FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Holy Grail trilogy abounds in bold action and accurate historical detail

Pender Island playwright-director pens novels with engaging plot, compelling characters and quick pacing

(Victoria, BC) – Barry Mathias, former Camosun College instructor, will launch the first two novels of his *Ancient Bloodlines Trilogy* in June 2008. Exciting historical adventures with 'vivid imagery and dramatic action,' these novels explore the timeless battle between good and evil, against a background of England, France and the Holy Land in the 12th century. The Holy Grail puzzle is given a new twist in Mathias's dramatic story.

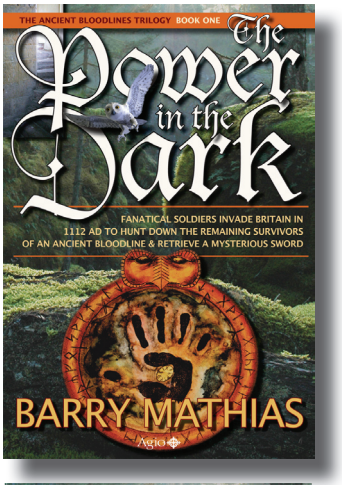
The Power in the Dark is the first novel of this fast-moving historical fantasy, set in 1112, thirteen years after the fall of Jerusalem at the end of the first Crusade. The action takes place in Wessex County, England, where John and Gwen, who are in their mid-teens, find themselves the focus of powerful enemies and wonderful friends.

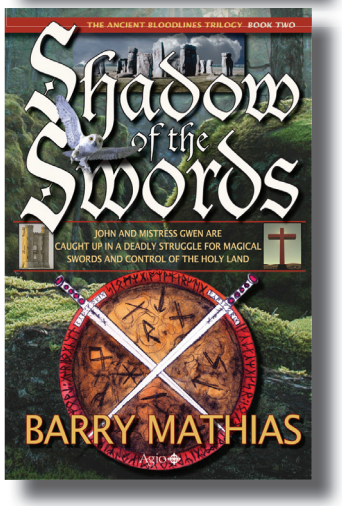
Shadow of the Swords continues the dramatic story in the years 1113–1116, introducing new characters and the concepts of nobility, friendship and love. The action moves from Wessex and Stonehenge, to France, Cyprus and eventually the Holy Land. There are romances and deadly battles, and always the unanswered questions: Why do the Knights of The Order want to control Gwen? Why is John called The Keeper of the Grail? And what is the connection between John and Gwen?

All will be revealed in *The Keeper of the Grail*, to be released in 2009. The final novel embraces the founding of the Knights Templar in 1118, an epic power struggle in the Holy Land, and the surprising truth about John and Gwen's bloodlines.

An earlier version of the first novel is already in use by a number of BC schools. The late editor of *The Malahat Review*, Robin Skelton, said of *The Power in the Dark*: "A good story, well told. Moves along with speed and clarity, and with such vivid imagery and dramatic action that the reader becomes excited and possessed, as are the book's characters."

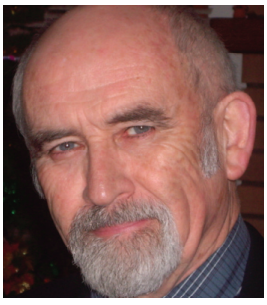
***The Power in The Dark**, ISBN 978-1-897435-11-3, Agio Publishing: Victoria, 2008.*
***Shadows of the Swords**, ISBN 978-1-897435-13-7, Agio Publishing: Victoria, 2008.*
***The Keeper of the Grail**, ISBN 978-1-897435-15-1, Agio Publishing: Victoria, 2009.*





HOT TOPICS

- how does writing for the theatre help a novelist with pacing and dialogue?
- how accurate is the historical detail – lifestyles, the weapons, the events?
- have concepts of love, power and bravery changed since the 12th century?
- what multi-media plans are afoot for this trilogy?



BIO: Novelist Barry Mathias has theatrical talents

Barry Mathias is a writer of novels, plays and poetry. He has directed and appeared in plays presented on the Islands and in Britain. Mathias emigrated from England with his wife and two daughters in 1990, and instructed at Camosun College in Victoria. He retired from teaching in December 2000 and opened a bookstore with his wife on Pender Island. They sold this successful business in January 2007 so Mathias could devote more time to writing. He is available for interviews and dramatic readings. His website is *www.BarryMathias.com*.

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