

Local Mystery Writer to Visit Library

October 12, 2006

By Adam Swift from the Peabody & Lynnfield Weekly News

PEABODY – Most people don't look forward to living a life of crime when they retire, but that isn't the case for former Peabody resident Don Finegold.

Luckily for the safety of the community, Finegold has confined murders and mystery to the pages of the three novels he has published since his retirement from the leather industry in 1997.

On Tuesday night, the Peabody Institute Library is hosting a free program with Finegold at 7 p.m. in the Sutton Room. Finegold will be reading from his latest novel, *The Pemberton Murders*, and will be answering questions from the audience.

For the 77-year-old Finegold, writing novels is something he has wanted to do since he went to Peabody High School.

"Once I was in the leather business, I didn't have time," Finegold said, but he said he was always an avid reader.

"I'd read everything, the classics, romantic novels," he said. "When I started to write, I chose murder-mysteries because I had the opportunity to have a lot of fun with it."

Finegold's novels take place in the fictional towns of Pemberton and Stanton, but local readers will probably notice that those two towns bear more than a passing resemblance to Peabody and Salem. Finegold currently lives in Salem with his wife.

"I use both fictional names of places and people, but I mention a lot of the old-time stores and restaurants that a lot of people will recognize," Finegold said. "I also use the names of some of my old high school friends as some of the characters. It's a lot of fun, people seem to enjoy them."

He said he has to spend a good amount of time researching the places in his novels, or else his many local readers might pick up the inaccuracies.

For Finegold, writing has been a wonderful way to spend his retirement.

“Normally, I spend just about every day writing,” he said. “Once I get started and interested, I really get into it.”

Finegold said he will spend anywhere from two to eight hours a day writing. Unlike many authors, he said, the words usually come easy once he gets into a rhythm.

“I started writing in earnest and I enjoy every minute of it,” he said. “It comes awfully easy.”

Even when he’s away from the pen or keyboard, Finegold said, the creative process doesn’t stop.

“I get a lot of my ideas when I’m in bed at night and rested,” he said. “I’ll have to get up in the middle of the night and write them down because I don’t want to forget them.”

Finegold has spoken at a number of libraries and community centers, and he said the events usually consist of a reading followed by questions from the audience.

“Three weeks ago, I spoke at the West Peabody Branch Library and I had a great time,” he said. “There were about 21 women there from the city and they knew a lot of the places in the book. The question-and-answer session lasted over an hour.”

While Finegold will be reading from his third novel, *The Pemberton Murders*, on Tuesday evening, he is already hard at work on his fourth novel, which he expects to be on the shelves by the end of next year.

The Pemberton Murders tells the story of a woman whose husband was believed to be a serial killer, but only she believes in his innocence. Finegold weaves in DNA and forensic science with the local landmarks in the woman’s effort to solve the mystery.

“It’s wonderful, it really keep my mind active,” Finegold said of his writing.