

Stouffville native spreads the word through first book

Author goes out on speaking tour

BY JIM MASON
Staff Writer

Sitting in English literature class at Stouffville District High School in 1965, Jan Spence knew she wanted to write a book.

Two decades of writing and years of serious illness later, the now Jan Howlett published *The Treasure of His Company: A Collection of Devotional Poetry & Meditations Vol. 1*, a 208-page inspirational offering two years ago.

After graduating from Toronto Bible College in 1968, she returned to Stouffville to work at the public utilities commission with long time friend Noreen Burkholder.

She recalls fondly working as a young girl at a pharmacy coffee shop and Parkview Home and later visiting her mother as she volunteered at the Care & Share Thrift Store.

Jan married in 1972, and accompanies her husband, Ross, in the travelling preaching ministry and radio work known as Feeding His Lambs: Word & Music Ministry he founded 1984. They live in Orillia.

When she's not writing, Mrs. Howlett is a watercolour artist and founder of the non-profit sewing group Garments For The Gospel, which creates clothing for needy children in Canada and around the world.

Mrs. Howlett spent three years full time on the book. Her paintings, included in the colour center section, illustrate many of her real-life stories and poems.

The reviews have been positive. International Women's Conference speaker Faith Crosby of Newmarket writes on the back cover: "As sure as the coming of daybreak, this book will bring hope to the burdened life, comfort to the weary soul and passion to the heart that thirsts for the living Lord."

Mrs. Howlett was honoured to have long-time Stouffville resident and renowned evangelist Dr. John M. Moore write the introduction to the book.

"When I started writing this book", she said "I wanted it to be a volume to encourage many hearts, even as I was strengthened in my own life at a time when all hope seemed lost and overshadowed by many years of serious physical illness."

"I wanted to use my everyday life experiences with people, events and encounters

with God's creatures to write how God ultimately transformed those times into practical, spiritual lessons for my own life. I longed to share them as short compelling parables and poems in a form one could enjoy a morsel at a time."

She didn't forget her roots. "To see how the dream of writing a book grew in the heart of a young Stouffville student and how that dream ultimately became a reality is amazing. And, as that student, I am thankful for the positive influence of my teachers."

If you would like Jan to share her story and book with your women's coffee hour, seniors or community group or purchase a copy, call 705-329-4381, from noon to 8 p.m., Monday to Saturday. Her book is also available at the Treasure House in Barrie and Newmarket.



Stouffville native Jan Howlett recovered from serious illness to write inspirational book.

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