Cynthia Neale is a native of the Finger Lakes region of New York and now resides in New Hampshire. She enjoys Irish set dancing, traveling, reading, painting, baking fanciful desserts, hiking, kayaking, creating events that include food and dance, and dreaming about possibilities.

Cynthia writes novels, cookbooks, screenplays, short stories, essays, plays, and conducts living history productions; she holds a B.A. in Writing and Literature from Vermont College.

Contact Cynthia for Book Talks, Teas & Talks, and Living History Presentations.

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\- Norah
\- The Irish Milliner
\- The Irish Dresser
\- Hope in New York City
\- Pavlova in a Hat Box
\- Catharine
The Irish Dresser
A Story of Hope during The Great Hunger (An Gorta Mor 1845-1850)

When thirteen-year-old Norah McCabe crawls into the old dresser that sits next to the hearth holding a few pieces of her mother’s china, she dreams of luscious cakes and fairies as hunger pains grip her. It is in the dresser that Norah finds hope when her father declares they must leave their beloved Ireland for America. Hidden in the magical dresser aboard the ship traveling to a new land, Norah lives an adventure that transforms her life and turns hope into reality.

Hope in New York City
The Continuing Story of The Irish Dresser

This sequel continues the saga of Norah McCabe and her family now dwelling in New York City where they encounter poverty and racism as Irish Catholics and immigrants. Injustice and violence are a matter of course in this mysterious and alluring city filled with strange languages. Desperately homesick, Norah vows to save money and return to her homeland of Ireland.

Norah
The Making of an Irish-American Woman in 19th-Century New York

As Norah McCabe tries to free herself from the limitations of poverty, gender, and class, she experiences corruption, exploitation, love, and enchantment in a city that is forever mythic and magical.

The Irish Milliner

The Civil War is brewing and Norah McCabe is now a widow and a milliner with a young daughter. Struggling to survive in tumultuous times, Norah meets Abraham Lincoln, befriends the extraordinary African-American woman, Elizabeth Jennings, and assists in the Underground Railroad. She falls headlong in love with Edward M. Knox, but he is lace curtain Irish and she is shanty Irish. Can their love survive the war and class differences? A story of survival, intrigue, romance, and exploring the conflict of Irish immigrants thrust into a war that threatened to destroy a nation.

Catharine
Queen of the Tumbling Waters

Catharine is a compelling and powerful true story that spans the French and Indian War and the American Revolution. Today, as American exceptionalism prevails against the recognition of indigenous peoples, Catharine’s relevant and fact-based story enlightens and makes visible the unwritten truths of early American history.

Pavlova in a Hat Box, Sweet Memories and Desserts

A cookbook filled with sumptuous dessert recipes redolent of the comfort of old-fashioned fare, essays wrested from a country childhood and a writing life, and cheerful artwork throughout. CD of piano improvisations is available as an accompaniment.

"Cynthia Neale’s Pavlova in a Hat Box is a love letter disguised as a cookbook! Filled with heart-warming memories of her mother and her delicious confections, Ms. Neale’s book invites readers into her mother’s kitchen, a place always filled with warmth and love. Beautiful full color illustrations and images of old recipe cards punctuate the book and remind us that “recipes are like love notes that warm the heart of the baker”

~ Margaret M. Johnson, Irish cookbook author

Cynthia Neale is available for events in schools, libraries, and other venues. Her presentations inspire adults and children, and includes period music, dance, and dramatic storytelling.

“Cynthia G. Neale is a master at characterization. I felt as if I knew Norah personally. I cheered for her as she came to respect her heritage. If I could give this book higher than 5 stars I would. This is an excellent read that you won’t want to miss.”
~ Readers’ Favorite, Book Reviews and Award Contest