

# Bainy Cyrus' 'Tea and Toil at The Woman's Club' Receives International Recognition Through the INDEPENDENT PRESS AWARD®

*'Tea and Toil at The Woman's Club' by Bainy Cyrus takes winner in the 2025 INDEPENDENT PRESS AWARD®*

NORFOLK, VA, UNITED STATES, January 31, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The INDEPENDENT PRESS AWARD, one of the most prestigious book award programs globally for independent authors, publishers, and illustrators, recognized "[Tea and Toil at The Woman's Club](#)" by Bainy Cyrus as the Women's Issues category winner.

The competition is judged by experts from different aspects of the book industry, including publishers, writers, editors, book cover designers and professional copywriters. Selected IPA Award Winners and Distinguished Favorites are based on overall excellence.

"Tea and Toil at The Woman's Club" offers a captivating glimpse into the vibrant history of the Woman's Club of Norfolk, housed within the historic Martin Mansion. This engaging narrative chronicles the club's rise and fall, from its heyday as a social and cultural hub to its eventual bankruptcy and subsequent decline.

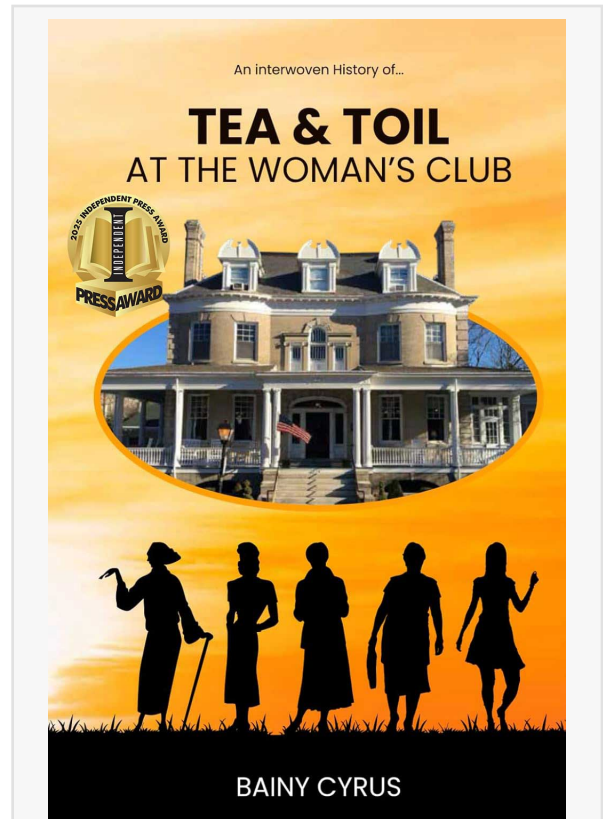
Cyrus weaves together historical accounts with vivid descriptions, transporting readers back in time to a period when the club thrived, hosting everything from elegant tea parties to joyous wedding receptions. The book is filled with fascinating stories of the dedicated women who spent countless hours within its walls, striving to preserve this cherished landmark.



"Tea and Toil at The Woman's Club" by Bainy Cyrus  
The historic Martin Mansion, owned by the Woman's Club of Norfolk since 1925, is facing neglect and bankruptcy after a century of hosting teas, cocktail parties, wedding receptions, college lectures, bridge tournaments, and charity drives. And the club itself has shrunk significantly, almost to extinction with only a small handful of members. Located in a unique semi-circle neighborhood called The Hague, the Martin Mansion is known as "The Woman's Club" and watches itself intertwined in the histories of the Woman's Club of Norfolk, the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), the city of Norfolk, and even America for the past 115 years. Since its establishment in 1890, GFWC has improved the world by founding the National Park Service, advocating streetlights and seatbelts, producing 75% of public libraries, funding 431 WWII warplanes for the U.S. military, protecting endangered species, and many more.

Overall, this umbrella organization, once boasting 16,000 affiliated clubs and 12,000,000 members in America and 60 countries, shows the power of women as a team fighting for human rights and global improvements. The author, a lifelong resident of Norfolk, regales her stories growing up in the rented auditorium of The Woman's Club by performing in elementary school skits, practicing Christmas carols, and attending debutante parties. And she later attends Thanksgiving gatherings at the mansion with her aunt Frances, a descendant of Alvah Martin who built this beautiful home in 1910. Finally, in 2014, the Martin Mansion, on the verge of collapsing, is rescued by three resilient women who face overwhelming costs of repairs and improvements in a 10,000-square-foot mansion. However, these women manage to bring the mansion back to its glory days as a popular event venue – and their Woman's Club back to community service.

In 2025, the INDEPENDENT PRESS AWARD saw participation from journalists, well established authors, and small, medium and large publishers across the globe, including those residing in Australia,



"Tea and Toil at The Woman's Club"  
by Bainy Cyrus



Author Bainy Cyrus

Canada, Dominican Republic, France, Germany, India, Hong Kong, Japan, Portugal, Scotland, Singapore, Spain, United Kingdom, and the United States.



Winners were chosen from publishers such as Amplify Publishing Group, Black Rose Writing, Blackstone Publishing, BookBaby, Calumet Editions, Globe Pequot, Finishing Line Press, Gatekeepers Press, Hachette Go (Blanco of Grand Central Publishing), HarperCollins Leadership, Ideapress Publishing, IVP Kids, Koehler Books, Mad Cave Studios, North Dakota State University Press, Oceanview, Publishing Old Stone Press, Pegasus Books, Post Hill Press, Red T Kid's Media, Rowman & Littlefield, She Writes Press, University of California Press, and University of Georgia Press.

"The 2025 INDEPENDENT PRESS AWARD awardees included the excellence and diversity of global independent publishing," said Gabrielle Olczak, IPA President and Award Sponsor. "There is no stopping independent publishing. It provides unparalleled content and quality to consumers worldwide and we are excited to showcase this year's honorees to the world."

For more information please visit [independentpressaward.com](http://independentpressaward.com); and to see this year's list of IPA Winners, please visit: <https://www.independentpressaward.com/2025winners>

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#### About the Author

Bainy Cyrus is the author of five books. She was born severely deaf in Norfolk, VA, and learned to speak/lipread at Clarke School in Massachusetts. She graduated from Virginia Tech in 1985 with a bachelor's degree in landscape horticulture and worked as a landscape designer for nearly 20 years before deciding to change careers. In 2004, Bainy earned a master's degree in counseling from Old Dominion University. She worked as a job coach for people with disabilities for fifteen years until her retirement in 2021. Her first book, "All Eyes," was published in 2005 as an anthology titled "Deaf Women's Lives: Three Self-Portraits" and won the silver Eric Hoffer award in the memoir category. Then, "All Eyes" was published as a stand-alone edition in 2010 and won two silver awards in the autobiography/memoir category. Next, she self-published "Della on Facebook" in 2012, depicting her year-long daily posts on her Labrador puppy, Della, who passed away of old age in 2023. Bainy lives in Norfolk with her husband, Steve, and their lab rescue, Sydney. She enjoys hiking, biking, pickleball, gardening, and RVing.

To learn even more about the author, please visit her website at: <https://www.bainycyrus.com/>

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The Independent Press Award is announced every spring and is open to independent authors and publishers.

The fall book competition, NYC Big Book Award, <https://www.nycbigbookaward.com/> allows all authors, publishers, and includes submissions from the big five publishers.

Join us for the Awards Dinner on May 3rd, and at the BookCAMP event, May 2 - 4, 2025, <https://www.independentpressaward.com/ipabookcamp>

Gabby Olczak  
Independent Press Award  
+1 973-969-1899

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