



C.I.H.S.

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CIHS Annual General Meeting
Thursday October 30, 2008, 6:00 pm
St. Anthony Soccer Club,
523 St. Anthony Street.
Ottawa

The Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society will be held at the St. Anthony Soccer Club, 523 St. Anthony Street, Ottawa on Thursday, 30 October at 6:30 pm. This is approximately a month earlier than last year, in hopes of better weather.

For those of you who did not attend our past two meetings, St. Anthony Street runs west off Preston Street, immediately north of the 417 overpass. The Club is wheelchair accessible, with ample parking at the end of the street.

Members may assemble at 6:00 pm at which time, in keeping with Immigration Service tradition, the bar will be open. The meeting will come to order around 7:00 pm, and adjourn around 8:00. We are pleased to have Stephen Rigby, President, Canadian Border Services Agency as guest speaker. Dinner will be an Italian buffet), as in the past two years.

Our finances require that we must charge for drinks and members are encouraged, but not required, to make a voluntary donation towards the price of the meal which is costing the Society \$25 per person.

Finances will form a large part of the agenda this year and a number of substantial changes will require decisions at the meeting, including possible changes to our constitution.

We are looking for a good turnout, primarily because of the important issues facing us, our excellent speaker and because of the Soccer Club dinner, which has been so well received over the past two years.

We hope to see you there.

CIHS Bulletin 54: 40th Anniversary of the Czech Refugee Movement

August 2008 marks the 40th anniversary of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, which put an end to the "Prague Spring", an effort by liberal Czech communists led by Alexander Dubcek to introduce "Communism with a Human Face". The invasion in turn led to an outflow of Czechoslovakian refugees. This past summer when a resurgent Russian Federation flexed its muscles in reaction to ill-advised Georgian efforts to reassert control over the breakaway region of Southern Ossetia, it was possible to recapture some of the gloom that descended over the West when the tanks rolled into Prague forty years ago.

We mark the anniversary with two articles. The first is by **Milo Suchma**, past-president of the Czech and Slovak Association of Canada who, like so many young Czechoslovaks at the time, was taking advantage of the Dubcek regime's relaxed regulations to travel with his wife in Western Europe at the moment of the invasion. The second is by CIHS member **Ed Zeigler**, who, as Director of the Strategic Planning and Research Division oversaw a Department of Manpower and Immigration "Longitudinal Study" on the settlement experience of Czechoslovakian Refugees in Canada from 1969 to 1972. This study provides an account of the economic and social progress of this remarkable group of people during their first four years in Canada.

These two reports, when combined with our special "Czech Mates" edition of the Bulletin 47 (June 2005) and the lead article in Bulletin 48 (November 2005) provide a comprehensive account of the movement

40 years in Canada

As with any year ending in 8, 2008 is a significant year for the Czech Republic and for my family as well, because my wife and I came to Canada in 1968, when the Prague Spring was crushed in a Soviet invasion.

Brief History

On October 28th, 1918, the Czechoslovak Republic was created and the first Czechoslovak President, T. G. Masaryk, was elected. Pre-World-War-II Czechoslovakia was one of the most democratic countries of the time, and was rated the 6th strongest economy in the world. This year the successor to that Czechoslovak Republic is celebrating its 90th anniversary.

In the early hours of September 30th, 1938, the Munich Pact was signed in the absence of any representatives of Czechoslovakia by German Chancellor Adolf Hitler, Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and French Prime Minister Edouard Daladier. The Munich Pact essentially allowed Germany's immediate occupation of the Sudetenland. The following March German troops entered the rest of the Czech lands, while Slovakia separated from the Czech part of the country with Germany's blessing. Following the creation of "the Protectorate", Czech lands were occupied until the end of World War II.

On February 25th, 1948, the Czechoslovak communists seized power in a putsch, which they organized because they knew they faced defeat in the elections planned for May, 1948. This signalled the beginning of 41 years of communist dictatorship, lasting until Gorbachev's *perestroika* helped to pave the way for the Velvet Revolution of November, 1989, and its accompanying democratic changes.

On August 21st, 1968, the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies invaded Czechoslovakia to halt the reforms of the Prague Spring. The subsequent 21 years of "communist normalization" ravaged the country and damaged the morale and character of the Czech people. Throughout this period, defiant people were imprisoned or persecuted and the standard of living deteriorated. For my family, however, this 40th anniversary is cause to celebrate, because 1968 is also the year we landed in Canada.

My Story

In 1968, I was the 28-year-old manager of the data centre of Czechoslovak Airlines in Prague. My wife was working as an interior designer. We had been married for one year. Up to that point, from a political and cultural point of view, 1968 was the best year of our lives after many years of living under communist dictatorship and indoctrination. Despite an easing of restrictions, in 1968 the communists did not want to give up power (there was no discussion of free elections) but they tried, nevertheless, to create a system which they referred to as "socialism with a human face". In this atmosphere many new political organizations were created (e.g. the Club of Committed Non-parties or K-231 – an organization of political prisoners) and previously banned organizations tried to renew their existence (e.g. the Social Democratic Party, the Scouts and the Sokol Gymnastic Organization). Many of these organizations were given permission for preparatory activities but received no official recognition because the Communist Party was worried about consequences from the USSR, the guardian of Communist demagoguery.

Around that time, I was drawn to the new Club of Committed Non-parties – called the KAN (Klub Angazovanych Nestraniku), an organization

founded to represent those who were not affiliated to any political party. In a country of 15 million people, one million were card-carrying Communist Party members. Shortly after the creation of the KAN, I became a member and soon ended up on the main committee, responsible for the organization and collection of signatures of well-known individuals in Czech society who had no affiliation to any political party (for example, artists, writers, scientists and academics). Using these signatures, we eventually published a Manifesto. The Communist Party worried that the KAN would become an opposition party, leading to demands for free elections; this was of great concern to the Soviet leadership.

In the liberalized atmosphere of 1968, my wife and I planned a vacation in Western Europe, where we were permitted to go. We had planned to return home after our trip, and therefore we did not take many belongings with us (my wife was less optimistic than me, and she wanted to take more necessities, just in case...).

We left on August 17, 1968, by train with planned stops in Germany, Holland, Belgium, and France, and planned to return to Prague via Germany. On August 21, we visited a diamond cutter in Amsterdam as I had always been interested in seeing how diamonds were cut. My father, who died in 1967, had been a jeweller, but he was arrested, his property was confiscated and he was sentenced to three years in jail by the communists for the crime of being a capitalist. The owner of the diamond-cutting shop, after learning that we were from Czechoslovakia, asked us what we planned to do. We did not understand what he meant, so he showed us a Dutch daily newspaper. On the front cover, there was a photo of a Soviet tank in the center of Prague, with the heading: Czechoslovakia Occupied. We decided to continue on to France to see how the situation would develop.

We travelled from Amsterdam to Rotterdam, Brussels and Paris. In all the cities we visited, we experienced hospitality and sympathy with our situation. We slept in Youth Hostels, attended demonstrations and meetings against the Soviet occupation and were even invited by local people into their homes.

During the spring and summer of 1968, Paris experienced its own "Paris Spring". In May, 1968, massive confrontations between police and students brought workers out on general strike and

brought the French government to the point of collapse. As Bernard-Henri Lévy, the French philosopher, said: "The 1968 riots marked the beginning of the anti-totalitarian movement in France, which appeared to be communist but in actual fact was an anti-Marxist movement, in support of the Czech demonstrations. Our hearts beat to the same rhythm and for the same cause as the people of Prague."

When we arrived in Paris, the city was still in a revolutionary mood, this time directed against the Soviet occupation. We attended a number of meetings and met a number of supportive people. We are particularly indebted to one individual, Pierre Douniol, who proved to be very helpful and kind. At the time, he was a student living on the outskirts of Paris and he arranged for us to stay in the family home of a Protestant preacher and later in the house of the town's mayor. We have never forgotten his kindness.

For a number of reasons, my wife and I decided to immigrate and seek refuge in Canada. As a leading member of the KAN, I would have been in immediate danger of persecution if I had returned to Czechoslovakia. A number of people from the KAN immigrated to the USA, Sweden, Switzerland and elsewhere. Those who stayed in Prague were persecuted and some were imprisoned. Given my father's imprisonment years before and his reluctance to leave the country when he had the opportunity, I wanted to avoid the same fate.

On September 9th, 1968, I bought a copy of the Herald Tribune in Paris which only confirmed our decision not to return to Czechoslovakia. An article in the paper reproduced the "Agreement from Moscow", signed by the Soviet communist Politburo and by key liberals from the Czechoslovak communist leadership, including A. Dubcek and others, who had been kidnapped from Czechoslovakia and taken to Moscow. The Agreement did not leave any doubt that the Soviet Army intended to stay in Czechoslovakia indefinitely and in fact, they stayed 23 years, not leaving until 1991.

Why did we select Canada? In the winter of 1967, my wife and I had attended programs organized by the Canadian Embassy in Prague, showing documentary films on Canada, including some about Expo 67 in Montreal. The films were impressive and described the beauty of Canada. One of these films described winter in Ottawa and

showed snow ploughs cleaning huge piles of snow in the early morning hours, an experience which we continue to "enjoy" in Ottawa every year.

We contacted the Canadian Embassy in Paris and applied to immigrate to Canada as refugees. At the time, the whole world seemed sympathetic to Czechoslovak refugees and was critical of the situation in occupied Czechoslovakia. Canada was no different. We later learned and appreciated that representatives of the Czechoslovak Association of Canada petitioned Prime Minister Trudeau personally to accept Czechoslovak refugees from Europe and to speed up the administrative process.

After submission of our immigration application, we had an interview at the Embassy, our X-rays were taken and sent to the Canadian Medical Examination Centre for Europe and very soon we were notified that we were accepted as refugees. We signed a loan for our airfare which we repaid by instalments the following year in Canada. On September 23, 1968 at 1 p.m. we landed at Montreal's Dorval airport.

At Dorval, we were processed with the help of representatives of the Czechoslovak Association of Canada who assisted Canadian immigration authorities. The first week I received a job offer from the computer centre of one company, but we were advised by the former Consul General to go to Toronto, where he felt we would have more opportunities and where we would integrate more easily in that city's unilingual environment, rather than in the bilingual and mostly francophone environment of Montreal.

After a few days in Montreal, we left for Toronto and a week later I went to look for job in the computer field. I was lucky to be hired by the first company I contacted (Sperry Rand Univac) and worked on several projects over the next few years, including the largest on-line reservation system of the time, for Air Canada. Meanwhile, after a brief English course, my wife started to work as an Interior Designer at a private company and later at the Head Office of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce.

In 1973, my wife and I were expecting our first baby. Around the same time, I won a competition for the position of manager of systems design and programming in Microsystems International (maker of the first Canadian microchips) in Ottawa. I took the job in Ottawa because in our view Ottawa was

a much better place for raising a family than Toronto. We have been very happy in Ottawa and have remained there to this day.

Since immigrating to Canada, my wife and I have tried to integrate into Canadian society and to respect Canadian political and cultural customs. Over the years, we became a middle class family with two Canadian-born children. Despite our love for Canada, an ongoing concern was the situation in Czechoslovakia, where we had family and friends. We realized that we could not return to visit as the situation continued to be worse than when we had left. The Czechoslovak communist government introduced a policy of "normalization" towards its own émigrés, meaning that you could, for a relatively high fee "normalize" your stay. This could be achieved by renouncing one's Czechoslovak citizenship or by officially acknowledging dual citizenship, with the condition that one would behave as a Czech citizen, i.e., by assenting to the political status quo in Czechoslovakia. In return, the Communist government would rescind our *in absentia* prison sentences, imposed for leaving Czechoslovakia without permission. This option was absolutely unacceptable for my wife and for me, since accepting the terms of normalization would be in contradiction of the reasons for which we had left the country in the first place. We recognized that under the circumstances we could not return to our place of birth, even for a visit. We could not imagine explaining to our friends and family there, who were struggling under the Communist regime, why we had returned when the situation had not changed.

In Canada I became a member of the Czechoslovak Association of Canada - CSAC (following the split of Czechoslovakia in 1993, it was renamed the Czech and Slovak Association of Canada). I became head of the Immigration Committee at a time when a number of refugees from Czechoslovakia were still seeking freedom in western countries including Canada. CSAC signed Sponsorship Agreements with the Canadian Government, allowing CSAC to sponsor refugees from various refugee camps in Europe. I recall that during a vacation in Europe, I visited Vienna where the largest concentration of Czech and Slovak refugees was to be found, and interviewed a number of them at the American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees. After consultation with the Immigration section of the Canadian Embassy, some of them ended up in Canada.

CSAC was very concerned about the situation in Czechoslovakia when the Czechoslovak Government signed the Helsinki Accords and agreed on a paper to grant democratic rights to its own citizens. In reality, they continued to persecute people, especially dissidents, after the creation of Charter 77 (a manifesto calling for the Czechoslovak Government to fulfill its obligations under the Helsinki Accords), led by Vaclav Havel. We constantly wrote about this persecution and informed the Canadian Government about the real situation in Czechoslovakia, asking Canadian authorities to intervene on behalf of the persecuted.

Eventually, I became president of the CSAC and served four two-year terms (1987 – 1995 and 2003 – 2007). In May, 1989, at our annual Congress in Montreal we decided to honour Vaclav Havel, the leading dissident, and Marta Kubisova, a singer who had been persecuted and banned from performing from 1969 to 1989, with our Masaryk award. I called Vaclav Havel at his Prague apartment with news of the award a day after our Congress ended, which was also the day after his release from prison.

In 1978, I became editor-in-chief of the magazine "West" (Zapad). Others on the editorial included board Josef Skvorecky, one of the most-recognized Czech writers, who was awarded not only the Order of Canada, but also the Governor General's literary award. West was distributed in about 40 countries, including Czechoslovakia, and it informed fellow Czechs and Slovaks about the situation behind the iron curtain, especially in Czechoslovakia.

What to say after living 40 years in Canada, the greater part of our lives? Today, my wife and I are Canadians and our hearts beat for Canada on all levels, not only during hockey matches. As for our children, we are proud that they are Canadian-born and that both of them have become successful professionals. We are proud that they, along with their families, are real Canadians who are fully-contributing members of Canadian society. We are grateful to Canada for all of the opportunities we have had and for being able to live in Canada at a time when Czechoslovakia was under communist dictatorship. The country of our birth never gave us the same opportunities and we will never forget all that Canada has done for us. Thank you Canada!

..... **Milo Suchma**

The Adaptation of Czechoslovak Refugees in Canada 1969-1972

The Russian occupation of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 ended the so-called Prague Spring, and resulted in a flow of Czechoslovak refugees seeking asylum in other countries. Canada accepted 12,000 of these from the fall of 1968 to the spring of 1969.

Almost simultaneously, the Strategic Planning and Research Division of the Department of Manpower and Immigration (M&I) in 1969 commenced a Longitudinal Study of New Immigrants. "Longitudinal" means follow-up of the economic and social adjustment of the same group of people. The study focused on their adjustment during their first three years in Canada, i.e. 1969-1972. The aim of the study was to provide a description of the continuing process of their adaptation to life in Canada.

As interviews were regarded as too costly, the survey was based on the replies to four questionnaires in the language of the newcomers, sent out at intervals of six months, one year, two years and three years after their arrival. Every eighth immigrant destined to the labour force was

selected for inclusion in the study. The total sample selected amounted to about 7,800 persons. Brochures and a desk calendar were given to those selected in order to maintain their interest in the survey. It should be noted that the response rate to all four questionnaires was over 60%, which was higher than expected.

Questionnaires were also sent at the same time to a control group of Canadians with similar characteristics who would serve as a comparison with the new immigrants selected for the Longitudinal Study. The authors of the study were in particular interested in comparing data on employment, income and housing.

It may be noted that the Longitudinal Study became part of the Green Paper on Immigration released in 1974, which was undertaken in advance of the new *Immigration Act* in 1976. Senior management of M&I followed the preliminary results closely while the study was still underway. Likewise, immigration authorities in Australia, the United States and Israel showed great interest in the study.

The simultaneous influx of so many Czechoslovak refugees inspired M&I to carry out a parallel longitudinal study on the adaptation of that group. The methodology for the Czechoslovak Refugee Study was largely the same as that employed in the Longitudinal Study of New Immigrants. The sample section, however, was much smaller, and consisted of about 800 refugees destined for the labour force. Another difference between the two studies was that the refugees were only surveyed three times: after one year, two years and three years in the period 1969-72. It was felt that to conduct a survey only six months after their arrival would not yield useful information on labour force participation, since a majority of the refugees were attending language courses during this time. In terms of objectives, it was hoped that the longitudinal study of Czechoslovak refugees would not only help to develop of programs for the settlement of possible future waves of refugees, but would also shed light on differences in adjustment between refugees and new immigrants. As in the larger Longitudinal Study, the focus in the Czechoslovak Refugee Study was on the economic and social adjustment of refugees.

The response rate to all nine questions in the Czechoslovak Refugee Study was about 60%, as in the Longitudinal Study. Although no major differences were found between the refugees and other new immigrants, the refugees were slightly older, better educated, more likely to be married and a higher proportion were professionals and craftsmen.

The following are some of the highlights of the results of the study of Czechoslovak refugees:

- a) Refugees spent a longer period between arrival and finding their first job, because of their participation in language training.
 - b) Refugees achieved a fairly good and stable level of employment.
 - c) Unemployment fluctuated over the three years (1969-72) between 8-9%, compared to 5-7% in the Longitudinal Study.
 - d) The refugees showed a fair degree of job mobility in the first year after arrival, but settled into one job in the following years.
 - e) One half of the refugees had obtained employment in their occupation of interest
- f) The labour force participation rate of wives among Czechoslovak refugees was fairly high, already reaching 57% in the second year after arrival.
 - g) About one half of the refugees expressed contentment with their employment opportunities.
 - h) About 90% had received public financial assistance until they became self-sufficient. The average family income increased from \$6,620 in the first year to \$10,349 in the third year. This increase in income was slightly higher than that reported by new immigrants. About 80% of the refugees expressed satisfaction with their earnings at the end of the third year.
 - i) One half of the refugees had bought a car in the second year of arrival.
 - j) Two thirds of the refugees lived in apartments, which reflected their experience in Czechoslovakia. The responses indicated satisfaction with accommodation. Residential mobility was largely limited to the same city or town and province.
 - k) With regard to education, 85% had taken some courses or training in the three-year survey period, compared to a 50% rate for the immigrants surveyed in the Longitudinal Study. The language barrier was quite significant upon arrival.
 - l) About 80% of the refugees attended English-language classes and 41% French-language classes.
 - m) About one quarter undertook occupational training, compared to one half in the Longitudinal Study. The need for occupational training among the Czechoslovak refugees was apparently lower than for new immigrants as the former

by the end of the third year, compared to 70% of the immigrants surveyed in the Longitudinal Study. Lack of acceptable qualifications and the state of the labour market were major obstacles, and the generally-poor labour mobility in Canada contributed to the situation. Provincial regulations were also an obstacle.

were better educated and skilled (particularly those considered craftsmen).

- n) The general level of satisfaction of the refugees rose over the three years, which may have reflected their considerable increase in earnings. The better-educated and skilled respondents were more content than the refugees in general. The highest level of satisfaction was expressed by those working in their intended occupation and those settling in the Pacific Region.
- o) Contentment with health services rose from 52% in the first year to 75% in the third.
- p) Satisfaction with available recreational facilities was quite high, reaching 84% in the third year after arrival.
- q) Less contentment was expressed with cultural facilities, such as art museums, concert halls, theatres, galleries and libraries. About two thirds of the refugees criticized this feature of life in their new country. The refugees appeared to believe that the "finer aspects" of culture were far less widespread in Canada than in Czechoslovakia. In this regard, the results for the refugees differed from those of the Longitudinal Study, which found new immigrants to be largely content with cultural facilities.
- r) About one half of the refugees stated that the level of their social standing had declined. This again was contrast to the findings in the Longitudinal Study.
- s) Craftsmen and those working in their

intended occupations, however, reported an improvement in their social standing.

- t) The vast majority of the refugees felt well accepted. This paralleled the findings in the Longitudinal Study.
- u) Two thirds of the refugees expressed a greater attachment to Canada than to Czechoslovakia after three years. The feeling of belonging was strongest among young refugees.
- v) The wish to settle permanently in Canada was much stronger among the refugees than among new immigrants.

Finally, I would like to note that the Longitudinal Study and the parallel Czechoslovak Refugee Study represented a unique effort by the Department of Manpower and Immigration. The studies were followed with considerable interest by immigration authorities in other countries where I was invited to speak about the results.

While I was responsible for the general direction of the studies, the major contributions were made by immigration officers selecting and informing new arrivals and by the staff of the Strategic Planning and Research Division of M & I. The latter had the cumbersome job of following up responses and tabulating the results. Messrs A. Gaudreau and R.F. Gordon were closely involved in the preparation of the Longitudinal Study while Messrs R. Heatly and C. Letourneau prepared the final report of the Czechoslovak Refugee Study.

... **Ed Ziegler, February 2007**

Book Review by Raph Girard:

Gift of Freedom – by Brian Buckley. Renfrew: General Store Publishing House, 2008

Brian Buckley's recent book, *Gift of Freedom*, which documents the magnificent response by the people of the City of Ottawa to the needs of the refugees who poured out of Indo-China after the Communist victory in 1975, should be required reading for anyone in government who is involved, or has an interest, in refugee resettlement policy and operations.

This very readable narrative of the origins and organization of Ottawa's outreach to thousands of desperate people caught up in the exodus from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, will provide many insights of value to policy analysts, resettlement workers, sponsoring groups and to all those who have a stake in resettling refugees. This is not a history for the bookshelf. It is an active memoir which merits close study, and which will

give useful insights on the events of those heady days of the summer of 1979 – insights which may be used for the benefit of contemporary victims of persecution in other parts of the world.

What is most compelling in Buckley's account of Project 4000 is the contrast between the impulsive, unconditionally-generous response by Ottawa Mayor Dewar at a time when the Canadian government was proceeding more cautiously, and when the international community remained wary and slow to come to grips with what became the largest out-of-region resettlement programme for refugees the world had seen to date. The exodus of boat people from Vietnam had grown inexorably through 1977 and 1978, but the international community had not come together to work out a coordinated response. At the time it was set late in 1978, Canada's planned intake for 1979 of 8000 boat people seemed generous. By mid-1979, however, half of this number had arrived, but the exodus continued to grow geometrically.

Mayor Dewar intervened precisely at that point. Regardless of what could have become a political disaster for her personally, she inspired a talented group consisting mainly of volunteers to translate her unsolicited public commitment to take "the other half" of the government quota for the year. This provided a huge impetus to the relatively new and dynamic of partnership between the federal government and grassroots organizations to supplement Canada's overall intake of refugees through participation by other groups both institutional- and community-based, to do the hands-on work of refugee integration into the Canadian community...

Brian Buckley recounts how it was not political gain that prompted Mayor Dewar to put her career on the line in order to help those less fortunate than her constituents. The media had been bringing nightly images of desperation and the horror of push-offs from the beaches of Malaysia into the living rooms of Canadians who were frustrated at their inability to help. Mayor Dewar sensed that there was a way to tap the goodwill of these people so that more of the unfortunate victims would find durable solutions in the City of Ottawa. She moved forward without a blueprint, giving momentum to an enterprise that was eventually shaped by the participants. The objective was clear. The methodology remained to be defined.

SADLY Marion Dewar, the moving spirit behind Project 4000, has recently passed away. In the words of Ed Broadbent, this former mayor of Ottawa was "a champion of what was just and right... a happy warrior". The Canadian people's response to the "Boat People" crisis of 1979-80, which won our country the UNHCR's Nansen Medal, owes an enormous debt to her inspired leadership.

Buckley does not look deeply into concurrent planning and programming within the government but does justice to the proactive initiatives of Canada through the early stages of the crisis while the international community still dithered about what to do about the increasing exodus of Vietnamese. While the purists in Geneva and the reluctant host countries in the region itself debated whether the boat people were entitled to protection under the to the 1951 Convention on Refugees, Canadians got on with the job. The heroic efforts of Ian Hamilton in November, 1978, when he went to the rescue of some of the thousands of unfortunates on the Hai Hong, a freighter had which brought its wretched cargo to the Malaysian coast, galvanized public concern.

Buckley reports how the spotlight that Ian Hamilton cast on the urgent humanitarian crisis on the ship not only caused many members of the Canadian public to become engaged in finding a solution, but precipitated the international effort that would eventually resolve that problem. Canada did not agonize over the question of whether, in fact, the boat people were Convention refugees. It was obvious that their departure from Vietnam was going to be permanent, so the solution had to be resettlement either in the region, or abroad. The scale of the outflow, however, dwarfed the Canadian government's ability to respond, and made imperative direct community involvement in resettling individual refugees and their families.

There are inspirational nuggets throughout Brian Buckley's account of Project 4000, which he uses to illustrate the broader experience both of the sponsors and of the refugees they had undertaken to help. The success of Project 4000 taught everyone concerned that privately-sponsored refugees settle more quickly than those supported by government resettlement schemes. They benefit from an earlier connection to the mainstream of Canadian society and acquire a sense of belonging to Canada, which helps to reduce and eventually fill the emotional void created by their involuntary departure from the country of their birth. It also contradicted the

popular wisdom that government had to lead in formulating a Canadian response to refugee crises. The fact that fully two thirds of the more than 60,000 Indochinese Refugees ultimately accepted by Canada came here under private auspices is proof positive that government was responding to a groundswell of public support, and in the main only facilitated a movement to which programs like Project 4000 in Ottawa and Operation Lifeline in Toronto gave primary impetus.

Brian Buckley's account is a fascinating one, and all the more important since it was written by one of the participants in a program which was a laudable example of generosity and compassion.

Daughter of Boat People wins gold for Canada

On a happier note: Carol Huynh, Canadian Gold Medalist in the 48-kilogram freestyle wrestling in the Beijing Olympics is the daughter of refugee boat people who fled Vietnam for freedom and a better life in Canada.



Carol, born just 9 months after her parents' arrival in little Hazelton, British Columbia, knows the long journey she and her parents have taken in order for her arrive at the Olympic podium. She could not have been prouder as she held the Canadian flag aloft, nor could all of Canada.

Book Review by Charlene Elgee

Quarriers Story: One Man's Vision that Gave 7000 Children a New Life in Canada -- by Anna Magnusson. Toronto: Dundurn, 2006

The story of the British home children can't be told often enough as far as this reviewer is concerned. Historical accounts, personal stories, fiction – the courage, suffering and triumphs of these little immigrants -- should be known to all Canadians. As part of that narrative, this little book has merit, but it has the added value of telling the lesser-known story in particular of the Scottish home children. And it is also the story of the mastermind behind the program, William Quarrier. A self-made man from an impoverished background, a wealthy Victorian shoemaker who built up a string of successful shoe and boot shops, a philanthropist who left the world of business behind to devote himself full-time to the running of his organization, his main objective was to provide humane, well-run

homes for destitute or orphaned children in their homeland. A rural area of Renfrewshire near his native Glasgow was the chosen spot for his children's village. Out of the thousands who passed through the village, 7000 were sent to Canada between 1872 and 1933. Anna Magnusson's well-written account tells their stories with compassion and without false sentimentality. She does not shrink from recounting some of the horrors which beset these children, even though the organization still exists today, albeit in much changed form and circumstances. This is a worthwhile read -- one to be recommended to anyone, and not just to those whose interest arises from the connection of this strange little episode of Canadian history to the larger immigration story.

The Ethiopian Refugee Movement of the Early 1980s from Sudan to Canada

The Ethiopian refugee movement from Sudan to Canada started in early 1983. As the immigration program manager in Cairo, Egypt, responsible for Canada's immigration program in Sudan, I was charged with establishing and maintaining the program.

At the time, there were some 600,000 Ethiopian refugees in Sudan, escapees from the authoritarian Marxist regime of Mengistu Hailemariam and the various civil conflicts between several ethnically and politically based liberation movements inside Ethiopia. Most of the refugees were housed near Gedaref in eastern Sudan, close to the Ethiopian border and around the Red Sea port city of Port Sudan in camps set up by the UNHCR under the authority of the Sudanese government. There was also a smaller concentration of refugees living in the streets of Khartoum, the Sudanese capital.

All the religious and ethnic groups of Ethiopia were found among the refugees, including Christians, Muslims and Jews, Amhara, Tigrinya, Somali and Oromo, as well as other smaller ethnicities. Most refugees were young peasants, tribesmen and nomads, with limited or non-existent educational backgrounds; often they were members of large broken families, with some family members in Sudan, other family members still in Ethiopia, still others in some Middle-Eastern or Western country, usually with no legal status.

Canada was third on the ground in establishing an Ethiopian refugee program out of Sudan. The USA already had a small program in place when we arrived and Israel had a tiny clandestine operation to smuggle the Ethiopian Jews, the 'Falashas', from Sudan to Israel (Later, the Israeli operation became quite important, moving thousands of people). There were also small, intermittent efforts on the part of some European countries to help individual Ethiopian refugees to get to Europe, usually people urgently needing political asylum or medical treatment. We started out with a small target of 50 refugees which eventually grew to an annual target of 300. Our policy directive from Ottawa was to 'select those refugees who really required Canada's assistance'.

At first, the logistical and administrative difficulties of establishing a refugee movement from Sudan at a distance – however small that movement was to be at the outset – appeared extreme. Sudan had a radical Islamic government that barely tolerated the presence of Ethiopian refugees. The country's transportation infrastructure was very primitive, and Sudanese governance structures were ill-organized and weak, especially outside the capital.

At the outset, we needed to establish contact with UN and international agencies present on the ground. The UNHCR had a small branch office in Khartoum and tiny, one-person sub-branch offices in Gedaref and Port Sudan. When I first arrived in Khartoum, the UNHCR had one legal officer, one protection officer, but no resettlement officer. Later, a UNHCR resettlement officer position was established. However, during the time we were active in Sudan two UNHCR resettlement officers had to be medically evacuated: the first had a mental breakdown and seriously injured a refugee; the second contracted a difficult-to-treat strain of malaria. The IOM had a one-person branch operation in Khartoum. As our efforts took shape, it became obvious that only by relying on existing meagre UNHCR and IOM resources could we hope to establish a functioning refugee program.

My first meetings with UNHCR Khartoum were not promising. UNHCR officials stated that a tiny refugee movement to Canada would take up too much of the UN organization's inadequate resources in Sudan, would create unreasonable hopes among the refugee population and would thereby worsen the already chaotic conditions in the camps. It would also cream off the educated elements among the refugees, but leave behind in the camps large families, often headed by under-educated single mothers. My reply was that Canada's goal was to select those refugees who required Canada's assistance and that we would rely on UNHCR's experience in the field in helping us to determine who those refugees were. I emphasized that we would in no way undermine UNHCR efforts to assist refugees in the camps, but that we were there to help to the maximum with those efforts. UNHCR officials replied that if this was the case, there were some refugees in the camps who had been politically active in Ethiopia against the Mengistu dictatorship and who feared for their lives at the hands of agents of the Ethiopian clandestinely active in the camps. Would we be able to consider their cases rapidly and move them rapidly, if this was required for their safety? I stated that we were there to attempt to work out a modus operandi to move difficult cases rapidly. I further stated that although we were not in a position promise anything, we were prepared to move those who met Canada's requirements and who needed our urgent assistance.

Looking back at the movement as a whole, I would estimate that about 10% of our movement consisted of refugees who were in danger in Sudan and had to be moved as rapidly as possible.

Our meetings with IOM's Khartoum branch operation were much less difficult. UNHCR Khartoum, evidently working in close cooperation with IOM Khartoum, had forewarned IOM of our goals and requirements and IOM's representative in Khartoum, a highly experienced field professional, showed herself ready to help with all the logistical aspects of enabling refugees to move to Canada. This included obtaining travel documents, arranging for transportation and arranging and monitoring medical examinations under our oversight. These tasks were, in fact, considerably more complex than may appear at first sight. Travel document issuance and permission for international travel were under the control of Sudanese government authorities. Depending on a range of circumstances, this entailed engaging in constant delicate negotiations with senior Sudanese officialdom, which appeared to change its basic requirements on a monthly basis. As an example of the complexities involved, it should be noted that even though the refugees received UN Refugee Travel Documents, the issuance of these documents remained under the control of the Sudan Government's refugee office, rather than the Khartoum UNHCR office. As well, the Sudanese government strictly controlled all international flights leaving Khartoum; on more than one occasion refugee flights that had been arranged ahead of time were delayed by the government for no apparent reason.

Following these meetings, and further meetings with the British Embassy in Khartoum as well as with senior Sudanese officials, we were able to work out procedures that enabled us rapidly to select our initial target of 50 refugees and then to increase it relatively rapidly, first doubling it and then gradually over a two-year period increasing it to 300 government-sponsored refugees per year. The program depended on close permanent coordination with the two international agencies in Khartoum, often relying, especially in delicate cases, on the communications facilities of the British Embassy in Khartoum.

At all times, the basic principles of our program were to select refugees who met Canada's refugee eligibility and admissibility requirements, and who were in immediate danger and needed to leave Sudan quickly. By definition, most of the refugees falling within these two groups were relatively well-educated male refugees. This left the large mass of ill-educated refugees, often in family groups headed by single women, outside the scope of our program. However, right from the outset, several Canadian humanitarian and religious groups were interested in sponsoring some of the more difficult-to-settle refugee cases. We had a series of meetings both in Cairo and in Khartoum with representatives of interested Canadian groups, outlining to them the possibilities and practical modalities of privately sponsoring refugee families. Subsequently, through group and private refugee sponsorships, we were able to move a number of otherwise difficult-to-accept family groups. This helped to ensure that our movement was not overly weighted with better-educated Ethiopian males. I would estimate that at the peak of the movement, we were issuing visas to and moving about 40 to 50 refugees per year – most of them members of large families -- sponsored by private Canadian groups, mainly Canadian churches.

From this distance in time, it is hard to imagine the logistical difficulties of running a refugee movement in Sudan in the early 1980's. There were no scheduled flights between Khartoum, Gedaref and Port Sudan, so we had to rely on flights arranged by various international agencies like the UNHCR and UNDP as well as private companies doing business within Sudan. At one point, my flight to Port Sudan on a single-engine Cessna had a minor crash with me and two other passengers on board; fortunately with no injuries. In Gedaref, there were no hotel facilities, so we had to arrange lodgings in homes of UN officials. At another time, lodging arrangements fell through, so I stayed in an African 'guest house' in a room that could not be locked, with an outdoor biffy and an outdoor fire as cooking facilities. Often, we had to interview refugees who feared for their lives in 'strange' locations in Khartoum. Still, we managed to do our scheduled interviews as required; managed to help a number of refugees in difficult circumstances; and managed to cooperate in an effective manner with Canadian sponsoring organizations. A number of the families we accepted and moved to Canada were admissible only with the help of these organizations.

In all, despite the difficulties, I recall my participation in the Ethiopian refugee movement from Sudan as one of the highlights of my career.

... Peter Duschinsky

Charlie Dagg

Charles John Dagg died May 12th, 2008, in his 89th year, after a long battle with cancer. He died with humour and grace, as he lived his life.

Charlie served almost six years in WWII, joining a few days after war was declared and serving in the 51st Anti-Tank Battery, 1st Division Artillery. He served in England, Sicily, Italy and Holland. After the war he joined National Defence, and then moved to Immigration where, he spent the rest of his career.

Charlie's whole career in Immigration was in Enforcement, where he was a competent and forceful advocate for catching and deporting the bad guys. Enforcement was much easier legally and judicially in the 50's, 60's and 70's, although resources were pitifully short until late in that era, but there were still crooks and illegals, many with money or "connections" (in some cases political) who got in and stayed, and Charlie fought hard and generally successfully all his career to deal with them. In 1963, Lester Pearson announced a "War on Crime", and Charlie was loaded for bear. I was then Acting Director of Admissions and Charlie brought me a massive compendium of all the REALLY bad guys who should be targeted. We put it up the line and got some support, but interest at the political level petered out. It was a time of musical chairs and scandals among Ministers and their staff, and little concern about the real issues. Charlie's papers, however, were pointed and hard-hitting. I believe some, at least, are in the CIHS archives, and are well worth reading.

Charlie retired in 1979, the same month I left the Department, and I was honoured to give his farewell address.

He kept active and loved to attend the periodic Immigration breakfasts, right up to his last, failing,

months. He remained passionately interested in and anguished about Immigration activities, and avidly debated them.

Charlie and Muriel had visited Florida for many years and upon retirement decided to spend their winters there. My wife and I dropped in on them one winter, and on a scenic drive they took us to a small Island in the Gulf, Anna Maria Island, which was to become their winter home, and ours, for many years. Charlie and I walked thousands of miles on those lovely beaches, talking constantly about politics, sports, Immigration, whatever.

When he was 82 Charlie decided that since I had taken up golf (at 65!) I should teach him, so I did, and we played (badly) together as long as he was able. Charlie was proud of his golf, and we actually taught two lovely young blond ladies how to play. When Charlie used to sit with the other old guys at the door of the big stores, waiting for their shopping wives, he loved to say "I'm 82 (or 85, 86) and I've taken up golf. When I get the hang of it, I'm going to take up tennis"

Charlie was everyone's friend. At his memorial reception a huge crowd attended and tributes were heard from family friends, fishing buddies, old Immigration colleagues, Mason associates, and others. It was truly a celebration of a life well lived.

In my comments I mentioned that for Charlie's 88th birthday I had taken him in a wheelchair to visit the new War Museum. We paused for a long time at the displays of the Italian Campaign, where Charlie had served so long and valiantly, and his eyes were moist. We promised to go back again this year. Alas...

... Jack Manion

PS. Charlie's obituary may be found on the Ottawa Citizen's website. You can search by name, and there is a guest book where tributes can be left.

Lloyd Dowswell 1925 - 2007

Last year, in June, 2007, Lloyd Dowswell died. Sixty years ago, in 1948, Lloyd joined the Department of Immigration. He worked for ten years at the border office in Emerson, Manitoba, and in Winnipeg, particularly during the influx resulting from the Hungarian uprising of 1956.. This followed Lloyd's service in the Navy on destroyer escort duty during the war. During that period, the Immigration Service overseas was not rotational, but one based on single assignments. Why, in 1959, Lloyd and Isabelle, with four kids under ten, decided to uproot themselves from metropolitan Emerson, population, at a stretch 800, for Liverpool, England, is a question I have never really had an answer to. Other than there was not much in Emerson.

Lloyd never was the most voluble reminiscer. With that decision, Lloyd launched into a lifelong career of foreign assignments, becoming a member of the rotational Immigration Foreign Service when it was created. Lloyd served several times in the UK (London and Birmingham) and in Asia (Manila, twice, Seoul and Singapore) as well as in Minneapolis, his final posting prior to retirement in 1990. His greatest dread was an assignment to HQ, Ottawa. During his entire career, Lloyd successfully evaded that fate except for one short period in the mid-seventies. Those who knew Lloyd and his wife, Isabelle, before her early death in 1983, know they were a couple who enjoyed the company of all, and who loved to be abroad experiencing new surroundings, both people and places.

... Wally Dowswell

MYSTERY SIGN



I have received an enquiry via the librarian at Pier 21 about this sign. I am addressing it to many on the off-chance that someone may have encountered the sign.

Karl Small (the enquirer) would like particularly to know its age, that is, when (and where, perhaps on Pier 21 itself) it would have been used on a building. He would be grateful also if someone could come up with a photo of it 'in situ'.

...David Bullock

Hi David,

Sorry for a somewhat late reply, but I just got back from TD in Bogota yesterday. I found your question fascinating, so I did a bit of research. The attached extract is from an article in a publication called "Archivaria", number 19, winter 1984-85. The article is by Patrick A. Dunae, "Promoting the Dominion: Records and the Canadian Immigration Campaign, 1872-1915".

According to Dunae's article, a federal-provincial Immigration Conference was held in Ottawa on 19-22 September 1872. The conference had been called, at Sir John A. Macdonald's request, to map out a plan of action with respect to overseas recruiting. Specifically, he hoped to prevent inter-governmental jealousies and jurisdictional disputes between the Dominion agents and those from the provinces. Several of the provinces had already stationed agents in Britain under the terms of an arrangement reached between Ottawa and the provinces in 1869, and on several occasions these agents were found providing contradictory information or making rival claims for their respective districts."

Among the conclusions of the September 1872 Conference were the following points:

"3. The several Provinces will maintain an efficient system of Immigration Agency within their respective territories. . . .

4. [The Provinces] may appoint such immigration agents in Europe and elsewhere, beyond Canada, as they may think proper, and such agents, on requisition to that effect, will be duly accredited by the Dominion Government.

5. Each Province will disseminate such information as it may deem requisite for the advancement of immigration, and to that end will furnish to the Department of Agriculture and to the Emigration agents of the Dominion full information as to its system of settlement and colonization . . . [along] with all other information, and all documents deemed requisite for the advancement of immigration."

Thus, based on the above, it would appear that Dominion Government Immigration Agents acting for individual provinces were acting in Britain and inside the territories of the provinces in a somewhat disorganized manner between 1869 and 1872 and in a much more organized manner after the 1872 Conference. I'm just guessing, but this appears to fit the sign "Dominion Government Immigration Office for Nova Scotia", which, therefore may originate at any time after 1869 and up to 1915. It is to be noted, however, that after the 1872 conference, immigration activities in the UK were concentrated in the hands of federal dominion immigration agents rather than provincial ones, so based on this, I'm guessing that the most probable date for the sign is between 1869 and 1872.

I'm not sure whether this is helpful (and I would guess that other, just as valid interpretations are possible), but in any case, here it is for your consideration and, if you consider it worthwhile, further possible follow-up.

...Peter Duschinsky

Editor's Note: Peter's explanation of the origins of the mystery immigration sign are fascinating. We would be glad to hear from other members who might have additional insights or theories.