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# New book's author explores Greece's heritage landscapes with her mum's 1978 travel diary, faces fear, and falls in love with life

Sally Jane Smith announces the June 2023 release of *'Unpacking for Greece: Travel in a land of fortresses, fables, ferries and feta'*

[NSW CENTRAL COAST, AUSTRALIA, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023] - When Sally sets out for Europe with her mother's 1978 travel diary in her pocket, she is searching for the wanderlust she lost in a devastating overseas road accident. As she ventures into the heart of the Mediterranean – wandering volatile landscapes, exploring historical sites, pairing books with places and savouring the tastes of Greece – she finds it is possible for a clumsy, out-of-shape woman on a budget to experience a life-changing journey.

In a story told with warmth, humour and a fascination with Greece's natural and cultural heritage, Sally connects with her past, overcomes her fears and falls in love with life again, one olive at a time.

"I didn't know my mother's journal existed until a few days before my first trip to Greece. That tiny notebook with its scuffed red covers became a treasured travel companion, and helped me to make peace with the memory of my mum, who died when I was in my twenties," says Sally. The cover design of *Unpacking for Greece*, which features honey-hued stone columns against a deep blue sky, includes a family snapshot of Sally's mother and grandmother seated on the steps of the Parthenon.

"[Sally Jane Smith's] eloquent and beautiful descriptions are so vivid, you'll travel right alongside her" says Maria A. Karamitsos, Greek-American journalist and author. "It's a story of re-learning to trust oneself, opening to possibilities, making peace with the past."

*Unpacking for Greece* journeys through some of the most iconic destinations on the Greek mainland and islands, including Athens, Monemvasia, Meteora, Santorini and Rhodes. Pre-publication excerpts from the planned three-book series have won First Place Non-Fiction in the Port Writers Open Literary Competition and been shortlisted in the National Writing Competition organised by the Society of Women Writers NSW.

Described by Tina Hartas, co-founder of TripFiction, as "an inspired Greek odyssey", the book provides a rich armchair travel experience for those who remember, plan, or dream of a trip to Greece. "Sally takes you with her in every sense," says Ned Kelly award-winning and *USA Today* best-selling Australian author Sulari Gentill.

Sally has lived on five continents and visited thirty-three countries, but she gives credit to Greece – and particularly a serene writers' retreat named Limnisa on the Peloponnese Peninsula – for turning her into a writer. She completed a residency at Varuna, the Writers' House in the Blue Mountains in 2018 and has published articles in *Gulf News*, *Women's Ink!* and *Brevity Blog*. Sally's story of her great-great-grandmother's extraordinary life appears in the anthology *Itchy Feet: Tales of Travel and Adventure*. Her exploration of travel and grief is included in the *Newcastle Short Story Award Anthology 2022*.

The launch of *Unpacking for Greece* will be celebrated at a literary event hosted by the prestigious Words on the Waves Writers Festival at Woy Woy Library on the NSW Central Coast on the evening of Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023. Get tickets at [www.WordsOnTheWaves.com.au/book-launches-2023](http://www.WordsOnTheWaves.com.au/book-launches-2023), connect with Sally on social media as @JourneysInPages, or find out more at [www.SallyJaneSmith.com](http://www.SallyJaneSmith.com).

***Unpacking for Greece* is available at bookstores and online retailers from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023**

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