He was the father of Linda Bisiker, who married George Sullivan (aka Ben Webb). Their son was Mike Sullivan, who appears in *Book Three: The Twain Shall Meet*. Burned down in 1904, the Amber Whale was replaced by *Phoebe's Boutique*. The dress shop was torn down in 1979 and the Amber Whale was rebuilt to original 1870 specs.
- **Anchor's Aweigh:** Old, beaten-down motel just off the Larkin City exit on US Highway 1 North. (*Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*).
- **Animal Life Centre** (opened June 1997, *Book Six: Hearts Desires*): No-kill animal shelter founded by Jamie Page. Located on twenty acres near Cliffhaven Lane in Larkin City. The property is half-way between the entrance to the family mansion and Larkin city, and a short distance from Ben Webb's cottage.
- **Ash Lane:** Andrea St. John lived in a small house on Ash Lane in Larkin City with her daughter Alexandra before skipping town. Shannon Larkin owns the house. (*Book Seven: The Twilight*).





- **Atlantic Apartment Complex:** Located on Harbor Lane in Larkin City, where Cora Ann Hogan takes a studio flat after being evicted from her daughter Andrea's house on Ash Lane. (*Book Seven: The Twilight*).
- **Azoulay Dry Cleaners:** Located on Main Street in Larkin City two doors down from the *Larkin Cinema* and across the street from *Larkin Mines*; dry cleaners managed by Lydia Azoulay, wife of Larkin City Mayor David Azoulay. (*Book Six: Hearts Desires*, *Book Seven: The Twilight* and *Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*).
- **Azoulay Gems:** Jewelry store located on the harbor in Larkin City, between a red-brick office complex and *Quayside Perk*, a popular coffee shop. Jewelry store owned by Larkin City Mayor David Azoulay, managed by his daughters Rachel and Deborah.
- **Bangor Mental Hospital** (aka *Bangor Mental Health Institute*): Located on Hepatica Hill in Bangor, where Jennifer Sullivan and her grandson Mike Sullivan were both committed at various times. (*Book Two: Quixotic Crossings* and *Book Three: The Twain Shall Meet*).
- **Banshee Point Hotel** (includes golf course & winery, *pictured below*): The property comprises acreage left to Liam Larkin by his father Rory in 1999, which is located near Larkin Highway, south of the mansion. The grand opening occurred on Wednesday, 29th June 2005. The castle-like appearance of the Banshee Point Hotel and the emerald green of the golf course beyond is a stunning tableau for all guests. Built against a small hill, the lodging has two stories and an observation parapet that runs the length of the building. The black concrete parking lot is bordered by neatly-clipped boxwood shrubs with apertures that lead to the golf course and an outdoor dining veranda. Soft halogen lights built into the ground cast elegant tracery on the hotel at night, giving focus to the castellated sculpture. Constructed with the same whitened brick and stone used for the winery, the hotel offers an Olympic-sized swimming pool, a fully-staffed spa with cosmetic treatments, sauna and Jacuzzi, guided horseback riding, picnics, and balloon rides from Banshee Point and the lighthouse. (*Book Seven: The Twilight* and *Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*).



- **Banshee Point Winery** (part of the *Banshee Point Hotel & Golf Course*). The winery produces ten select wines and sells about 250,000 bottles per year. Varieties include

Red (*Beaujolais, Cabernet Sauvignon, Ginocchio, Sangria, Shiraz*), White (*Chardonnay and Riesling, Semillon-Chardonnay*), Fruit (*Blueberry and Apple*), Dessert (*Ice Wine*), Sparkling Champagne and Larkin Cognac (exclusive, \$800 per case of ten). The Winery employs more than thirty people, and includes a tasting room, wine shop, a small but exclusive dining room by reservation only, along with wine tastings, culinary demonstrations and wine seminars. There are also walking guided tours, when guests are permitted to see the wine production areas.



- **Barter Street:** A few blocks from Seacove Lane in Larkin City, where Mariko Woods has a home.
- **Bather's Realty:** Located a few doors down from *Bruno's Café* on Main Street in Larkin City, where Kip Bathers runs his real estate business. (*Book Seven: The Twilight* and *Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*).
- **Beam Street:** Located in Larkin City, where Jennifer Sullivan moved in 1934. (*Book Two: Quixotic Crossings*).
- **Blue Fin Pub:** Located on the west side of Larkin City.
- **Blue Harbor Lane:** Located off Main Street in Larkin City and a few blocks from *Larkin Lumber & Hardware*; where Sara Sullivan once resided in a duplex flat. (*Book Five: The Keeper's Journal*).
- **Brickyard Square:** Built in 1975 and located on Main Street in Larkin City, a few blocks from the lumberyard. The square includes *Harbor View Catering*, *Pepe's Café*, *Bennett Blueprints* (architectural firm owned by Ms. Lynn Bennett), a boutique, a printing outfit, pizza parlor, and an aerobics studio.



- **Bruno's Café** (est. 1926, *pictured above*): Located on Main Street in Larkin City, a few doors down from the old mining company and Luke Castaneda's office. A casement window runs the length of the café's front on the boardwalk, with outside planters. Tables are set in the main area of the café, next to a long counter with barstools. *Bruno's Café* is a favorite haunt of locals, and is patronized by members of the Larkin family throughout the *Collective Obsessions Saga*. Resident gossip and waitress: Berty Soames, who also becomes the live-in cook for the Larkin family in 2015.



- **The Byre** (est. 1922, *pictured below*): Year-round tourist-driven leisure resort in Larkin City with two hundred guest rooms, two restaurants, a ski lodge, three bars, a ballroom, and several large, private guest cottages, stables, two swimming pools, and three seasonal ski slopes. Restaurants located in The Byre include the *Coral Cove Café* (formal dining) and the *Fish Hook Diner* (casual dining).



- **Clamshell Employment Agency:** (est. 1988 by Mariko Woods). Located on Seacove Lane off Main Street in Larkin City; housed in a one-story brick building with white-shuttered windows and a gabled roof. The structure originated with the settling of Larkin City in 1867, and was once the home of a Catholic priest. It was later turned into a fabric outlet in the 1950's. Mariko Woods purchased the building after it had been uninhabited for twenty years. On each side of the building are other businesses, including a small coffee-house named *Pot O'Beans* and an attorney's office.
- **Cliffhaven Lane:** Located three miles from the highway entrance to Larkin estate, where George Sullivan (aka Ben Webb) has lived since 1985. The *Animal Life Centre* is also nearby.
- **Clyde's Billiard Hall:** (est. 1956 by local crab boat captain Clyde Dewhurst). Located on Main Street in Larkin City, next door to the *Larkin Fish Shop*. One of Rory Larkin's favorite haunts (*Book Four: Enthrallment*) and a safe hangout for Jamie Page and Kyle Adkins (*Book Seven: The Twilight*).



- **Colleen Larkin Memorial Park** (est. 1964, *pictured above*): Located on Main Street in Larkin City, next to city hall and the courthouse. Established in honor of Colleen Larkin's charitable work during her lifetime.
- **Colm Sullivan's Cottage:** (*cottage and garden pictured below*). Located on Cove Hollow Circle in Larkin City, where Colm lives after retiring as the Banshee Point lighthouse keeper and where his grandson Jean-Claude Sullivan leads a double-life. The cottage garden is also the setting for Colm's visions of Molly forty years after her death. (*Book Two: Quixotic Crossings*). Seventy-five years later, the cottage is the site of the Colm Sullivan Art Gallery (*Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*).



- **The Coven Nightclub** (*pictured below*): Located in Larkin City, operated by Kevin Larkin. *The Coven* was first established by Roddy Larkin on Christmas Eve 1933, a few weeks after the repeal of prohibition. It began as a public house, but was transformed into a private club by his son Patrick ten years later. He renovated the inside, laying down red carpets, dark oaken walls and tables, and plush furniture. He also made additions to the club, building a second level that included an intimate restaurant and a poker room with a half-dozen rounded tables and an individual bar. Patrick's son Brian Larkin abolished the private club policy in mid-1960, opening *The Coven* to anyone who had a mind to walk through the front door. The pub and eatery is a popular place in the city, and is typically full to capacity any night of the week. Fridays and Saturdays are particularly festive, most patrons enjoying the end of a work week by having a few drinks and a game of pool in the billiard room.



- **Curry Street:** Located in Larkin City. Where Jean-Claude Sullivan and Jennifer Sullivan had their first cottage, and where George Sullivan (*aka Ben Webb*) was raised. (*Book Two: Quixotic Crossings*). Turned into a duplex in 1995, where Kyle Adkins lived before moving in with Jamie Page (*Book Seven: The Twilight* and *Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*).
- **Education & Leisure Centre:** Located in North Town, Larkin City.
- **Elm Road:** Located a few blocks east of Main Street in Larkin City, home to Dana Maitland and her mother Miriam. Also where Bridget Gallagher owns a home. (*Book Three: The Twain Shall Meet* and *Book Six: Hearts Desires*).
- **Front End Auto Shop:** Located in Larkin City, where George Sullivan (*aka Ben Webb*) worked for ten years (1983-1993).
- **Harbor Hill:** Affluent area of Larkin City including Crimson Lane, where Susan O'Reilly's parents had a home. (*Book Two: Quixotic Crossings*).
- **Harbor Hill Food Mart:** Convenience store and gas station in affluent area of Larkin City.
- **Harbor Street Pier:** Located near the waterfront and Larkin Harbor, where Mick and Layla Sullivan had a two-story cottage. (*Book Two: Quixotic Crossings*).
- **Ivy Gardens:** Apartment building in Larkin City owned by Shannon Larkin, located near LCU on High Street (*pictured at right*). Professor Lee Gunther (*Book Seven: The Twilight* and *Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*) has a flat in the building.
- **King's Inn Apartment Building:** Located on High Street in Larkin City, near Larkin City University (LCU). Where Jack Sansovino (*Book Four: Enthrallment*) and Kip Bathers (*Book Seven: The Twilight*) once had flats.
- **KXLC TV Studios:** Located near LCU. Property taxes were temporarily increased in 1940 to build the television studio, with a sizable portion being donated by Roddy Larkin. KXLC aired its first news broadcast on a Friday night, which also happened to be Valentine's Day in 1941.
- **Larkin Animal Clinic:** Located on Waterford Street in Larkin City, near Larkin Harbor.
- **Larkin Arcade:** Located across the street from *Bruno's Café* on Main Street in Larkin City; owned and operated by Kimi Gardner since 1968 (*Book Three: The Twain Shall Meet*).
- **Larkin Cinema** (*pictured below*): Located on Main Street in Larkin City; two doors up from Azoulay Dry Cleaners and across the street from Larkin Mines. The exterior of the theater was built with gray stone, designed to appear as a mini-castle with two small towers and a faux parapet. Constructed in 1892 to provide live plays to the populace of Larkin, the structure was converted into a movie cinema in 1913. The first film shown on its screen was *The Bangville Police*, starring the Keystone Cops. The theater itself was



a layout of plush gold and red design, sloping downward slightly. There was a massive silky yellow curtain covering the screen at the bottom of the room, with etched wall sconces shedding murky light on the carpeted floor. The seats were designed for one occupant or two - a simple armrest could be pushed down to create a double into a single.



- **Larkin City Airport:** Located on the outskirts of Larkin City, and three miles from the entrance to Larkin Estate. The airport has a small terminal, the majority of flights usually consisting of charter planes or twin-engines from Bangor or New York City. The airport building is painted a powder blue, surrounded by neatly-clipped foliage.
- **Larkin City Bank & Trust:** Located on Main Street in Larkin City.
- **Larkin City Cemetery** (est. 1867): John Larkin personally designed the city cemetery. It looks much like the private burial ground near the mansion, only on larger scale. There are plentiful pine trees, as well as twenty-two acres of beaten paths, lush green fields and peaceful forest areas. The burial site is slightly elevated on a slope, accessed by Bench Road on the outskirts of Larkin City.
- **Larkin City Hall & Courthouse** (est. 1867): Located on Main Street in Larkin City, next door to the gray-bricked offices of the local police department. A new police building was constructed in 1977 through donations by the Larkin family.
- **Larkin City Hotel:** Located on Main Street in Larkin City.
- **Larkin City University** (LCU; est. 1923, *pictured below*): Located on High Street in Larkin City; has six colleges including medicine, law, computer technology, business, forestry and culinary arts. LCU was built through donations made by John Larkin. LCU now has a healthy population of students from all over the country and across the globe. Seeing the need for additional housing, Roddy Larkin also commissioned the building of a dozen apartment complexes surrounding the college grounds.





- **Larkin Co-Op** (est. 1993): Located in Larkin City. The shop contains souvenirs such as postcards, dolls, needlework, wooden crafts, ceramics, rugs, wreaths and tin-ware, fish pastes, locally-made blueberry preserves, and steaming accessories for cooking shellfish.
- **Larkin Fish Shop**: Located a few blocks from the *Nook & Cranny* on Main Street in Larkin City. The shop produces more than 30 varieties of smoked seafood, sold all over the country, and allows customers to view the process of smoking the fish through glass windows.
- **Larkin Free Clinic**: Located on Main Street in Larkin City.
- **Larkin Gazette** (est. 1869): Located on Main Street in Larkin City, next to the *Wee Book Shop* with an alley between leading to a large parking lot in the back. Larkin City's only newspaper.
- **Larkin Grocery & Mercantile** (est. 1867): Located on Main Street in Larkin City; one block from the *Amber Whale*.
- **Larkin Harbor Tour Company** (est. 1927 by Roddy Larkin): Located near Harbor Street Pier in Larkin City. Guided tours are given during the summer season on a 65-foot wooden schooner known as *Lady Banshee*. The vessel was constructed at Shipbuilders Station on the harbor, made with traditional two-inch carved cedar planks over white oak frames. The schooner has a roomy fifty-six feet on deck, with cushioned edge seats and grip rails. The beam is fourteen feet with a draft of six feet six inches. *Lady Banshee* has 18,000 pounds of ballast and carries 1,600 square feet of sail.
- **Larkin Health Club** (aka "Gym"): Located on Pine Street in Larkin City.
- **Larkin Health Club (II)**: Located on High Street near LCU and King's Inn Apartments.
- **Larkin High School**: Located near Colleen Larkin Memorial Park on Main Street in Larkin City. Football team: *Sea Celtics*; baseball team: *Bluebirds*.
- **Larkin Lumber & Hardware** (est. 1906 by Roddy Larkin, *pictured below*): Located at 1600 Main Street in Larkin City. The yard covers almost a complete city block, and is one of Larkin City's largest employers aside from the college and hospital. The main entrance to the yard consists of a wide, wooden arch painted dark green. There is a parking area next to the main building, which contains the hardware store and offices on the upper floor. There are several rows of long buildings that hold the bountiful

supply of lumber, and a large garage that houses delivery trucks. The main lumber yard expanded to over two miles in width and one mile in length. New buildings were also added over time: a door shop and a separate structure that featured manufactured log cabins made to specs. The inside of the store was refurbished and rebuilt into two stories. The main floor houses a large supply of nuts and bolts and other various hardware and tools, with a small coffee shop and waiting area. The upstairs hold the offices of the lumber company: a conference room that doubled as a lunch room for employees, along with several offices and drafting rooms. Larkin Lumber employed drivers, an entire shipping department, inside sales, outside sales, the door and log cabin workers, accounting and office help, loaders in the yard and a foreman. Larkin Lumber serves many towns in the surrounding vicinity. They deliver as far as Bangor sometimes, but the main route is usually Larkin first, and then through Belfast, City Point, Swanville, and then back down to Searsport, Stockton Springs, Prospect, Verona, Orland and Ellsworth.



- **Larkin Mines** (est. 1948 by Brian Larkin): Located on Main Street in the center of Larkin City; the two-story brick building dates back to 1915. The office is a few doors down from Bruno's Cafe and across the street from the Larkin Cinema. Brian Larkin retired in 1982, handing the business over to Scott Page. After Scott died in 2002, Shannon sold the company to a mining corporation in New York, leaving the office empty. It was leased by Boston attorney Luke Castaneda in 2004 (*Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*).
- **Larkin Post Office** (designed by John Larkin, *pictured below*): Located next to Larkin City Courthouse, off Main Street and surrounded by tall pine trees. Built from gray stone, the arched entry to the post office is inset with a half-moon window above the main door, painted a dark green. Green pillar letter boxes dot street corners in the city, with a colored image of the American flag imprinted onto each.





- **Larkin Railway Station** (est. 1870): Located near the harbor in Larkin City; red-bricked building covered in ivy vines.
- **Lobster Tail:** Popular seafood restaurant located in Larkin City.
- **Mayor's Office:** Located in Larkin City Courthouse on Main Street. Serving mayors include James Bretherton (*Book One: The Advent*); Clarence Southwick (*Book Two: Quixotic Crossings*, wife Abigail); Edwin Aldridge (*Book Four: Enthrallment*, wife Maya); David Azoulay (*Book Six: Hearts Desires*, *Book Seven: The Twilight* and *Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*; wife Lydia). NOTE: Under the Maine Constitution, mayors were elected every four years, with a two-term consecutive limit. The people of Larkin City voted to change their mayoral limits in 2004 because of Azoulay's popularity. He was eligible to be elected mayor four times, making it possible for him to serve for sixteen consecutive years. He won the 2004 election in a landslide. He is also a Jewish merchant who owns *Azoulay Gems* on the harbor, while his wife Lydia runs *Azoulay Cleaners* on Main Street.
- **Megan's Graphics & Web Design** (*pictured at right*): Located on Harbor Lane in Larkin City; business owned by Megan Larkin. She purchased the small office building in 2002, finding the property through her friend, Kip Bathers. She has a view of Larkin Harbor from her second story office, the lower level containing a reception area and a filing room. The building is made from red and white brick, and features quaint white shutters with window-box foliage. Megan's desk is cluttered with stacks of paper, a telephone and a lighthouse lamp. She does most of her work at the heavy, oak table alongside the desk, where she has three computers, two printers and a fax machine. A photo-copier is positioned in a corner of the office, next to a counter area with a coffee pot, microwave and tiny refrigerator. In another corner of the room is a daybed, covered with a deep red comforter and several decorative pillows. Megan sleeps over many nights, too tired from working to return to the mansion and seek her own bed. The fenced area in front of the office building features a rock garden. Small, white-painted pebbles surround an eastern black oak tree contained in a red-brick planter. This is where Megan discovered her beloved cat Kiki in 2005, a stray of Siamese and Bengal origins. (*Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*).



- **Nook & Cranny:** Located on Main Street in Larkin City. The shop deals exclusively with local pottery, mainly tea services and trays, with a wide selection of teas, pastries, savory foods and fresh seafood.
- **North Town Trust** (est. 1927): Located in North Town, Larkin City. The North Town Trust is a charitable organization founded by Colleen Larkin to assist clinics and community centers for North Town residents.
- **Pine Whispers Road:** Located one mile from the Larkin City Cemetery, where Detective Mark Balsam has a house.
- **Phoebe's Boutique** (est. 1920): Located on Main Street in Larkin City where the original *Amber Whale Tavern* once stood. *Phoebe's Boutique* was a chic dress shop owned and operated by Phoebe McGarren (Colleen Larkin's sister). The dress shop was torn down in 1979, when the *Amber Whale* was rebuilt to original 1870 specs.
- **Pot O'Beans:** Coffeehouse located on Seacove Lane in Larkin City.
- **Quayside Perk:** Popular coffee shop located on the harbor near Azoulay Gems and a red-brick office complex.
- **Quinn's Forge** (est. 1867): Located near the harbor in Larkin City. *Quinn's Forge* was Dary O'Quinn's blacksmith shop. It closed in 1900, replaced by a continental bookstore operated by a bespectacled Walter O'Toole, grandson of Barry O'Toole, one of Colm Sullivan's shipmates on the voyage to America in 1880. (*Book One: The Advent*).
- **St. Patrick's Church** (est. 1873): Catholic Church located in Larkin City. John Larkin imported a priest named Father Martin Neeson from Ireland to preside over the parish (*Book One: The Advent*). Successive priests included Father Kelvin Hearn (*Book Two: Quixotic Crossings*), Father Padriac Mahoney (*Book Three: The Twain Shall Meet*), and Father Daniel Hunter (*Book Four: Enthralment, Book Five: The Keeper's Journal, Book Six: Hearts Desires, Book Seven: The Twilight* and *Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*).
- **St. Patrick's Hospital:** Located near LCU in Larkin City. Includes three-level medical building with a pharmacy and rehabilitation facilities. Former workplace of Andrea St. John (*Book Seven: The Twilight*).
- **Sea Wharf Café** (est. 1877): Located on Main Street in Larkin City near the harbor, between the *Amber Whale Tavern* and a haberdashery, and one block from the grocery store. Specializes in fresh seafood and hearty fare such as beef and potatoes. On warm summer days, wooden tables sheltered from the sun by large parasols are set out on the boardwalk in front of the café so that patrons could dine outside, or "al fresco."
- **Seacove Lane:** Located a few blocks from Main Street in Larkin City. Includes the Woods/Castaneda House, *Clamshell Employment Agency*, coffeehouse *Pot O'Beans*, attorney John Milkenson and several residences.
- **Shamrock Bowling Alley:** Located on Main Street in Larkin City.
- **Silver Tassel Restaurant** (est. 2005 by Derek Larkin, *pictured below*): Located on Harbor Lane in Larkin City between a private cottage and a printing business; a few

blocks away from Megan Larkin's office (*Megan's Graphics & Web Design*). The *Silver Tassel* offers fresh seafood, French specialties and American fare. (*Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*).



- **Suds Pub** (est. 1904 by Adam Bisiker): Located in north Larkin City. Built after the first *Amber Whale Tavern* burned to the ground.
- **Waterford Street:** Located near the harbor in Larkin City. The *Larkin Animal Clinic* is on Waterford Street. The lane is also where former Larkin family attorney Gerald Frazier resided (*Book Two: Quixotic Crossings*).
- **The Wee Book Shop** (est. 1890 by Scottish immigrant Angus McFadden): Located on Main Street in Larkin City. The shop is next to the offices of the *Larkin Gazette*, with an alley between leading to a large parking lot in the back.

## ABOUT THE LARKIN MANSION

Once the settlement of Larkin Village was initiated, John started construction on his dream mansion, six miles outside the city limits. The image below gives an idea of what the mansion looks like, as depicted in the original book cover art (*at left*), second issue (*center*) and the final cover image (*at right*) for *Book Two: Quixotic Crossings*.



Other images of the imposing house appear subtly on the covers for *Book Four: Enthrallment* and *Book Eight: Megan's Legacy* (see below).



John Larkin spared no expense when he first began to build the estate, which he completed in 1874 with the help of renowned architect Richard Morris Hunt. The mansion was constructed on a steep incline that Mr. Larkin christened *Banshee Point*, and was surrounded by a dense stand of pine trees and endless green lawns. At the top of *Banshee Point* was a path that led to the estate's lighthouse and sheer, rocky cliffs that overlooked the ocean and private beach.

The house is a blend of vernacular Châteauesque and mock Tudor design, with elaborate towers and spires and countless mullioned windows. Ivy and moss cling to the exterior walls, giving the mansion a rather eerie ambiance. The rooftop of the house can only be accessed from the lofty attic, where a door and steps lead to the apex. Rather than the simple, railed-roof platform found atop many coastal homes, John Larkin built his Widow's Walk so it ran almost the entire length of the house. Instead of wooden railings, the protective barriers are made of gray stone and reached high enough so people could rest their arms safely and look over the side. From the rooftop, Larkin City can be seen in the distance.

The stables were once located to the left side of the mansion, where no fewer than twenty horses were kept with several carriages and buggies. Roddy Larkin converted the stables into garages in 1942, where up to twelve vehicles could be parked under the mellow red-brick exterior. A high-ceilinged maintenance bay and workshop are located next to the garages, which includes a storage area for gardening equipment and supplies.

A path from the mansion ends at a shelf of rocky cliffs overlooking the ocean, named "Banshee Point" by John Larkin. A lighthouse is perched on one of the cliffs, owned by the Larkin family but operated by the US Department of Commerce & Labor until automation in 1927.

More about the mansion and its environs:

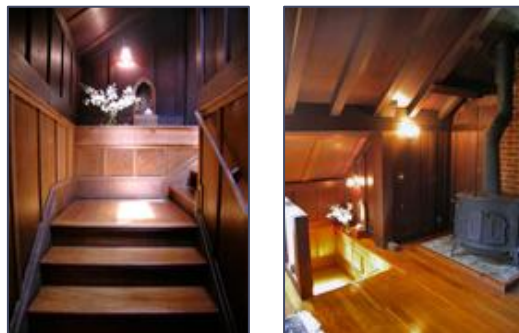
- **A-Frame Cottage** (on the grounds of the estate, *pictured below*): Scott Page and Shannon Larkin built their own home on the estate grounds in 1973, which resembled an A-Frame Cottage. They later returned to the mansion in 1987. Their son Jamie Page moved into the A-Frame Cottage in 1992. The home later became the scene of multiple violent crimes involving Jack Sansovino (*Book Six: Hearts Desires*, *Book Eight: Megan's Legacy* and *Book Nine: Limb of Iniquity*).



- **The Attic** (*pictured below*): The attic in the mansion is accessed at the end of the hall on the fourth floor of the Larkin mansion, which is directly under the roof and widow's walk. It isn't a typical attic filled with cobwebs and creeping rodents, but a light and airy

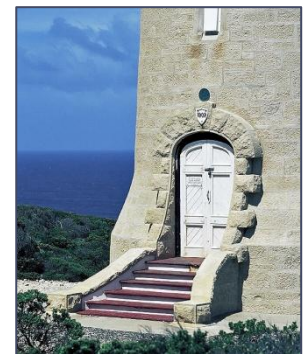


place with well-ordered boxes, covered furniture and bric-a-brac located on one end. The floors are of highly polished hardwood, laid with a long Oriental carpet down the center walkway. The other side of the attic, which is located up a few steps from the entrance doorway, is a vast, unoccupied space. A rounded carpet holds a solitary antique chair with a high back and thick armrests. Above is a window that goes across the breadth of the ceiling, revealing sunlight in good weather and clouds, rain and snow in bad. The design of the ceiling window was ingenious, sprung from the mind of John Larkin for the top and final level of his extraordinary home. There are also porthole windows on either side of the attic, which give views of the mist rolling in from the ocean and the automated beacon sweeping across the estate from the Banshee Point lighthouse. The attic is the setting for several dramatic scenes in the *Collective Obsessions Saga*. Molly Larkin takes refuge in its environs after a mental breakdown (*Book One: The Advent*), Patrick Larkin retreats to its confines and later takes his own life in the rafters (*Book Two: Quixotic Crossings*), and Angela Page sequesters herself in the attic to contemplate her future after a serious medical diagnosis (*Book Seven: The Twilight*). It is also where Megan Larkin finds a treasure trove of Colm Sullivan's artwork with the help of her pet cat Kiki nearly seventy-five years after Colm's death (*Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*).



- **Banshee Point Lighthouse** (*pictured at right and below*):

Constructed by John Larkin in 1880, the gray-brick lighthouse stands 125-feet high. Inside is a metal spiral staircase, leading 200 steps to the top. Every five feet on the staircase are small, round windows made of thick glass and built to resemble ship portholes. The tower room holds two desks, bookcases with volumes on maritime law, lighthouse regulations, oceanographic maps, and a wild life book on birds and fish common to the area. After the lighthouse was automated, computers controlled the foghorn and lights with sensors. There is also a back-up generator in case of power outage, and two telephone lines. One is used to contact the state of Maine, and the other is a regular outside landline. On one of the desks is a small





unit that detects sonar movements in the water within twenty miles, and prints out a report every six hours. Several old telescopes also line one wall of the room. Colm Sullivan was the first lighthouse keeper at Banshee Point, where he worked from 1880 to 1919 (*Book One: The Advent*). His son, Michael "Mick" Sullivan, took over the keeper duties until the lighthouse was automated in 1927 (*Book Two: Quixotic Crossings*). **SPOLIER ALERT:** The Banshee Point Lighthouse has a history of two suicides. The first was Molly Larkin in 1886 (*Book One: The Advent*), and the second was Luke Castaneda in 2008 (*Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*). Both Molly and Luke flung themselves to the rocky shores below the lighthouse.



- **Brose & Bridget's Cabin** (*pictured below*): Rather than continuing to live inside the Larkin mansion, Brose Larkin and his longtime girlfriend, Bridget Gallagher, decided to build their own abode on the estate grounds. Located not far from the A-frame cabin, Brose built the structure based on the cabin featured in the television program *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman*, which was Bridget's favorite TV show. Constructed from wood and stone, the home has three bedrooms (upstairs), two bathrooms, a large pantry, laundry room, living room, dining room, and an L-shaped kitchen. The front door has a rounded window made from smoky mosaic glass. From 2010 onwards, the cabin was occupied by Brose, Bridget and their daughter, Tara Larkin. (*Book Nine: Limb of Iniquity*).



- **Chef's Suite** (*pictured below*): Roddy Larkin hired the "Chef's Suite" built specifically for family chef Claude Mondoux in 1920, knowing the older man was feeling his age and could no longer easily navigate the multiple staircases from his old room on the fourth

floor of the mansion. (*Book Two: Quixotic Crossings* and *Book Seven: The Twilight*). A long hallway links the suite from the pantry and kitchen. Specially commissioned portraits of all family chefs through the years were placed on the walls, including Claude Mondoux, Nicholas Bertrand, Mae Jensen and Berty Soames. The Chef's Suite contains a sitting room with a fireplace, decorated with light paisley prints and chintz curtains. Off the sitting room is a library, a smaller replica of the Larkin original in the mansion. The room also includes a large desk, two settees, several chairs and three tables. Elongated windows overlook the front area of the mansion. A second door off the sitting room leads to the spacious bedroom and overly-large bathroom. A wide, oval window with black mullions separate the bedroom from the white-tiled bathroom that runs the length of the suite. Another window features a view of the sea.



- **Dining Room** (*pictured below*): Huge chandeliers adorn the ceiling of the dining room in the Larkin mansion. A long, oak table is the centerpiece, and can easily seat twenty-six people. One stone wall is covered with Irish symbol tapestries, which include an Irish cross and displays of intricate Celtic knotwork. The opposite wall contains more tapestries, one dubbed *Women of the Sacred Grove* with medieval-fashioned ladies praying in a forest, and the other *Into the Mystic* with a large, white moon depicted atop bare trees in the dark of night. A massive white marble fireplace looks out onto the long dining table. A doorway in one corner of the room leads to the kitchen.



- **The Drawing Room** (*pictured below*): The drawing room in the Larkin mansion has warmly paneled walls and French doors that open to the rose garden, which overlook a terrace and a cobbled walk. Beside the large Jacobean fireplace is an oak sideboard and several settees, love seats and divans, all designed with an antique rose pattern. Polished tables are draped with the same lace cloth covering the sideboard, and lamps have smoked glass with roses traced on each shade. The walls in the drawing room contain portraits in gold frames with nameplates underneath them. Most of the artwork was painted by Colm Sullivan, in place long before the gallery bearing his name opened in 2008 (*Book Eight: Megan's Legacy*). The drawing room is somewhat of a focal point for the Larkin family. It is where they gather for tea every afternoon, and where they have drinks before dinner each night. It is also where they spend Christmas morning and other holidays, a place they can gather and connect like any other family.



- **The Foyer** (*pictured below left*): A large, shiny oaken table rests in the center of the foyer. It contains a lamp, with etched glass ornaments. A telephone sits next to the lamp. Off to the left is a silver bowl, oblong in shape, used for incoming mail. To the left of the foyer table is a closed door, which leads to the kitchen. Sweeping a large left of the foyer are three sets of double doors, spaced at least thirty five feet apart. They lead to the dining room, which also leads through to the kitchen around back. The second door over is the drawing room, and the third room is the living room. The drawing room also has a very nice bar, and a small office leads off the living room. A grand staircase leads off the foyer to the right, winding up to a landing that has a large picture window with black moldings. The large main staircase is carpeted in dark blue and brown fabric, the hardwood showing off to the sides. The staircase leads to the upper reaches of the Larkin mansion, including the fourth floor landing (*pictured below right*), attic and Widow's Walk.



- **The Kitchen** (*pictured below*): The kitchen in the mansion is large, remodeled into a gourmet delight in 1990. There are gleaming white floors, restaurant style ovens and refrigerators, a five-foot long chopping block, two indoor air grills, a breakfast nook, pantry, a long pine table off the work area in the kitchen adjacent to an old stone hearth, two large freezers and an adjoining room that contains several washing machines and dryers. The *Chef's Suite* is down a corridor off the kitchen, where portraits of all chefs hang, past and present. Another doorway leads back to the foyer of the mansion, and yet another provides access to the dining room.



- **Larkin Estate Gate:** The Larkin estate became gated in 1996. The family secured the gate with an electronic monitor and keypad access, whereby no one gets inside unless they are expected or announced, or unless they are family members. The entrance is flanked by large stone markings that appear to be in the various shapes of pine trees. There is a big, silver mailbox to the right, with the address painted in green: *4807 Larkin Highway South*. In 2011, a gatehouse made from brick was constructed to make the entrance even more secure.
- **Larkin Estate Grounds** (*vegetable garden pictured at right*): John Larkin designed the grounds in *jardin à la française* style, beyond which are natural woodlands and agricultural areas. The grounds contain a large expanse of emerald green lawns, with copses of pine trees surrounded by ferns, lilac bushes and shrub gardens. There are also areas of hornbeam hardwood





trees, elms, beech trees and Tilia (*linden*). Various gardens also dot the estate. Aside from the rose garden next to the mansion, there are groupings of red, yellow and deep purple tulips, late summer sunflowers, yellow and red chrysanthemums, peonies, hanging vines of grapes and gourds, flowering Narcissus plants, Cyclamen, lilies, Azaleas, flowering trees, espaliers and perennial borders. Closer to the house are various garden patches of edibles, including lettuce, spinach, radish, carrots, scallions, onions, kale, tomatoes, cucumbers, bell peppers, eggplants, zucchini, okra, sugar snap peas, summer squash, winter squash, pumpkin, watermelon, beans, herbs (peppermint, oregano, spearmint, apple mint, dill, chives, rosemary, parsley, marjoram), red and white potatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, garlic, and sunflowers.

- **Larkin Family Cemetery** (est. 1886, *pictured below*): Located on the grounds of the Larkin estate, to the left of the path that leads to the lighthouse and beach. The entrance to the cemetery is an extension of the stone walls and is rounded on top, with a wooden sign hanging by s-hooks & jack chains that reads: "Larkin Family Cemetery" in Gothic Stonehenge lettering. The cemetery has stone/brick walkways, mature trees and shrubbery, a small chapel made from stone (known as *Lady Grace Chapel*, named after John's aunt Grace O'Larkin who left him money to leave Ireland and immigrate to America), a stone shed holding tools and equipment, and a small gardener's residence that is unused in the modern day. The cemetery is surrounded by stone walls and tall, spiked wrought-iron gates (made by *Quinn's Forge*). Statues and water fountains dot the graveyard landscape, the most notable of which was the ornamental *bean-sídhe* water fountain (overlooked by a statue of a Banshee). Smaller border fences are made from wrought-iron, with enclosed carriage-style black gas lamps at intervals (later converted to electric and then to solar). Molly Larkin was the lone grave without enclosure for a short time until John Larkin built the cemetery proper in late 1886, when Dary O'Quinn died. While there are not many graves in the family cemetery, even to the present day, John Larkin constructed the burial ground to accommodate future generations.



- **Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage** (*pictured below*): Constructed around the same time as the *Banshee Point Lighthouse* (1880), the white fence-enclosed keeper's cottage is built back from the edge of a sharp cliff, just a short distance from the lighthouse. The kitchen is small, with a wood-burning stove, an icebox, sink, long counter and a pantry closet. A

back door leads outside into an area facing the direction of the main house. The bedroom walls were made from knotty pine. Double French doors lead to porch, where a table and two high-backed chairs face the ocean. The keeper's cottage has been witness to much drama over the years. It was the setting for the romance between Colm Sullivan and Molly Larkin, and later where she repudiated him (*Book One: The Advent*). Patrick Larkin brooded in its environs until he went off the deep end (*Book Two: Quixotic Crossings*). It was also where Angie Page discovered Colm Sullivan's old journal and where she and Tom Cimorelli spent their honeymoon (*Book Five: The Keeper's Journal*), and it became a retreat for Shannon Larkin after she suffered more than one life-altering event (*Book Seven: The Twilight*).



- **Rose Garden** (est. 1920, Colleen Larkin): Located on the Larkin estate, surrounding the mansion. The garden has 1,200 rose plants consisting of 180 different varieties, ranging from old to modern hybrids including Old Garden Roses, Irish and English Roses, hybrid teas, floribundas, grand floras, climbing roses, miniatures and shrub roses. The area surrounding the foliage is a symmetrical wonder with winding red-brick paths, a rounded area with a fountain sculpture depicting an Irish banshee with flowing hair and a chiseled gown. Old stone benches are situated along paths with smaller fountains including statues of elves and forest animals, and a gazebo with rose vines growing in the trellis walls. The rose garden encompasses one side of the mansion, which is directly accessed from the French doors in the drawing room. It is also an access point to the swimming pool.

- **Shannon Larkin's Suite** (*pictured at right*): Shannon Larkin's rooms on the fourth floor are much like the rest of the mansion, with walnut paneling, dark carpets and heavy brocaded drapery. Past the sitting room and up two small steps is her bedroom, which is left in dark colors and patterns. She has a king-sized four poster bed with bed curtains, which is situated to the left of the room. To the side of the bed are a tall chest of drawers, an easy chair for reading and another fireplace that faces the bed from the opposite wall. French doors open onto a balcony that overlooks the front of the estate and affords a view of the distant Larkin City, six miles away. On a clear night, Shannon can see the twinkling lights of the city. Her sitting room (*pictured below left*) is decorated in less austere fashion with a light marble fireplace, a beige couch, two white sitting chairs and a large color television. A large bathroom (*pictured below right*) and a walk-in closet were added to her rooms in 1975. The bathroom has black tile, a Jacuzzi-style bathtub, and a vast glassed-in shower. Shannon's rooms in the mansion have been the scene for several dramatic events. Her relationship with Mike Sullivan took a turn in the sitting room, and it was where Mike





later broke in and killed one of her friends' before her eyes. She also gave birth to both of her children in the bedroom (*Book Three: The Twain Shall Meet*). Later, it was where she discovered unsettling secrets about her husband Scott Page (*Book Seven: The Twilight*).



- **The Study** (*pictured at right*): John Larkin's study can be accessed from the mansion foyer. In the present day, the study is more of a showpiece for family history, a private tribute to Larkin City's founder. However, Shannon Larkin often uses it when she works on the family accounts. The room is dominated by his massive oak desk, which faces a fireplace.



Over the hearth is a portrait of John Larkin, which looks down from an elaborate pewter frame. French doors overlook the front lawn of the mansion, and two bookcases surround the center of the room with their volumes. A display case rests in one corner of the room, which contains old documents and photographs. The lining of the case is made from brittle velvet material, dark red in color. There is a yellowed photograph of a steamer ship named the *SS Tobercurry*, docked at Dún Laoghaire Harbor in Ireland. There are sketches and folded blueprints of the mansion and Larkin City in their various stages of construction. A wedding photo of Roderick Larkin and Sascha McShane, dated February 1881. A youthful picture of Phoebe McGarren in 1926, standing in front of her dress shop in Larkin City. Another cluster of documents under glass are spread out in fan shape, centered by John Larkin's signature stamp. There is the original property deed to the Larkin estate acreage, another showing the formal establishment of Larkin township in 1867. A paper with bold heading: PROBATIONARY APPOINTMENT, which was for the first Banshee Point lighthouse keeper Colm Sullivan, dated May 25, 1880. John Larkin's old ledger also rests under glass, which contains sections for inventory, servants' wages, births, deaths and weddings on the estate.

- **Swimming Pool** (*pictured at right*): Located down a small slope from the rose garden, in the rear of the mansion. The pool is surrounded by trees, concrete leisure areas with lawn chairs, and a barbecue area complete with a large ground area for boiling shellfish. The pool also has a large, built-in Jacuzzi. Access to the swimming pool



is best through the French doors in the drawing room or via the kitchen back door, both of which include a walk through the rose garden.

- **Widow's Walk** (*pictured below*): The Widow's Walk is accessed through a rounded, wooden door located in the attic of the Larkin mansion. The door leads to the Widow's Walk on top of the house, which affords a sweeping view of the estate and Larkin City in the distance. Rather than a simple, railed-roof platform that was found atop many coastal homes, John Larkin built his Widow's Walk so it ran almost the entire length of the house. Instead of wooden railings, the protective barriers are made of gray stone and reach elbow-high. From the Widow's Walk, one can easily view the lighthouse, the keeper's cottage, family cemetery, the A-frame cottage and Larkin City in distance.



For fictional purposes, the Larkin Mansion is collectively based on several existing structures, including:

- Biltmore House (*Asheville, NC, USA*)
- Greystone (*aka Doheny Mansion, Beverly Hills, CA, USA*)
- Harlaxton Manor (*Lincolnshire, England*)
- Lyndhurst (*Tarrytown, NY, USA*)
- Seaview Terrace (*Carey Mansion, Newport, RI, USA*)
- Waddesdon Manor (*Buckinghamshire, England*)

Images contained in *About Larkin* that reference or lend suggestion to the above mentioned structures as individual buildings is not purposely intended.

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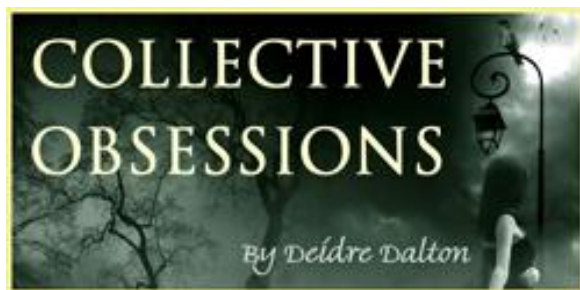
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### Visit the Collective Obsessions website:

<https://deborahotoole.com/collective/>



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Deidre Dalton is author of the *Bloodline Trilogy*, which follows the uniquely magical journey of three women through time. Books in the trilogy include *Bloodfrost*, *Bloodlust* and *Blood & Soul*.



She is also author of the *Collective Obsessions Saga*, which chronicles the extraordinary loves and intricate obsessions between two families sweeping a span of more than 150 years, all set against the backdrop of a Gothic seaside mansion in Maine. Titles in the family saga include *The Advent*, *Quixotic Crossings*, *The Twain Shall Meet*, *Enthrallment*, *The Keeper's Journal*, *Hearts Desires*, *The Twilight*, and *Megan's Legacy*. All eight books were released by Club Lighthouse Publishing. A ninth book in the saga, *Limb of Iniquity*, is tentatively scheduled for release in 2025.

Deidre is author and editor of the *Larkin Community Cookbook*, which is a compilation of recipes mentioned or prepared by characters in the *Collective Obsessions Saga*, and the electronic versions of *About Larkin* (companion guide to the *Collective Obsessions Saga*), and *The Private Journal of Colm Sullivan*.

Writing under the her real name of Deborah O'Toole, Deidre is also author of the fiction titles *Celtic Remnants*, *The Crypt Artist*, *Glinhaven*, *In the Shadow of the King*, *Mind Sweeper*, the *Short Tales Collection* (juvenile fiction), and a book of poetry known as *Torn Bits & Pieces*.

For more, visit <https://deborahotoole.com/>.

Using the pseudonym Shenanchie O'Toole, she also writes for the cooking/recipe website Food Fare. She is writer and co-editor of thirteen cookbooks, along with more than forty titles in the *Food Fare Culinary Collection*.

For more, visit <https://deborahotoole.com/FoodFare/>.

Deidre is a native of Greenwich, Connecticut. She has also lived in San Francisco, Reno and Spokane, among other US cities. She currently resides in the mountain west.

For more, visit Deidre's website at: <http://deidredalton.com/>.