



**BERKLEY BOOKS INTRODUCES MARY ELLEN TAYLOR WITH
THE UNION STREET BAKERY, HER NOVEL EXPLORING
FAMILY, HERITAGE AND THE CLAIMS OF THE PAST**

**THE UNION STREET BAKERY is Published as a Trade Paperback Original
On Sale February 5th**

*"A wonderful story about sisters, family, and the things that matter most.
I loved this beautifully written journey of self-discovery."*

—Wendy Wax, author of

While We Were Watching Downtown Abbey and Ocean Beach

Mary Ellen Taylor's passions include writing, baking and family, all of which intertwine in **THE UNION STREET BAKERY**, a Berkley Trade Paperback Original on sale February 5th, 2013. In it, Taylor introduces

Daisy McCrae, who's returned to Alexandria's Old Town after losing her boyfriend, her job and most of her money, and is once again living above her family's bakery and ignoring the whispers of an amiable spirit who shares the attic rooms.

For Daisy, who grabbed her college scholarship, left town and swore she wouldn't return, being with her family and living and working in the place where she was abandoned as a three-year-old is painful. The McCrae's adopted her and love her as one of their own, but Daisy struggles with the feeling she's not a "real" McCrae—and she still wants to know why her birth mother rejected her.

With her parents no longer able to run the bakery, Daisy's doing her best to keep the 160-year-old family business afloat and to manage her less than perfect relationships with her sisters. Rachel, widowed thirteen months ago, lives in the shop's second floor apartment with her five-year-old twin girls. She's been shouldering the load since their father's heart attack and reluctant retirement. An extraordinary baker, she has no head for business. Their sister Margaret and her almost-Ph.D. in archaeology have returned to the store as well, though with a definite lack of punctuality and enthusiasm.

On Daisy's first day back in the shop, wealthy 99-year-old Mabel Woodrow comes by and tells her that she had dreamed about her the night before. She ignites old sentiments and buried anger by insisting she knew Daisy's birth mother whom she'd seen on the docks hours before she abandoned Daisy. Equally frustrating is the fact that Mabel chose not to tell the McCraes or the police about the woman. The next morning, Miss Mabel is dead. Her housekeeper delivers the news along with a handwritten journal from the mid-nineteenth century that the old woman had insisted go to Daisy.



Studio FBI Photography

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Daisy knows she has the book for a reason and she's determined to uncover its secrets. There are truths amid these pages written by a slave girl named Susie and history to be recovered, but before Daisy can begin to piece together the mysteries it may hold, she gets the answer to the question that's haunted her for thirty years. Her birth mother is back.

In **THE UNION STREET BAKERY** Mary Ellen Taylor brings together history, contemporary concerns and the stuff of legends as she explores how family relationships, loyalties, and love shape the present, and the role the past plays in determining the future.

ABOUT MARY ELLEN TAYLOR

Mary Ellen Taylor grew up in a southern family that embraced stories of all kinds, from a well-told anecdote to a good yarn or a tall tale. It may have been inevitable that Taylor would take her storytelling heritage to new heights, moving beyond the oral tradition to become a published author.

Taylor, who finds cooking and baking to be important creative outlets, explores some of the challenges and comforts of those pursuits in **THE UNION STREET BAKERY**. The novel is influenced by her life in another way as well. Both her grandmother and her daughter were adopted, and so is her protagonist, Daisy McCrae. Taylor has been active in bringing attention to issues regarding adoption, including the concerns faced by adoptees in adulthood. Recently, she and her daughter, born in Russia, spoke out on Richmond's WTTB-TV regarding that country's efforts to curb adoptions by foreigners.

Taylor was born and has spent most of her life in Richmond, but also lived in Alexandria for four years. She received her degree in English from Virginia's Hollins University, and worked in marketing and sales before she became convinced she could write and sell one of the many stories swirling in her head. Today, nineteen of her romance and suspense novels and four novellas written as Mary Burton have been published, earning praise from readers and reviewers as well as spots on The New York Times and USA Today bestseller lists. **THE UNION STREET BAKERY** is her first novel as Mary Ellen Taylor.

When not writing or appearing at conferences and book signings, Taylor continues her culinary pursuits. She's been a kitchen assistant for more than fifty culinary classes over the past seven years at Sur la Table and at the University of Richmond's Culinary Arts program, where she is currently completing her Baking and Pastry Arts Certificate. In addition to spending time with her family and her two miniature dachshunds, Buddy and Bella, Mary Ellen enjoys yoga and hiking.

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THE UNION STREET BAKERY

Mary Ellen Taylor

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