

Turn the pages of young memories

Find childhood books on Web site

Works well for buyers and sellers



Jo-Ann Dodds
Second-hand Sleuth

When I was in Grade 7, I whiled many hours away reading in the school library. One of my favourite books was *Little Katia* by E.M. Imedingen and illustrated by Viktor Ambrus. It told the story of a girl who grew up in Czarist Russia and her experiences until she went away to boarding school in St. Petersburg. Another much-loved book was *A Traveller in Time* by Allison Uttley about a young girl who goes back and forth to the 16th century.

If you're like me and the books you loved in childhood never left you, there's a chance you may want to find them again to share with young people in your life.

If you're frustrated in your search, there's a Web site, www.abebooks.com, which is an absolute treasure trove of information for those who collect or wish to sell antique or out-of-print books.

Go to the Reading Room category to find one of the most popular features of the site. This is the "book sleuth", an open forum for those wishing to track down the name of a book they read in the past, but can't remember the title.

Post a description of the book on the forum, which is open to people all over the world, and they can respond with the name

of the book, which they think matches the story.

The "book sleuth" posts the solved entries as well as the unsolved ones. In one of the solved ones, the plot described a married woman who travels back and forth in time. Sleuths worldwide sent their answers and Uttley's book, *Traveller in Time*, was one of the answers. When I read that title, I was transported back to the school library. (That answer was wrong, by the way. The book title the person was looking for is Daphne du Maurier's *House on the Strand*.)

So what does this mean for the average reader? Supposing you are looking for *The Blue Max* by Jack D. Hunter. Sadly it's out of print, but you have seen the movie and just have to have the book. What do you do?

Log on to abebooks.com and type in Blue Max. There are 119 copies available on the site at the time of writing, priced from \$4 (U.S.) up to \$375 for a first edition.

For those wanting to sell a book, the site works equally well, and it's a good way to get an idea of the value of a book.

Book dealers pay a monthly fee starting at \$25 U.S. to list books. There's a 5 per cent commission on each sale. If the site processes the payments there is a 5.5 per cent charge to handle the sale.

A visit to the site reminded of the joy *A Traveller in Time* gave me all those years ago.

I plan to re-read it again very soon and pop back into my very own past.

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