



Time's Legacy

Barbara Erskine

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In present-day Cambridge, Abi, a recently ordained priest of the Church of England, is appointed to a notoriously difficult parish. The priest in charge is the charismatic but fundamentalist Kier. He objects to her mysticism, her practice of healing in particular.

When she sees a vision of a congregation in an old church, Kier accuses her of witchcraft, but Abi soon sees more visions; an entire Roman family history, dark with betrayal and a promise of bloody revenge.

With foreboding forces building up to violence, Abi must battle the approaching terror along with her own personal demons, drawing upon the expertise of Druidry and shamanism from a questionable source...

Time's Legacy Details

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From Reader Review Time's Legacy for online ebook

Deborah says

I so love this book. It was my first Barbara Erskine book, bought for me by my son last Christmas and as soon as I picked it up I couldn't put it down. More telling is the fact that some 6 months after finishing it, I still think about the characters in this book. For me it is in my top 10. I particularly like the way so many faiths are weaved together without prejudice. Yes, there are some parts of the story that question your beliefs, but, over all I think this book stretches our acceptance of other people. It is based on the idea that Jesus visited England (hence the song Jerusalem) and some people poo-hoo that. I prefer to keep an open mind. I am not religious but do enjoy the historical thought behind the idea.

I have also now read Whispers In the Sand, which I enjoyed but didn't love , and am part way through Lady of Hay (which is grabbing me again) by the same author. If you like a historical, other wordly book then grab an Erskine!

Moppet says

Barbara Erskine's books tend to follow a recognisable pattern -but each time, she shakes her kaleidoscope to create a new and enthralling variation. The result is always a novel very difficult to put down. I've never taken more than three days to finish any of her books.

The heroine of Time's Legacy is Abi, an Anglican priest. Harassment from her disturbed superior, Kier, who has decided she is a witch, drives her from her Cambridge parish into retreat near Glastonbury.

Unfortunately Kier has no intention of letting her go that easily. As Abi tries to evade him, she is drawn into the story of the haunted place where she is staying. Through the medium of the crystal her mother left to her, she watches as a two-thousand-year-old tragedy unfolds. It's an experience which will lead her to question her faith, her identity and her future.

The Glastonbury area is beautifully evoked, both in the past and the present: as I read I could hear the birds, smell the wood-smoke and feel the touch of swirling mists. The creation of atmosphere is Barbara Erskine's speciality. She uses layers of description to build up tension to the point where you are almost afraid to turn the page.

But she also knows how to break up the tension - and in fact, no-one can combine chills and cosiness the way she does. On one page, kettles boil, cakes come out of the oven and labradors snooze by the fire; on the next, rain spatters the window, the electricity fails and the dogs begin to whimper as footsteps are heard overhead. Even though you thought you were alone in the house. It's an irresistible combination.

Time's Legacy didn't topple my two favourite Erskine novels, Lady of Hay and Midnight is a Lonely Place, from their pedestal. Nor did I feel it was all it could have been. Although I loved the last page, I wasn't altogether convinced by the way things were tied up and there are some loose threads – like the couple Abi meets in a coffee shop who are introduced by name: I kept waiting for them to reappear before realising belatedly that they wouldn't.

Notwithstanding, this is a very recommendable book – entertaining, suspenseful and thought-provoking. If you've never read any Barbara Erskine, this would be a great place to start.

Full review and quotes here: <http://bit.ly/bITyHK>

Annette Gisby says

I must admit that this review is biased. Why, you may ask? Well, there hasn't been one of Barbara Erskine's books that I didn't like whenever I've picked one up, and Time's Legacy is no exception. Peopled with complex characters and rich, deep storylines, this book is like stepping into another world. Although quite a long book, the writing is flowing and fast-paced, with just enough description to detail what you need to know. Ms. Erskine knows how to weave a spell with words and none of them are wasted.

Some people might not like the duality of a modern day tale set against one so far in the past, in this case around 2,000 years ago, but for me it was book heaven. The main character, Abi, has just recently been ordained as a priest, which was unusual to say the least. I've only read one other set of books where the heroine was a female priest, the Merrily Watkins mysteries series by Phil Rickman.

Abi is very spiritual and a bit psychic, she also seems to have the gift of healing and these things combine to make her new boss, Keir Scott accuse her of witchcraft and she is forced out of her new parish on a retreat to the west country. Her story is juxtaposed with that of a young Roman family living near Glastonbury Tor and the enigmatic young man who is studying with the druids there. But with Abi's forays into the past becoming more and more frequent, is he a danger or something else?

It's a bit of cliché, but this book was a page turner. I needed to keep reading to find out what happened next. The storyline is intriguing, but I don't want to say too much in case I give the plot away, it is something you'd need to read for yourself and come to your own conclusions. But if you like things like the Da Vinci Code, then this one is another that you might like.

Great, satisfying read.

Anne says

I have heard Barbara Erskine speak and was fascinated by her knowledge of history but had not read any of her novels before picking up The Time's Legacy.

The story has had me gripped for the past few days, with the characters whirling around my head and the sense of anticipation as each page is turned is massive. I can only compare how I felt whilst reading this story to how I felt when I read Labyrinth by Kate Mosse - another book that gripped me from start to finish. I discovered that yes, I do like historical fiction and I like it best when it is told in dual narrative form and the story is about real down-to-earth people that I can relate to.

The novel opens with newly ordained priest, Abi Rutherford who has just started a new job. Unfortunately her new boss Kier is causing lots of problems, not only is she strangely attracted to him but he is accusing her of being a witch. Abi soon leaves the parish and finds sanctuary in Glastonbury where she intends to consider her future.

Abi has always had the gift of healing but it is after her Mother shows her a mysterious crystal that she starts to see ghosts. Glastonbury is a town full myths and magical beliefs, the house she is staying in seems to be full of spirits. Abi's visions are centred around Roman characters over 2000 years old, druids and healers and Romans.

The dual narrative is wonderfully done, each part of the story, both modern and ancient weave together seamlessly. Abi's modern day dramas and her visions link together so well. The tension builds quickly in both parts of the story, in modern Glastonbury Abi's old boss Kier is becoming increasingly bizarre in his

behaviour - stalking her and flinging more and more accusations at her. In ancient times, a young healer from Galilee is visiting England to learn the druid's ways - he is being stalked by Roman soldiers sent by Herod. Gradually it dawns on the reader who exactly this young healer could be, which to me, only added to the whole mystery of the story.

Historical, supernatural and suspenseful, this novel drew me in from page one. I got so wrapped up by the modern story and then suddenly I was back 2000 years, but the writing is so good that within a paragraph I was firmly ensconced in that part of the story, and so it goes, back and forth, but loses nothing in the style. An absolute delight that I am sure Barbara Erskine's existing fans will love and I hope will also gain her many more new ones.

Helen says

DNF about page 60. The Mary Sue main character irritated me. Seriously, she's perfect, can do no wrong, and everyone loves her. Add in hands-on faith healing, magic crystals, and the religious beliefs, and this is just not for me.

Frances says

I really enjoyed this book as the author easily goes between a mystical past and the present day. There are many strong characters both past and present giving the reader a fascinating tale right to the end. I've only read two of Barbara Erskine's books rating this one much higher as the whole story blended together so well and was such a good read.

Anne says

What a wonderful read - I'm a total sucker for dual-time writing anyway, but this one is quite superbly done. The story of Abi and the characters around her blends quite seamlessly into pre-Christian Glastonbury and the lives of the roman family and the druids. And the ending was absolutely perfect... Although I have read one by her many years ago, I'm quite thrilled to have found an author I love with a nice hefty back catalogue to explore...

SJ says

What an absolute disappointment. I really regret this Kindle purchase. The basic premise behind this pagan/Christian/Da Vinci Code wannabe is that a Protestant vicar starts seeing ghosts and images after her mother passes on a magical crystal that has been in the family for generations. It makes her question her faith as a Christian. At the same time, her attractive but control freak boss who also sees strange things starts to stalk her out of a suspicion that she's actually a witch. She starts seeing an account of Jesus Christ while he travels through England and..blahblahblah. It goes on from there. While the author has a voice and CAN tell a story, the type of story she's telling was just a little too jump-all-over-the-place with characters that seemed so flat and repetitive and uninteresting that the story just didn't do it for me. It's the right book for a certain audience, but that audience just wasn't me, I'm afraid.

Dora Okeyo says

I have to say that reading this book felt like getting out of a maze of sorts.

Abi, the heroine of the story, is posted as a curate under a parish headed by Kieran Scott who first seems kind but with time proves to be overbearing, and this leads to her resignation. She seeks shelter at the Cavendish home after her mother's sudden death. She can see ghosts, and it feels as though she is living their life and feeling their pain, but what's sad is Kieran believes she is a witch and the demons have to be cast out of her.

What drew me to this story was the idea of seeing ghosts and having a main character whose beliefs are questioned by everything that's happening around her.

Abi is opinionated, and quite stubborn and that made it easier to read because there's the feeling that she'd always see things to the very end.

I didn't buy the whole Yeshua story because it seemed to ruffle everything I know about Jesus but nonetheless, I found it to be a very interesting twist to the story.

It's a good read.

Sweetp-1 says

I have read all (? I think) of Barbara Erskine's books and this one follows the history blended with supernatural themes that Erskine does so well. While the plot felt a little too familiar at times, I thoroughly enjoyed the historical setting and the preChristianity mystery that was woven throughout. It isn't a time period I know much about and found some of the legends and Druid mysticism quite fascinating. Makes me want to go visit Glastonbury someday :) Although some of the elements of the book were a little predictable - Abi's attraction to Just (the prerequisite male that has to come save our heroine) and the conflict with Kier, I found myself unable to put it down once I got past the halfway mark.

Yasmin Schembri says

Very well written and interesting plotline. However, some questions were left unanswered.

Wendy Sice says

Oh, how I love a good ghost story! This one did not disappoint! In fact, I was so into it I stayed up until dawn to read the whole thing! A female priest in her new role of curate of a parish is soon disillusioned by the crazed rantings of the pastor and retreats to the home of a spiritual advisor of the church. There, she discovers she has the ability (aided by a crystal given to her by her mother) to 'see' the lives of a ghostly family living in the area before the time of Christ. Each time she looks into their lives she becomes more convinced that she is meant to do something for this family, but does not know what it is. Meanwhile, the crazed pastor, who thinks she is a witch, harasses her with phone calls and stalking determined that they can save each other's lives. The to-ing and fro-ing between the past and the future is captivating, and the

exploration of both Christian and pagan beliefs is fascinating. I was thoroughly intrigued by the nail-biting pace and drama of the story and felt emotional at the very end reading the interwoven story of Jesus healing the sick. An intriguing story with controversial religious elements (think The Da Vinci Code) and time-crossing adventures which I found impossible to put down.

Alaine says

Barbara Erskine books will always hold a very special place on my bookshelf. The first novel she wrote was Lady of Hay and it introduced me to the time travel/historical genre and I loved it. Sadly around that time there weren't really any other authors writing that genre. Her unique style of writing can keep you captivated for over 700 pages. Then she wrote Kingdom of Shadows in the same style as Lady of Hay and then the follow on Child of the Phoenix which sadly had no time travel in it but was still a fantastic historical novel. Child of the Phoenix was a staggering 1100 pages and I remember buying it the day it was available at the book store and staying up all night reading it and going to work the next day. Then in 1994 she wrote Midnight is a Lonely Place and she'd completely changed her style and to be honest it was a little on the scary side. So that was the end of my love affair with Barbara Erskine books or so I thought. That is until now!

I had forgotten how quickly Barbara Erskine draws you into the story. For me, this book was truly amazing and contained many aspects of various genres and storylines that I love. Abi is a Curate for the Church of England and will one day become a Priest. She is a strong and complex woman who is drawn into a dark and unknown story from the past. The story that Abi is drawn into is over 2000 years old and it explores the idea that Jesus, during the unknown years spent time with the Druids in Brittany. This story in its own unique way brings together all religious beliefs and the various gods they worship whilst testing Abi's faith to the core of her beliefs.

If like me you don't know much about the modern Church of England then you will learn a great deal in this book. My knowledge of the Church of England is limited to the Tudor period so I was fascinated with the information. I enjoyed the level of understanding I gained and what it must be like for a woman to be called to the Priesthood, not only will she face challenges within the church but also within the community and her own parish. This is not an easy calling and in many ways is so much harder than it is for a man.

In true Barbara Erskine style this book is very difficult to put down with its fast paced plot and with two stories being told at the same time, you are racing to get from one story to the other. In fact, that is one of the things I love about these types of books, it keeps your mind so completely occupied that it is so easy to get lost in these books.

Sandra Barkovi? says

Ovo mi je prvi roman ove autorice, ali sigurno ne i posljednji. Zanimljiva pri?a gdje se prošlost isprepli?e sa sadašnjim?nu, povijest s mitovima i legendama. Misti?no mjesto radnje, šaroliki i upe?atljivi likovi, ima tu i ku?anica, biskupa, druida, rimskih vojnika... ljubavi, straha, prijateljstva, mržnje, okrutnosti, vidljivih i nevidljivih sila, misti?nih mo?i, odlu?nosti, vjere... ma svega! 500 stranica mi je bilo premalo, mada ima dosta prostora za maštu i što bi bilo kad bi bilo. Moja velika preporuka!

Linda says

I enjoyed the characters in this book. The lack of doubt in things mystical stretches believability sometimes, but I guess if no one got scared of the ghosties, there wouldn't be much to the book ;)

Despite ancient crystals and a Glastonbury setting (who needs another mystical Glastonbury novel, right?), there was much unique and likeable about this book. Erskine tackles some tough issues, like faith, female clergy and alternate healthcare without overdoing it.

The main character is a strong, modern woman who has rebelled against her parents, and her father in particular, by becoming a priest. However, she is sensitive to psychic forces, something suited to a male priest, but seen as witchery in a female one. I won't spoil the plot by revealing the trouble it causes, but both the modern and historic aspects of the novel are well written and well researched.

A significant lack in this novel is how the pagan versus Christian thing isn't addressed to any great degree. While it comes up in a couple of character relationships, the goodies all get past it readily, and the baddie doesn't. So, while Erskine tackles other tough issues, this one is carefully and notably put in a sterile bubble. Except for this one issue, Time's Legacy is good story. It was hard to put down and thoroughly enjoyable.

This is the second Erskine book I've read. While I don't think she will go down in history as a great novelist, she's a heck of a story teller.
