

THE TIME BRIDGE TRAVELERS

BOOK 1

by Linda Ayers

illustrated by Ryan Ayers

 *Blue Thistle Press*

To Bill, who gave me the courage to fly
To Herb, who taught me to use my wings
And to Mary, who let me leave the nest

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Published by Blue Thistle Press; Van, Texas.

First Edition

Library of Congress Control Number: 2004096305

Ayers, Linda. The time bridge travelers/ Linda Ayers; illustrated by Ryan Ayers. 56 p. 14 cm.

SUMMARY: Three siblings find an unusual spinning wheel in their mother's antique shop. It takes two of the children on a journey back to colonial America, where they are mistaken for a blacksmith's apprentices. ISBN 0-9760505-0-1 (pbk.)

[1. Time travel – Fiction. 2. United States - History - Colonial period, ca. 1600-1775 - Fiction.]

Printed in the United States of America.

Additional copies available from
Blue Thistle Press
P.O. Box 652
Van, Texas 75790-0652

www.lindaayers.com

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CHAPTER 1

THE TREASURE CHEST

“Ready or not, here we come! You look over there, Toby.”

Clint pointed toward the back of the shop.

“I’m going to look for Mandy in the front room,” he said.

The children had helped their mother name her antique shop. They called it The Treasure Chest, because it was full of so many wonderful things.

It was the perfect place for a game of hide-and-seek, and since the children lived in an apartment above the shop, they had lots of time to play there.

Clint wove his way through the maze of furniture, old toys, and picture frames. When he came to the door separating the two rooms he looked back.

Just as he thought, his younger brother had forgotten all about playing hide-and-seek. Instead, he was examining something near the door.

“Hey! Look at this. I wonder what kind of toy it is,” he said.

“Come on, Toby! Forget about that. We’re supposed to be looking for Mandy, remember?” Even as he spoke though, Clint walked back to where his brother stood.

There sat a big wooden wheel with lots of tiny spokes. It looked a little like a wagon wheel. Only this wheel was on a stand with legs. And it had a pedal.

“That’s not a toy. It’s a spinning wheel. I saw one in a library book once,” Clint said. “The pedal is called a treadle. Before there was electricity, people used treadles to make machines work.”

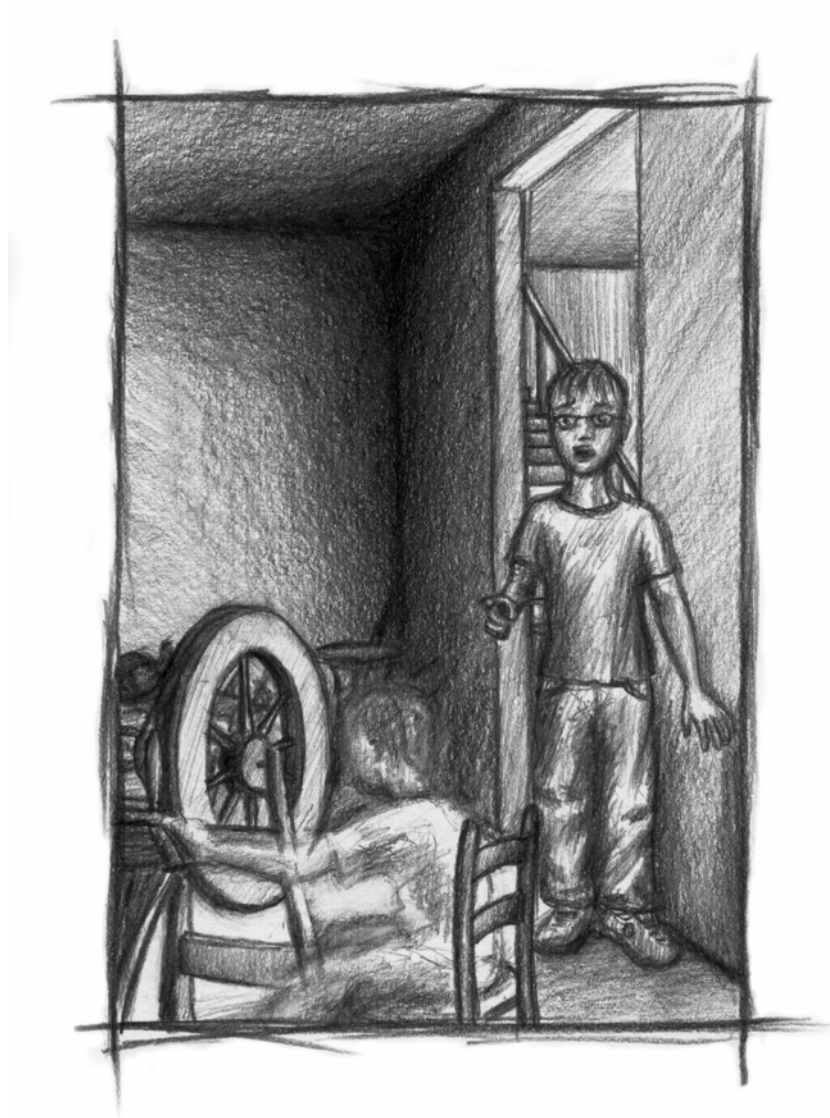
Toby mashed his foot down on the treadle and used his hand to give the wheel a spin.

“Whirrr...”

The wheel turned slowly to the left.

“Is this how it works?”

Toby looked up to see Clint pointing at him and backing toward the door. Then Clint did something that really surprised Toby. He screamed.



CHAPTER 2

THE HUMAN PING-PONG BALL

When Mandy heard the scream she came running from the other room. She was in such a hurry she knocked over a wooden chair. “Umph!” she groaned.

She limped into the room, her forehead creased with worry. Then she saw the boys standing still and silent, pale as a new moon.

“What’s wrong?” she asked. “You look like you’ve just seen a ghost.”

“Not exactly,” said Clint.

“But maybe,” said Toby. “I saw *someone*, anyway. She was wearing a long, old-fashioned dress.”

“Toby, there was no one here except us!” said Clint.

“I saw a girl!” Toby insisted. “And that’s not all. I saw bright colors and a sparkly path, too.”

“Sure,” said Mandy. She rolled her eyes and turned impatiently to Clint. “Why don’t *you* tell me what happened?”

“Well, *something* strange happened. I didn’t see what Toby saw, but I heard a funny sound. Like someone sucking the last bit of milk out of a straw. Then, Toby got sort of hazy around the edges.”

“Oh, really,” said Mandy.

“Really!” insisted Clint. “The next thing I knew he popped in and out of the room like a speeding ping-pong ball.”

“Oh, you’re not making any more sense than Toby!”

Mandy frowned. Clint should be able to explain things more clearly. After all, he was eight years old, and Toby was only six.

She looked down at the floor in disgust. “Hey, I don’t remember seeing this before.”

She rested her hand on the spinning wheel. “Where did it come from?”

“I don’t know,” said Clint. “It wasn’t here yesterday. I guess it came in a morning delivery.”

“Mom will want this in the front window of the shop, where people will see it and buy it,” said Mandy.

She grabbed hold of the spinning wheel and started to pick it up. Before she could stop him though, Toby pumped the treadle up and down with his foot.

“Whirr. . .”

The wheel spun slowly to the left. Then there was another sound. One Clint had heard before.

“Schlupp, pop!”

“Not again!” yelled Clint. He was all alone in the room. Mandy and Toby had both disappeared. And so had the spinning wheel.