



**Canadian Immigration Historical Society
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
21 October 2009**

The Social Side of the CIHS AGM - Ian Rankin

At its most basic the annual general meeting (AGM) of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society (CIHS) is the formal annual event at which the Directors, the budget and the general nature of the program are confirmed. It also provides an occasion to present an annual assessment of the past year of the Society.

However, it is more than mere formalities. This year, more than 40 people, including former and serving immigration officers from both the domestic and international regions, together with spouses and guests with an interest in Canadian immigration history, came together to renew friendships. Of course, they also shared points of factual history, including some embellished tales and the occasional truth perhaps better left untold, while also providing a keen appreciation of the critical immigration debate before Canada today. Since this is a group that has been central to debates on and the delivery of Canadian immigration policy and programs over the last half century, their opinions were well informed and founded in an enormous amount of collective experience.

Certain moments were poignant. We were all happy to have this occasion to renew our friendship with Konrad Sigurdson before we so suddenly lost him, and we enjoyed the exuberance of Al Lukie breaking into a familiar song and dance routine on centre stage. Out-of-towners Daryl Mischeau and Jean-Paul Delisle were warmly welcomed. Joe Bissett and Ian Thomson staked out sides and drew all of us into a vigorous debate on immigration policy, with commentary from Gerry Savard and with Gerry Van Kessel defending the domestic service. To many of those present, this was an example of what seems to be missing in today's immigration debate. It was impassioned, vocal, articulate and, while no firm conclusions were reached, it was nevertheless a perfect micro example of what is needed in a larger Canadian societal debate. This was indeed the central theme of our provocative guest speaker, Professor Gilles Paquet: how to develop a serious public debate on Canadian Immigration policy without fear of being stigmatized or marginalized in the over-polarized atmosphere that characterizes discussion of immigration in Canadian society. He called on the CIHS to contribute its collective knowledge and experience to that discussion.

The initiatives of the last year, and especially our new collaboration with Wilfrid Laurier University, have moved the CIHS into a more active era where our collective history can be of great value. This was well recognized as the AGM wound up and we were happy to have had another occasion to reconnect with friends and acquaintances, appreciative of our collective history and accomplishments and re-energized by the debate: whither immigration, whither Canada.

President's Report – Mike Molloy

Four of the Society's members passed away in 2009: Bob Latimer, one of the great pillars of our settlement and assisted passage programs and a man with a smile that could light up a room; John Dobson, a steady, serious, hard-working colleague; Brian Danby, who single-handedly taught a

generation of officers how to write and, of course, our founding member and long-serving former Secretary, Al Gunn. I think that Al served on the board of Governors longer than anyone else.

This year we have taken a number of steps to increase the profile of the Society. Erica Usher

recently asked, do we produce this work on the history of Canadian immigration for our own amusement or are we hoping to reach a wider public? Clearly, it is the latter, but while our successes over the years have been real, they have also been modest and intermittent. We are going to change that.

After a couple of false starts, the long-delayed project to put the 56 back issues of the CIHS Bulletin on the internet where they will be available to students, academics and the general public is going ahead under the leadership of Brian Davis.

We have formed a partnership with the International Migration Research Centre at Wilfred Laurier University and next September we will present a CAD1000 prize for the best university paper on an immigration history related topic. The Board of Governors has decided to call it the Gunn Prize in memory of AI's many years of service to the Society, to the Immigration department and to the country in peace and in war.

For the CIHS, these are pricy initiatives, but we either get out there and make a mark, or we are not living up to the vision of the men and women who founded our society. The increase in fees to \$25 for annual members and to \$250 for life members will help. We have been gratified by life members who have topped up their original investment in the society to the new level under the "Get a second life" campaign.

At present we can afford to send out two Bulletins a year and there is a bit of a tug of war between the desire to publish serious historical research and our wish to keep the tone light and interesting. We are going to introduce a "Vignettes" column and we are asking members to start sending us short accounts of interesting or amusing incidents from their experiences. We already have the first one which, I hope, will set the proper dignified tone.

CIHS Treasurer's Report October 30, 2009 – Raph Girard

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Cash on hand, November 1, 2008, | \$3738.59 |
| Invoices paid | (\$1971.71) |
| Revenue from all sources | \$2926.23 |
| | |
| Cash on hand November 1, 2009 | \$4693.11 |

Invoices to be paid:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Donation to the Vietnamese Boat People Museum | (500.00) |
| Essay prize on Immigration History | (500.00) |
| Digitization of the CIHS Bulletin: (est.) | (1500.00) |
| Estimated true cash position | \$2193.11 |
| Investments | \$6806.09 |
| Uncommitted assets November 1, 2009 | \$8999.11 |

In the last year, revenues exceeded expenditures thanks to one-time donations from an encouraging number of current life members who increased their contribution to the new life member level of \$250.

Ongoing revenues are difficult to predict. Due to the lengthy illness and passing of our secretary, AI Gunn, no reminders went out to annual members for renewal at the annual membership fee of \$25 that we ratified last year. As a result, only one annual member is paid up at the new rate. The mainstay of the Society is the \$1000 annual contribution from CIC for a corporate membership, thanks to Charlene Elgie, who has managed to protect it through various changes in the DM and ADM ranks. One of the first tasks our new secretary will have to address is updating the membership list and sending out reminders that fees are due for the 2009/2010 period.

Over the years the rate of return on our capital investment with BMO was so low you tended to cringe when reading the monthly report. For the last year we earned 0.8% on our \$6800 account. In retrospect, with so many mutual funds and personal investments substantially underwater, the value of no risk investments to a society such as ours is clear. Suggestions re a better safe investment are earnestly solicited.

Membership – Mike Molloy

We are in the midst of an exercise to verify the size our membership community and to reach out to members with whom we've had little direct contact over the past few years. In the course of the process we have been in touch with June Coxon, Jim Cross, Gerry Maffre, Michael McCaffrey, Caroline Melis, Don and Dot Millburn in Sydney BC, Jerry and Dawn Munroe up in Cochrane, my classmate Norm Olson in Edmonton, Murray Oppertshausser out in Lotus land, His Excellency Robert Orr, Sharada Shiva, Rob Vineberg and Ed Ziegler. We received a nice message from Neil

Brockenshire down in Argentina and another from Bill Marks.

At present our membership stands at 152, including 90 life members and 62 annual members.

Election of officers – Joe Bissett

The following slate of candidates for the Board of the CIHS was approved by acclamation in a process inspired by the recent Afghan election.

Officers

President- Michael Molloy

Vice President – James B. “Joe” Bissett

Treasurer- Raphael Girard

Secretary – Lorraine LaFlamme

Editor- Hector Cowan

Members at Large

David Bullock

Ian Rankin

Jerry Van Kessel

Erica Usher

Brian Davis

Ian Thomson

The Gunn Prize – Jerry Van Kessel

At last year’s annual meeting I mentioned we were initiating a two-pronged approach: i) essay contest, ii) CIHS members as academic resource

i) In June the Board met with Dr. Jenna Henneby of International Migration Research Centre of WLU, and agreed to a shared annual \$1000 award for fourth year and graduate students for the best immigration history essay over the next three to five years. An MOU between the two organizations will soon be signed. The prize will be named the Gunn Award in memory of Al Gunn. The contest was advertised at the Metropolis meeting in the spring and on the IMRC website, and it will be placed on other websites soon. Some essays have already been received.

ii) A questionnaire on areas of expertise and areas of work was sent to members so requests for interviews, information, etc. can be better directed. We have had a number of responses so far. A good example of this kind of activity is an ongoing series of discussions with Dr. Vic Satzewich of McMaster, who is studying “discretion” in immigration decision-making, and we are dealing with a request from a

PhD student at UBC who is looking for insights into immigration from Hong Kong from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Presentation to Mr. Can Le for the Vietnamese Boat Peoples’ Museum

In updating our membership list we tracked down Don and Dorothy Milburn in Sydney, BC. Don and I had a good chat about those frantic days in 1979 and 1980 when we were resettling 60,000 refugees from Indochina and Don managed the critical work of the Matching Centre.

Tonight we have with us a number of people who made critical contributions to that largest of refugee resettlement operations. They include **Ian Thomson**, who joined the refugee task force for a few weeks and asked: “Are we here to move paper across the Pacific, or people?” In the course of a single weekend Ian developed the codes, concepts and protocols that brought order to the communications between half a dozen embassies, two reception centres, ten regions, the Matching Centre and untold CICs, and permitted the whole thing to work.

And we have **Al Lukie** who directed a far-flung effort that rescued refugees who were washing up on the shores of Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and several places we’d never heard of, shepherding them through 15 or 20 camps and on to the huge airlift that would bring them to new homes with us in Canada.

We have been aware for many years now of the vitality of the Vietnamese community that came into being in our country at that time, and of the many contributions they have made to our society, our economy and our culture over the last three decades. The Vietnamese community in Ottawa has been a national leader and will make a new addition to the Ottawa scene with the construction of a Vietnamese Boat People’s Museum to commemorate the refugees and to showcase their contribution to Canada.

When I travelled to SE Asia in December, 1980, at the close of the project, I visited the Convent Camp in Malaysia run by Irish nuns. This is where hundreds Boat People with family members suffering from TB were accommodated while we waited for acceptance by the Provincial Health

ministries. It was a good place to work because Ian Hamilton had convinced the good sisters that Canadian Immigration Officers required ice cold beers on the half-hour to keep up their strength.

Among the refugees was Nguyen Chong Minh, a talented man who passed his time making replicas of the small boats on which the refugees had fled. One of these replicas was given to me at that time.

I would like to ask Mr. Can Le, Commissioner for External Relations of the Vietnamese Canadian Federation and Museum Project Leader, to accept a cheque for \$500 towards the building of the Museum, from the members of our Society as well as this "Small Boat" as a gift of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society for the new museum.



Mr. Can Le expressed appreciation for the donations and the role various members of the Society played in the Indochinese refugee movement.

Professor Gilles Paquet – Guest Speaker

We were honored on October 21 to have as our guest speaker at the annual banquet, Professor Gilles Paquet, Professor Emeritus of the Telfer School of Management, University of Ottawa.

Professor Paquet, a former President of the Royal Society of Canada and holder of numerous honorary degrees and awards for outstanding academic and public service, has been recognized as an outstanding Canadian. He was appointed a Member of the Order of Canada in 2006. He has made valuable contributions in a variety of fields,

including economics, management, journalism, urban studies and public administration. He is a prolific author and has published or edited over 30 books and hundreds of papers on a wide range of subjects. Professor Paquet is also an active journalist and a familiar face on television where he is frequently a commentator on national affairs. Often consulted by CIC he is noted for a particular interest in "administrative pathologies and subversion." In his introductory remarks Prof. Paquet warned us that he was going to discuss sensitive subjects that few dare to talk about openly: diversity, multiculturalism, citizenship, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and "reasonable accommodation."

He did not disappoint. His address touched on all of these subjects with a critical and perceptive assessment. He described diversity as a "weasel word" used by the politically correct to justify moral relativism and pointed out that a book by R.D. Putnam about diversity in the 21st century concluded that diverse societies tend to be divisive and lacking in common purpose. Yet our society continues to pay obeisance to the concept and sing its praises.

He deplored the current approach to citizenship with its undue stress on the cultural richness that newcomers bring to their new country rather than the duties and responsibilities that citizenship entails. He suggested that the large immigration flows in the past 25 years were rapidly transforming the demographic landscape of Canada and yet immigration was not a subject either of public discussion or debate in Parliament. He believed the ordinary folk of Herouxville had performed a valuable service by provoking discussion about how far a host society must be expected to accommodate newcomers without in effect eroding their own core values and culture.

Professor Paquet's remarks were provocative, thoughtful and delivered with warmth and good humour. He concluded by challenging the members of the society who were practitioners of the immigration profession to take the lead in stimulating intelligent debate on these important and vital issues.

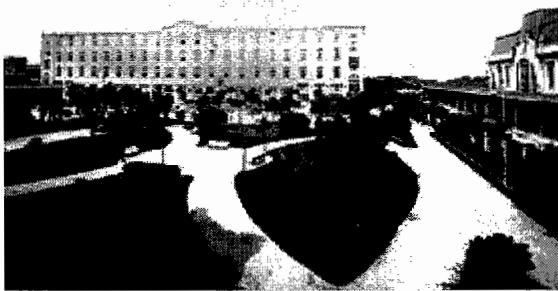
A lively question period followed the professor's speech sparked off by a mysterious query by Ian Thompson that the professor dealt with politely and

deftly considering that few in the audience really understood the question. Joe Bissett accused Ian of asking a metaphysical question that only obscured the issues raised by Prof. Paquet. With that brief and minor disruption the remaining question period was lively, relevant and contributed usefully to the discussion.

Letters to the Editor

From Neil Brockenshire in Argentina:

There is a Government Immigration Museum in Argentina in Buenos Aires. It is right beside the main immigration office of Buenos Aires in the port area. It was the old Migration Hotel where immigrants were housed and fed until cleared for landing. I have attached a photo of how it was a hundred years ago more or less. It stands as it was. The Argentines were our superior peers in the big rush for migrants back then.



Hope you are well. If you or Society members need a hand with something Argentine, I guess I am somewhat knowledgeable now after an accumulation of about 8+ years here off and on, people can ask me anything. No problem, as I learned how to say no as well as yes in government.

Best Regards, Saludos

Neil Brockenshire

Bill Marks on Pier 21

Bill Marks wrote to us in July enclosing a generous cheque to top up his Life Membership to the new level, and enclosing the following letter regarding Pier 21.

2 July 2009

Dear Friend of the Pier,

We have exciting news to share. Pier 21 is one step closer to becoming a National Museum. On Thursday, June 25, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced that the Pier 21 Society and the Government of Canada will enter negotiations to see a new national Museum of Immigration established at Pier 21. Gaining this official designation will be an historic event for Pier 21, and for Canada. Pier 21 would become the second national museum outside the National Capital Region.

Pier 21 has enjoyed a high degree of success and acclaim celebrating Canada's immigration history, and is now well positioned to expand its story and its reach. Pier 21 is dedicated to preserving, celebrating and sharing Canada's immigration stories, from the 1.5 million immigrants and Canadian military service personnel who passed through this gateway, to the broader story of nation-building and the early beginnings of Canada. National Museum status will afford us the opportunity to dramatically increase our community outreach programming, our online presence, our marketing reach and our ability to deliver all content in at least the two official languages. Partnering with other National Museums will allow us the opportunity to reach Canadians from coast to coast.

Sincerely,

Robert (Bob) P. Moody, Ph.D.
CEO, Pier 21 Society

PIER 21 IS APPLYING FOR A GRANT TO RESTORE THE HISTORIC PEDWAY AND CIHS HAS WRITTEN TO HERITAGE CANADA SUPPORTING THEIR APPLICATION.

Website Renewal - Brian Davis

We are in the process of renewing our 'on-line' presence. A new website is being designed to provide a more modern look and functionality. It will be hosted on an independent server in order to have the necessary technical support and the flexibility we will need.

The design is still in progress but it will include a section for the general public and a separate section reserved for members of our Society. The latter will give access to the value-added benefits of membership, such as contact with colleagues, information about members' activities and a forum for members to raise their concerns and interests.

Open to the general public will be C.I.H.S. publications, including past Bulletins. These will be available in a searchable text format. Liaison and partnership activities with other organizations will have their own niche. Awards and prizes also will be highlighted.

With these changes, we believe our website will be more user-friendly than at present. This will benefit not only the members of our Society, but will also allow us to respond more effectively to the requests we receive from academic and research *milieux* for access to material we produce. We see it as the kind of vehicle the Society needs in order to keep pace with our objective of expanding our activities and footprint.

There is considerable work to be done but it is our goal to have the website in place by next summer.

Updating Our Membership Contact System – Ian Thomson

George Santayana famously said, "History is a pack of lies about events that never happened told by people who weren't there," and "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Such sentiments are fundamental to the Canadian Immigration Historical Society (CIHS).

In order to meet the growing interest in CIHS we have to do a better job both of establishing contact with, and staying in touch with, witnesses to our shared history: the people who know what the truth is about Canadian immigration and the events that did happen.

We are in the process of re-establishing contact information for our membership and friends, and putting it in a form that will make the two-way exchange of information with those witnesses easier and cheaper. Brian Davis has told you about the website activity. We are also loading our membership and friends information into a contact management system (Microsoft Outlook). We will be reconfirming contact information, willingness to participate in the various CIHS roles and whether electronic distribution of material is acceptable to you.

We have no intention of cutting off snail mail devotees, it is just a lot more labour and expense

when a lot of members are perfectly happy with electronic delivery. It will be an 'either/or' choice.

Over the next year you will be asked 'Do we have these details right?'; 'Do you know anybody who was or is interested in being contacted by CIHS?' 'Are you interested in xxx?' We will then have a modern contact management system which will allow CIHS to provide individuals with topics they are really interested in, contact and social news or the text of the winning entry in the national competition (The Gunn Prize) for the best essay about immigration.

As a start, if you know any CIHS orphans or wannabes – contact them or have them contact Ian Thomson at ianthomson000@primus.ca or 613-233-7378.

VIGNETTE

The Naked Immigrant, by Rob Vineberg

When I was with the Canadian Embassy in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, in the late seventies, due to the bad mail service, we could not schedule precise times for sponsored immigrants to pick up their visas. Therefore, the convocation letters stated that they could come to pick up their visas on any day at 2 pm. Some days, we would have as many as 30 people, and other days, none at all. On days we had sponsored cases to visa, the immigrants were ushered into the Embassy boardroom and shown those old slide cassettes with a voice-over narrative about Canada. As it took some time to draw the files and pass them to an officer, the immigrants got to watch two different cassettes.

One day, we only had one woman come for her visa. Like all others, she was ushered into the boardroom to watch the slides. When one of the LES went into the boardroom to change the cassette she was surprised to find the immigrant stark naked. Somehow she managed to change the cassette and tell the woman to put her clothes back on without breaking into laughter. However, by the time she got to my office to tell me, she was laughing so hard she could hardly get the story out. After I stopped laughing too, it dawned on me why the poor woman had taken off her clothes.

I said to the LES, "So far, we've asked her to go see a doctor, and what did she have to do?" "Go into a room and take off her clothes," replied the LES. "Then," I said, "we asked her to get an X-

Ray, as what did she have to do.” “Go into a room and take off her clothes,” replied the LES. Then she added, “So I guess she thought it made sense to anticipate being asked and take off her clothes again when I led her into the boardroom?”

“Exactly!” I replied. It took all my professional training to keep a straight face when I went into the boardroom to give the woman her visa.

In Memoriam

Konrad Sigurdson - 22 November 2009

Excerpts from a eulogy by Jean Roberge

Beloved father of Bradford, Derek and Carrie, adoring grandfather of Dana and Zoë (Martintown), Benjamin and Avery (Toronto), and Luc and Alex Konrad (Jamaica). Konrad will be missed by Maree Sigurdson, Kathy Sigurdson and Valerie Smith.

Konrad joined the Department of Immigration and Employment in 1967. He was an efficient and efficacious officer. Skilled at understanding the situation, identifying what was needed and getting the job done. This trait was recognized early by senior management and he became one of the youngest managers in the Immigration Service of the time.

A colleague recalled how Konrad had no patience for fools and was rather a towering and ominous presence with the young line officers. At the same time, he could show a very warm and human side and ensure that the newly-minted arrivals at his post were well received and made to feel part of a great team

I was more closely involved with him after the Immigration arm of the Foreign Service returned to CEIC in 1993. It was the time of Peter Harder and Ian Glen at the helm and Konrad was a close and essential aide to them both. Konrad, Ian Glen and I were also neighbours, Glebites of the Avenues and Konrad ferried us to CEIC in his car.

One memory will always stay with me. We had crossed from Quebec and the car was descending Booth Street with Konrad driving but also animatedly talking about a particularly prickly issue. The car came to a stop sign but Konrad was so engrossed in the idea that we did not even slow

down and careened on... The expression on Ian Glen's open-mouthed, blood-drained face will remain etched in my memory. And Konrad simply carried on.

This carrying on was his strength. When the goal was set, he would not deviate from it and, yes, carry on until it was achieved, even if it risked ruffling a few feathers in the process.

I reported to his office one morning and, as we spoke, saw him highlight several unread e-mail messages with a “control-shift” keyboard gesture and then “delete” all these messages. I said “But Konrad, you haven’t read any of those!” He replied, and this has also stayed with me: “If it’s important, they will write again.”

I think this was the secret of his career success: understand the essentials, solve the problems and move on.

He served with distinction in Hong Kong, Stuttgart, Manila, Tehran, Kingston and London. He was Canada's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka (1995-1997) and to Pakistan with responsibility for Afghanistan (2001-2003).

Konrad's professional responsibilities in Ottawa were wide-ranging. He worked on challenging issues including the negotiation of finance and personnel resource transfers from Foreign Affairs to Employment and Immigration, was Director General of Public Security, International Operations, and dealt with numerous personnel issues. He retired in 2006 as Director General of Consular Services at Foreign Affairs in Ottawa.

Joan Atkinson - 21 December 2009

Excerpts from a testimonial to Joan Atkinson by Michelle D'Auray, Secretary of the Treasury Board of Canada

Joan was a true leader, a teacher, an innovator, and a trusted advisor. She was a quintessential public servant, in all the best senses of the term. Joan led and delivered – new policies, programs, legislation, frameworks and systems. Joan built – teams and confidence, everywhere she went – domestically and internationally.

Joan advised and counselled – those who worked for her, those who worked with her (her colleagues and peers), those she worked for, ministers, parliamentarians. She occasionally told us what we didn't want to hear – but she did it so well that sometimes we didn't realize we were being told off...

Joan taught – all of us. She taught us to be better, to be creative, to make decisions, to be thoughtful, to be respectful – to treat others as we would want to be treated. She was a role model.

And she also taught us to have fun! In the workplace.

A few colleagues have noted Joan's singular propensity to burst into song at management meetings. This could either signal the beginning of a free flowing discussion, or more often the end of the meeting... Nothing brings a management meeting to a swifter close than a rendition of 'Oh what a beautiful morning, oh what a beautiful day', or 'I could've danced all night' – a subtle hint that things were dragging on a bit...

Throughout her 30 years in the federal public service, Joan's professional accomplishments are many:

- she trained at least two generations of Canadian immigration officers. She was posted abroad [Milan, Port of Spain, Los Angeles and London] and knew the immigration and visa business inside out.

- she was the major force behind the legislative reform leading to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

- after the effects of September 11, 2001, she also led the concept of extending the border out – working with other countries, such as the United States, the UK, and Australia – a model that Canada has taken up in a wide range of areas outside immigration.

Inasmuch as the major part of Joan's public service career was spent shaping Canada's immigration policies, programs and training, the final part of her career focussed on changing the dynamics of people management at very senior levels.

Joan was rock solid, trustworthy and trusting, discreet, direct but tactful, experienced, mature, wise. Joan had lived through tough situations in her career as a public servant – knew what it meant to interact with ministers, parliamentarians, other governments, 'stakeholders'. She knew policy, programs and operations. But more importantly, she knew people, and she knew how to engage with people in the public service. She had tremendous respect for us, for our work. Her goal was to get the best out of us, for us and for Canadians.

For me, as for many, Joan was smart, wise beyond her years, thoughtful, warm, funny, engaging and engaged. She was tough and courageous. She was an extraordinary woman, an extraordinary public servant. A great model to us and future public servants.

Joan, your untimely demise is a great loss to us all.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP STATUS

Dear _____

Our records indicate that you are

- _ A Life Member (the old rate) @ \$100
- _ A Get a Second Life Member @ \$250
- _ An Annual Member @ \$25
(1 January to 31 December)

As an annual member your fee is due

- _ Immediately
- _ January 1, 2011

UPCOMING: *Part II on the Palestinians of 1956, Jim Cross on Three Deputy Ministers, Ron Button on the brotherhood of fighter pilots and more on the Mysterious Istrians*