

Valley Area Novelist Autographed Books at Blessings

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Ruth Marlene Friesen, of Hague, Saskatchewan, signed her books at Blessings Christian Marketplace on June 15, 2 - 5 pm. Not nearly all the friends she had invited showed up, but in the days after, she received a number of private orders, which is gratifying. It even connected Friesen with a friend she hadn't talked with in nearly 19 years.

Her novel, *Ruth's Secret Roses*, is set in Saskatoon, and a small town called Kleinstadt, loosely based on Hague, Friesen's home town.

After many years of dogged writing, re-writing, and some rejections, Friesen, a live-in caregiver on zero income, discovered Print-on-Demand, a new publishing trend on the Internet. In March she was able to publish it in conjunction with BookLocker.com, where she gets a royalty of 35%. The highest POD royalty available.



Author, Ruth Marlene Friesen, signing her first novel at Blessings Christian Marketplace, Saskatoon, June 15, 2002.

Friesen's novel is printed only as orders come in, but the high-speed computers at the USA printer, spit a copy out in about 5-8 minutes, soft cover bound and all. They are out in the mail within 48 hours to the ship to address, (allowing for weekends).

"The more I learn about POD, and e-books too," Friesen says, "and how traditional publishers are switching over, or including POD in their services - whoa, it's exciting! It means no expensive warehousing for them, or dump trucks of remainders to send to the landfill. Service keeps improving and speeding up. Changes are happening in the publishing world every month!" However, these can be bumpy, as Friesen blushes as she adds, "These days I'm learning about exchange rates and the high cost of shipping. Not being able to afford to order in bulk is a handicap too."

Ingram's, the largest book distributor in North America, has Friesen's book in their order system, with the ISBN, which means any store can order it at discounts, but not on credit, as it cannot be returned.

Since Friesen, has taught herself web design and built up a domain to promote and give background on the book, she chose to be personally involved in promoting her novel, and is making it her main work. "I can," she explains, "place orders for friends who cannot, or do not care to shop online. But the quickest and best profit for me," she says, "is if people go to my book page at <https://www.BookLocker.com/books/642.html> and order right there. BookLocker has just made a rule that I have to order five books at a time if I'm selling them personally."

To get acquainted with Friesen and her novel, a visit to <https://Ruthes-SecretRoses.com> is very helpful. From it she sells a downloadable electronic version of the book at a lower price, \$12.77 US, (later reduced to 5.99) and will offer that free to those who will give her a written review that she may use in promotion if she likes it.

Friesen offers a free subscription to her inspirational email newsletter, *RoseBouquet* too. Her first novel features a small town high school grad, who commutes to work in Saskatoon, but who keeps her city friends a secret from her family and friends in her hometown. It also has a Mennonite Grosz'mama, who speaks Low German.

Although the heroine is a good girl, and her city friends love her for the way she helps them in their crises, Ruthe creatively evades her fears until her double-life catches up with her.

"This story is peopled with friends from my vivid and imaginative teen years when I had few friends," says Friesen, a former telephone and switchboard operator, as is Ruthe, the main character of the novel. "When my daydreams did not turn out to be prophecies," Friesen, who came home from Ontario 18 years ago to care for her aged parents, adds, "I knew they were destined to be in a book."

Early Reviews: "I loved the transformations; the physical makeovers, the home decorating, and best of all, the total heart conversions," says Kathy Wollf, the first Reader of the novel." Wollf adds, "I like that Ruthe has her faults too, that she deals with them, and grows through her problems."

Connie Lepovosky, Orlando, Florida, formerly a typesetter, reviewed this book, and says, "Your style of writing is excellent, especially the way you build interest and keep me wanting to read faster and faster. What a wonderful story!"

Friesen, author of two self-published family histories, a chapbook of poetry, and freelanced articles and stories, says of her first novel, "I poured many years into this book, learning to write as I went, and finally decided to write the kind of story I'd love to read myself. Huge improvement! Now it's full of people - which I love - and features a young woman who also chatters to God at every turn about everything she experiences. That's something I believe other teens and women do too, but seldom confess openly."

"Ruthe's Secret Roses does not have the conventional romance plot," Friesen says, "because that's coming in huge doses in the next book of this trilogy. This one is layered with suspense plots, however, and will meet the need of those who desire more spiritual depth to the fiction they read."