

Bowing to the Future A Lou Anders Blog



Monday, January 05, 2015

Fantasy Author Visits Storybook Castle

This past weekend, my family and I got to visit an actual storybook castle!

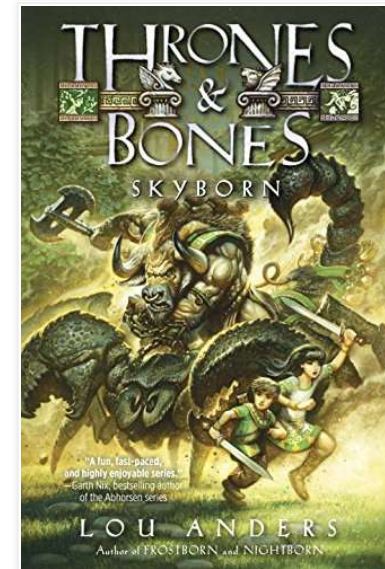
Let me explain. To celebrate the end of 2014 and ring in new year, we traveled to Fairhope, Alabama for some warmer weather, a change of scenery, and an escape from household chores. It was four days of eating too much, riding bicycles, visiting the awesome [Page & Palette bookstore](#), enjoying ice cream at [Mr. Gene's Beans](#), dining at [Dragonfly Foodbar](#) (get the five-spiced duck tacos!), and picking up some *Magic the Gathering* booster packs at [Mini War Game](#), but one excursion really stood out for us.



We got to visit [the Mosher's Storybook Castle!](#) Yup, a storybook castle in Alabama.

Sometime after World War II, a man named Craig Sheldon moved his family to Fairhope, Alabama and began work on a house. He was in the construction business, and brought home scraps and leftover materials, and what he did with it is quite amazing. The result was [Sheldon Castle](#), a rather unique place - but the tale is only getting started. When his daughter Pagan married an artist named Dean Mosher, they purchased the property next door to Sheldon Castle and began their own storybook home. Building every single piece of the castle by

Skyborn



Out now!

Skyborn

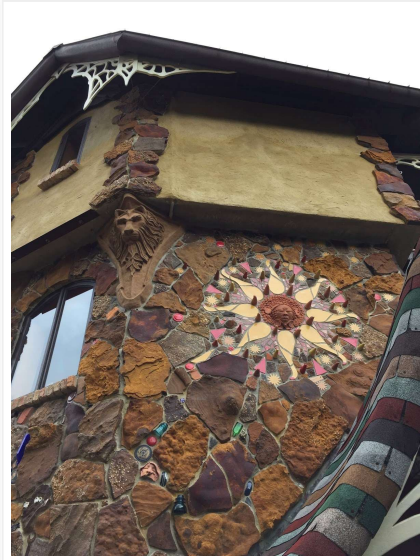
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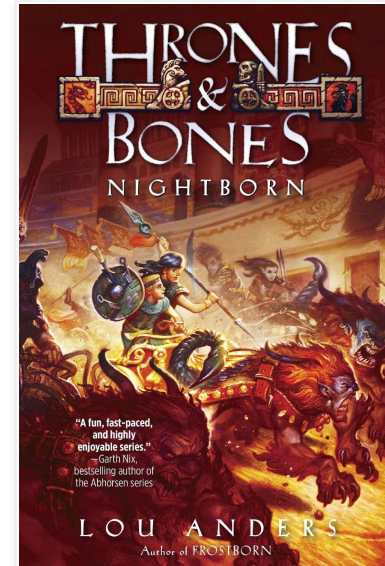
hand, and working over a period of 30 years, Dean constructed **Moshers Castle**. It actually dwarfs the original, and has got to be one of the most unique structures I've ever been in.

So how did this come about you ask?

I heard about the castles in a news article, and read that the Moshers didn't object to people taking photographs of their castle's exterior. Still, I didn't want to invade their privacy, so I wrote to them and asked if it was true that it was okay to take pictures. Pagan Moshers wrote me back and unexpectedly and enormously generously invited us to join

them for lunch and a tour!

We visited their house on Saturday, for food, coffee, and a long visit between our two families. The Moshers are all very creative people, even if they didn't live in a castle. Pagan is the Artistic Director at **Children's Dance Theatre of Fairhope** and Owner/Director at **Creative Outlet Dance Center**. Dean is an historic painter whose work is in museums around the country. His "Wilbur Wrights Greets Lady Liberty" is on permanent exhibition in the Early Flight wing of the National Air & Space Museum! The story of the year's long research period for the "Battle of Flamborough Head" is jaw-droppingly amazing. Dean actually constructed a 20 foot wide section of a ship's hull and fired a cannon ball through it to get an accurate rendition of the blast effect and debris! And that's just one aspect of his process. The detail and historical accuracy of his work is amazing, and someone could make an incredible (and enjoyable!) history book by charting the process of creating one of his paintings start to finish (all of which are photo-documented and backed up by scholars and experts). Check out his [portfolio here](#). Their son and his girlfriend are also creative types and were very fun to talk with too. I didn't get a chance to meet their daughter, but, in addition to being a television producer, she is also an



Thrones and Bones

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Frostborn

author, having co-authored a book called *The Spirit of Fairhope* with her father).

As to the castle itself - wow! Every door, window, every stone in the floor, ever pane of glass, ever timber and beam - all beautifully hand-crafted. There was a story everywhere I turned my eyes. In fact, it was hard to keep to one line of conversation or maintain eye contact with anyone for more than a few minute, because everywhere I turned my head, there was something amazing leaping out at me.



It was a delightful afternoon with the Moshers, who are wonderful and creative people. Check out their work, [Dean's studio](#), and their [castle](#). And thank you to the Moshers for generously sharing their time and opening their home to us (as well as for the copy of *Frostborn* they left out on the coffee table!) - it was absolutely the highlight of the trip and an experience we'll never forget.

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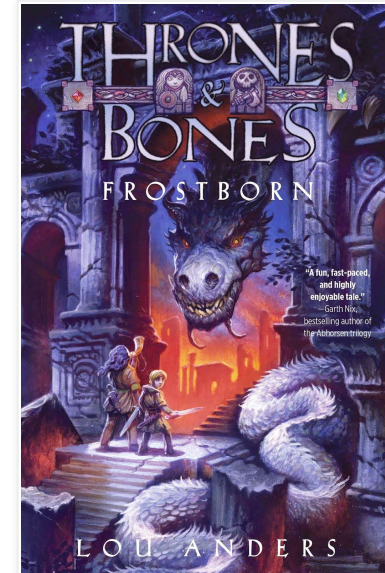
Posted by Lou Anders at [1/05/2015 11:08:00 AM](#)

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1 comment:

Charmed, Im Sure said...

Hi! I saw your post from a few years back about the Birmingham Batmobile! Well, guess what is being resurrected and is currently housed at Old Car Heaven??? The Batmobile!! I'd want to help the creator of the upcoming



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About Me

Lou Anders

Lou Anders is the author of the Thrones and Bones series, a middle grade fantasy adventure that begins with the novel Frostborn, published by Random House's

documentary to get the word out. You can contact me at sixxi05@gmail.com
Thanks! Tamara M

10:13 AM, January 21, 2015

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Crown Books for Young Readers. He is a Hugo award winning editor and a Chesley Award winning art director, with six additional Hugo nominations, six additional Chesley nominations, three World Fantasy award nominations, a Shirley Jackson award nomination and a Philip K. Dick award nominations. For ten years, he served as the editorial director of Pyr books. Additionally, he is the editor of nine anthologies, including *Swords & Dark Magic* (Eos, 2010, with Jonathan Strahan), and *Masked* (Gallery Books, 2010). He is the author of *The Making of Star Trek: First Contact* (Titan Books, 1996), and has published over 500 articles in such magazines as *The Believer*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Dreamwatch*, *DeathRay*, *Star Trek Monthly*, *Star Wars Monthly*, *Babylon 5 Magazine*, *Sci Fi Universe*, *Doctor Who Magazine*, and *Manga Max*. His articles and stories have been translated into Russian, Spanish, Danish, Greek, German, Italian & French.

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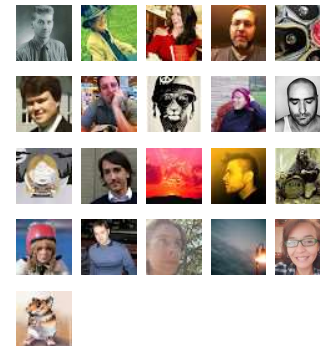
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