

■ AT AGE 92, the ever erudite professor Alice Shalvi is still running around to cultural and feminist events, and was in the front row of a book launch on Wednesday at the Tel Aviv residence of Canadian Ambassador Deborah Lyons. It wasn't Shalvi's book *Never a Native* that was being launched, yet again. It was the Hebrew edition the prize-winning *The Dead Man* by Canadian novelist Prof. Nora Gold, who divides her time between Toronto and Jerusalem. A former tenured professor, Gold was an associate scholar and writer in residence at the Center for Women's Studies in Education at OISE/University of Toronto from 2000-2018, where she created the Wonderful Women Writers Series that she still coordinates at the Toronto Public Library. She is also the founding editor-in-chief of jewishfiction.net, a prestigious online journal that publishes Jewish-themed fiction from around the world, either in English or translated into English. To date, there have been translations from 16 languages and readers of the journal come from 140 countries.

Among her many activities, Gold is a social activist, community worker, and has served on numerous committees, task forces, boards and advisory councils. She is particularly interested in issues relating to disability and multiculturalism, but most of all, she is engaged in support for Israel.

In 1982, she was among the founders of the Canadian branch of the New Israel Fund, and for 18 years served as its vice president. For much of this time, she also sat on NIF's International Board and later on was its International Executive.

In Jerusalem, she was one of the founding members of the Yedidya Congregation. She is involved in a host of other activities, including Canadian Friends of Givat Haviva, which promotes understanding between Israel's Jewish and Arab youth.

Gold and her good friend, Prof. Shuli Barzilai – an expert on Canadian literature, particularly the writings of Margaret Atwood – discussed *The Dead Man* as each of them read excerpts in both Hebrew and English to illustrate the importance of language and the challenges faced by translation.

Shalvi, an Israel Prize laureate, is a retired English professor, one of Israel's leading feminists and an NIF Board Member. So she had several reasons to attend the event, which was moderated by Canada's new Deputy Chief of Mission, Martin Larose, who arrived in Israel 10 days prior.

Gold's three novels, which have each won prizes, all have Jewish themes. In presenting a synopsis of *The Dead Man*, she mentioned themes including obsessive love, mental illness, feminism, Israel and Diaspora, the power of music and the pull of Jerusalem. Barzilai made the point that translation of any work should not be taken for granted, as the translator has to give proper consideration as to who thinks of the lines and who speaks them.

Without giving too much away, Barzilai said that the essential message of the book is it's never too late to grow up and assume responsibility.