



## **Book Review: Life's A Beach**

By Dr. Linda Hancock

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

### **Published**

March 21st, 2011

Life's a Beach is one of six books written by Claire Cook. It is also a reminder to me of why this author is quickly rising to the top of my favourite author list.

The main character, Ginger Walsh, finds herself in her forties living in a small apartment above the garage owned by her parents. She is very hard on herself as she has not been as successful as her sister, Gerri, who married a childhood sweetheart, has a large house and career as well as three beautiful children.

Ginger has moved from one job to another without feeling satisfied. She is now trying to build a business making homemade jewellery but, because it is not established, charges her sister for babysitting the children at times in order to pay her bills.

When it comes to romance, Ginger, has had a number of experiences that did not result in a happy partnership. Her sister criticizes the largely uncommitted relationship she has with Noah, who is a glassblower artisan, and deep down, Ginger knows that she really wants more than he has been willing to give her.

The only really strong relationship she has is with her cat who she calls "boyfriend".

Living so close to her parents offers a number of challenges for Ginger. Her mother tends to show up without notice, bringing members of her Red Hat group into Ginger's living quarters. It is not just their physical presence but also their advice for Ginger that seem to be without boundaries.

One of the main themes of this fictional story begins in the first chapter when Ginger becomes aware that her mother is planning to sell the house. Even though her father does not agree with this idea, Ginger is forced to consider her options and they don't look good. In fact, there is really nothing that is working well for Ginger except her great sense of humour.

Life's a Beach, a 273 page fictional story written in 2007, is packed full of interesting plot twists as the characters try to understand and deal with each other's idiosyncracies. But the story is much more than learning about a handful of characters who are related to each other. It is about a woman who is facing middle age and her journey that involves not only finding a satisfying career but also creating a satisfying life.

There were so many times when I laughed out loud and marvelled at the way this author described everyday activities in an extremely insightful manner. Ms. Cook draws out the personality traits of all members in this three generation family in such a realistic manner that I believe each of the readers will be able to totally connect with them and perhaps even see resemblances to members of their own families.

I loved this book and think you will too! It is a fun and interesting read.