

C.I.H.S BULLETIN

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADIAN IMMIGRATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY

“We cannot re-write history by substituting our latter-day judgement for that of contemporaries...”

John Major, Response (February, 1993) to request to reconsider cases of British soldiers executed during WWI.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings everyone!

In preparation for writing these words I looked over the messages from recent presidents as they took over this exalted post. I'm not alone in having been press-ganged to take the job by the small but keen group attending the AGM. Having accepted it by acclamation, I do welcome the challenge and shall do my best to keep the Society going.

In contrast to recent presidents who have been serving officers in the Department, my origins in Immigration jump back a couple of generations to the second post-war immigration phase, that of the late fifties and sixties. In other words, I bring to the Executive a different perspective which I hope will be equally valuable. The absence on the current Executive of a

link to the Department is a hurdle, but in jumping it I hope to set up good working relations with various parts of the hierarchy in order to achieve our goals.

The main goal must still be to ensure that the Society attracts new members. Needless to say, I have no magic solution, but one innovation which may have some influence is to get our message on to the World-wide Web and use the internet as an effective means of communication. We must make every effort to rationalize the administrative foundation at the same time as keeping the social side alive as well as fomenting interest in historical projects. These are the *raison d'être* of the Society. With your active help, I can see the Society staying alive and well as your contributions nourish it. Without that help....well, let's keep this, my first presidential message, positive.

I'd be delighted to hear from any and all of you by any means you like—email at <bullock1587@home.com>, phone or fax at (613) 241-1587, and even snail mail to the Society's address..

David Bullock

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LETTERS

It was sad to learn in the last C.I.H.S Newsletter that Ron McDougall had passed away and then to learn that Kirk Bell had died on January 30th. All who worked with these fine people will have their own memories. Here are a few of mine.

Ron came to the Leeds office in 1961 or 1962 as part of a promotions board along with, I think, Bud Clark. After the interviews were over, Pat and I invited them to have dinner with us at our flat in Far Headingley. They came by taxi from the Queen's Hotel and we had a pleasant evening.

Pat and I had just taken delivery that afternoon of a 1961 Anglia and the only experience I had of driving on the 'wrong' side of the road was the few miles from the dealership. Being young and rash I offered to drive the two fellows back to the Queen's Hotel. Ron was in the passenger seat and Pat and the other fellow were in the back.

I backed onto Spen Road and things were going just fine until I came to a roundabout. Instead of going to the left I turned to the right and went 'round it the wrong way.

Ron shouted as I dodged a car coming straight at us. The other driver honked (hooted) and looked totally startled.

I got straightened away and drove slowly and carefully to the hotel. I told Pat we could give up any idea of promotion, that we would be lucky if I weren't fired.

Whenever Ron and I met after that he would look at me, smile, and say "Do you remember that roundabout in Leeds?" And then he would tell the story to whomever happened to be with

us. He told the story so well, with that slight lilt--perhaps picked up in Belfast or Glasgow---that you couldn't take offense.

I once suggested there should be a ten year 'sunset law' on telling about dumb things I had done but Ron just smiled.

I first met Kirk in 1965 or 1966 in London. He and Jackie had just arrived for their first overseas posting. I remember two things from our first meeting. We both came from tiny Ontario towns no one had ever heard of: Kirk was from Dunnville---not far from where Pat and I now live, in Grimsby---and I was from Arthur, not far from Guelph.

Second, that Kirk had a law degree and should be able to help me cope with the Immigration Act and Regulations. Which he did.

He was popular with the prospective immigrants. We were handling a record flow of immigrants at the time and everyone was under a great deal of pressure. Kirk did his full share of interviews and yet stayed warm and human. He answered the people's questions and showed he understood they were making a huge decision.

I only saw Kirk annoyed once, and it was with me. It was soon after he arrived in London and I guess I was going on a bit too much trying to warn him about London estate agents and landlords. Kirk made it plain, politely but firmly, that I didn't have to teach him how to suck eggs. He could cope. And he did.

Later on, back in Ottawa, our careers took different paths but we often had to talk with each other about immigration and employment policy issues. No matter how urgent the call, Kirk would always start the conversation with

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"How's the family/" We would chat about Jackie, their girls Amanda and Melissa and about Pat and our kids. Kirk was very proud of his family.

It just wasn't fair that disease should strike him down in mid-career. An outsider can't imagine the strain his illness must have placed on Jackie and the girls. All one can say is that Kirk's pride in his family was well-placed.

John Hunter

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Dear Editor,

This is in response to "keep those letters coming". I enclose for consideration for the Bulletin an article on an early leper colony here in B.C. Much of the information was gleaned from the civic archives.

I was saddened to learn of Ron McDougal's death. Ron was as fine a fellow as the Maker makes them. I relished his never-ending sense of fun. I wonder how many have been exposed to Ron's eye-switching technique? Ron lost an eye to a German sniper. He knew a specialist in artificial eye making who had learned his trade in Halifax after the 1917 disaster. Ron had his friend make one to match his surviving eye. In addition he had him make two other glass eyes, one depicting a Union Jack, the other a girl in a bikini. Whenever a party threatened to become dull, Ron would replace the natural looking artificial eye with one of the substitutes. Hilarious results were assured!

I was pleased to read of Bernard's settlement experiences. We have had far too few stories about the Canadian end of the immigration flow. This helps to restore the imbalance. Bernard's reference to the Czech

volunteer couple and their wish to get a traffic ticket fixed reminds me of my own experience with a Czech refugee and his different cultural attitude.

The year was 1948 at the time of the Communist takeover in Prague. I was working as one of the first three civilians to be employed by the Special Branch of the RCM Police (It evolved in time to CSIS). A Secretary in the Czech Embassy in Ankara defected and was given sanctuary in Canada. The placement of a diplomat must have been a real challenge to the old Settlement Service. In due course this courageous man was given a job as a translator with the RCMP. We shared an office. For the first week after his arrival, any time I made a move to leave the room there would be the scraping of a chair followed by a headlong dash to open the door for me, which was done with a clicking of heels and a deep bow. Believe me, that was a heady experience for a young fellow on his first job. In due course I was able to explain that we were colleagues and that in any case we didn't do that in Canada!

I believe that the roles of the officers at our ports of entry are not really appreciated. Their attitude to newcomers may have effects far into the future This was brought home to me in an interview given by B.C.'s much-loved former Lieutenant-Governor, David Lam. He described how he and his wife Dorothy were treated when they arrived as immigrants from Hong Kong. He related that after the interview had been completed, the immigration officers helped him and his wife with their very considerable luggage out to the parking lot. Mr. Lam said that would never be done by a uniformed official in Asia.

Mr. Lam went on to a very successful career in real estate. Many a B.C. university and other institutions have benefited from his liberality. He and his wife were so successful at their vice-regal role that the federal government

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was reluctant to replace them. Eventually Mr. Lam had to appeal to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, during her visit to Victoria. She is alleged to have turned to the Prime Minister and said "Naughty naughty."

Sincerely
Jim Cross

WORKING PIER 21

By Al Troy

There has been a lot of publicity on the opening of the Immigration Museum on the site of the old Pier 21 on the Halifax waterfront. However I have never read any comments from anyone who actually worked there during those hectic years when thousands of immigrants poured into Canada – especially during the winter months when the St. Lawrence River was frozen and the ports of Quebec and Montreal were closed to passenger ship traffic. I thought a few personal remarks might be of interest.

In 1952 the province of New Brunswick was transferred from the Eastern Region to the Atlantic Region headquartered in Halifax.

When Jeff Christie, Assistant District Superintendent, was making a tour of the latest addition to his empire I mentioned I would be prepared to accept a transfer anytime anywhere as I found border work at a small port with 98% local traffic extremely uninteresting and wanted something more challenging. Within a couple of months I was offered a posting to the Port of

Halifax and I immediately accepted and moved the family in early December 1952.

Halifax was a fairly large operation with Regional HQ as well as the Port of Halifax staff. There were three full-time medical officers from Health and Welfare who operated a small hospital and a large detention facility for persons detained off passenger vessels as well as a steady stream of people awaiting deportation by sea. Most of these were deserting seamen who sometimes were detained for months while waiting for a ship from the same owner of the ship from which they had deserted. It was cheaper for the owner to pay detention costs rather than pay steamship fare.

Regional HQ consisted of Hugh Grant, District Superintendent; Jeff Christie, Assistant Superintendent; Fenton Crossman, District Inspector; Alison Smith, Secretary; Stew Grant, Accountant; Urban MacKinnon, Principal Clerk; Earl McCarthy and Bert White, Rod Bethune, District Settlement Supervisor; Vince Chisholm, Settlement Officer and Bill Marks. He was hired as a Registry Clerk, but he retired a few years ago as the Atlantic Regional Director of Immigration covering the four Maritime provinces. Who says you can't get ahead in the Immigration Department?

Harry Wade was the Officer-in-Charge of the port of Halifax and Jack O'Connor was Senior Officer and the man who made it all run efficiently. Jack was 'one of a kind' and had the respect of all who worked for him. The following is an alphabetical listing of the Port officers at that time: Albert Anderson, Reg Barron, Bob Baker, Leo Campbell, Charlie Dwyer, Tom Flanagan, Andrew Maladek, Fraser Munro, Ned Manning, O.A. Peterson, Max Purchase, Bill Shaw, Gordon Thomas, Al Troy.

The detention centre was staffed by, I think, 25 guards under Chief Guard Walter Share. We had

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a fully staffed and equipped kitchen and dining room. Altogether the complete operation consisted of between 50 and 60 persons.

These were the days when the bulk of the migrant traffic traveled by sea and only the wealthy traveled by air. During the winter we would have from 13 to 20 arrivals each month with each ship carrying 600 to 1800 migrants. We could have a ship being cleared at Pier 21 with another anchored off George's Island and receive word that another ship was only a few miles off shore waiting its turn. Examination of passengers was fast and many officers operated on the principle "if they can see lightning and hear thunder" they were in. Most migrants were in possession of rail tickets to their destination and enough money for food as well as being destined to relatives or friends who would provide accommodation. Not too many like that now as they all expect the government to provide everything they need for survival.

I can remember arriving for work at 8:30 am and not getting home until after midnight completely wiped out. The shipping companies fed us on board and provided taxis to take you home as public transport in Halifax shut down to a minimum schedule after 10:00 PM. The overtime rate at this time was a huge \$1.86 per hour. Most officers were not interested in working all hours for that (mind you there was no such thing as double time). We gave up overtime and came to a much better arrangement with the shipping companies. Although the winter season was the busiest, the summer traffic was still quite active. The Italian and Greek Line vessels used Halifax the year round as they were destined to end their journey in New York. The Arosa Line and Scandanavian Lines made Halifax a stop to and from New York. Passengers would disembark from the ship directly into the waiting room area on the upper floor of Pier 21. After a brief check

by the medical officers they were directed to fill the benches and wait until they were called for immigration inspection. Individuals, or family units, would be directed to the desk of whichever immigration officer was free who would do a quick check of their documents, ask a few pertinent questions with the aid of an interpreter provided by the ship. If all was in order the passports and Form 1000 were stamped and the migrants directed downstairs where Customs would examine their luggage which had been landed from the ship into the ground level of Pier 21. After Customs they proceeded to the railway station and boarded the train standing outside the shed door. They were given an opportunity to purchase food at a sort of mini-market operated by the Department to take on board the train for consumption during their journey. Telegrams were prepared by various church and social workers to all destinations in Canada so that waiting friends or relatives would know exactly when the newcomers would be arriving at their new homes. To the average person viewing this operation I'm sure it must have looked like absolute chaos but in reality the system worked remarkably well as a result of long practice and dedicated staff.

I could go on and on about the two years I spent working in Halifax until I left for an overseas posting in mid-1955. I am pleased that we now have an Ellis Island type of museum and a collection of equipment, etc., for the public to see, but I would like to point out that, while buildings and equipment are one thing, we must never forget the long hours and effort put in by many officers to make the system work.

THE LEPER COLONY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Jim Cross

D'Arcy Island was the base for a leprosarium near Victoria. The inhabitants of the Island were immigrants, whose malady had been detected at the immigrant quarantine station of William Head, near the city of Victoria. The facilities, wretched though they were, were operated by the city from 1889 to 1903, when the Provincial government took over.

Under the city's jurisdiction the inmates, never more than six, were housed in individual units in a row house. No staff lived on the island. Their needs were provided for every three months, when provisions of rice, salt pork, tea, tobacco, salt, fresh blankets and coffins were dumped on the shore. Chickens and ducks supplied the eggs and the meat. With the spring came vegetable seeds for the colonists to plant in their gardens. It was reported that the fear of contagion was so great that when one of the early supply vessels arrived, the lepers rushed down to greet it. The sailors sailed away in a panic, taking some of the provisions with them.

The city medical officer who accompanied the supply vessels examined the patients. His annual report would contain a line or two about D'Arcy Island, listing the number of patients and recording the number of deaths. No names were ever given.

Victoria attempted to get the federal government to assume responsibility, hoping that their charges would be transferred to the federal leprosarium in Tracadie, New Brunswick. The federal government demurred at first but after a three-year period in which the province ran the

facilities, it took over in 1906. Some of the lepers were deported to Canton, where they were treated in a Presbyterian hospital.

New cases continued to be referred to D'Arcy, but the total population never exceeded a dozen.

Conditions improved under federal jurisdiction. For the first time a guardian was appointed to attend to the needs of the inmates.

In 1924 D'Arcy Island was closed, and the lepers were transferred to Bentinck Island, only three miles from William Head station and accessible by a federal motor launch in fifteen minutes.

Conditions on Bentinck were much better. There were fifteen individual units for the patients, a building for the caretaker, another for the doctor as an examination office. Life was far from idyllic. No one came to visit them, neither friends nor relatives. There was no electricity or telephone service until 1924. Outgoing letters were sealed in formaldehyde fumes for 12 hours before they were despatched. Nor would the patients associate with one another, each thinking his neighbour in worse condition than himself.

The majority of the patients were Chinese but there is a reference in the records to one East Indian, one Japanese and one Caucasian female who had been a missionary in Africa.

On the positive side, new medicines, particularly the sulfa drugs, arrested and sometimes reversed the disease. Those who didn't succumb to a secondary ailment such as tuberculosis, were eventually treated and released. One poor vegetable grower couldn't adjust to outside life and returned to Bentinck where he died in 1956.

In 1957 the facilities were closed and the resident nurse, Dorothy Fairweather, went home. The federal government attempted to sell Bentinck Island but there were no takers. For a time after its closure, the island was used by the Royal Canadian Navy as a demolition base.

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IMMIGRATION READING

The Irish in Ontario: A New Approach

Dr. Bruce Elliott

In the first Canadian study to link immigration, settlement, and subsequent internal migration, Elliott probes beyond the aggregate statistics of most studies of the migration process. Tracing the genealogies, movements, landholding strategies, and economic lives of 775 families of Irish immigrants who came to Canada between 1815 and 1855 from County Tipperary, Ireland, Elliott follows his subjects not only from Ireland to Canada but in their subsequent movements within North America. This work is a strong contribution to current discussions of nineteenth-century society in Ireland, Canada, and the United States.

McGill-Queen's Studies in
Ethnic History

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Ethnicity in the Mainstream: Three Studies of English Canadian Culture in Ontario

Pauline Greenhill

English Canadians seldom see themselves - and are seldom seen by other Canadians - as an ethnic group. Pauline Greenhill suggests that this is because Canadians believe that the expressive culture of both mainstream English and English-origin groups lacks a carnivalesque component - an essential element in the Canadian idea of ethnicity. In *Ethnicity in the Mainstream* she argues that Canadian English culture is indeed carnivalesque and, like that of other ethnic groups, is selected, emergent, and invented, not appropriated intact from the old world. She also explores uses of power in contexts of ethnic expression.

Greenhill presents three studies from the perspective of a folklorist and within the framework of feminist analysis. Loosely linked by the theme of power and discussion of carnivalesque elements of traditional and popular culture, these studies examine immigrants' narratives about adjusting to life in Canada; Morris dancing as practised by Forest City Morris of London, Ontario; and actions and responses of promoters and residents to the development of the Shakespeare festival in Stratford, Ontario. Greenhill notes that because the English are perceived as lacking carnivalesque traditions, their position vis-à-vis other ethnic groups has been defined solely in terms of power, and demonstrates that concepts of power and entitlement are inextricably bound up in English self-definition. She concludes by examining the implications for social scientific practice of an insider studying her own culture and the political ramifications of such studies for a pluralistic, multicultural society such as Canada.

Greenhill's methods, concepts, and conclusions have much to offer practitioners in the fields of folklore, Canadian studies, ethnic studies, anthropology, and women's studies.

"Greenhill becomes the first scholar since historian Ross McCormack to discuss the

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English in Canada as an ethnic group ... It is high time scholars explored the English, the great unstudied ethnic group in Canada ... I found Ethnicity in the Mainstream intellectually challenging and a real revelation of how far folklorists have progressed and of how much they have to offer other disciplines."

Bruce Elliott, Department of History, Carleton University.

Pauline Greenhill is associate professor of women's studies, University of Winnipeg.

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Editor's Note: In Canada there is little debate about the basics of immigration. Most newspaper accounts deal with horror stories relating usually to refugees, deportations or illegal migrants. The special interest groups and all the political parties agree immigration is a good thing. In the USA the debate is much more active and much more wide-ranging, with some groups advocating zero immigration and others, such as the Wall Street Journal, on the side of totally unrestricted immigration. The following resolution, passed by the council of the city of Aspen, Colorado falls somewhere in between, but highlights a number of issues that we in Canada rarely if ever hear about.

The Aspen City Council (Colorado)
voted 5 to 0 in favor of Resolution 114
on December 13, 1999:

City of Aspen, Colorado

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF U.S.
POPULATION STABILIZATION**

WHEREAS: The population of the United States reached about 274 million in 1999 and is growing by approximately three million each

year, over 57,000 weekly, the highest population growth rate of the developed countries of the world. Most European countries are at zero or negative population growth. (Professor Albert Bartlett, University of Colorado, Boulder)

WHEREAS: The population of the U.S. is six percent of the world's population, consuming up to 25 percent of the world's natural resources. (Population Reference Bureau)

WHEREAS: The ability of the United States to support a population within its carrying capacity is now strained because of population growth. Fifty percent of our original wetlands have been drained to accommodate growth. (Environmental Protection Agency) Ninety-five percent of all U.S. old growth forests have been destroyed. (Save American Forests) It is estimated that we have consumed approximately three-fourths of all our recoverable petroleum, and we now import more than half of the oil we consume in the United States. (Dr. Albert Bartlett) America's underground aquifers are being drawn down 23 percent more than their natural rates of recharge. (David Durham, Carrying Capacity Network)

WHEREAS: For each person added to the U.S. population, about one acre of open land is lost, causing a total yearly loss of about three million acres. America annually exports \$40 Billion in food. If present population trends continue, the U.S. will cease to be a food exporter by about 2030. (Dr. David Pimentel, Cornell University)

WHEREAS: The report of the Task Force on Population and Consumption of the President's Council on Sustainable Development (1996) said: "The two most important steps toward sustainability are: 1. to stabilize the population promptly, and 2. to move toward greater material and energy efficiency in all production

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and use of goods and service." The President's Council said, "...reducing immigration levels is a necessary part of population stabilization and the drive toward sustainability."

WHEREAS: Population growth generated by mass immigration to the United States causes increasing pressures on our environment and forces local governments and communities to spend taxpayers dollars for additional schools, health care facilities, water disposal plants, transportation systems, fire protection, water supplies, power generation plants and many other social and environmental costs. (Carrying Capacity Network; Roy Beck, Immigration by the Numbers)

WHEREAS: 70 percent of U.S. population growth in the 1990's resulted from mass immigration, comprised of approximately 1.2 million legal immigrants and 300,000 to 400,000 illegal immigrants plus their U.S.- born offspring, annually. (Center for Immigration Studies, January, 1999) If mass immigration continues, the population of the United States is projected to exceed half-a-billion by 2050. (United States Census Bureau)

WHEREAS: Excessive population growth is unsustainable. With a return to replacement levels of immigration, U.S. population can expect to stabilize in another 40 to 50 years, at best at 325 million (Dr. Albert Bartlett) Replacement level of immigration is approximately 200,000 per year.(U.S. Census Bureau).

WHEREAS: A majority of Americans of all ethnic and racial backgrounds favors substantial reduction in legal immigration and a complete halt to illegal immigration. (1998 Wall Street Journal Poll; 1996 Roper Poll; Hispanic USA Group survey)

WHEREAS: The people of the United States and the City of Aspen, Colorado, envision a country with a stable population, material and energy efficiency, a sustainable future, a healthy environment, clean air and water, ample open

space, wilderness, abundant wildlife and social and civic cohesion in which the dignity of human life is enhanced and protected.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the City of Aspen hereby petitions the Congress of the United States and the President to immediately implement-with deliberate speed and by means consistent with the Constitution of the United States, the consensus of the American People and the President's Council-legislation appropriate to stabilize the population of the United States and insure sustainability: (1) that will encourage and promote all opportunities toward establishing and maintaining material and energy efficiency, social and environmental responsibility; (2) by a return to traditional replacement levels of legal immigration, approximately 175,000, all-inclusive, annually; (3) by requiring equitable wages and benefits for workers and community environmental protections to be part of all free trade agreements; and (4)by mandated enforcement of our immigration laws against illegal immigration, thereby promoting the future well being of all the citizens of this Nation and the City of Aspen.

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CANADIAN IMMIGRATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY

***Form for Initial Membership, Membership
Renewal, & Change of Address.***

Please note that the Membership Year runs from May 1 to April 30.

1) Please enter / renew my membership in the C. I. H. S.

Fee Attached \$ _ _ [Life Member (\$100) , Annual Member (\$10)]

Name:

2) Please fill out address etc. *only* if joining for the first time or if you wish to inform us of a change of address etc.

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

A GENTLE REMINDER RE 1999/2000 DUES

Our present fiscal year began May 1, 1999 and ends April 30, 2000, a couple of months hence. Please check your membership card or the number on this mailing envelope and if it shows (9) it means you had forgotten to send your much appreciated cheque for \$10

As our new fiscal year begins on May 1, 2000 I would suggest you might wish to send us a cheque for \$20.00 which will make you a member in good standing until, April 30, 2001. We sure would appreciate hearing from you at your convenience. Thanks in advance


 Alan Troy, Treasurer

3) Please send this form with your cheque to:

The Treasurer
 The Canadian Immigration Historical Society
 P.O. Box 9502, Station T
 Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 3V2