If you've ever

met Graham Salisbury, you know he carries light wherever he goes. A bestselling author, gifted musician, and celebrated painter, Graham is one of those rare individuals who has lived multiple creative lives. Warm, kind, and endlessly generous, he radiates an energy that feels a lot like sunshine—steady, life-giving, and unmistakable.

HAWAIIAN ROOTS

To some, Graham is known simply as 'Sandy'—a nickname his mother gave him as a baby, bundling him off to the beach as soon as he could crawl. That early exposure to saltwater, sand, and the rhythm of the Hawaiian surf became a steady foundation for his life.

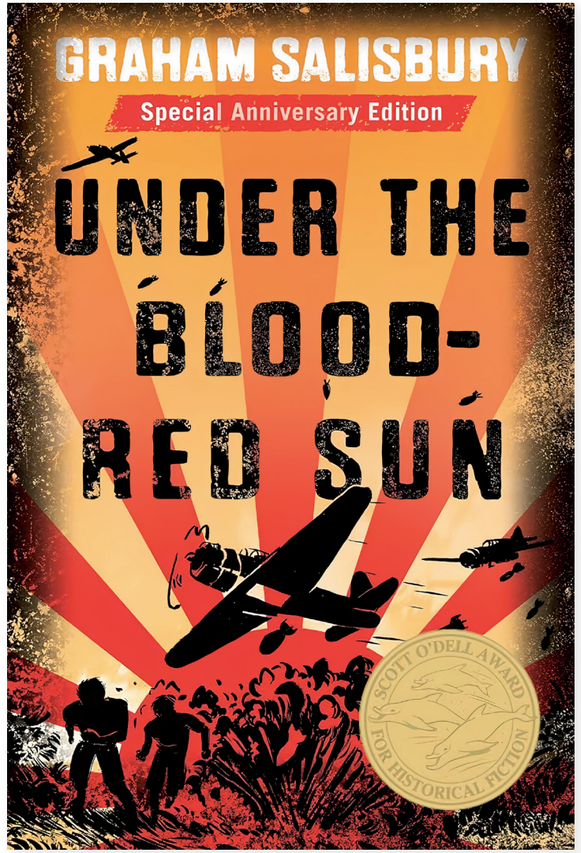
Graham is a product of the Hawaiian Islands, with deep family roots reaching back to 1820. His grandfather, William Twigg-Smith, was a noted oil painter in Hawai'i and New Zealand, and creativity clearly flows through the family line.

A LIFE IN THE ARTS

Art, in fact, has been the thread connecting Graham's many careers. After graduating magna cum laude from California State University, Northridge, with a degree in education, he earned a master's degree in writing from Vermont College of Fine Arts. Along the way, he composed and performed music with The Millennium, a band that still enjoys cult-favorite status among 1960s rock fans.

But Graham made his most significant mark in writing. His novel Under the Blood-Red Sun became a national bestseller and multiple award-winning classic for young readers. Over the years, he's published 20 books, weaving stories that have touched generations.

And then, another passion emerged. Inspired by his grandfather and the grandeur of the western landscapes, Graham fell in love with painting. Today, his representational landscapes—sweeping skies, ranch lands, and rugged shorelines—speak to the miracle of God's art.



"I sometimes think I should have been a cowboy," he admits with a smile. "I love the ethics of honor, hard work, and grit, and I love the astounding beauty of the western landscape. My only creative intention is to paint personal interpretations of the natural beauty that surrounds us. I have no other agenda."

Today, Graham's work can be found in collections across Hawai'i, Bhutan, and multiple states in the continental U.S. Beyond his art and writing, he joyfully gives back to the community. He is a former volunteer and continuous supporter of the Community Transitional School for homeless youth, a patron of the Oregon Community Foundation, and co-owner of Project 360, Lake Oswego's premier personal training gym.



LAKE OSWEGO LIFE

Graham has lived in Lake Oswego since the mid-nineties, settling shortly after the historic Willamette Valley flood in 1996, which made lakeside property both a gamble and, as it turned out, an opportunity. "One of the best investments I've ever made," he says, reflecting on how much he loves living on the lake. While commercial real estate brought him to Oregon, it's his deep love for the Pacific Northwest that keeps him here.

Ask him what makes Lake Oswego special, and he doesn't hesitate: "Its cleanliness, safety, and dedication to art. We have exceptional police and fire departments, and a community that cares about its personality and character."

Graham remembers when Millennium Park was nothing more than a mound of weeds and dirt. Today, he takes pride in watching it serve as a lively gathering space—a transformation that, in many ways, reflects the spirit of Lake Oswego itself.

FAMILY AND LOVE

Behind Graham's accomplishments stands a family he's enormously proud of. His adult children have grown into remarkable individuals—a police detective, a deputy county sheriff, a Navy lieutenant, a PhD psychologist, a children's librarian, a commercial property business owner, a city parking specialist, and an electric company administrator. "Phew!" he says with a grin. "They're all stellar individuals. Lucky me!"

Then there's his partner, the love of his life, whom he met through their kids' high school sports. Both had experienced marriages that didn't last, but together they found what had been missing—kindness, unconditional love, and mutual respect. "These attributes work wonders," he says. After nearly ten years together, he still marvels at his good fortune.

INSPIRATION EVERYWHERE

For Graham, inspiration often comes on the road. He loves drives through the countryside or to the coast, where wide-open skies and golden-hour light fuel his creativity. His partner happily chauffeurs him, patiently stopping while he snaps photos he later uses as reference for his paintings.

Life on the lake adds another layer of joy—mornings of glassy water, singing birds, and the rumble of the train rattling dishes as it passes by. "I love that train!" he says. "And I love the lake. Sharing it with others feels like a gift worth giving."

ADDING TO THE GOOD

Through it all, Graham lives by two simple creeds. The first was given to him by Alex Haley, author of Roots, who once told him: "Add to the good in the world, because we surely need it." The second hangs in his studio: "You did not wake up today to be mediocre."

Graham's art, words, and presence all add immeasurable good to the world. And there's nothing mediocre about that.