



# C·I·H·S BULLETIN

Issue 52

ISSN 1485 - 8460

December 2007

The Canadian Immigration Historical Society • P O Box 9502, Station T • Ottawa ON K1G 3W2 • [cihs@ncf.ca](mailto:cihs@ncf.ca) • <http://cihs.ncf.ca/index.htm>

## The Transfer of Offenders Treaty A Recollection Of An Old Immigration Officer

by Nick Wise

Back in 1971 I joined Canada's immigration service at the local Ottawa Canada Immigration Centre as the service was expanding to process the growing number of non-immigrant applicants for landing in Canada. I'll always remember the great colleagues in that service when I subsequently moved on to Citizenship Registration and finished my public service career at Canada's Passport Office, retiring in 2007.

At a very enjoyable meeting of past immigration members last year I was encouraged by Mike Molloy to document my experience with the first transfer of offenders between Canada and the United States.

After a stint in Enforcement Policy at IDHQ I moved on to the Kingston CIC as the Officer-in-Charge of two very capable employees, Lynn Fenner and Gail Dunn. Lynn had a lot of work with all the area 'goals' (as I recall them referred to in the old Immigration Act of the 50's) and we had a lot of student visa cases and some sponsorships. The days of more frequent 'ship jumping' had long preceded me. Kingston was a beautiful city and I stayed there from 1977 to 1979 when I returned to the National Capital area joining Citizenship Registration.

### Editor's Note

*In some ways this is a sad issue of the CIHS Bulletin since we record the passing of Cal Best and Al Troy with short articles about each. Paul Scott has asked, on behalf of Betty Troy, that special thanks be extended to Al's colleagues who were especially helpful to her in the final stage.*

*Unfortunately we have also learned of the deaths of Elizabeth Gryte and Lloyd Dowsell. Tributes will appear in a future issue and we would be pleased to receive more contributions.*

*The articles which appear in this issue are nothing if not diverse: '40s/'50s Europe, '70s Canada and '90s Middle East—examples of how our newsletter is a useful historical tool.*

*For the record, this is the last issue for which I shall be responsible. Peter Duschinsky will take over next year. Good luck to him!*

David Bullock

As some may recall Canada and the United States signed a Transfer of Offenders treaty in March of 1977, and we were notified by HQ through our regional office in Toronto, in early 1978, that the two countries were 'marshalling' their efforts to arrange a large exchange of prisoners to implement the treaty. I took responsibility for this program in the office, though I can't remember whether I wanted this for myself or whether Lynn declined, having had enough to do with prisoners. In any event, the Americans had decided to coordinate the transfer by bringing the 'eligible' Canadian prisoners to an institution in Chicago and Canada would be gathering the US citizen prisoners in the Kingston area.

We were given the contact numbers of Canadian coordinators in Ottawa for Correction Services, Immigration and Citizenship and as luck would have it, William Van Staaldin, at the Canadian Consulate in Chicago. I had worked for Bill while at

IDHQ. For me the challenge was all about ensuring that I would know who was to appear at my port of entry and that the documentation was in place to confirm their identity and Canadian citizenship beforehand. Needless to say, many phone calls and telexes preceded the event and all appeared to be in place for 30 to 40 prisoners from each country to arrive on a U.S. plane.

The Officer-in-Charge of the nearby Cape Vincent U.S. port of entry, and I arranged to drive out to the Kingston Airport, such that it was, to 'witness' the landing, arrangements having been made for the secure examination of the Canadian arrivals in the confines of Kingston Penitentiary.

It was a light but overcast late-spring morning when the institutional buses and supplementary guard vehicles rolled up near the tarmac and very shortly thereafter an old propeller plane from the fifties came down smoothly. The buses moved up close to the plane as it stopped. In a very orderly manner off came men with both arm and leg shackles, looking very pale and meek, and they were quickly put on to the empty buses and off they went. This was followed by about the same number of much more tanned and vigorous men, only handcuffed as I recall who were loaded on to the plane and off it quickly went. All this took about 20 minutes.

I next went to the Penitentiary, waiting for about 10 minutes before I entered through its very large gate. It had turned sunny and it is rather attractive in there with the limestone inner buildings and perimeter walls and clear but well-maintained lawns between the buildings. There was an area inside a building where the prisoners were being organized for me to examine together with their documentation. As it turned out, there were about 4 individuals for whom complete citizenship documentation was not available and I think a few of them were not on the manifest which I had been provided beforehand. I simply advised the Corrections authority that I was 'detaining' them under the Immigration Act and we would subsequently chase down their particulars. I returned to our office, filed my reports and over the course of a few days all documentation was confirmed between the parties.

I assume these men have served, or are still serving their time—as for me, I was left with the very strong sense that these Canadians were particularly glad to have returned to Canada under the Transfer of Offenders Program!

# A YEAR IN THE EMIRATES

## Blueprint for Change — Part Two

by Gary Komar, CIHS Director-at-large,  
Prairies (Winnipeg)

Armed with the Minister's approval, I set about the task of preparing detailed plans. In addition the Sheikh ordered the formation of a Special Committee to oversee VIP office developments. Brigadier Mattar Salem Al Niyadi, Director of Information Technology at the Interior Ministry, and Majors Salem and Sultan from the Police Directorate's Human Resources department were assigned to assist with our needs and to monitor our progress. I was to have detailed plans ready for presentation to the Special Committee before the end of December 2004. One month's Christmas leave had been scheduled for the third week of December when I intended to return to Canada. By December 1, my induction process was still incomplete. I still had not been paid my salary, the apartment lease fees, or the furniture allowance dictated in my contract.

Four hours before I was to leave for Canada, Saeed and I were suddenly called before the Special Committee to present our plans. This whole process underscored the two concepts of doing business in the Emirates: "Hurry, hurry! Wait, wait!" and "Inshallah" (When God Wills). Saeed and I were continually bombarded with these extremes.

During the first week of December I designed new organization and work flow charts after consulting with supervisors in the Visa, Residence, Passport, and IT units. Particular attention was paid to streamlining systems and to provide for on-line applications. We intended to enable clients to make applications and pay fees on-line, remove from managers the onerous and time-consuming daily chore of signing thousands of visa and residence permits, and to have applications and permits picked up and delivered by a local courier service. Authority would be given to trained, front-line staff to issue machine-signed and machine-read coded permits. Routine applicants would be given same-day customer service. Clients would not be sent elsewhere or have to return to the office repeatedly. Personal interviews would be necessary only in contentious cases, and a specially trained Problem Officer would be available to assist in complex cases. The new system would remove the necessity for many to appear personally at the VIP office to have their applications processed. Managers

and supervisors would be trained to manage the office professionally and its staff to have the tools to anticipate change, and to plan accordingly.

Saeed was given a list of assignments to complete while I was on holidays for one month. I asked him to spend a week or two with four select Head Office staff to study the Dubai operation. The Dubai Work Team was to make a detailed report when I returned. He was to follow up with ADNOC for suitable office space, and explore with local training institutes the courses available in English, computer, customer relations, and management. All staff would require upgrading on immigration rules and procedures which had to be provided by the Datel Corporation in Dubai. Datel had the expertise and gave training to Dubai immigration employees. Saeed was also asked to look at the Human Resources unit at the Abu Dhabi Head Office and in Dubai in terms of personnel salaries and financial accounting, as well as the current method of buying equipment and supplies. He was to speak with the local staff in the immigration security, lookouts, and investigation units in order that we might provide expanded capabilities at the new office. The VIP office was to be a separate and totally self-contained operation. Some 100 employees would be needed. Some were to be selected for their experience from Head Office personnel; others for their skills and abilities through Tanmia, the Emirate's national employment services. We were instructed to recruit 20 male graduates from the Police College.

January 2005: I arranged an appointment with Kathleen Nectoux, the ranking visa counsellor at the Canadian Embassy in Abu Dhabi to review Canadian overseas visa operations. Saeed and I also expressed the need for fraudulent document training for Head Office and VIP staff. Kathleen's husband, Patrice, the Airport Liaison Officer with the Canadian Consulate in Dubai, agreed to assist. This contact would prove rewarding in establishing a working relationship between Abu Dhabi immigration, and the Canadian and British Embassies. In June 2005, Patrice Nectoux and Robin Humphries of the British Embassy in Abu Dhabi gave fraudulent document training to ports of entry and inland immigration staff, with a promise to add sessions in interview techniques.

There now followed in rapid succession the execution of a half dozen stages of a plan that Saeed and I carried out over the next eight months virtually alone through persuasion, coercion, and threat. Repeatedly we had to remind those in the bureaucratic system, including our Special Committee members of the wishes of the Minister of Interior on the establishment of the VIP office. His Highness shared our vision and

gave us direct access to his office if we needed to overcome obstacles. Yet the bureaucratic system was a continual challenge, determined to move at its own traditional pace. We were later told by organizational experts that what we accomplished in one year in the Emirates, would normally take five. The fact we were attempting to train Emiratees to provide customer service was unheard of; the locals usually expected to be served not to serve others. We were establishing a model organization that could be emulated at every government level.

Broadly speaking the plan included the following:

- find and develop the physical space with a view to future expansion of facilities,
- select and train 100 staff from three diverse areas, grant management and staff new authorities, and desegregate men and women to enable them to work together side by side.
- incorporate a new fee system and partner with an Abu Dhabi bank and the Finance Ministry,
- create specific job titles and a practical work flow system, coordinating clearances with the national security, labour, finance, and health departments,
- design a new IT system to handle on-line applications, fee payments, security and labour clearances, document preparation with photograph, fingerprint and eye scan features, and statistical gathering for management tracking and planning,
- design an overseas operation.

Except for the overseas operation, the goal was to bring all the elements together at the same time. While the physical space was being found, designed and constructed according to job title and work flow specifications, staff would be interviewed, hired and trained, and a new IT system established to include on-line applications and fee payment systems. The VIP office was to open tentatively in September 2005 to initially test and fine-tune all areas, with two shifts fully operational after Ramadan. It was to be a streamlined, flexible, and professional organization that provided superior customer service and delegated authority to employees without compromising national policies or interests. And it was to be run as a business.

Yet the 'model organization' vision came with restrictions. Where Saeed and I saw the need to have the Datel organization from Dubai train our diverse staff in every phase of the new operation, we were instructed to engage local training institutes and to reduce the costs. Datel was under contract to Dubai

immigration to provide full and continuing services. Since our VIP motto was 'Dubai or better' we considered it essential that the Datel experts provide the same full training package.

Saeed and I also considered the new office could not function with less than 100 employees as a one-stop-shop. We were told to start with 50. Fifty employees were not enough. Otherwise we would have to eliminate some services. The office would operate independently and include personnel, pay and finance, and office support/supplies units. We anticipated taking a third of the business away from Head Office and its 1000 employees during the first year of operation. As the public became more aware of the speed and efficiency of the new VIP immigration service, we expected units of business to double. Our clients were certain to include the 250,000 employees, family members and domestics associated with ADNOC. We would need trained staff to plug into the new system as operations expanded. I once asked His Highness what would happen to Head Office if the VIP operation took most of its business away. His answer was simple and direct: Head Office would either change the way it did business, or close.

We were also instructed to hold to a staff ratio of 75 men to 25 women. We argued the mix, had to be at least 50/50. The women, we suggested, were more intelligent, better educated, and worked harder. Many were unemployed or underemployed because of the Islamic cultural and religious norms in the Emirates. We had to convince our colleagues and superiors that current traditions would not be able to cope with future challenges. To meet the demands of the 21st century, radical change was necessary. Otherwise, we argued, the project would fail.

After reviewing the findings of the Dubai Work Team, Saeed and I set about to execute our plans, wary that conditions and instructions could change at any given moment. What was approved today, could be changed tomorrow. We learned to be patient, yet flexible, persistent and firm. When clearance for some aspect of the project was promised for a certain day and not delivered, we shuttled back and forth from one Interior Ministry office to another politely waving the Sheik's letter of authority and asking a Colonel or General in charge for a document or decision. Saeed and I would later joke that since we returned to some offices so often, we were given what we wanted just to get rid of us. There was also the danger a Ministry employee might get a dismissal call from the Sheik's office. In the Emirates system of government, there is no appeal against dismissal; a person is just "sent home".

In December 2004, a member of the royal family offered us the vacant Women's Sports Centre building he owned at the Abu Dhabi Exhibition grounds, as the site of our new VIP office. This offer was later withdrawn in February 2005 sending Saeed and I scurrying for another location, only to have the offer returned to us again in March. Situated between downtown Abu Dhabi and the airport, the empty building consisted of two long wings on one level, some 15 meters deep by 450 meters wide. Desk type counters were to be constructed and would span almost the full width of each wing. Staff and support offices were to be located behind the front counters. This would enable clients to sit comfortably during interviews. Each counter station would include staff computers coupled to machine-signed, machine-read document scanners and printers. Two shifts would operate between 7:30 am and 2:30 pm, and from 2:30pm to 9:30 pm, Saturday to Wednesday (the normal Emirate work days).

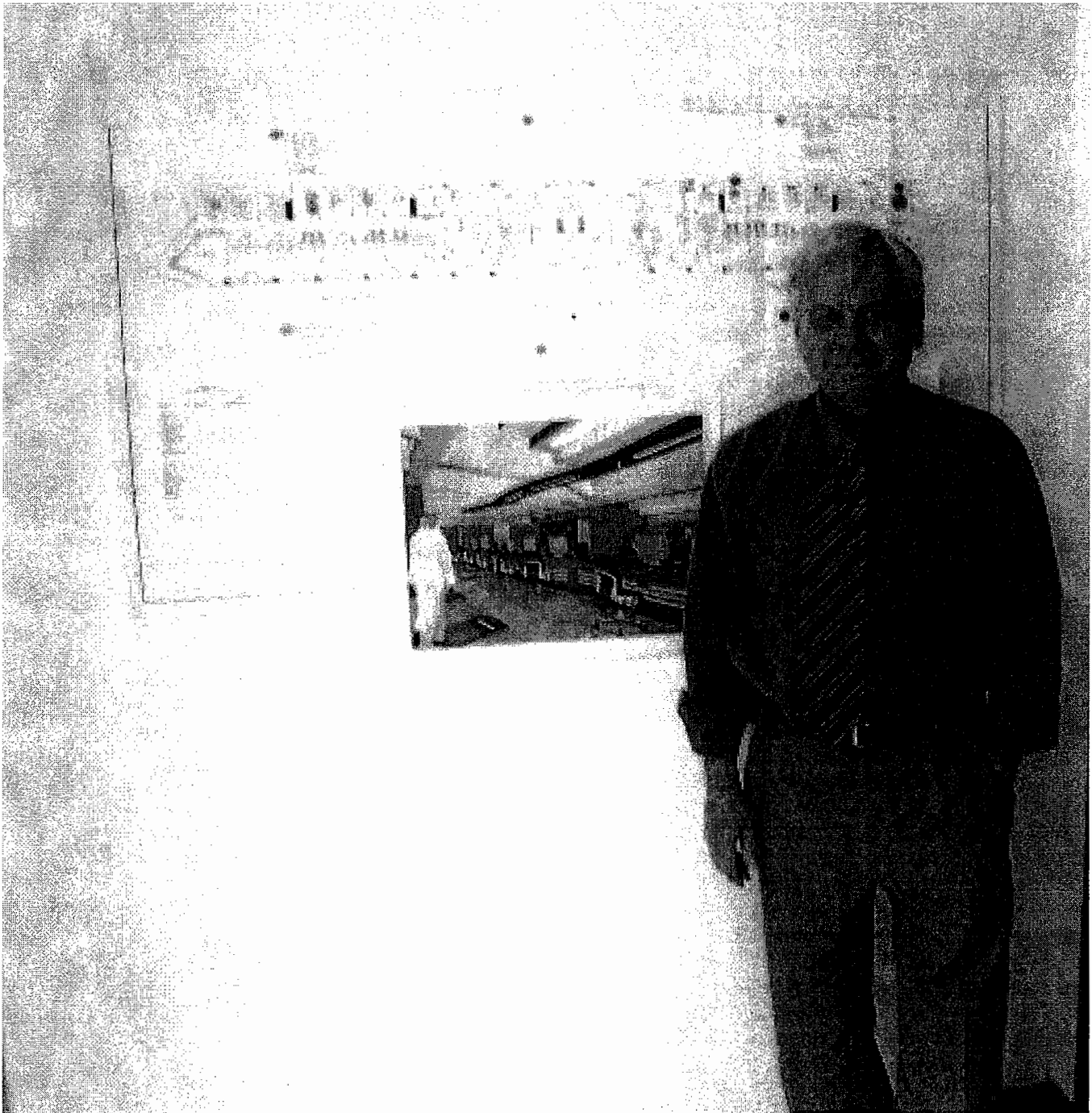
With building architectural plans in hand, we designed the interior space. A police engineer was assigned to draw up the interior space, and to seek tenders from construction firms. Initially, the engineer drew up his interior plans without consulting us concerning our workflow specifications. The plans and renovations would cost some 850,000 Dirhams, with construction to start in the summer and finish 6 months later. The delays meant the VIP office would not be open until December 2005.

One day in April 2005 Saeed and I were told to rush out to Al Ain and select 20 male police cadets from the Police College's March graduating class. No lists. No names. No resumes. No contact arrangements. After two unproductive trips, we assembled some 400 cadets on the parade grounds. I asked Said to pose three questions to the assembled group: How many speak English, have a high school education, and want to join the immigration department. Some 20 people put up their hands. We interviewed them all and selected 12. Later we learned that three had already been chosen to work for another government department and were unavailable to us. The selection process had to be repeated again for the May graduating class until we had our 20 people.

The Tanmia organization approached our problem more professionally. We provided our contact there with our specifications and salary levels. The candidates were expected to have knowledge of English, high school or better education, ICDL (International Computer Driving License) computer skills, some business experience, and a willingness to help others. Tanmia screened hundreds of

unemployed applicants, mainly women, and scheduled on our behalf some 400 interviews. Between April and June 2005 we interviewed and selected 100 people, 50 for the new office and 25 on a Team A reserve list as alternates, to be hired if our

operation expanded. Another 25 people who showed potential were put on a Team B reserve list. The majority of our candidates were women.



*Gary with the plan*

After inviting Abu Dhabi immigration employees to apply, we interviewed about 100 people and selected 30, including six male managers and supervisors. We

wanted ten management personnel but could only qualify six candidates who had the skills, abilities, willingness, and attitudes to make the grade. I asked

the Special Committee to appoint Captain Saeed manager of the new VIP office.

Our Special Committee considered the Datel training costs of 1.5 million Dirhams too high. Saeed and I argued unsuccessfully that for the sake of training consistency and Datel's years of expertise providing training to Dubai immigration staff, the cost was well worth it. I pointed out that during the first year of operation the VIP office would more than recover these training costs through the new fee system. Our plans called to have all VIP staff candidates upgrade their English skills, obtain ICDL (computer) certification, and undergo customer relations and immigration rules upgrading. They were to learn the current IT data base system as well as a new one. The police cadets and Tanmia candidates would need to learn the immigration rules and current IT system from scratch. And we would need all staff taught an English course in immigration terminology, not just conversational English. In addition, six Head Office employees were to take a management-training course.

With Datel excluded because of costs (although we managed to obtain a concession to have Datel give immigration rules training; no Abu Dhabi educational institute was qualified), Saeed and I invited proposals from a number of educational organizations. Our Special Committee agreed with our choice of one institute to provide ICDL, customer relations, and management training. Datel would give the immigration rules and immigration IT systems training. English teachers at the Interior Ministry's Police College agreed to upgrade the English capabilities of our new staff, as well as teach an immigration terminology English class drawn up according to my specifications. The total cost of all training was 500,000 Dirhams, with Tanmia agreeing to pay half the costs for the 50 people we selected through their organization. This was not what Saeed and I wanted but it was a start. I impressed on him that when the VIP operation was up and running, he could take the profits from the fees collected, and send staff to Datel on refresher courses. We expected salary and operating costs to be no more than 20 million Dirhams a year. Income from the new fee system would be approximately 100 million Dirhams initially based on a client intake of 400,000 people (250,000 from ADNOC; 150,000 from the general public). We were convinced that by providing quick and efficient service, more people would use the VIP office in the future.

While the VIP office plans in were progress, the UAE Cabinet decided that it needed a new citizenship

process. In April 2005 I was asked to draw up preliminary plans for new citizenship procedures with Ray Cairns, a newly hired British immigration consultant. Few expatriates were granted citizenship status, and then only after living some 30 years in the Emirates. Applicants petitioned the Sheik's office through some process we were never able to determine, and were dealt with through an office in Federal Immigration. When Ray, Saeed and I attempted to examine the current process, the contact at the Federal immigration office refused to cooperate without written authority.

Saeed continued with the VIP project, while I detached myself temporarily to work with Ray on the proposed citizenship system. While Ray researched other facets of this project, I drew up a detailed organization and work flow chart and statements of duties, based on the Canadian model, including incorporating a permanent residence process. The Emirates has no system of granting permanent residence prior to the grant of citizenship. The government called a Swiss citizenship expert to make a presentation on his country's system to a group of senior police executives, at which time Ray and I contributed our opinions. Eventually, I was able to have Ray take the lead in the citizenship project in order that I might concentrate on the VIP operation.

To keep the Special Committee focused, Saeed and I repeatedly stressed the VIP Philosophy: the office was to run according to modern management principles, with state of the art technology, staffed by people who were valued and well-trained, and to provide quality service to the public. *Dubai or better!*

**Part Three of Gary Komar's article will appear in a future issue of the *CIHS Bulletin*.**



Editor's Note:

Reproduced below is the covering letter sent by Roger St. Vincent with his article, *We look on this as a particularly valuable contribution to our knowledge of a fascinating period of postwar immigration history.*

DGB

The Editor, CIHS Bulletin  
PO Box 9502 Terminal T  
Ottawa, Ontario K1G 3V2

June 29, 2006

The attached article is by no means exhaustive but it may be sufficient to bore some readers. It is not easy to condense in a few pages events that happened over nearly four years serving with the CGIM.

I have also attached two maps in color—both could be in black and white, since color is not a forte of the Society. During this assignment, I rubbed shoulders with more doctors, security and immigration officers than at most periods of my career with the exception of the "Asian exodus." What made the difference with other assignment was the constant travel from one IRO Processing Center to the next, sometimes many hundreds of miles away for many years. I wish I could have included the names of all those with whom I worked during this important period of generosity by Canada. It resulted in so many benefits as the refugees in found their niche in our society. A great many established themselves as entrepreneurs creating jobs for Canadians in all walks of life.

On behalf of all those who took park, I wish to say that we played our part to the full.

*Roger St. Vincent*

4998 Maisonneuve West (1021)  
Westmount PQ  
H3Z 1N2

*Maps:*

*p. 8 Occupied Germany.*  
*p. 9 Karlsruhe (Durlach).*

# THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT IMMIGRATION MISSION

## Karlsruhe, Germany 1948-1952

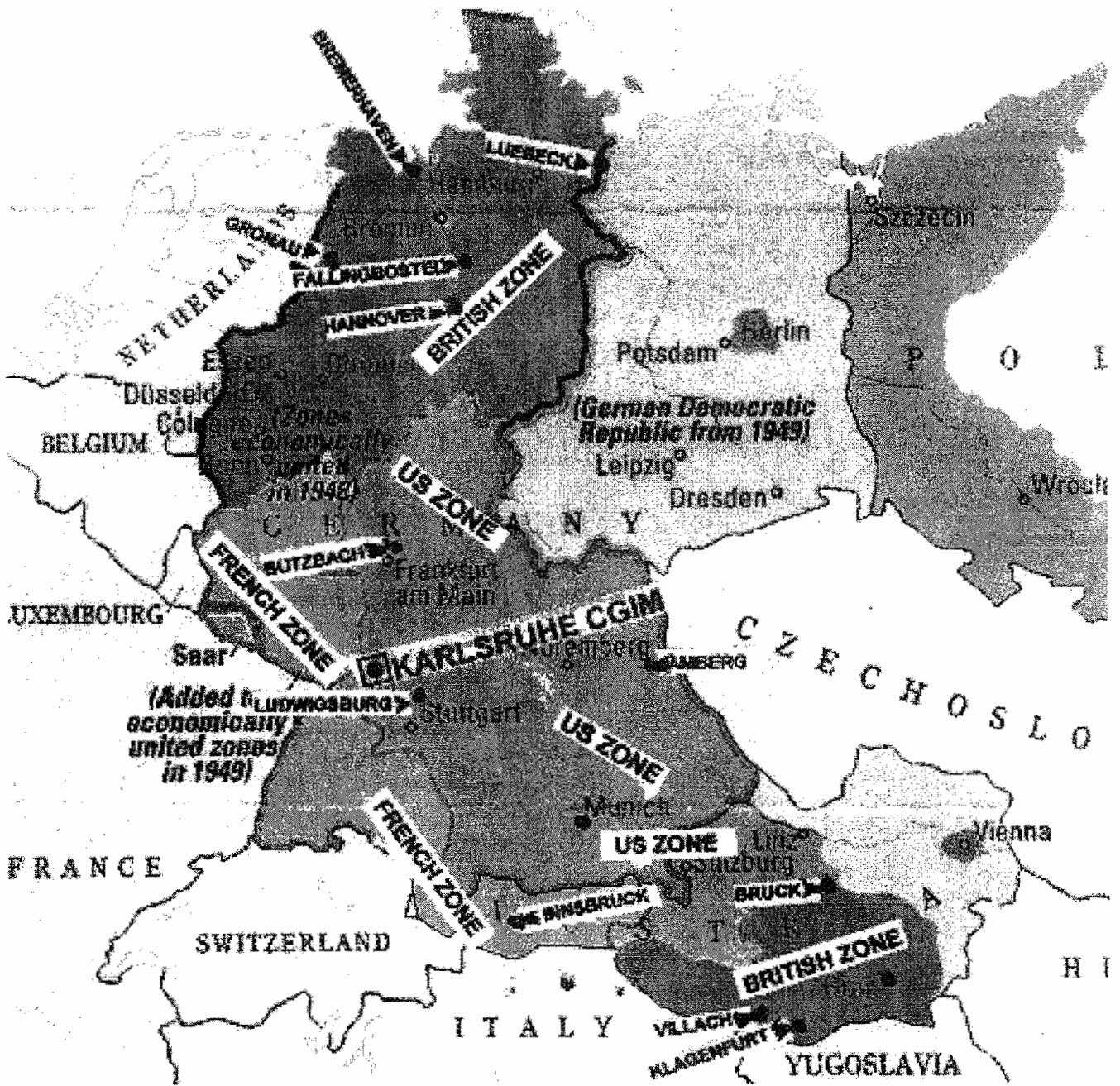
**By Roger St. Vincent**

I was on duty at the Port of Lacolle, Quebec, in December 1947 when I called Roger Martineau, who was working the 4pm to midnight shift at Dorval Airport. He told me that he had to report to the Woods Building, Ottawa for an interview with C. G. Congdon, the Commissioner for Overseas, about an assignment to Germany. I knew Roger well, having served together with the RAF in the Middle East during WW II. He said that he applied in answer to a poster asking for volunteers to go abroad. I had not seen that poster at Lacolle. He did not have a car and I offered to drive him to Ottawa. We drove to Ottawa in a snowstorm in early January 1948 in my 1940 Ford convertible with insufficient heating.

I left Roger at the Woods Building and waited for him at the Lord Elgin Hotel. When he came back from the interview, he said that he was told that he would hear about the outcome in a few months. Then he surprised me when he said that the Commissioner wanted to see the border officer who drove to Ottawa in such terrible weather. When I met Mr. Congdon, he asked about my duties and wanted to know if I was interested in going abroad. I said yes, adding that I came back from Germany a few months before. He said that I would hear from him.

We drove back to Montreal in the same storm and awaited the results of the interview. Roger got his assignment, leaving Montreal by ship in May 1948, transiting through London to get his permit to enter the Allied Zones of Occupation. I left a month later via a similar route.

Our first Immigration Officer In the Occupied Zones was Immigration Officer Odillon Cormier. Prior to WW II he worked in a number of European cities as Officer-in-Charge, processing immigrants for Canada. He went to Berlin, on behalf of our Government to discuss with the Allies and the PCIRO the modus



The map shows the zones of occupation in Germany and Austria at the end of WW II. The Soviets occupied areas in light grey. The US Occupation Forces had an enclave in the British Zone at Bremen and used the port of Bremerhaven for supplies and movement of their troops. The International Refugee Organization had a processing camp at Bremen and the International Committee for European Migration (ICEM) used the facilities of Bremerhaven and Cuxhaven to transport refugees to North America. The cities of Berlin and Vienna were split in four zones of occupation, i.e., US, French, British and Soviet. The names of the IRO Processing Camps are where I and some of my colleagues worked. The names appear throughout this chapter

operandi for the selection, processing and onward movement of refugees/displaced persons for Canada. The discussions included the questions of housing, accreditation, privileges, etc for our immigration officers, doctors, labour officers and security officers

who were to carry out the selection of refugees/DPs in the Allied Occupied Zones of Germany and Austria. I arrived at Karlsruhe with my travelling companions, officers Jim Milner and Charlie Anfossi and was driven



to the Canadian Government Immigration Mission (CGIM) in Durlach, a suburb of Karlsruhe, by



the Mission's driver. We met the Chief of the Mission, P.W. Bird, from Vancouver and his assistant, Eve Young from the London office. After a short briefing, I realized that this would be an interesting and challenging assignment with many unexpected perks. I never saw mention of these in the poster, so I was pleasantly surprised. Among the perks was US\$10.20 per diem paid in travellers' cheques. After six months, I received Terminal Allowances at the Grade 6 level. As I had a driver's licence, I became responsible for driving a new Ford sedan with a doctor and a security officer to the various IRO camps in the Allied Occupation Zones of Germany and Austria.

Arrivals at the CGIM and others in transit stayed a short distance from the CGIM in a large villa requisitioned by the US Town Major. The accommodation and meals were free. In other parts of the US Zone of Occupation in Germany and Austria, the hotel accommodation cost 25 cents and the maximum for meals was 1 dollar. Hotel rooms in the British Zone were free.

Since it was assumed that we were experienced officers, we were not told much, except that we would be going to work with a team for a few days to familiarize ourselves with the procedures. We were never told what the security officers did nor what

questions they asked, although their IRO interpreters knew it all.

The other members, including doctors, Department of Labour and, I suspect, security officers received \$15. As their 'chauffeurs', immigration officers got less.

In a few days, I had a new set of Visa and Extension Stamps (XXXVI), a valid US driver's license and the US registration for the 1948 Ford Sedan. I was provided with US gasoline and oil coupons by Miss Young as well as a Post Exchange (PX) card allowing me to buy duty free goods in US Army Post Exchanges stores throughout the US Occupied Zones of Germany and Austria. One exchanged traveller's cheques for US Military Script to buy goods.

Miss Young told me to go to Munich on Sunday and report to Bob Baker for familiarization. He was in Munich on a 'permanent' basis with Dr. W.R. Bulmer and Security Officer Ted Bye. They lived in a large second story flat in a sector of Munich where flats were requisitioned by the Munich US Town Major. The flat had four-bedrooms, was fully furnished and was serviced by German personnel. Bob had a commissary card enabling him to buy meat, bread, coffee etc. They prepared their breakfast and ate at US establishments.

On Monday morning, I followed Bob's car to the large International Refugee Organization (IRO) Processing centre, the 'Funk Kaserne,' Headquarters for Bavaria, in an ex-German Army barracks north of Munich. The IRO had its regional offices in that building. There were sections staffed with IRO personnel for countries that accepted large numbers of refugees like Canada, Australia and the USA. They looked after the documentation and medical examinations of the refugees. Bob introduced me to the IRO staff at the Canada Section and I met his two multilingual secretaries at his office. I sat by Bob when he interviewed the first refugee family. Bob Baker's team was stationed at Munich because the IRO at the Funk Kaserne was able to supply, on a continuous basis, refugees applying to go to Canada.

I should clarify the use of the words 'IRO Processing Centers.' They were large army barracks or 'kaserne' throughout the Allied Occupation Zones that were taken over by the IRO for their operations to run refugee camps in their area. They had the facilities to document refugees who came from outlying refugee camps and were accepted by Canada and other countries. The refugees had their documentation prepared by IRO staff, including IRO Doctors who X-rayed them and completed a medical form. Applications for immigration to Canada as well as travel documents were completed at these centres. In

some cases, the refugees were bussed from their camp to the centre for a day and returned to their camp.

Employers in Canada informed the Labour Department officials about their manpower needs. That information was collated by the Department of Labour in Ottawa and transmitted to the IRO, which posted the Labour Scheme requests in Refugee Camps. Once the refugees applied for a particular scheme, the IRO created a file and told the CGIM where the refugees could be interviewed by the labour officer to ascertain their qualifications. This was the case for sugar beet workers, millinery workers, domestics, general labourers, single or married farm workers, sewing machine operators, textile workers etc. Each file of refugees selected under the various schemes bore a Department of Labour stamp on the front page of the file with the name of the scheme.

Some Canadian organizations like the Canadian Jewish and Hebrew Immigrant Aid Societies, the Canadian Mennonite Church and the Canadian Christian Council for the Resettlement of Refugees were active in the recruiting process. They provided guidance to refugees selected under the various Labour Schemes

The file prepared by the IRO's Canada Section staff contained a one page Application for Admission to Canada, showing tombstone data, marital status, dependents, and on the bottom of the page, information about the refugee's residence, workplace and employment since 1939. On the reverse of the application there was a declaration which the refugee was asked to sign to the effect that the answers he gave in the application corresponded to the truth. The file also contained the IRO Medical Officer's report and an X-ray for everyone over 12 years of age for our doctor's guidance. The other document on file was the IRO travel document called 'Certificate of Identity for the Purpose of Immigration to Canada.' It contained the photo of the refugee, tombstone data, marital status, nationality, occupation, parents' names, description of holder and the signature of an authorized IRO officer vouching for the document. The refugees came back to be interviewed by members of a Canadian team.

The IRO file was presented first to the Security Officer who interviewed the refugee and, if he was satisfied with the bona fides, placed his stamp 'Passed Security' on the Application for Immigration to Canada with the date and his initials. His secretary-interpreter then took the file and the refugees to the doctor. If the Security officer found the refugee inadmissible according to his criteria, he stamped the Application 'Not Passed for Security' and the file was

taken to the Visa Officer who told the refugee that he was not admissible to Canada.

The doctor was the busiest person, having to examine each person thoroughly. He had to wait for the refugees to undress and dress again before he could proceed with the next case. The doctor or his secretary placed the allotted round medical stamp on the Travel Document with the serial number of the Medical Notification and Record form and the doctor's signature. The pace of examination depended on the doctor's workload. Examining single persons did not create any bottlenecks.

When the refugee/s appeared in front of Bob Baker, one of the two multilingual secretaries checked the file and handed it to him saying everything is OK. This meant that the Security officer's stamp was 'passed Security' and the doctor had not certified or found the refugee/s to be unhealthy. Bob's secretary asked the questions without being prompted, the examinations being treated as routine and repetitious. If Bob was satisfied, he told the refugee/s they were accepted for Canada and they left relieved and smiling. The secretary placed the visa stamp on the Travel Document and completed the entries. She repeated this action on the Application Form for Immigration to Canada and Bob signed both visas and the file was returned to the IRO's Canada Section by the other secretary.

The same procedure took place at all IRO processing camps where I went except that, in a very short time, I was fluent enough in German not to rely on questions and answers by third parties. I asked more background questions wishing to familiarize myself with <sup>to</sup> how the refugees ended up in refugee camps. I also paid less credence to answers given on the Application form for Immigration to Canada since the answers given by the refugees to the IRO employee completing the forms were accepted by the latter at face value. Most likely, they had orders to move the refugees out of camps.

While officers such as Bob Baker in Munich and O. Petersen in Hannover were 'permanent' because of the workload at those places, I and most other officers were part of what was referred to as 'flying teams.' Usually, we would move each week from one processing camp to another, sometimes a day's travel away, to be ready to examine refugees by Monday morning. When the Canadian Government decided to increase its intake of refugees, more immigration officers arrived as well as doctors and security officers. This required J.R.F. Robillard, assistant to P.W. Bird, to accelerate the response from the IRO Processing Centres for the presence of teams to process more

refugees. Teams travelled non-stop over weekends to reach the next IRO Processing Centre for the following Monday morning. We travelled from Ludwigsburg to Faltingbostel or to Lübeck facing the Soviets across the Trave river. Gronau on the Dutch border was the Mennonite camp while Amberg was near the Czech border. The Ludwigsburg Kaserne was a busy IRO Processing Centre for the large number of refugees from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania from the nearby Essingen Camp. It was always pleasant to work at the Lehen Kaserne in Salzburg, Austria, but less so in Brück auf der Mur, Villach and Graz, in the British Zone of Occupation in Austria.

A number of incidents took place during the nearly four years that I spent with the CGIM. It was a thrilling experience to be given the responsibility for the Austrian operations, although still reporting to Mr. Robillard who took over from Mr. Bird when the latter returned to Vancouver. That lasted nine months and I had two visa officers, a doctor and a security officer to assist with the operations. The assignment came to an end when I returned to Canada, married and was reassigned to the Montreal Immigration Office as of April 1952.

The IRO folded on December 31, 1951. This was not the end of our involvement in the refugee movement, as we continued to process refugees in Germany and Austria as well as those who made their way to other European countries. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees took over from the IRO and we continued to accept and process refugee applications.

According to official statistics, Canada received 186,000 refugees between 1947 and 1952 of whom half came from Germany and Austria. The screening system to ensure that we did not select people who were undesirable was not one hundred percent foolproof. We had a number of court cases, in later years, about 'refugees' who managed to slip through the system by misrepresentation. Some IRO employees were susceptible to bribes and, at times, issued IRO Identification Cards to persons who were not entitled to them and went to Canada as bona fide refugees. This also points to a flaw in our interview techniques and that of the security officers.

The Department of Justice, Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Section was very active between 1997 and 1999 in prosecuting a number of persons who were identified by persons who were admitted as refugees in Canada. I was called eight times by the Justice Department as a witness for the Crown in Federal Courts. Considering the number of bona fide refugees that came to Canada, the number of

misrepresentation cases was small but nevertheless required action by our Government, even if the accused were of advanced age.



## James Calbert (Cal) Best

**Cal Best** died on July 30, 2007, age 81. Cal was the son of the late Dr. Carrie Best and Albert T. Best of New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. He was predeceased by his wife Doreen (Phills).



Excerpt from Cal's death notice:

As a young man, Cal and his mother Carrie founded the first African-Canadian owned newspaper, the *Clarion*, in New Glasgow. After graduating with a B.A. in Political Science and diploma in journalism from King's College, Dalhousie University in 1948, he did post-graduate work in Public Administration before moving to Ottawa in 1949. His distinguished 49 year career as civil servant and diplomat began in the Department of Labour. It was there that he co-founded the Civil Service Association of Canada, which evolved into the Public Service Alliance of Canada. He served as the CSAC's first president from 1957-66. Subsequently he served as Director, Personnel & Administration, Office of the Comptroller of Treasury (1966-69); Director-General Administration, Dept. of Supply & Services (1969-70); Assistant Deputy, Dept. of Manpower and Immigration (1970-75). He was seconded to the Commonwealth Secretariat in 1975 and spent two years in London, England as Director, Applied

Studies in Government. During that time he traveled the Commonwealth, sharing his expertise as far afield as India, Papua New Guinea and Uganda. He was Executive Director (ADM) for Immigration from 1978-85. In 1985, Cal was appointed Canadian High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago. Cal retired upon his return, but his public service continued. He chaired the Minister's Taskforce on Sport which published the report *Sport - The Way Ahead* in 1992 and was Commissioner, Core Sport Study 1993-94. In 1999 he was a member of the Treasury Board President's Task Force on the Participation of Visible Minorities in the Federal Public Service. Cal also conducted an investigation into allegations of discrimination involving Canada's Mens National Basketball team. Cal was awarded an honorary LLB from King's College, Dalhousie University where he also served on the Board of Governors. He received the Centennial Medal in 1967.

—**from Raph Girard**

Despite many outstanding achievements in other aspects of his career, he particularly treasured his attachment to the immigration program and to the department. In retirement he was a regular participant in immigration activities. Cal was the first black Canadian to achieve executive status in the Public Service and had served as President of what has become the Public Service Alliance from 1957 to 1966.

His first association with immigration began in 1970 when he was named Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations in the recently formed Department of Manpower and Immigration. He presided over what proved to be an unsuccessful attempt promoted by the Manpower policy side to blend immigration into the broader labour market service network, treating immigrants as simply one more stream of clients for the Canada Manpower Centres. Immigrant settlement services had been eliminated from the departmental menu of service offerings and nowhere in the new department was there a settlement focus of any kind. Cal was responsible for inland CICs along with CMCs and the regional headquarters that managed them within Canada.

The early 70s were a tumultuous time for immigration. The Tom Kent-inspired regulatory system that let visitors apply for immigrant status in Canada and appeal to the Immigration Appeal Board if they were rejected brought immigration control programs to a standstill and immigration into disrepute. Matters came to a head in 1973 when the CIC at Dorval refused to clear inbound flights full

of potential appellants who would achieve *de facto* immigration through joining an appeal backlog that already stretched into the next century. This led to a complete overhaul of immigration from the minister on down with the arrival of Prime Minister Trudeau's trouble shooter, Robert Andras replacing Bryce Mackasey, and a new Deputy, Alan Gottlieb. The new team at the top set about reorganizing the department and developing a Green Paper on immigration policy.

As a result of the reorganization, Cal was assigned to the Commonwealth Secretariat in London where he ably represented Canada for some four years.

The new law, the 1976 Act, actually came into effect in April, 1978 and it was at this point that the executives who developed it moved out to take on other challenges. The new Deputy, Jack Manion, persuaded Cal to return to Canada to take the post of Assistant Deputy Minister, Immigration in place of Richard Tate. Cal was to manage the Immigration programme until 1985 when he was named High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago.

It was during this period that Canada's refugee resettlement programs captured the imagination of Canadians who had witnessed the Hungarian, Czech and Ugandan programs but had not greatly participated in them. Resettlement of Indochinese under Cal's leadership resonated nationally bringing the community into the centre of refugee selection and settlement. New humanitarian regulatory initiatives such as the designated classes for Indochinese, for Latin American political prisoners and for self exiles from Eastern Europe were developed during Cal's stewardship also opening avenues to Canadian to sponsor and settle the oppressed and dispossessed. This led to the award of the prestigious Nansen Medal to Canada by the UNHCR in 1985.

From the beginning of his professional career, Cal Best showed himself to be a man of exceptional determination, compassion and courage. Many people who had been driven out of their own countries and who found the opportunity to start a new life in Canada owe that opportunity to dedicated public servants epitomized by Cal Best.



# J. Alan (Al) Troy

—from Al Gunn

My association with Al began in the CIHS. We had met previously but never worked together. Nonetheless, my memory of our association in the Society has always been most pleasant. Possibly, the thing we had most in common, was growing up in the Maritimes, albeit in different communities, during the 'great' depression.

Al was pragmatic, honest, reliable, and a hard worker. His wry sense of humour, and ability to express an opinion in a few well chosen words made him a likeable fellow.

Without any fear of exaggeration, he could be described as the consummate volunteer.

As Treasurer, Al maintained our financial records meticulously, followed-up on the status of membership dues, and for several years, had custody of the Society archives, which he stored in his home. In addition, he arranged the printing and distribution of the Bulletin, and never asked for assistance. He had no use for computers and accomplished all this manually, with a standard typewriter. I guess he believed in the old business joke going back to early computer days i.e IBM= Its Better Manually

He will probably be best known by members for his serial stories on his overseas career which appeared in *Bulletins* numbered 17 to 28.

My last comment may be repetitious but real - 'We will miss him.'

—from David Bullock

It was a very sad day for the CIHS when we learned that Al Troy had died. I had met Al on several occasions in the early sixties when we were both posted in the UK. He was always a convivial participant in regional meetings. My career took a turn which meant that we did not have contact until the CIHS in the nineties by which time we had both retired.

While I was aware of his role as treasurer since I remitted my membership dues to him, it was only after being elected president in late 1999 that I realized just what a significant part in the ongoing administration of the Society Al played. In those days when the future of the CIHS hung by a thread, Al was stalwart in providing the support needed of a treasurer. When Al felt obliged to resign (in the same month as Bernie Brodie!), I thought the thread was

breaking but he gave us the encouragement to carry on though he was sorely missed.

Not only treasurer, he was the repository of the Society's 'corporate memory' in the form of boxes of precious archival material piled up in his basement. His inventory of the contents still serves as a frequent reference though the boxes have long since been transferred to Pier 21.



## Email message:

From: "Ross Nichol"  
<rmnichol@sympatico.ca>

Subject: **For the Record re:  
Canadian Immigration  
Historical Society  
Contribution to the  
International Plowing Match**

Enclosed are some vignettes of the story and scenes at the International Plowing Match and Country Fair in Crosby, which the CIHS assisted with. The local paper reports that 88,000 went through the turnstiles along with 1600 volunteers so in total roughly 90 thousand attendees, which was a new record. At Gerry Van Kessel's suggestion, I had the organizers contact the Dutch Embassy and they graciously showed up to host a reception at mid day on Sept. 21st. As stated below the Cultural Attachee was impressed. You may note that there are more Frisian flags than Dutch ones, which truly reflects the local community [hence the large population of holstein-frisian cows hereabouts!]

This was a major endeavour of the Athens and Area Heritage Society [AAHS]. It attracted many people of Dutch extraction and we received many additional artifacts or leads as to where to look for other resources. The AAHS intends to continue building this exhibit for future years and will house parts of it in the Joshua Bates Centre on Main and Elgin Street in Athens, Ontario. The museum is closed for the winter except by appointment, but will be open again after Victoria Day next Spring when you might consider a truly bucolic outing 90 minutes SW of Ottawa.

Thank you very much for your assistance and support.

# Hats Off To Dutch Farming Community

By Darcy Cheek

Staff Writer, Brockville Recorder & Times.

Crosby, Ont.— The liberation of western Holland by Canadian troops in 1945 changed a lot of lives in the years to follow, but it also changed the landscape of Canadian agriculture, especially in Ontario.



A tribute of sorts to those adventurous immigrants who settled in Leeds and Grenville counties was held at the International Plowing Match and Country Festival on Friday with a visit by a member of the Dutch ambassador's office.

Rosemieke van de Meerendonk told a group of visitors in the VIP tent that the ambassador, Karel de Beer, was too busy to attend, but he might be sorry he was.

"When I tell him all the stories about today, and about the huge setup of this (IPM), I think he will be sorry he didn't come."

The assistant press and cultural affairs attaché said she recognized the extreme effort it took to put on an event like the IPM and was very impressed. And she also recognized those immigrants who played a big part in Ontario agriculture from 1947 to the present.

"It doesn't matter where I go in Canada, I always meet Dutch people," she said.

"Many immigrants came from Holland after the war. Right now immigration is down a little, but the farmers are still coming."

Van de Meerendonk said later that her work with the Netherlands Exchange Program is the main reason she meets so many Dutch people in the agriculture community. Yet she is still overwhelmed by the numbers of Dutch people she meets in her travels.

"I'm amazed at how many Dutch people there are here," she said.

Van de Meerendonk was also amazed by the scope of the IPM and she was still trying to get to the Athens and Area Heritage Society's display on the Dutch presence in the agriculture community.

"I had no idea what to expect," she said, noting she had never been to anything like the IPM. "I can't believe all the things that are organized here."

Van de Meerendonk said she is currently working with the Museum of Civilization on the possibility of a Dutch immigrant display.

"I know there will be a lot of agriculture in there," she said. "They've all worked very hard, and most Dutch farmers have been very successful in Canada."

Family members of some of those Dutch immigrants were on hand at the function Friday and one, Henry Smid, spoke about the display that had been put together at the IPM in the History and Heritage tent.

"One of our committee members thought we should do more," he said of the Athens and Area Historical Society creating a Dutch immigrant display.

The IPM site at Crosby was kind of like a coming home event for Smid, whose family came to Canada in 1948 and wound up on the Talmage Stone farm at nearby Crosby.

"To me this really means something," he said of the IPM being at Crosby and the gathering of countrymen in the VIP tent.

"This is where we landed when we came to Canada."

Smid was only seven years old at the time but remembers



with clarity those early years in a new land.

“(Stone) supplied a roof over our heads and milk,” he said.  
“The pay was \$75 a month.”



Smid said it was a challenging time for the family with no other Dutch people to socialize with within 30 miles. But that also changed in the few following years.

“(Immigration) started to really grow in the '50s,” he said.  
“The Dutch people were so happy with the liberation ... and Canadians were just loved.”

The Canadian government, Smid said, also assisted with the large number of Dutch immigrants to make it to Canada. The government at the time was advertising for farm help and many people from the Netherlands took the chance on a new life. Agriculture in Ontario changed as a result.

“We're all into second and third generations now,” said Bill Borger of Athens. “There are very few original (first

generation) farmers left.”

To many Dutch people, Borger said, Canada appeared to be the “Land of milk and honey,” where they could move and make a decent living for their families. It wasn't as easy as that, but the Dutch community, especially in Leeds and Grenville, did grow and prosper to the point where Borger said he wasn't sure what the population of immigrants, or their descendants, would be now.

“As soon as I retire I'm going to do a little research on it,” he said.

The mayor of Athens Township, John Conley, didn't have to do any research to find out that the Athens and Area Historical Society's display at the IPM was a huge success.

“We've had four people going steady for three days,” he said.  
“The enthusiasm has just been overwhelming.”

*Published in Section A, page 1 in the Saturday, September 22, 2007 edition of the Brockville Recorder & Times and reprinted with permission*

Pictures:

- on p.14: A poster from the heyday of Dutch immigration to Canada on display at the IPM.

- on this page: Dutch Embassy Attache, Rosemieke van de Mierendonk and AAHS volunteer Henrik Smid.



## A Moving Experience

When the old Bourque's last hallway is empty  
And the wallpaper is shrivelled and dried  
When these dirty carpets are faded and  
Eisa's houseplant has died  
We shall rest - and faith we shall need it  
Stop work for an hour or two  
Till the Masters at Phase IV shall seize us  
And put us to work anew.

And those that are sad will be sadder  
For they'll sit in the same wooden chair  
They will squeeze in their 2x4 cubicle  
Without room to brush even their hair  
They shall find small comfort to draw from  
- dim lights, no windows, grey halls -  
They shall work for an age at one  
Sitting and never breathe fresh air at all.

There will be long lines to wait in each morning  
For elevators, buses and loos  
Three urinals and only two closets  
Can make for very long queues.  
The building's designed like a factory  
They have only forgotten one thing  
It's people that's got to work there  
Not robots or cattle or things.

For the old Bourque though smelly and  
Threadbare, lacking in style and third-rate  
At least lay along side of Rideau  
And had the market, and Alfey's and Nate's.  
But we'll go now wherever they send us  
We'll not hang our heads down in shame  
We'll pretend that a message from heaven  
Told us it was Dick Hunt to blame.

—Joe Bissett, December 7, 1979

