



News Release

Attention: Arts and books editors,
Community news editors

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**Local author and *Ottawa Citizen* memoir contest prize winner, Anne Shmelzer,
launches acclaimed debut novel**

Ottawa, Ontario....Anne Shmelzer's debut novel, *A Marginally Noted Man*, captures the trauma of war against the backdrop of WWI battlefields, a hilltop Trappist monastery in Flanders, and the Nicol's pastoral homestead in Madoc Township, Hastings County, Ontario.

Shmelzer, a local author, began to draft the novel – a poignant tale of one soldier's struggle to come to terms with the effects of war – after winning first prize for *The Ottawa Citizen's* WriteNow! memoir contest in 1997. Columnist Charles Gordon said that Shmelzer's story "dealt with an emotional topic, the return from the war, with great subtlety and a nice eye for detail." Shmelzer believes this experience gave her the push she needed to stay rooted to her writing desk and create a fuller, richer narrative around her fictitious main character, Will Nicol.

"This was a story I needed to tell," she says. "I wanted to explore the horrible wars that my father and my uncles would not speak of, and I chose the home and farm I grew up on in Madoc Township as the main setting where my character returns after the Great War."

A Marginally Noted Man is a vivid portrayal of Will Nicol's anguish and internal struggle to regain his mental health after five years on the Western Front and was recently endorsed by Col Rakesh Jetly, Senior Psychiatrist with the Canadian Armed Forces. According to Jetly, "Anne Shmelzer displays an acute understanding of the warfare experience. She shines a light on the early emergence of PTSD and creates a vivid image of Will Nicol's internal struggle to regain his mental health. From the battlefields of the Western Front to his reintegration into society, *A Marginally Noted Man* takes us on an emotional journey that is difficult to put down. This is a great read!"

Historically relevant, morally complex, and emotionally charged, *A Marginally Noted Man* incorporates themes of lasting love and friendship. Shmelzer's disturbingly accurate look at the human effects of war weaves complex narrative elements intricately together. Her experiences as a psychiatric nurse, poet, musician, and accomplished writer bring her characters to life and create a memorable, timeless story.

A Marginally Noted Man is available for purchase at railwaycreekbooks.ca and through Amazon ([print-on-demand](#) and [Kindle](#) editions), [Kobo](#), and [Apple iBooks](#). Fine print editions are also available for purchase at Perfect Books and Books on Beechwood in Ottawa and at Novel Idea in Kingston.

Book signings for *A Marginally Noted Man* are being held Sunday, November 29 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Perfect Books, 258A Elgin St. Ottawa; Sunday, December 6 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Books on Beechwood, 35 Beechwood Ave. Ottawa; and Sunday, December 13 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Novel Idea, 156 Princess St., Kingston.

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Synopsis for *A Marginally Noted Man*

In *A Marginally Noted Man*, Will Nicol returns to Hastings County to rebuild his life after the horrific aftermath of war on the Western Front and to seek comfort in the arms of his forbidden love and widowed niece. With Leah by his side, Will attempts to banish the memories that have scarred his mind and body and continue to plague him. Will struggles to reconcile his status as a war hero with the traumatizing memory that he can't contain. Despite employing the teachings of the Trappist monks who tended him during a six-month convalescence following the war, Will soon realizes that to regain his sanity he must come to terms with the past. Together with his comrade-in-arms, Michael Isaacs a Mohawk from Tyendinaga, Will returns to the scene of a fateful mission to confront his guilt and unburden his mind. Anne Shmelzer chronicles the poignant and memorable tale of one man's attempts to confront the truth of war and find redemption. Her vivid portrayal of the human trauma that accompanies war is both haunting and relevant.

Anne Shmelzer Bio

Anne Shmelzer is an accomplished writer. Her award-winning memoir, *The Night My Father Came Back from the War*, which appeared in the *Ottawa Citizen*, served as a precursor to her debut novel, *A Marginally Noted Man*. Anne's experience and extensive knowledge as a psychiatric nurse helped shape her characters and her years as a poet and accomplishments in music underscore the lyrical quality of her writing. She has also written musical and academic papers deposited in the National Library of Canada and the Henri de la Grange Library in Paris.

Born in 1940, Anne Shmelzer spent her childhood between Toronto and Madoc Township, Ontario. She attended the prestigious Lisgar Collegiate Institute where her love of writing was first nurtured and went on to receive her Registered Nursing diploma with a focus on psychiatry. Anne later completed her Bachelor of Music High Honours from Carleton University. Anne Shmelzer has long been connected with those who seek to observe and notate the workings of the human heart.