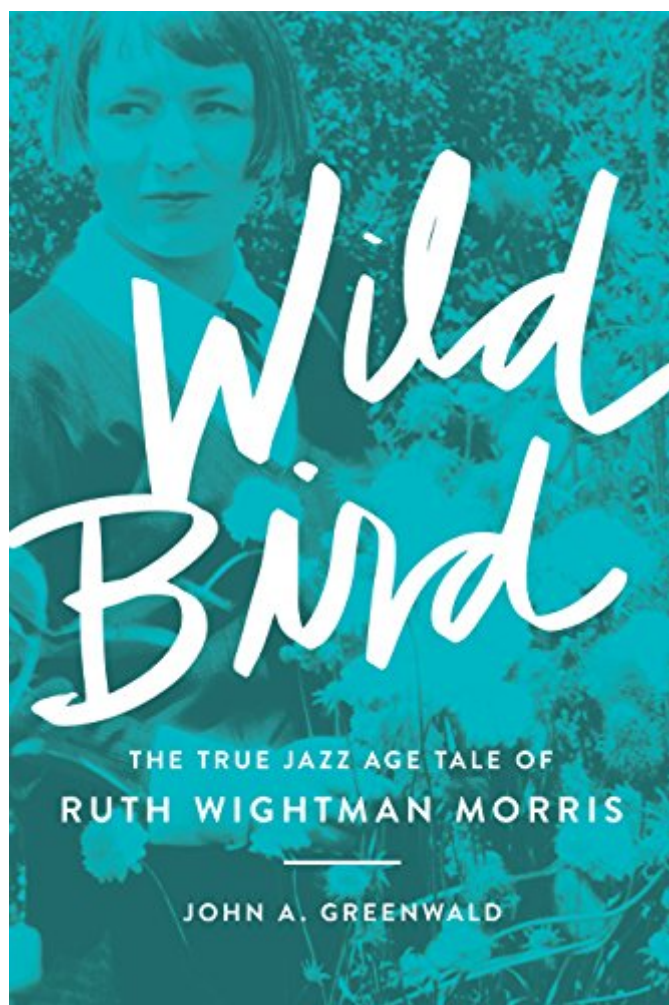


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Wild Bird: The True Jazz Age Tale Of Ruth Wightman Morris



Synopsis

It wasn't that Ruth Wightman Morris didn't know the rules—it was that she lived to break them. Fiercely defying expectations in every area of her life, Ruth was at the forefront of the Jazz Age revolution. She was a woman who could captivate every man in the nightclub and the next day set the women's speed record in a race car, perform a stunt in a plane, or get in the ring with a bull. Hers was a life of great successes and great sorrows, fabulous parties and headline-grabbing scandals, love affairs that could not endure and a dead body that could not be explained. And until now, her story has gone untold. In John A. Greenwald's true tale, we follow this Roman candle of a woman from coast to coast and across the seas, sharing in her adventures as a rebel and pioneer and witnessing the tragic downfall that led to her early death. Here, at last, is her story—and like the woman herself, it is unforgettable, inimitable, and wild.

Book Information

File Size: 801 KB

Print Length: 276 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 0997736704

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: Hawk Tower Press; 1 edition (October 13, 2016)

Publication Date: October 13, 2016

Sold by: Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B01M7PW9XV

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #230,495 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #80

in Â Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Biographies > Jazz #530 in Â Kindle Store >

Kindle eBooks > History > Women in History #897 in Â Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History >

Americas > United States > 20th Century

Customer Reviews

I read about this book in a news item while on a visit to LA from New Hampshire. I am not generally interested in the Hollywood type scene or people .I decided to read it for the death mystery aspect. The book was a long and interesting biographical build up to the actual death on the premises of the Morris. I especially liked the Greenwald's connecting her personality to taking on the challenges of competing in traditional male sports. The author had extensive references and an index for those doing research. I enjoyed reading the book .

I admire a biography that is well-researched on an unknown person. John Greenwald's dedication to delivering a complete story is obvious and his subject, Ruth Wightman Morris, deserved this as do we readers. Morris, the "wild bird," lived an exciting life as a daredevil, working in Hollywood, as a bon vivant, and socialite. Deeply flawed, charming, smart, she lived life to its fullest. Vanity Fair would have written of her had she lived in these times. She had affairs and they are interesting to read about. The author somehow found troves of letters from various sources which provide the necessary veracity and intimacy. All in all, keeps your attention. Finally, Greenwald writes very well; loved his use of the language, the metaphors, and that it was written with a great historical perspective.

John Greenwald has parlayed his extensive research into Ruth Wightman Morris's life into an eminently readable and historic book that captivated and kept me reading to the end. Having lived on the Monterey Peninsula for 40 years, I found it both fascinating and enlightening to learn so much more about the history of this area during the late 1920s-1930s. Ruth and her husband Gouverneur's list of friends reads like a Who's Who from this time: Sinclair Lewis, Charlie Chaplin, Rudolph Valentino, Robert Louis Stevenson, Francis McComas, Jack London and many others. I wish I had been there!

Before reading "Wild Bird," I'd never heard of Ruth Wightman Morris, now I can't stop thinking about her and the amazing life she led. She managed to be both firmly of her time and decades ahead of it, being a pilot, race car driver, bullfighter(!), screenwriter, and more. Along the way she traveled widely and met hundreds of rich and/or famous people, and had a tangled love life which itself would be worthy of a Hollywood soap opera. Author John Greenwald tells her story beautifully and hauntingly. Highly recommended.

I'm posting this on my hubby's account, who also read this book. I usually read only fiction, but I got "Wild Bird" and read it in hardly more than a day. By page 40, there's Ruth and a water cannon, hair-raising auto races, aerial acrobatics, Charlie Chaplin and Hollywood screen plays by Ruth. I love all the famous writers and Hollywood people that are involved in Ruth's life! Sounds like fiction but it's not. Would make a great movie. Claudia L

An excellent and very clever read with some surprising revelations. Ruth was a fascinating and talented woman certainly ahead of her time. I loved the fun way it was written.

Exciting, lots of information about Monterey and surrounding areas. Love reading this era. Will definitely explore La Mirada after reading this book.

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