Lucinda longs for intimacy, her natural desire to be touched often commanding her attention. Instead of fulfilling her desires, she remains fearful of love, and in turn, fearful of happiness in this world.

Given that she has lived most of her young adult life in the shadow of a dark secret, the prospect of happiness remains a distant hope.

Suddenly, on July 4th, 1840, a chance encounter with an intriguing gentleman begins to reshape her world, and on the evening of the Sturgeon Moon, after a night of dance, Lucinda is lifted from the darkness, her life changed evermore.

An avid enthusiast of living history, Art Martin has always been intrigued with roots: roots of religion, roots of family, and roots of life in America during the early 1800’s. It was with this intrigue of roots that he set out to write his first novel, “Summer of 1840,” a historical fiction based on a simple letter entitled “Happiness,” written by Lucinda Bixby on November 4th, 1840. He discovered the letter in a small leather chest, uncovered while he was restoring Lucinda’s house in Millbury, MA, the house that she grew up in. Art now lives with his wife Vicki in the neighboring town of Sutton, MA, in a house built by Amos Waters in 1816, meticulously restored by them over the past five years.

Art has creatively weaved the history of these houses, and the towns where they are located, into his book. Art and Vicki have volunteered at Old Sturbridge Village for more than ten years where they presently interpret Early American Dance.