



Katharina Luther: Nun, Rebel, Wife

By Anne Boileau

PRESS RELEASE

Escaping from a convent in a herring barrel, marriage to Martin Luther and pregnant with an 'Antichrist' child, the unsung history of Katharina von Bora is brought to life in this fascinating new historical fiction.

On 31st October 1517 Martin Luther pinned ninety-five theses on the Castle Church door, Wittenberg, criticising the Church of Rome; they were printed and published by Lucas Cranach and caused a storm. Nine young nuns, intoxicated by Luther's subversive writings, became restless and longed to leave their convent. On Good Friday 1523 a haulier smuggled them out hidden in empty herring barrels. Five of them settled in Wittenberg, the very eye of the storm, and one of them – Katharina von Bora – scandalised the world by marrying the revolutionary former monk. Following a near miscarriage, she is confined to her bed to await the birth of their first child; during this time of enforced rest, she sets down her

own story. Against a backdrop of 16th Century Europe this strikingly realised account of the early life of Katharina von Bora brings to the spotlight this spirited and courageous woman.

In 1991, Boileau was researching for a dissertation on nature conservation and agriculture in the former East Germany; while in Wittenberg she came upon an exhibition about Katharina von Bora. She saw her wedding dress, a pair of shoes, her ring, and portraits of her by Lucas Cranach the Elder. She was surprised to learn what is common knowledge in Germany: that Martin Luther was married. Ten years later she began researching this woman's life; she came to admire her resilience; how she learnt to adapt to secular life in a patriarchal and misogynist society. In this book Boileau highlights the strength of a woman who flouted convention, possessed a defiant and courageous spirit, a willingness to challenge authority and who shaped social and religious history alongside, not behind, her husband.

A timely and compelling new study of a woman whose story is not widely known in the English-speaking world, **Katharina Luther: Nun, Rebel, Wife** will captivate fans of the likes of Philippa Gregory and Hilary Mantel, and is set to fascinate, enlighten and leave readers hooked until the very last page.

About the author: Anne Boileau (also known as Polly Clarke) lives in Essex. She studied German in Munich and worked as interpreter and translator before turning to language-teaching in England. She also holds a degree in Conservation and Land Management from Anglia University and has written and given talks on various aspects of conservation. Now she shares, writes and enjoys poetry; her work has appeared in a number of anthologies and magazines; she has also won some awards, including First Prize with Grey Hen Press, 2016. She translates modern German poetry into English with Camden Mews Translators and was Chair of Suffolk Poetry Society from 2011 to 2014. Her debut novel, **Katharina Luther: Nun, Rebel, Wife** (published by Clink Street Publishing 4th October 2016 RRP TBC) will be available to purchase from online retailers including amazon.co.uk and to order from all good bookstores.

For a review copy or interview request please contact:

Kate Appleton, Senior Publicist at Authoright / 0207 993 4438 / kate@authorite.com