

Authors on stage Sunday in Orangeville

By Constance Scrafield

It's fantastic that these big name people come to Orangeville, Nancy Frater declared.

She was singing the praises of Carol Off and Doug Saunders, who are the first of the 'big names' to come to the Opera House this Sunday (Sept. 24).

Off worked as a journalist and documentary reporter for CBC Television and Radio for years. Among her many awards was ACTRA's John Drainie Award for distinguished contribution to Canadian broadcasting in 2008.

Since 2006, she has been host of CBC's *As It Happens*, with Jeff Douglas, making telephone calls to people all over the world for stories.

Sunday, Off brings her latest of several books, *All We Leave Behind: A Reporter's Journey into the Lives of Others*. This is the story behind the story of her Gemini award winning documentary, *In the Company of War Lords*, exposing Washington's involvement with Afghanistan's 'most murderous criminals.'

Her new book tells how she decided she could not leave the family behind, who helped her and, consequently, risked death. So, she campaigned, over eight years, for their immigration to this country. In an interview this week on *The Current*, she and the eldest child of the family, Robina, discussed the journey and their happy ending.

'Carol is a miracle woman,' Robina said. 'She fought to bring us here.'

Saunders, international affairs columnist for the *Globe and Mail*, comes with a suggestion: that Canada increase its population to 100 million people. He reckons we need to start preparing now for this size of population for a 'safer, greener, more prosperous future.'

Writing for the *Globe and Mail* since 1995, he was foreign correspondent from Los Angeles and London, England. While in the U.K., he covered 40 countries and travelled extensively.

His columns and articles have won numerous awards, including the National Newspaper Award, which is the Canadian Pulitzer Prize equivalent, on five occasions.

There are two earlier books: *Arrival City* 'concerning the unprecedented population move from rural to urban living. This book has been translated into eight languages.

The Myth of the Muslim Tide analyzes the 'effects of immigration from Islamic countries to the West.' It has been especially well received in Canada, the U.S. and Germany.

Frater commented about Saunders' work and ideas.

'He's always interested in Canada and building Canada,' she said. 'With *Maximum Canada*, he argues for 100 million population.

His caveat is that it has to be done carefully; planning has to start now and go in stages.'

'The controversy goes back to 1967,' she added. 'He proves people have fled the country 'professionals, artists 'went south where they could do better.'

'It's an interesting discussion,' she observed. 'An entertainment, really, having an exchange of ideas. Each reading will be entirely different.'

'It's really important not forget the written word in the arts.'

Beginning at 2 p.m. in the theatre of the Opera House, there will be the conversations with moderator Bernadette Hardacker, the authors' readings, followed by the Q and A. The afternoon finishes downstairs in the atrium with 'gourmet goodies and wine,' Frater said, and a chance to meet them.

'Proceeds go Theatre Orangeville's New Play Development Program,' she added.

Tickets for all three events or for just one may be bought at BookLore on First Street or at the Theatre Orangeville Box Office at 87 Broadway or at the Information Centre; by telephone BookLore 519-942-3830; Theatre Orangeville 519-941-3423; online at www.booklore.ca or www.theatreorangeville.ca