

Author celebrates first published novel

BY DANIEL SCHWAB

It was fitting that in a place dedicated to honouring Canadian soldiers, Ron Van Stone introduced his own hero of the battlefield – Alan Stone, the fictional character of his recently published war novel.

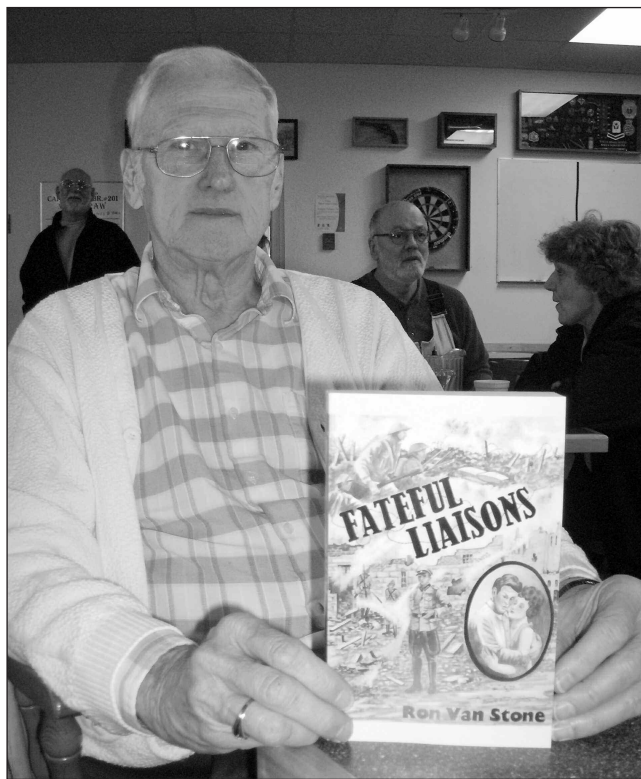
Van Stone's friends and other avid readers lined up to have their copies of *Fateful Liaisons* signed by the author at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 201 on Feb. 28.

Interest for the book has been spreading by word of mouth and has prompted Van Stone to produce something he didn't expect – a sequel.

"Many people have come up to me and said, 'What happens to this character? Who are you going to kill off? Where's the sequel? You've left us hanging!'" Van Stone said during the book signing.

For now, the author will be selling *Fateful Liaisons* from his home. The 480-page book was published by Trafford Publishing of British Columbia.

Over the past three decades, Van Stone has written 15 books, with *Fateful Liaisons* being the first to be published.



Ron Van Stone, author of *Fateful Liaisons*, signed copies of his novel at the Essex Legion last Wednesday.

The novel, a First World War drama that mixes action and romance, was not Van Stone's first choice to be published.

He initially wanted his book *Roses For My Darling* to be the first one to go to press.

But that book, about a sex-crazed serial killer, wasn't the first choice of his critics and biggest supporters – his wife and daughter.

"I hadn't thought about which book to publish until my wife and daughter started putting pressure on me and I kind of had to make a decision," Van Stone said.

"You were going to do that other one but your daughter didn't like it," Marge Van Stone said to her husband with a laugh.

It was decided that *Fateful Liaisons* would be the better pick. The novel's blend of action sequences and love scenes have appealed to both male and female readers, Van Stone has discovered.

"We'll read it together," one woman said nudging her husband and chuckling, as the pair stood in line to get their books signed.

Fateful Liaisons is the story of a young British soldier, Alan Stone, who emigrates to Canada in 1911. He gets married, but leaves his bride when he enlists as a soldier in the Canadian army and is shipped overseas dur-

ing the First World War. On the battlefield, Stone is injured and, while recuperating in a military hospital, he begins an affair with his nurse.

"(People) just seem to like the storyline," Van Stone said, when asked about what makes the book appealing. "They like the way I've intermingled different plots and characters."

The author based some parts of the book on real people or events in his life.

In the story, the hero's sister falls in love with a German prior to the start of the First World War, and they eventually marry.

This parallels the life of Van Stone's aunt, who married a German soldier. Van Stone says her brother, who fought against the Germans, was always afraid that he'd come face to face on the battlefield with his brother-in-law, who he really cared for.

Several copies of the book have been sent overseas to Van Stone's friends and relatives in England and Ireland. As well, copies have been mailed to the United States.

When the first published copy arrived at Van Stone's house for him to edit, he told Marge it was like having another child.

"It was so exciting I couldn't even describe it," the author said. "It was just unreal when I saw it. I thought, 'Oh my God, I did that?'"

For now, Van Stone said he'll be working on the sequel to *Fateful Liaisons*, along with a number of other writings.

"I think I've got some other good stories that would interest people," he said.

To order *Fateful Liaisons* in paperback, call 519-776-6234. Each copy is \$30.

Kingsville army cadets named top corp

The 2918 South Essex Scottish Army Cadets have claimed top honours in the Western Ontario area, winning the Lord Strathcona Trophy for the top army cadet corps with less than 50 cadets.

"We're absolutely thrilled and honoured that we've been recognized," said Cpt. Steve Stephenson, 2918's commanding officer. "It's actually quite a shock because we've always done our job and kept the cadet's training at the forefront of everything we've done. We didn't think we were special in any way – even though we think the world of our cadets."

Every year, corps must be inspected near the end of the training year and submit reports on what they've done throughout the training year. The results are evaluated based on a points system and the corps are then classified

for awards. Awards were handed out in the Western Ontario area for the Top Large and Top Small Corps.

"We're incredibly happy to be sponsoring such a fine group of young ladies and gentlemen," said J.D. Willett, cadet liaison from Royal Canadian Legion Branch 188 in Kingsville, which provides a home for 2918 along with the Kingsville Historical Park.

The cadets were presented with the 2006 Lord Strathcona Trophy on March 1 at the Kingsville Legion. Mjr. Perry Bast and Cpt. Duncan McMillan from the Cadet Detachment in London presented 2918 with the award. Lt. Col. Phil Berthiaume, commanding officer of the Essex and Kent Scottish Regiment was also on hand during the service.

The 2918 corps meets every Thursday evening at the Kingsville Legion.



THE BAND PLAYS ON – The Silver Ambassadors concert band presented "Movie Music and More" to an audience gathered at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 201 in Essex Sunday. The program included selections from such movies as *The Wizard of Oz*, *A Hard Day's Night* and *A Star is Born*. The band's 25 members hail from across Essex County.

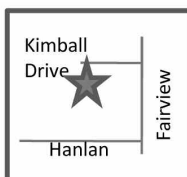


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