

RAVE REVIEWS by Jean E. Eustance

Rhys Bowen is a popular author at the Pine Bush Area Public Library. She has written the Molly Murphy series of mysteries, set in New York City.

Her Christmas mysteries are **Away in a Manger** ( set in 1905) and **The Ghost of Christmas Past** (1906) . In the first book, Molly Murphy stumbles across a young brother and sister who are obviously upper class, but who are begging on the street. In the second book, a child had disappeared ten years before from a rich household. Now a young woman has come back, claiming to be that girl. Can Molly save the day, and do it before Christmas? Go to our bookshelves and find out.

I prefer one of Bowen's other series, the **Royal Spyness** series. This stars Lady Georgiana Rannoch. It's set in Britain in the 1930s, and Georgiana is a somewhat naïve young woman when the books begin. She grows up over the course of the series and is finally able to hold her own against such formidable characters as Mrs. Simpson, which is a feat in itself.

**The Twelve Clues of Christmas** is a spritely, fast-moving murder mystery based on the song, the Twelve Days of Christmas. Someone is killing off one person a day, during the Christmas season, and the first is a man named Freddie Partridge, found dead in a pear tree. The fourth is sort of a "calling bird" in that she is a telephone operator. The eighth is a farmer's wife, apparently killed by being kicked by a cow, which makes her one of the "eight maids a-milking" in the song. It goes on from there, and it is amazing that neither Georgiana nor her friends realize how things are holding to the words of the song, or why until quite late in the book!

Light finally dawns, and there is a deadly scuffle at the end, and the good guys triumph and the bad are punished. This series is a lot of fun. In our library, we have other books in that series, including **Queen of Hearts** and **Malice at the Palace**. Come in for a good book!