

# Betsy J. Green takes Santa Barbara locals back in time with her novels

[Julia Torres](#)



In 1912, the [Flying A](#) film studio moved from its home in Chicago to Santa Barbara, California and became an essential piece of its society. In 2014, author Betsy J. Green did the same. Since then, Green has been publishing books about local history, including two focusing on the silent film industry. Her newest book, "Behind the Scenes at the 'Flying A': The highlights, hijinks, and hazards! of silent-era filming in Santa Barbara", was released this month.

This is her second book in her silent films series, her first being "Million Dollar Mansions." Green's work was displayed and sponsored by the Santa Barbara Historical Museum on the evening of Wed. Sept. 27. According to

the Santa Barbara Historical Museum Executive Director Dacia Harwood, the space was filled to its full capacity and even had some people on a waiting list.

"Flying A is a topic of great interest in Santa Barbara history," she said. "We are always interested in telling the stories of the Flying A because it's such an interesting part of our history and it really led to so many other things."

Green cracked jokes while sharing the chapters of her book in a slideshow, keeping her audience entertained throughout her talk, showing pictures of the film company's actors and sets from the early 1910s. The talk was divided into several sections, ranging from the dangerous experience the Flying A actors had, to the various animals that starred in films, and family memories from actor's descendants who shared the stories of their family working on films.

"The studio is gone, but we still have plenty of photos and memories," Green said at the end of her talk. "Let's go back in time."

Since she first moved to Santa Barbara, Green was fascinated by the history and weather of entertaining newspapers and society in the town.

"We have a very interesting history and the newspapers wrote about interesting things. There were newspaper journalists in Santa Barbara who wrote about fun stuff," Green said.

The audience members who attended the event were able to recognize names of various landmarks in the images in Green's presentation due to their local residency. Bunny DeLorie, who has a vacation rental in downtown Santa Barbara, attended and bought a copy of Green's new book, hoping to promote the history of the city in which she was born and raised.

"I think we need to know where we live and more about the history of our beautiful city." DeLorie said. " There's a lot of hidden gems that a lot of

people don't know about."

Green also shares DeLorie's wish for more Santa Barbara residents to look into their history, recommending people to go on social media and look up silent films.

"I would hope people get interested in the silent movies and be interested in saving some of them," she said. "I would hope people might think about the value of the older films. For entertainment and for part of history."

Green's book is available in bookstores and the museum's gift store, where special signed copies are on display, while unsigned copies are available for purchase online.



Guests happily chat and enjoy refreshments while waiting to be seated for Betsy Green's talk "Behind the Scenes at the Flying A." The talk took place at the beautiful Santa Barbara Historical Museum on Sept. 27 in Santa Barbara, Calif. (Bethany Davenport)