

December 2006 - We've just hosted our annual Xmas Opener bash. We love doing this party. It's big, it's brash, it boasts a guest list of some of the most gracious, fun-loving, stylish, friendly people in Saskatoon (and beyond). This year we saw the return of the popular Chocolate Fountain, had entertainment by the extremely talented pianist Rod S., and among the trees I decorate was a new one for this year with a loose theme of Frog Princess/Masquerade/New Orleans/Venice...odd, yes, but I think it worked. Nice to see you all! And Merry Christmas!

December 2006 - The reviews are starting to come in for Stain of the Berry and it seems like they love it - big sigh of relief - from local Saskatoon Star Phoenix to the Globe & Mail! Common comments I am hearing and reading is that although people think this is the spookiest of the series, it is also one of the best. I've put some of the juicy comments in the Review section of this website if you're interested. Thanks reviewers - including those folks who take the time to post their reviews on Amazon.ca where my books are sold.

December 2006 - The tour is over! It ended with a high point in Toronto on November 28th with a capacity crowd of eager, energetic, enthusiastic people. Bittersweet, I say in my Amazon.com blog. It was a busy hectic crazy month with everything from book launches and interviews and book club appearances to a bout with food poisoning and planes stuck in snows and missing luggage - but oh my it was above all a great joy - and I am sad it is over. Bittersweet is a nice flavour.

November 2006 - Some of the fantastic moments thus far on this wild month of introducing Stain of the Berry - the EY alumnic pre-book launch party hosted by Shelley Brown and attended by my super EYfriends, Sheila Catto the winner of a charity auction item that included the Russell Quant books and sitting up front with my crazy bunch at the Saskatoon launch, the lovely group of friends who helped us celebrate this book on Oct 28th with readings of their own from the Russell Quant books - awesome!, dinner with Cindy & Marco in Winnipeg, the wonderful crowd in Regina that surprised the bookseller (including Ken Curtis - you're terrific), the 'missed' visits with Gary & Joyce and Jessica & Steve in Edmonton, cocktail party at the Palisades, meeting newest niece Sophie in Vancouver, time with Kathryn and Gerard and Judy in Calgary, interview with Rob at the Archives in Toronto - and that's only the tip of the iceberg!

November 2006 - Planet S Magazine, a local A&E magazine did a cover feature story on me and the Russell Quant books. Okay - that was very cool, every bit of it, from doing the photo shoot with the talented Kevin Hogarth of Hogarth Photography in the middle of 21st Street (downtown Saskatoon in front of the majestic Bessborough Hotel) during a bitterly cold turn of weather to the

interview with Kelly Brownlee to seeing my pug plastered on the cover of a magazine for the first time. I just hope it wasn't used for too many budgie cages!

November 2006 - What a fantastic month this has been. From Humboldt to Saskatoon to Winnipeg to Regina to Edmonton to Vancouver to Calgary to Toronto. Tiring, yes, but a good tired. Every city gave me excitement and warm welcomes and great experiences with each book launch i did. And best of all? The people. From old friends and family to people I met starting with my first book tour with Amuse Bouche four years ago to brand new readers of the Russell Quant series. I thank you all for your interest and attention, the efforts made to come out to readings, the smart questions, the hugs and warm wishes. It makes me want it to never end.

October 2006 - CBC TV (with the terrific Britainy Robinson) has done a profile on me, including shots of my Saskatoon launch last night (more on that later - it was awesome) - the air dates (both TV and radio) are in the Events section if you'd like to check it out.

October, 2006 - We've just added a new book tour date in Toronto - Tuesday, November 28th at 7:30 pm - see Events page for details. This is a joint reading the terrific Jim Bartley - check out his novel, Drina Bridge.

October, 2006 - Thank you, Humboldt! Last night I appeared at the Reid-Thompson Library in Humboldt, SK for Saskatchewan Libraries Week, and was thrilled with the strong attendance. And special mention to my sister Fran who drove weather-roughened roads from a great distance to be there. Flowers from Fran and the rest of my family. Rose Ward for inviting me and making me feel so welcome. And all of you who made the effort to come out - my thanks.

October, 2006 - Hearty congratulations to Stephen (Steve) O'Neill of Falls church, VA who was the succesful bidder on a Russell Quant auction package at this years Human rights Campaign national dinner event held earlier this month in Washington, DC. Included in the package was the opportunity to have Steve's name included in the fifth Russell Quant mystery to be released in 2007 (Canada; early 2008 U.S.). Thank you Steve for your winning bid and for supporting the Human Rights Campaign.

October 2006 - Added book tour dates in Edmonton and Regina and it looks like something will be happening in Toronto as well.

October 2006 - This is the month! Very very soon the box will arrive with my copies of Stain of the Berry. My publisher says they are expected to be released October 12. Then before I know it I'll be at my first book launch and all

the others will follow with blinding speed. An exciting and exhilarating time. Thank you thank you thank you.

October 2006 - I just returned from Madison, Wisconsin - a city much the same size of my home town of Saskatoon, and with much the same feel to it, both being college towns - where I attended the Bouchercon Mystery conference. Bouchercon is the largest conference of it's kind in the U.S., with attendees this year of over 1,000 writers, readers and publishing industry people including reviewers, agents, editors, booksellers. It was a busy weekend for me, appearing on a panel with fellow Canadians Caro Soles and Alex Brett as well as Neil Plakcy and Mark Richard Zubro. I also manned the registration table and the International Association of Crime Writers table for a spell, which is a great way to see and meet a lot of people. The rest of the time was attending other panels and spending time with other attendees, including drinks with one of my literary heroes Ellen Hart, and dinner out with Canadian greats Rick Mofina, Robin Harlick, Barbara Fradkin and Caro (during which we shared an astoundingly bad bottle of wine and good conversation and laughs). Overall a terrific event.

October 2006 - Had a wonderful September in France, with last four days spent in London (my first time). Another first was taking my laptop with me on vacation. Normally I would not do this. But, I thought it was a necessity because of the upcoming book release and tour details still being ironed out, so I needed ready access to e-mail. And, as luck would have it, although the village of Grimaud where we were living did not have wireless capability, Port Grimaud - 5 minutes away - did. And luckier still, it was at a terrific little bar called Unicorn, that served rather delicious Pastis Peche and overlooked a main square good for people watching. When we left home, I was in the midst of a writing project, so I brought it with me on the off chance I became inspired - although I've come to believe I can only write in the familiar, no-distractions confines of my home office. But, low and behold, one afternoon, about 4ish, I threw open the shutters of the dining room, revealing stunning views of vineyard-covered hills and a lovely cooling breeze (it was stinking hot out) and sat down with a glass of wine and started pecking away. I ended up doing this for a couple of hours at least four or five afternoons - and loved it