



# As Always, Jack: A Wartime Love Story

*Emma Sweeney*

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## **As Always, Jack: A Wartime Love Story** Emma Sweeney

Near the end of WWII, a Navy pilot meets and falls in love with a beautiful California girl. They have a brief two weeks together before he is shipped off to the South Pacific. This is an engaging collection of his letters, compiled by the daughter he never got to meet. Full of poignant detail—a chronicle of the passions and fears of wartime—the book is the ultimate love story of America's “greatest generation.”

## **As Always, Jack: A Wartime Love Story Details**

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Author : Emma Sweeney

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# From Reader Review As Always, Jack: A Wartime Love Story for online ebook

## Laura says

A series of letters written by a navy pilot stationed overseas and sent to his sweetheart in California make up the bulk of this book. The letters are entertaining, sweet, and humorous. They make it easy to see why the girl fell in love with this guy during their correspondence. I love that it's a true story!

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## Serena says

*As Always, Jack* by Emma Sweeney is an epistolary memoir in that letters from Sweeney's father to her mother are shared with several sections of explanation from Sweeney, herself. After just 11 days together, Jack and her mother corresponded for a year and a half through letters as he went off to help stabilize the Pacific following WWII. He wrote 45 letters to her mother over seven months in an oddball courtship that showcase her father's wit and humor as well as his constant devotion.

In many ways the correspondence allowed the young lovers to get to know one another more intimately without the awkward face-to-face interactions. They learned about their religious beliefs and their thoughts on infidelity when she tells Jack of her boss' infidelity with one of the dental assistants. Emma found her father's letters to her mother after her mother's death in the back of a drawer, but she never knew him in person as he died before she was born.

Read the full review: <http://savvyverseandwit.com/2012/07/a...>

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## Caiti says

A beautiful memoir and letters. Emma Sweeney meets the father she never knew via his love letters to her mother written in 1946. A navy pilot, Jack Sweeney left for an undetermined length of time for duty in the Pacific two weeks after he met the woman he would marry. Ten years later, while stationed in the Caribbean, Jack's plane goes into the Atlantic while on a mission, there were no survivors. Emma is born several months later. Emma grew up knowing next to nothing about her father; her mother rarely spoke of him, believing it was best for the family to move on. Years later, after her mother's death, Emma finds her father's letters to her mother written in 1946. Through the letters, Emma meets the father she never knew, living up to her imagination of him. The letters are funny and sweet. Worth a read.

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## Ruth says

Four months after her father was lost in the waters south of Bermuda on what was supposed to have been a routine Navy flight, Emma Sweeney was born. By the time she was old enough to start wondering about the father she'd never known, Emma's mother had remarried. And with a reticence to revisit the past, perhaps characteristic of her mother's generation, information about her father was slow to come over the years, when

at all. But following her mother's passing, Emma discovered her final gift -- a ribbon-tied packet of fragile letters through which she finally met the man that tragic plane crash, decades earlier, had forever robbed her of the chance to know in person. Through those letters she finally met Jack.

As Always, Jack, collects the letters Lt. Jack Sweeney wrote Beebe Mathewson over the course of a six-month deployment to Asia in 1946. Though they'd known each other a scant eleven days before he left California for points east, that was enough for Jack, who made no secret of his determination to win Beebe's heart. Funny, heartfelt, and poignant, Jack's letters are not only an introduction to a young man head-over-heels in love with the woman he'd determined to marry, but a window into the hopes and dreams, concerns and fears faced by those living in the uncertainties of the waning days of World War II.

This slim volume is beautifully designed, interspersing period reproductions of air mail stamps and Jack's humorous illustrations throughout the text. The latter, especially, are powerful reminders of the intensely personal nature of these letters, and what a precious gift it is to be invited to share in the heady early days of this timeless love story. As I met Emma's father, I was powerfully struck by what a rare gift it is for a child to gain such insight into their parents, to see them before they became firmly ensconced in a parental role, when life and love were still very new prospects. As such this book is an intensely personal gift, one that cannot fail tug the heartstrings, threaten tears, and leave the reader awash with a renewed sense of gratefulness for the sacrifices of the military and their families through the ages in the name of honor, duty, and patriotism. This book is an incredible gift, one I'll not soon forget.

"Just remember me once in a while -- not too often, or it'll cramp your style, you know -- and as long as I'm remembered, I'm not really dead. I'll still be living in John, and Bill, and Al, and Dan, bless their hearts. That's what they mean by eternity, I think." (from Jack's final letter, written days before his death in 1956)

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### **Maureen says**

The best love stories are true. Great reveal near the end. And yes, the ending had me diving for the tissue box!

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### **Beth says**

This is a short read. The story is read -- a collection of letters from a serviceman at the end of WWII to his girlfriend who later becomes his wife. Edited by the daughter he never knew. He was killed in the 1950s in a plane accident while she was in utero. It was very moving, real and funny too.

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### **D.J. says**

Loved this book. I've rediscovered how much I love epistolary stories and reading handwritten correspondence. It makes me long for the days when we still communicated via handwritten letter. A beautiful love story told through a young man's letters. I won't give the ending away, but the last letter is especially poignant.

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### **Judith says**

This was an amazing read, both for the romantic aspect of the letters this man wrote to his girlfriend who became his wife and for the aspect of a daughter learning about her father through the letters he sent her mother before she was born. His letters are wonderfully witty and romantic and it definitely speaks to a time when there was romance and love and connections between people that were shared in letters. I just so absolutely enjoyed this.

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### **Krizia Anna says**

A really really good non-fiction love story. Emma Sweeney's father is a really good letter writer. It has a tragic end but reading letters made me feel happy and loved. If this guy was alive at this time, at whatever age, I'll probably fall in love with him. His witty, funny, faithful, sure and sweet. Its hard to look for that kind of man nowadays. If you want an easy and happy read then pick this book up. :)

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### **Vickie says**

I was expecting a wartime love story with letters mixed in. What I got was a brief back story with letter after letter. Without seeing the letters she sent Jack, there was no way to understand what on earth his letters were talking about. It was all quite confusing. I put it down about 1/4 through and won't be picking it up again.

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### **Judy says**

There is great depth in this collection of letters from a young US Navy pilot to the girl he had known for only ten days before leaving for duty in the Pacific after WW2. They reawaken an awareness of what one might call old fashioned values and abiding love. Given that there was no committal at the outset a wonderful story evolves in this correspondence. The outcome, and the future of the couple is related by Jack's daughter, completing a rather surprising story that lingers in one's mind. The book was displayed in the classics section of our little library - rightly so, I decided.

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### **Kathleen (Kat) Smith says**

Emma Sweeney has spent her life wondering what her real father must have been like. From time to time, she could gather moments in time from her mother of what their courtship and marriage must have been like because he died before she was born. Her mother didn't like to talk about Jack much but when she did, Emma could tell she had fond memories of him. Yet somehow it still seemed like something was missing, a part of him she couldn't know until when her mother died from complications of heart disease, did she come across 45 precious letters detailing their love during the course of a year and a half while he was at war.

It is through those letters that Emma learns of the man her father was, how he viewed the time he spent with her mother, that he lovingly refers to in his letters to her as Blonde! It takes the reader into a different time and place, when letters home from those serving in the war, show just how valuable communication was from those they longed to hear from. She learns how Jack spent his time serving as a Navy Pilot from Texas as he moved from base to base and what he did to pass his time away.

Emma shares those letters in the memoir, *As Always, Jack, a World War Two Love Story*. Here we get to see how just one simple photograph is enough to anchor a man who doesn't know when or if he'll make it home and how weeks can go by without hearing from home. Yet it's through their faithful letter writing that they got to know one another and how it fanned the flames of love and gave Emma a rare insight into the man she never knew but got to know through his love letters to her mom.

I received *As Always, Jack* by Emma Sweeney compliments of TLC Book Tours and Axios Publishers for my honest review. Being a huge WWII history lover, this book resounded within me as well as a hopeful romantic who gets an inside look at what one man wrote to his girlfriend to keep him going through a very long war. It's beautiful, warm, and often times funny at how he talks to Beebe, with one of my favorite lines in a letter closing being, "Is you is, or is you ain't my Beebe?" Now I know just how important communication from home is for those serving in the war and my heart aches for those who may not have anyone to write home to, and why letter writing campaigns to our serving men and women is so vital today. I rate this memoir a 5 out of 5 stars and thank Emma Sweeney for sharing the love of her father and mother with all who read these words.

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### **Anne Clermont says**

I don't normally read memoirs, or true stories, or collections, but this tore at my heart strings from the first letter. I had goosebumps as I read each page, cried, laughed. I could clearly see Jack, in a strange land, writing letters to the girl he'd just spent a short few days with, and realizes, within a few weeks of being apart, that he loves her. The torture of awaiting her letters, the lack of communication of war time (pre cell phones, text messages, Skype, email,) really brings home how different things were. And to know that in the end he won't live...

A great read! I highly recommend! Quick too, and great to take to the pool or beach or your back yard and enjoy in the warm summer months!

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### **Sara says**

Emma Sweeney never knew her father, Jack, who shared a whirlwind romance with her mother via letters while stationed in the Pacific just after WWII. Jack died during a Navy flight before Emma was born. So as an adult Emma sought to learn more about the father she had never met. Here she shares his love letters to her mother, written after they had briefly met and were then separated for many months before marrying.

Not a book to take the world by storm, but the letters are terribly sweet! And the whole story is touching. Very quick to pick up and read. Recommended.

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## **Pamela (Lavish Bookshelf) says**

Book summary: Emma Sweeney finally meets her father, 40 years later, through letters her father wrote as a World War II aviator tragically killed in action before he ever met his only daughter.

Great quote: "I thought possibly when I first left you, way back in January, that the reason I thought of nothing but you was that it was the most recent happening in my life; but the longer I'm away, the better perspective I seem to get and the more I realize that you're the most wonderful girl I've known." ~Page 70

This is one of the sweetest books I have read in a long time. It's so amazing that it's true!

Emma Sweeney's father was a World War II aviator who was tragically killed before she was born. It was 40 years later and after the death of her mother when Sweeney found a stack of letters that her father had written during her parent's whirlwind long-distance courtship.

Jack Sweeney was a young suitor, shipped off to Asia and the South Pacific just two weeks after meeting the love of his life, Beebe. Through a series of letters, naval assignments that changed frequently and disagreements about "Fibber McGee and Molly", Jack woos his girl with a genuine and heartfelt sincerity that is really touching. Beebe's letters were lost over time, but Jack's letters are enough to show the progression of this romance.

Jack and Beebe did eventually marry and have five children, but sadly Jack passed away before ever meeting the youngest child, author Emma Sweeney. Perhaps the most touching part of this book is the ending when Ms. Sweeney finally meets relatives from Jack's side of the family and, most importantly, receives a final letter that was written by her father shortly before his death. His bravery, maturity and honesty in that final letter is very poignant.

Without a doubt, the world needs more Jack Sweeneys and his crazy over-the-top love!

I received this book complimentary from TLC Book Tours in exchange for an honest review but the opinion in this review is all mine.

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## **Rachel M says**

This is the kind of book that you save to read on a snowy night when you are the only one at home, can light a fire in the fireplace, put on your fuzzy slippers and settle into a comfortable chair with hot chocolate, which is the main reason you read books, anyway.

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## **Kristin R says**

This is a beautiful and sweet biography about the author's father whom she never got to meet. Her mother and father met at the end of World War II and got married when he returned home. The author's mother was pregnant with her when her father's plane was lost at sea. She found a bunch of love letters written to her

mother from her father and this is how she finally got to know her father.

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### **Lisa says**

I read this book in less than 3 hours so it is definitely a fast read. In the book, the author, Emma Sweeney, shares the letters that her father wrote to her mother in the months following the end of WWII. The Sweeney's mother was pregnant with her when her father died in flight so the letters helped her understand who her father was and shed light on the early days of her parents courtship.

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### **Chris says**

I read this in about an hour. I'm sure the author wished more than I do for the corresponding letters her mother wrote. Overall a sweet book. I wish there were more.

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### **Marsha Laney says**

I read this in a couple hours tonight. Phenomenal book told by letters from the author's late father. A navy pilot who eventually was lost in the Bermuda Triangle, the letters he wrote the woman who would later become his bride are a glimpse into the world of WWII America... They knew each other a mere two weeks but through letters learned about each and fell in love...A ten year marriage and five children were the result.., the author often wondered if her father knew she even existed since her mother was pregnant with her when her fathers plane was lost...read the book to find out...every woman should have a Jack in her life....

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