

## Join the local reading movement...

By Jane Whiting

In a similar move to eating local foods and buying goods from within a certain area, why not indulge your love of reading with a gift-giving theme of supporting authors from the capital region. What a great idea!

So what's new on the Ottawa book scene for 2009? Well, two of *Forever Young's* own writers have been very prolific once again. FY's Book Report columnist Ruth Latta, who is the author of twelve previous works, has published *Spelling Bee*, and Randy Ray's latest publication of fascinating facts is *The Big Book of Canadian Trivia*, co-authored with Mark Kearney.

In *Spelling Bee*, Latta explores such thought-provoking questions as whether we can "recapture the past" and "is life after sixty worthwhile?" The protagonist Colleen Hazelwood is a bored, married woman in her sixties who yearns to relive her fun experiences of forty years ago by contacting a glamorous school-teaching colleague from the past. Described by Latta as a woman's novel in the Jane Austen sense, she hopes that the book will make her readers both chuckle and turn their eyes misty.

For readers who love trivia and like to hear stories about important Canadian artifacts and history – including what became of Canada's World War II spy camp – *The Big Book of Canadian Trivia* is a must buy. Authors Randy Ray and Mark Kearney have put together a collection of the best Canadiana from their previous eight books, plus a considerable amount of new material, all in one new big book.

Other local authors who have attracted attention recently, and would be of interest to FY readers, include Agnes Bright. In *The Beginner's Book of Grieving*, Bright set out to write a self-help book for widows after the death of her spouse. As a Hungarian refugee to Canada after World War II, she went on to become one of Canada's first female engineers, as well as an award-winning writer and author of three books. She is currently working on an updated version of *Grieving* and in *The House of the Yellow Star*, she wrote a fictionalized account of her family's experience during the haunted Hitler years.

Ottawa Independent Writers is a group of about 170 novice and seasoned scribes who support and promote the craft and business of writing. Books by OIW members are listed on the website and include a wide variety of topics with

everything from historical fiction with a local setting to accounts of adventurous travel through the Canadian North and southern Alaska. For more details visit [www.oiw.ca](http://www.oiw.ca). Also check out [www.canauthors-ottawa.org](http://www.canauthors-ottawa.org).

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