

## **Study Guide for Naomi Wise: A Cationary Tale by Sandra Redding**

### **What is the book about?**

My historical novel was inspired by Naomi Wise, the beautiful orphan who lived and worked for a Quaker family during the early 1800s. What Naomi wanted is what most young women during that century desired: a husband and family. Because she had no dowry, no man would marry her, but reality didn't prevent her from falling in love with handsome Jonathan Lewis. After she told Jonathan she was pregnant with his child, he promised they would be wed. Instead he strangled her and threw her body into the Deep River located in Randolph county. Naomi's life and tragic death has been celebrated in popular ballads, including ones sung by Doc Watson and Bob Dylan.

### **Why did I write the book?**

Because I grew up in Randleman, where this legendary tale took place, I was always fascinated with the story. I actually admired Naomi's spunk. One brief account of her life appeared in a Greensboro newspaper many years ago, but my book is a novel over 200 pages long. I did a great deal of research. On areas that could not be supported by facts, I relied on imagination.

### **How have people reacted?**

I have been awed by reader's comments. When I have readings or discuss the book, people have many questions. Almost every day, I receive emails praising the book. Most say that after they started reading, they couldn't put the novel down. I consider that a great compliment.

### **What is my background in writing?**

I always wanted to write. Busy with a family when young and brought up during a time and place when most women lacked opportunities for higher education, I was almost 40 before I received a BA in English from UNC-G Greensboro and 48 before I received an MFA in Creative Writing. Since then I've published four books, numerous articles, book reviews, stories, even some poetry. I've written for several newspapers including The Atlantic-Journal Constitution and the Greensboro News & Record. Currently I write a column published in O. Henry, Pinestraw and Salt Magazines. And I'm completing the final edit on my new novel, *This I Know*.

### **Current programs celebrating the book**

During 2014, I participated numerous readings and presentations in libraries, book stores, museums and civic clubs. I also discussed the novel with several book clubs. This year I will dress in a Quaker costume to discuss the life and times of Naomi Wise.

### **How can you get in touch with me?**

Those who wish to buy a book or organizations that want me to present programs, please contact me by email at [sanredd@earthlink.net](mailto:sanredd@earthlink.net) or phone 336 282-9088.