

Vol 9 - December 2025
Cozy Scribe Newsletter

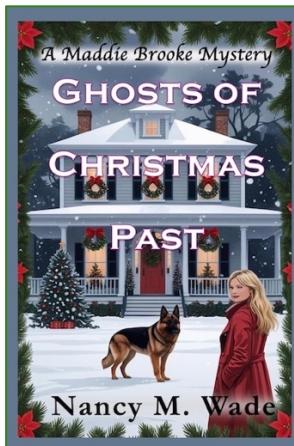


Happy Holidays Dear Cozy Readers:

It's that time of the year again when Hallmark saturates the air waves with one Christmas movie after another. Okay ... I admit I have my favorites. It's hard to believe Hallmark can come up with a different plot or storyline each time. You would think that anything and everything has already been done. What can the Hallmark characters possibly do to make the Christmas season interesting, romantic, spiritual, or satisfying?

Well, with Hallmark stories in mind, I turned to my own cozy mystery series, Maddie Brooke, and thought what would she do if she had a house full of guests, a blizzard, and a murder with no one able to leave the inn? So I put my thinking cap on and came up with "**Ghosts Of Christmas Past**" and decided to introduce another ghost into the mix that Grannie might have to battle. Here's the synopsis. You can let me know what you think. Personally ... I was rather pleased with this book and how it turned out. But you be the judge.

Ghosts of Christmas Past



Snowed in for Christmas... with a ghost from the past.

Christmas in Clarkstown means twinkling lights, steaming mugs of cider, and the warmth of family and friends gathered at the historic Magnolia Blossom Inn. Maddie Brooke had planned the perfect holiday—complete with heirloom ornaments, a tree trimming party, and cookies. Friends Lionel and Lily join Maddie along with handsome detectives Allen Crawford and Lucas Wampler for an intimate Christmas Eve dinner. Maddie's plans for a cozy Christmas are shattered when a blizzard traps her and her friends plus a handful of mysterious guests at the Inn.

Maddie welcomes stranded travelers Evan and Tara McConnell enroute to family in Pennsylvania when Tara's advanced pregnancy demands a rest from their arduous journey. Little did they know their overnight stay would turn into something much more.

Claire Jennings arrives looking for the mother who abandoned her as a baby, armed only with a name from long ago. What Maddie doesn't know is that Claire's search will stir up ghosts—both the kind that haunt the living and the kind who don't stay politely in the past.

The snow storm is the least of their worries when a local tycoon is found dead on the property and a vengeful 19th-century ghost is unleashed.

With her ghostly grandmother warning of a second, darker spirit stalking the inn, and tensions rising among the snowbound guests, Maddie must untangle an ancient mystery before someone else ends up dead.

Snow is piling high, the roads are closed, and the most dangerous secret in Clarkstown's history is about to be unwrapped.

Find **Ghosts of Christmas Past** on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Smashwords, Apple Books and Kobo in paperback, Ebook, and Audio exclusively on Audible. See all of the Maddie Brooke mysteries on my web site: <https://nancymwadeauthor.com>. Follow me on Substack for a chance to win a free Ebook!

The CSX Santa Train will return for its 83rd run on Saturday, Nov. 22.



Santa Train

When we moved to TN eight years ago, I learned about a special train that travels 110 miles from Shelby, Kentucky, on into SW Virginia, and arrives in Kingsport, TN all within one day. That train is called the Santa Train. It travels the rural tracks throughout the Appalachian hills with Santa on board to greet the children that line the tracks hoping to glimpse the jolly old elf. The Santa Train, an annual holiday tradition, has been going on for 83 years and is known for delivering more than 15 tons of toys, gifts and winter accessories to families. Just seeing that huge train pull into the station and toot its horn gives me a warm feeling.

Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holiday season.

Recipe of the month:

Make this easy, but delicious, cheese ball recipe ahead of time to enjoy later with your guests. The recipe follows.

TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS CHEESE BALL



Photo by Jennifer Baker.

This is one of those recipes that's best to make in advance. The trick to keeping your cheese ball fresh in the fridge for up to 1 week is to wrap it well. Start with a layer of plastic wrap, then wrap in aluminum foil to preserve both the shape and flavor. Remove the cheese from the wrapping, roll in your crunchy bits, then let sit at least 20 minutes at room temperature before serving.

Ingredients

- 1 ½ (8 ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 small Vidalia or other sweet onion, minced
- 1 (2.5 ounce) package thinly sliced smoked beef, chopped
- 1 (2.25 ounce) can pimento-stuffed green olives, chopped
- 2 dashes Worcestershire sauce, or to taste
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

Directions

1. Combine cream cheese, onion, beef, olives, and Worcestershire sauce in a bowl until evenly blended. Form mixture into a semi-ball shape in the bowl. Cover bowl with plastic wrap; refrigerate until firm, at least 2 hours.
2. Place a large sheet of waxed paper on a flat surface. Sprinkle with chopped walnuts. Roll cheese ball in walnuts until completely covered; transfer to a serving plate or rewrap with waxed paper and refrigerate until ready to serve.