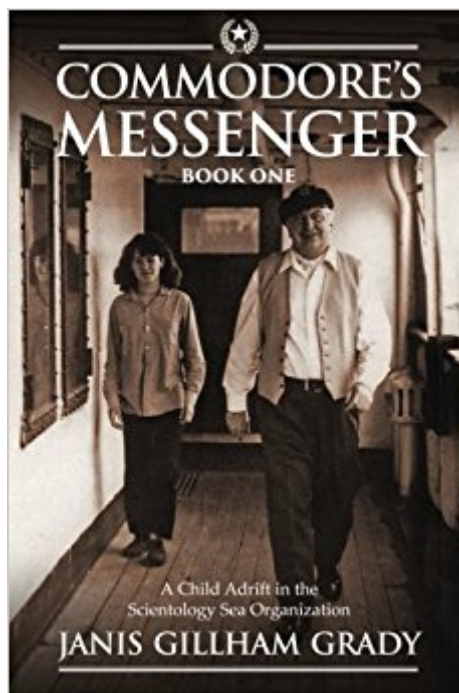




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Commodore's Messenger: A Child Adrift In The Scientology Sea Organization (Volume 1)



Synopsis

At age 12 Janis was thrust into a role that no one, not even L. Ron Hubbard himself, could have predicted the outcome, for within not too many years Janis and her fellow Commodore's Messengers, as they were called, would be running the whole of International Scientology. But that is the story of a later book. Commodore's Messenger begins by taking the reader into the life of the first family of Scientology in Australia, Yvonne and Peter Gillham and their three children, Peter Jr., Terri and Janis. Life for the Gillhams is not without its challenges in Australia, but nothing compared to what happens when the family moves to England after dealing with the banning of Scientology in Victoria. Things spiral out of control as Hubbard leaves England and takes to the sea, to continue his research into higher spiritual states for mankind, as he puts it, or to escape the long arm of the law as many critics contend. Yvonne and her children soon find themselves enmeshed in Hubbard's inner circle, Yvonne with Hubbard himself as one of his trusted aides, and the children with Hubbard's own family. When Yvonne joins the newly established Sea Organization, to support Hubbard in his seafaring adventures, her children find themselves aboard what would become the flagship of Hubbard's burgeoning navy. Having children underfoot does not fit well with the serious nature of Hubbard's plans to expand Scientology's worldwide impact. So, he determines to make these children useful. He begins using them to send messages to various parts of the organization aboard the Apollo, hence the name Commodore's Messenger. With this as a background, know that the story Janis has written comes from the earliest days and the epicenter of Scientology's Sea Organization. As a messenger, Janis was with Hubbard a minimum of 6 hours a day and often times much longer. She was privy to all his moods from sunny to thundering; as a messenger, she was intimately familiar with everything happening on board the ship as well as throughout the Scientology network. But Janis was also her own person and as a teenager, she lived a life that few of her peers could ever hope to have lived. I found myself literally agog at some of the early experiences that Sea Org members somehow survived in the organization's early years. Hubbard's cavalier regard for the lives of others was astonishing, as Janis relates some of the storms encountered by Sea Org vessels ill-equipped to be piloted by those with so little seamanship training. It is a wonder no one was killed. This is the first of three books. Dan Koon

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Customer Reviews

Janis was born in Australia to Scientology "royalty," the third child of Peter Gillham, the founder of Natural Calm, and Yvonne Gillham-Jentzsch, the founder of the Church of Scientology Celebrity Centre. Her stepfather is Heber Jentzsch, known for many years as the President of the Church of Scientology International, and its primary spokesman. At age 11, Janis, along with her brother Peter Jr. and her sister Terri, traveled to the Mediterranean to join Scientology's inner core, the Sea Organization. Aboard the Scientology ship Apollo, she worked for eight years as one of the personal messengers of Scientology's controversial founder, L. Ron Hubbard. She had a front-row seat as Hubbard expanded his new religion into a worldwide empire. After 22 years working as Hubbard's direct representative as a member of the elite Commodore's Messenger Organization, Janis became disillusioned with the direction Scientology was taking under its brash new leadership and escaped from Scientology's desert headquarters with her husband of eleven years, Paul Grady. They were done with Scientology, but Scientology was not done with them, covertly sending private investigators to stalk and harass them for years.

Janis has an exceptional ability to tell her story through the eyes of the child she was at that time. I found her book most troubling yet insightful as well. It was a time when there were many of us that thought we were "good" people doing the right thing to do our part to "save humanity, even if it meant sacrificing often ourselves personally and our families. Reading Janis's book and its impact on the children that were involved who did not sign up for this cause was heart wrenching. I'm only grateful for many of us that our consciousness

today has expanded to the point where including us, the children and our families are equally as important. I applaud Janis's courage for writing this book and look forward to purchasing and reading her next two books. I would highly recommend it to anyone who has ever been in Scientology or the Sea Org.

Did you ever wonder what life was like working directly with L. Ron Hubbard? A man who *stated* that he has found the answers to the universe and then created his so called step by step programs, at a hefty price, to reach nirvana this life time. Did he practice what he preached? How did he get so many bright and intelligent people to buy into Scientology? Some even abandoned their children believing in his cause. And what happened to these children? Janis is one of those children who became his personal messenger aboard the Apollo. She was with him day, noon and night for many years. Years without her parent guidance and love. How did she survive to tell her story?

This is an extraordinary book, rich in detail and clear-eyed observation; one that adds immeasurable knowledge to the historical record of Hubbard and Scientology during a unique period where there were very few reliable witnesses, and certainly none closer to Hubbard than the author herself. Scientology Organizations are notoriously unreliable sources of information as a result of their...excessive embellishment and frequent falsification of the subject and its history, so it falls upon first-hand witnesses like Janis Gillham-Grady to reliably inform posterity; and in this she succeeds admirably! I found it to be powerful, yet nuanced and understated in its indictment of the many failings of Scientology and its Founder, but balanced with a compassionate understanding of the genuine idealism and youthful innocence that motivated the early 'true believers' who fell under the thrall of Hubbard to "salvage the planet." As an ex-Scientologist myself whose involvement began in 1968, this book resonated strongly as unflinchingly honest and compassionate storytelling.

If you are a fan of the Leah Remini show or if you have family or friends who were involved with Scientology or are interested in the history of Scientology, my good friend Janis Gillham Grady has written a new book and it is available on both as an e-book as well as a paperback. I have known Janis for almost 40 years. There is no one I know who is more honest and loyal and she has a hell of a memory for names and details! Raised in Scientology since she was a small child, she worked with L. Ron Hubbard daily beginning when she was 11 years old thru her teenage years. After his death, there were changes in Scientology and she decided to leave with her husband to start a

family. Without much of a formal education and despite harassment and dirty tricks from the leftover leadership of Scientology, she became a successful and respected business woman in the Las Vegas mortgage industry and the proud mother of 2 children. This book tells her story of growing up in Scientology, right next to the Founder - L. Ron Hubbard. Almost no one was closer to him during those years. The book is full of fabulous photos of her and others on the Flag Ship Apollo as she tells her story. There also are great maps and diagrams which are great to refer to while reading the book. She also took the time to write a simple glossary of Scientology words and terms to make it easier to understand what is going on. Scientology has it's own "foreign language" and this glossary is very helpful. I highly recommend this book to all my family and friends!

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