

## Pound Ridge Author Shares Surprising Memories Of Her Mother

by Bob Dumas Neighbors 10 hours ago Comment



Pound Ridge author Lori Toppel co-authored the book, "Still Here Thinking of You: A Second Chance With Our Mothers." Photo Credit: *Harrison Edwards PR & Marketing*

POUND RIDGE, N.Y. – For Pound Ridge author Lori Toppel, writing a book about her mother wasn't something she planned on doing.

"We had a difficult relationship and I didn't want to write about her," Toppel admits.

But by working with three colleagues in her writers' workshop, the idea began to grow as the other women in the group challenged and encouraged her.

"As months passed, I found that maybe I could," Toppel said.

The result is the book, "Still Here Thinking of You: A Second Chance with Our Mothers," written by Toppel along with Vicki Adesso, Susan Hodara and Joan Potter. It chronicles the four women grappling with the circumstances that shaped their mothers' lives, which, in turn, deepened their understanding of their relationships with their mothers.

It will be officially published on March 1 by Big Table Publishing, but is currently available on Amazon.

"We had all been students of Joan Potter's," Toppel said. "At some point we were all in her class and we kept in touch. The idea for a writing group came about and we started it in 2006. It started as any writers' group where we brought in our work and critiqued it. Eventually Joan and Vicki started writing about their mothers."

The idea of putting together a book with each detailing their relationship with their mother grew – but for Toppel, it was easier said than done. She was the only one of the four whose parents had divorced.

"I had a lot of anger and disappointment," Toppel said, noting that her mother grew bitter after the divorce, which affected their relationship. "But I moved past that and found who she was from the past. I rediscovered so many memories of my early childhood." She continued, saying her mother was a different woman prior to the divorce "and a very good mother. It was crucial to regain those memories to get the full portrait of who she was."

Toppel said that with four different authors, each contributing their own story of the mother/daughter relationship, the reader is bound to find something to relate to.

“Even if you feel you are not that close with your mother or it was not the relationship you hoped for, there are so many different connections between mothers and daughters and that is what we explore,” she said. “It’s four different stories so different women will find more than one place that is familiar and something they can identify with. Readers may end up thinking about their relationships with their mothers in a very different way, and perhaps reevaluating them as we did.”

Toppel’s first book, “Three Children” (Summit Books, 1992), was nominated for the Hemingway Foundation/PEN Award. Her stories and essays have appeared in such journals as “Antioch Review” and “Del Sol Review.”

Toppel spent most of her formidable years in New York City and Puerto Rico. She and her husband moved to Pound Ridge 15 years ago.

“I think the town is absolutely beautiful and we’ve made some wonderful friends here,” she said. “I like that we are close enough to the city if we want to go there, but delighted to drive back home.”

She is the mother of twin boys, now 19-years-old and out on their own. However, Toppel doesn’t believe they’ll be writing books about her.

“They can write fine, but they are more into math and finance and that world, which is one that I don’t visit very often.”