

## **Libraries in my Life: A Personal Story**

by the Honourable James K. Bartleman, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario  
Honorary Patron of the 2006 'Telling Our Stories' Contest

Books were my ticket out of a life of poverty and manual labour. As a boy, I accompanied my father on frequent visits to the Port Carling Public Library. It was an excellent and well-stocked village library, and I always carried home armfuls of books. My father called himself a graduate of Frontier College and was an avid reader who loved to recount stories he had read. He had a special interest in aboriginal history so books stimulated storytelling in our family. I also read virtually every book in our school library. Looking back, I know that this early access to books and libraries widened my horizons and set me on the road to a good education and a fulfilling career. I have enjoyed introducing my own children to special books and, as Lieutenant Governor, I have launched several literacy initiatives for aboriginal children in Ontario's North. Today, I am still a voracious and wide-ranging reader, and I continue to rely upon, and be grateful for, the excellent services of Ontario's public libraries.