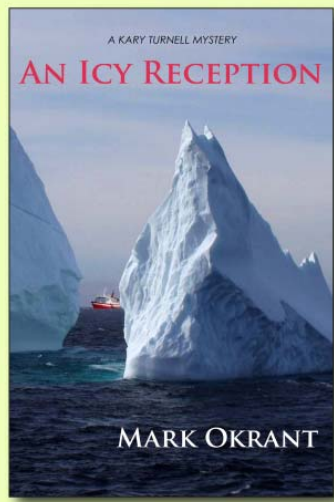




**TTRA Connects**  
*An official publication of the  
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Mark Okrant is well-known as a professor at Plymouth State University in New Hampshire. Mark has been active in the tourism research community since the mid-1970s and served as the TTRA President from 2000 – 2001. This TTRA member, however, has an alter ego: crime-solver Kary Turnell, the protagonist of a series of novels created by Mark. The third novel in the series, *An Icy Reception* was recently released.

When asked about the inspiration for his series of novels, Mark had the following to say:

*My mysteries were born out of a budget crunch at Plymouth State University that forced me to cut back on field trips in my tourism planning and development class. I needed to find a way to immerse my students in a 'real' community, one with prospects and problems similar*

*to those faced by every central place. My first book, Judson's Island, was set in a fictional community, based upon my experiences in six New England coastal communities. My Kary Turnell Mystery series is based upon encounters as a researcher and visitor.*

Mark had this to add about the research and life experiences used while developing the ideas for his novels:

*These books are not executed lightly. My first, A Last Resort, took 9 years to complete; the latest, An Icy Reception, required more than 40 years of research and travel. Some subject properties are former clients; others are places I have intimate knowledge about. TTRA members who are familiar with New England will recognize the resort settings in the White Mountains. The resorts in the first two books, The Balsams and The Mount Washington, have historic significance. The MS Explorer, the setting for An Icy Reception, made international news in November of 2007, when it sank after hitting an iceberg near Antarctica. I had sailed on the Explorer (to the Arctic) the previous year. I have written the Kary Turnell Mystery series to tell the story of tourism's impact on local areas. One cannot help but gain a better understanding of how segments of the tourism industry operate, all the while feeling that you are actually in the setting, and being entertained by a good mystery.*

Congratulations to Mark for all of his creative accomplishments! *An Icy Reception* is available through local bookstores and Amazon.com. For more information go to [www.beechriverbooks.com](http://www.beechriverbooks.com) and be sure to visit Mark's web site: [www.markokrant.com](http://www.markokrant.com).