

RADAR LOVE



AILEEN FRIEDMAN

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By

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Reviews

“I really enjoyed your book, Aileen. I loved the way you put it together and I found it flowed easily while reading. I can tell that you’ve done your research well – the names of the characters for that era, the songs that were playing in the Club, the flora on Robben Island etc. I could even smell the Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow tree! I am sure that there will be many people who will be able to identify with the special place that special friendships have in our lives. Although I had tears in my eyes at the end, you also managed to put a smile on my face. Well done! Don’t stop writing! May God continue to bless you in all you do and use you to bring blessings to others.” – *Kerry Scullard*

"I really loved the book it was such a lovely story and so beautifully written and had me in tears more than once - wow my friend you should be so proud of yourself and thank you so much for allowing me to read it. It's a wonderful read I think the characters will stay with me for a while " – *Linda Jones*

“I have read all of Aileen’s books but this latest one Radar Love blew me away.

You know the feeling when you pick up a book and you instantly feel a connection to the main character in the story?? Well this isn’t a book like that - this book you will feel a connection to ALL FOUR characters. A beautiful

war romance set in South Africa in the 1940's, four university friends that find themselves entwined together by war, by loss and by fate. As they endure the ever escalating dangers around them, they come to form a bond that lasts a lifetime.

First of all I thought maybe this book “gripped me” was because growing up I lived in a country that was fighting a war and our town had several army bases and living with soldiers in town was normal, so I related to the story line - but I soon realized the reason I loved this book wasn't because of that - it was simply because it is written so brilliantly.

I lived in this book - often even put the book down and actually listened via you-tube to the songs that were playing at the clubs mentioned in the book just to put myself amongst the pages. The book takes you on a roller coaster emotional ride through chapters of love, laughter, loss and ultimately, coming to terms with life and it's curved balls.

It is so beautifully written I felt as though it enabled me to be a part of that era even though before I picked up the book I had little knowledge of what life in South Africa was like.

I am not going to spoil anything by giving away the story all I can say is just buy it, read it, and make up your own mind. Whatever else it might do, it will definitely touch your soul,” – *Angie Wide*

"Radar Love is a beautifully written story of love, trust and commitment. In this timeless treasure Aileen sets the scene with the history of the elite SSS group and incorporates it masterfully into her plot in great detail. Following the adventures, trials, friendship and sisterhood bond of each of the four ladies leads the reader on a remarkable journey to self discovery with the realisation that God's love is immeasurable. This is truly a very special book. I find myself constantly thinking about the ladies who became my family through all the laughter, tears and conversations I shared with them from beginning to end. A superbly written love story, highly entertaining and well researched. An outstanding read!" - *Avy Hattingh*

*Thank you, Lord Jesus,
for your love and mercy
and for blessing me
with my family whom I love so much.
I am truly blessed.*

***Phil 4:13 'I can do all things through Christ who
strengthens me.'***

A Special

THANK YOU

To;

Kerry Scullard

Linda Jones

Angie Wide

Avy Hattingh

Susan Warneke

*I carry you in my heart, always
and forever. Thank you for your honesty and support
over all these years.
God bless you always*

Aileen Friedman

Website

<http://aileenfriedman.co.za>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/353447231333743/>

Twitter

@aileenlf

Email

aileen2462@gmail.com

Book Cover Design

Eyenegho Daniel John

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* Preface *

In 1939 General Smuts, Prime Minister of South Africa and Commander of the military forces signed the declaration of war joining the Allied forces.

At this time, Britain had requested the co-operation of all the countries of the Commonwealth to assist the technical division in the development of instruments to aid the defense of air attacks. The division was classified as a highly guarded secret, only the very top brass and the scientist involved were aware of it. The special division was given the name “Special Signal Services” or “SSS” The secret weapon was Radar – “Radio Detection and Ranging.”

In May 1941 when the South African oceans became increased targets for enemy ships, the chief principals approached the Bernard Price Institute to facilitate the introduction and setup of Radar stations along the coastlines. They became a sector of the SA Corps of Signals and also operated under the division of the SSS.

The SSS had a great deal of difficulties recruiting enlisted men to help with the setup of the Radar Stations since the command at the closest Army bases knew nothing of the SSS or Radar. When they did finally get a few men, they were all classified C3 – unfit for active duty. These men had broken limbs or were suffering from illnesses such as bronchitis or pneumonia and, therefore, were of little or no help at all and declared incompetent.

How the system worked; an operator at the Radar Station turned a handle to rotate an aerial while watching for blips or echoes on a screen. When a noticeable blip appeared on the screen, the operator, after first identifying whether the blip was from a ship, fishing boat, aircraft or U-Boat forwarded the information by phone to a Filter room (otherwise known as a Freddie). One Freddie facilitated all the Radar Stations in the region. At Freddie, the information was received by personnel manning the phones, who would then relay the given information to a person who plotted the co-ordinates on a plotting table. Readings from the Radar Stations of the same blip would frequently be received to enable them to monitor and track its course.

Freddie forwarded any information they deemed threatening to the Combined Operations Unit (Army, navy and air force) and if they felt it necessary, they issued the orders for a plane or patrol boats to investigate. Note: Even the Combined Operations Unit had very little knowledge of the SSS.

In 1941, all able men were called up for active duty service, and after the problem they had originally experienced with C3 class men, it was agreed that women with a University degree or higher would be employed as Radar operators while the technicians remained male.

By late 1942 shipping losses had intensified, and finally, the promised Allied Radar equipment arrived. This equipment included the much sought after coastal defense radar originally made for the Royal Navy. These were ideal for detecting U-boats. The two sets were erected at Signal

Hill and Cape Point. All in all, there were twelve Radar Station sets erected throughout Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban.

Recruitment officers were sent to the Universities to scout and enlist suitable female candidates. These candidates were sent on a six-week course and then posted to either a Radar Station or a Freddie. They had no choice in the matter.

Due to the secrecy of the SSS very little detail or information was revealed to the recruits, this of course only intrigued the recruits immensely and heightened their desire to be a part of this elite organization.

The story you are about to read will take you on a journey of four friends in their impressionable youths as they served South Africa during World War II.

While I have hopefully kept all the facts correct and truthful, please remember this story is purely fictional.

* Chapter One *

Winter 2003

Three ladies, three friends, walked arm in arm out of the enormous cemetery gates, crossed the road and into the city park. Their silver hair glowed against their black outfits in the radiance of the bright sun. Sunglasses hid the sadness their eyes portrayed.

They meandered along the pathway of the park in silence, the heels of their shoes click-clacked against the stone until they came upon an old majestic and large Weeping Willow tree. Under the drooping hanging branches, and surrounded by green grass scattered with winter leaves, was a quaint bench cemented into the ground beckoning visitors to sit on it. Dorothy Jorgensen, Audrey Kessler, and Maisy Erasmus stopped in their tracks and gazed at the bench that nestled under the tree. “Let’s sit here,” Audrey said moving toward the bench pulling Dorothy and Maisy with her.

The ladies, now eighty-two-year-old ladies sat and sighed as they made themselves comfortable on the bench. The sun warmed their faces as the Weeping Willow’s leaves brushed them with a cool gentle breeze. “This bench is so befitting for our Peggy,” Dorothy acknowledged, “she would have been so happy here under this tree.”

Maisy slowly stood up, allowing her old bones to click into place before moving to the back of the bench.

“What are you doing?” Audrey asked.

“I’m checking to see whether this bench is dedicated to anyone.” She replied looking for any sign of such.

Audrey and Dorothy cautiously stood up and checked the seat of the bench. When all three women were satisfied that the bench had indeed no endorsement they sat once more, they made themselves comfortable and sighed. The sun warmed their faces, and the branches of the Weeping Willow tree brushed them with its cool breeze.

“We should dedicate this bench to Peggy,” Maisy said nodding in agreement with herself.

“Are you allowed to do that, it’s a public park?” Audrey curiously questioned her.

“I will find out, and if it is not allowed, well, I will do it nevertheless. Our Peggy deserves a place of honor and this bench will be perfect.” Maisy shuffled back on the bench and crossed her arms in determination.

Dorothy and Audrey “hmm-ed” their approval.

They gazed at the scenery around them. A gazebo laced in Ivy stood firmly in the center; a paved walkway wrapped around it, before leading off to all four corners of the park. Several benches evenly separated dotted the walkways. People strolled by; there was couples arm in arm, some eating ice-cream while others sat on the benches reading newspapers or magazines. Many people merely sat and admired life taking a slow pace for a few minutes. Further away from the gazebo families and friends sat on picnic blankets sharing quality moments. Children played

on the swings, see-saws or flew their kites while the older teens played Frisbee or touch rugby. Whatever the activity, it was blissfully peaceful interrupted only by the sounds of joyful laughter.

The three old ladies smiled as passers-by greeted them, they petted dogs that sniffed at their shoes and waved at little children when they sheepishly stared; perhaps wondering why they were sitting on the bench all dressed the same.

“It was a lovely service for our Peggy,” Audrey said sighing at the same time.

“Yes it was, more people attended than I thought would,” Maisy answered with a smile.

Dorothy nodded at them both. “I was so surprised to see Agnes there, how did she even know about it?”

“I think Peggy gave the retirement home a list of people to contact. I had no idea she was still in touch with Harvey’s family.” Maisy said.

“It seems like an eternity ago, and yet at the same time it still feels like yesterday, you know what I mean?” Dorothy offered and sighed at the idea of life passed.

Audrey nodded wiping her eyes under her sunglasses. “We had a great innings, so much to be grateful for.”

Maisy and Dorothy never replied, instead Dorothy, who sat in the middle linked her arms through Audrey and

Maisy's arms and pulled them into her. They all giggled a little "There are not many in this world who can boast of having best friends for more than sixty years and who can still tolerate each other now is there?" She started to chuckle, and it was not long before Audrey and Maisy joined in with her.

People watched as three old ladies dressed in black, arm in arm, sat together on a bench, on a warm winter's day wearing sunglasses giggling at what seemed trivial to others, but to them, it was an intimate and significant laughter.

"Should we go back now? Do you think there is anyone still at the church?" Maisy asked looking back trying to see if she was able to see anyone hovering around at the graveyard chapel.

"Oh no, I doubt anyone is still there, it's almost lunch time, all the foggies will be back at the home just in time for lunch and their pills." Audrey started to laugh at her comment; it infected Dorothy and Maisy until again they were three old ladies sitting on a bench under a Weeping Willow tree in fits of hysteria.

An ice-cream cart came along the pathway; they were pleasantly surprised to see such a delightful sight in winter. It was as though Peggy had sent him. "Wait, young man!" Audrey called out. He stopped and opened the lid of his cooler box, smoke from the dry ice wafted up and out of the box. The ladies stood up and slowly made their way to the man. He took out one of each flavored ice-cream so that they could make their choices. Audrey pulled her little

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