

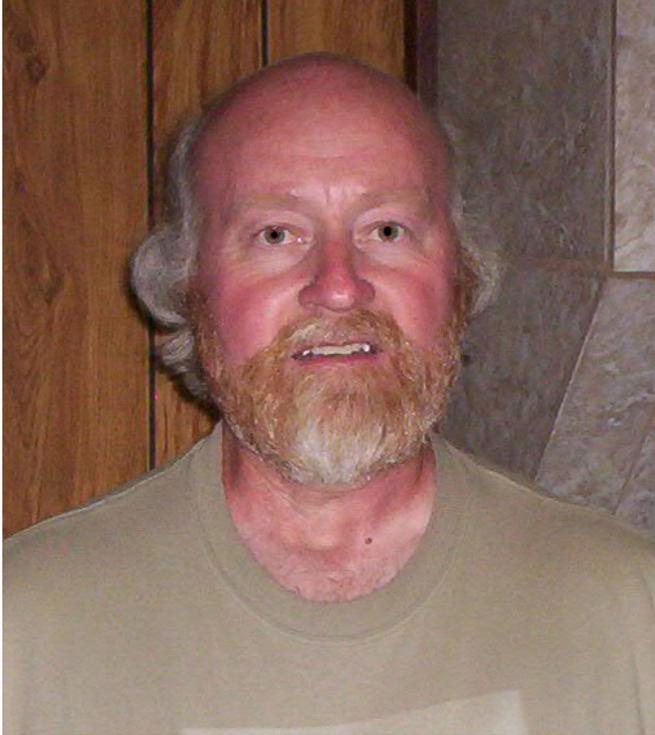
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“Author D.R. Haskins”



D.R. Haskins, an author from Royal, Nebraska, will be at the Norfolk Public Library for a book signing on Friday, April 8 at 6:00 pm. He has had three books published, the latest of which is “The Hills of Mars” about the history of Mars, Nebraska.

In a recent email interview, Haskins answered questions about his books and writing.

How long have you been writing and when did you write your first book?

I began writing my first book in 2007 and it was published in 2009

What type of books have you written?

I have written “The Hills of Mars” which is a historical novel and “Beyond the Hills of Mars” which is historical fiction. “Samuel’s Journal” was written by my great, great grandfather, Samuel J. Haskin.

Who do you consider your audience?

People who are interested in westerns, Nebraska history, American history, pioneer life, 19th century biography,

and historical fiction are fans of my books

Have you done other types of writing like poetry or has your work appeared in other publications?

I never even thought of myself as a writer until “The Hills of Mars” was published in 2009.

How long did it take to write the books listed above?

When I was writing “The Hills of Mars” it took me 13 months to write chapter 1, alone. The writing terrified me. I wrote “Beyond the Hills of Mars” in its entirety in about 12 months.

Who has helped you/ inspired you along the way with your writing?

My family has given me a great deal of support and encouragement, as has the Carlson family (the Carlsons grew up here at Mars). In addition close friends like Robert Gearhart, Mary Anne Block, Alexandra J. McClanahan, and Karl Schultz have encouraged and inspired me.

Do you have someone who helps you edit the books?

My first book was edited by Karl Schultz. This new book was edited by Karl Schultz and Alexandra J. McClanahan (an Alaskan author).

Do you plan on writing more books? If so, what is your timeline for publishing another book?

I am required to do two more books: "Return to the Hills of Mars" which continues the story of the history of Mars, Nebraska; and "Escape from the Hills of Mars" which follows the story of Frank Kibbee who was stealing horses in the area in 1889 – gets his brother killed and heads north ending up in Canada where he became a famous guide, trapper, and game warden.

Do you have family in Royal?

I live on Samuel Haskin's homestead at Mars and raised a foster son (Jeremy) here. My father (Jim) lives in Royal and I have a sister (Bonnie) in O'Neill and a sister (Betty) in Osmond. Plus, I have numerous cousins living not only here in the hills of Mars (most of us that are still here are descended from Fred Brandt), but many cousins in northeast Nebraska.

How have you marketed these books so far?

Apparently, the books have been marketed very well across the nation. They have sold in every state in the U.S. and even sold in Europe. The problem has been distribution – but I recently entered into an agreement for national distribution. I do presentations and book signings for local libraries, historical societies, women's clubs, and other organizations. I have been interviewed by radio stations and TV stations. I have been on book promotional tours across Nebraska and even out of state.

Do you know about how many you've sold?

The publishing company produced 1,100 copies of "The Hills of Mars" in its first print – based upon the number of books other local authors sold and the book went into second print within 6 months. "Samuel's Journal" was printed as a limited edition – no more will ever be printed because it is not only a valuable piece of my family's history, it is also a valuable piece of Nebraska's history – and to protect that value it was printed as a limited edition. "Beyond the Hills of Mars" was just released 6 weeks ago. It is too soon to know how it will sell – but the initial reviews have been great, and most people are saying that they like it better than "The Hills of Mars."