

## Interview for “A Pitch in Time” with Author Robert A. Lytle

I decided to go straight to the source to ask questions about this book. I asked Robert Lytle the author of the book some questions regarding this book and how it is to be an author.

1. Describe the feeling you had when you wrote the last word of this book.
  - “I wrote the last word, the last paragraph, the last page so many times with each of the over 50 revisions (and each time I was sure it was the last time) this is hard to describe my feeling. I suppose “elated” would be the best term, although “relief” might be right up there.
2. Where did you get the idea for the story line?
  - I had just finished “Three Rivers Crossing” which was my first time-travel story when I heard about the Rochester Granger and vintage baseball. As a former high school baseball player I decided to try out. I made the team and began to learn all the old rules and customs of the game’s early years—and that its popularity was closely related to the Civil War. The notion of taking a modern little league ball player into the past to become part of a Northern state’s social fabric intrigued me. It led to research into several areas such as “early baseball”, “Civil War”, “The Underground Railroad”, Michigan history”, “early pharmacy practice”, and much more.
3. Where do you get your subjects of the different plots in your book?
  - My subjects in this as well as all my stories come from, first, people I know for the good guys, and then, for the villains, from a fertile imagination.
4. How many times did you have to edit the book and long did it take you to write the book?
  - I quit counting complete revisions at fifty. Between revisions I found myself learning more about period activities and thus entering new materials, thus changing how that might impact an earlier or later scene in the story and forcing another revision. It took about 5 years before I felt it was ready. Then came the whole publishing process.

5. What are your favorite parts of the book? My favorite part was when Charlie was telling the story to Mac.
  - I really like the scene where Mac stood up to the town bully at the water tower. I also like the fire chapter when Mac helped the black family. I learned a lot about the Civil War during Charlie's involvement, injury and imprisonment. Come to think of it, I liked the opening "tryout" chapter, the last "future" chapters --- and everything in between.
  
6. How do you feel about the work you did on your book now?
  - I feel very comfortable that I made this the very best I could make it. But then I feel the same about each of my books. I am glad I did not rush with the revisions in order to have it done.
  
7. What was your reaction when your first book was published?
  - When I got the phone call at my drugstore that "Mackinac Passage: A Summer Adventure" was accepted by Thunder Bay Press... this was after three years of writing, researching, revising the story and then sending out hundreds of proposals to every publishing company in the county, waiting at the mailbox for their responses (rejections all of course\_ - well, I can tell you, it was very hard to concentrate on my pharmacy duties for the rest of the day.
  
8. Would you make any changes to the story of this book now?
  - None. The 50+ revisions took care of that. I don't often read my published stories, but I did read "Pitch in Time" recently and was pleasantly surprised that I found no typos or other changes.
  
9. How did you find your characters in the book?
  - Charlie Norton was, at best a tertiary character. Mac Dugan was the main character and Sally was second. All the other tool their roles to fill in to make points about baseball, Michigan history, the Civil War, etc....