



## Broadening our Focus

Mike Molloy

Some of our members have remarked that the Bulletin has been devoting a lot of space to refugee matters at the expense of other facets of Canada's immigration experience. A series of refugee anniversaries and the attention we have been paying to Indochinese refugees for our book *Running on Empty* largely account for this emphasis, but we are glad to say that the Bulletin will cover the broader immigration experience in future.

Two issues ago, we introduced a series on immigration and health by Dr. Brian Gushulak. This issue launches a comprehensive review of the evolution of the citizenship program by Andrew Griffith. We hope to have articles by veterans of immigration's enforcement activities in future. To launch that series, Gerry Van Kessel, whose career touched on every aspect of the immigration program, presents his thoughts on the key role effective enforcement plays in sustaining public and political support for immigration. I managed Ontario Region in the wake of the Todd Baylus and Just Desserts killings Gerry mentions and saw firsthand the devastating impact of enforcement failures, not least on the members of the perpetrator's community.

## CIHS Marks 30th Anniversary

Thirty years ago, several colleagues launched the society to promote the study of and articles about Canada's immigration history. That initial objective is still our driving force. We are celebrating our 30th anniversary at the Annual General Meeting in Ottawa on Thursday, 20 October, and we encourage members to come out and take part in the evening's special program.

We'll offer a presentation on the work of federal officials abroad and in Canada to meet the government's commitment to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees. The presentation will also acknowledge the important role of the NGO community. Ms. Dawn Edlund, Associate Assistant Deputy Minister, Operations at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, will address the whole-of-government approach domestically to facilitate this significant resettlement. Mr. Sid Frank will talk about overseas activities, drawing on his past role as coordinator of International Operations, Syrian Refugee Program. Ms. Louisa Taylor, Director of Refugee613, will be the moderator and speak about the NGO contribution. Refugee613 is an Ottawa NGO coordinating this city's response to the global refugee situation.

The celebratory AGM takes place in Ottawa at St. Anthony's Soccer Club, 523 St Anthony's Street (immediately north of the Queensway off Preston Street). A social gathering starts things off at six o'clock,

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followed by a special anniversary dinner at 7pm, with the main program afterwards. Tickets for the anniversary dinner will be \$45 (cash or cheque at the door), and include a complementary glass of wine or bar drink. Seats are limited, and so please reserve your place as soon as possible. RSVP by 17 October, by e-mail to [info@cihs-shic.ca](mailto:info@cihs-shic.ca), or [rgirard09@gmail.com](mailto:rgirard09@gmail.com).

## **Immigration and Enforcement**

Gerry Van Kessel

Enforcement of immigration laws is the basis of their credibility. Immigration laws exist because governments, generally in response to their electorates, have decided that conditions must be attached to the entry and stay of persons in the country without the legal right to do so. Since the *laissez-faire* approach to immigration at the time of Confederation, Canadian governments have continuously added conditions and limitations to entry and stay, because some of the people entering and staying in Canada were found to present risks and costs that the public was unwilling to absorb.

Unless the conditions of entry and stay are enforced, they have no meaning. That does not require 100 percent effectiveness, but it must be sufficient to deter others and to give the public confidence that its concerns are being met. Confidence in the integrity of immigration laws and programs extends to confidence that new entrants to Canada are here because of what they have to offer the country. Canada's immigration policies were, and remain, based largely on the principle that a successful immigration program is one that is good for the immigrant and good for the country. Canada is an attractive destination and place to settle permanently, particularly for persons in sufficiently desperate circumstances to chance the reward inherent in successfully bypassing, by whatever means, immigration conditions and limits—resulting in an unending contest between them and government officials whose task is to uphold the law.

The consequences of a failure to enforce immigration laws are everywhere to be seen. Our neighbour to the south has 11 million illegal residents. Without debating the merits of how to respond to this reality, what is clear is that this represents a massive failure of the immigration laws of the country. It brings into disrepute the program and the persons admitted under it or despite it. In Europe generally, governments do not allow permanent economic migration, yet economic migration is a fact of life there. The asylum system is the means for economic migrants to enter and remain. Historically, approval numbers for asylum seekers in Europe are very low. This is not because the Europeans are exceptionally tough on asylum seekers (it is Canada that is exceptionally generous), but because every asylum seeker knows that a negative asylum decision does not necessarily mean removal. Thus, the consequence of an asylum application is a *de jure* right to remain as a Convention refugee or the *de facto* right to remain because there is no serious risk of removal and there is, moreover, the possibility of a future amnesty or permission to stay under other programs. And so the generous impulse of asylum and those who seek it are brought into disrepute.

A survey of attitudes to immigration taken by the German Marshall Fund some years ago showed Canada as being foremost in the positive attitude of the public to immigrants and to the government's management of immigration. This is attributable to the fact that generally speaking Canada's admission programs have been able to exclude those who the law states are not eligible. Whenever enforcement is in question, public confidence wavers and can quickly turn into a negative attitude. Examples include: reaction to the abuse in the 1970s of the right to appeal (Regulation 34), whereby persons in Canada could apply for permanent residence, appeal their refusal and remain for the duration of the process, an opportunity taken by thousands who ended up being amnestied because the government saw no other course of action when it amended the law; the Baylis and Just Desserts killings in the 1980s; the boat arrivals on the east coast in the 1980s that resulted in an emergency recall of Parliament; the large-scale abuse of the refugee determination system; and the boat arrivals on the west coast in the 1990s. Programs that set aside the usual requirements of meeting economic needs, age limits, and familial connections in Canada require enforcement to ensure their integrity.

Immigration professionals and interest groups too often give grudging acknowledgement to the vital importance of enforcement, or as they call it "the dark side", to the integrity of the programs they favour.

# The Evolution of Citizenship: Policy, Program and Operations

Andrew Griffith

*Ed. Note: This is the first of a three-part series.*



Andrew Griffith is the author of [\*“Because it’s 2015...” Implementing Diversity and Inclusion\*](#), [\*Multiculturalism in Canada: Evidence and Anecdote\*](#) and [\*Policy Arrogance or Innocent Bias: Resetting Citizenship and Multiculturalism\*](#) and is a regular media commentator and blogger ([\*Multicultural Meanderings\*](#)). He is a former director general for Citizenship and Multiculturalism and has worked for a variety of federal government departments in Canada and abroad.

## Foreword

The history of Canada’s citizenship and immigration policies and programs focuses on immigration selection and settlement, with citizenship being assumed as the quasi-automatic end-point of immigration. The historically high naturalization rate of 85.6 percent, although declining, remains the highest among developed countries. Office holders, stakeholders and the media, historically and today, reflect this focus in their debates and initiatives.

The classic immigration histories, Valerie Knowles’s *Forging our Legacy: Canadian Citizenship and Immigration*, her later *Strangers at our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540-2015*, and Kelley and Trebilcock’s *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* are but three examples of citizenship being largely considered as an afterthought.

This article aims to fill the gap by providing a concise history of the development of citizenship policies and their related administrative and operational aspects in Canada since Confederation.

## Introduction

Throughout Canada’s history and even before the creation of separate Canadian citizenship in 1947, governments have largely focused on the same issues in establishing access to citizenship. Many of these are common to other countries, although the approach in each reflects the individual country’s history, geography and demography.

**Birthright citizenship (*jus soli*):** While questions have been raised as to whether birthright citizenship remains appropriate for immigration-based countries in an era of increased mobility, it remains a cornerstone of policy in Canada, in contrast to non-immigration-based societies, where ancestry and bloodline (*jus sanguinis*) are its basis.

**Residency:** All countries that permit naturalization have residency requirements. In general, immigration-based countries have shorter required periods than other countries. Canadian requirements have varied between three and five years as governments oscillate between more facilitative and more restrictive approaches.

**Language:** Most countries impose a language requirement, given the crucial role this plays in integration, with the degree of fluency required depending on the degree to which citizenship is viewed as an “endpoint” or part of the integration process. In Canada, the requirement has been “adequate knowledge”, defined currently as Canadian Language Benchmark 4 (CLB-4, defined as “fluent basic ability,” or basic communications for everyday situations), with the means of assessment changing over time.

**Knowledge:** Many countries impose a knowledge requirement, ranging from factual information such as history, political institutions, rights and responsibilities, and culture to more value-based requirements. Since the 1947 Citizenship Act, factual knowledge has been a requirement in Canada, although the content and modalities of assessment have varied.

**Age of Assessment:** As assessment of language and knowledge has become more formalized, the assessment has been limited to adults, defined differently in each country. In Canada, adults were originally defined as being 18 to 64; the definition was reduced to 18 to 54 in 2005, extended to 14 to 64 in 2014, and is currently being revised back to 18 to 54, with different governments varying ages in accordance with their overall approach.

**Values:** Both pre-Canadian citizenship (British subject) naturalization and the 1947 Act had a “good character” requirement, dropped in subsequent legislation that included criminality provisions. The equivalent in immigration legislation before 1967 was the prohibition for crimes of “moral turpitude”, changed in the 1967 Act to crimes liable to punishment of five years’ imprisonment or more. European countries have increasingly embraced value-based criteria.

**Dual Nationality:** Depending on the country and its history, dual nationality may or may not be permitted (or tolerated). With a few exceptions, such as British subjects and the retention of previous citizenship, Canada did not formally allow dual nationality until the 1977 Act.

**Intent to Reside:** An intent to reside (remain) in Canada was included in both pre-Canadian citizenship and the 1947 *Citizenship Act*. (The more substantive provision was that naturalized Canadians could lose their citizenship after an absence of 10 years or more.) This provision was dropped in the 1977 Act and resurrected in 2014; its repeal was announced in 2016.

**Retention/Subsequent Generations:** For children born abroad, the question of the parents’ ability to transmit their citizenship arises along with how many generations citizenship can be maintained. For countries with *jus sanguinis* citizenship, this is usually clearer than for birthright citizenship. In Canada, citizenship retention by children born abroad (second generation) used to require only a declaration on their becoming adults that they wished it, as long as they met the provision that they had either lived in Canada or had an “established” connection. This was changed to a first-generation limit in 2009.

**Revocation for fraud or misrepresentation:** All citizenship legislation allows for citizenship to be revoked in cases where applicants have misrepresented themselves in their application. The modalities of revocation have varied in terms of the degree of procedural protections in place.

TABLE 1 - CITIZENSHIP ACT COMPARISON

Aspect	Pre-1947	1947 Act	1977 Act	2014 Act C-24	2016 Bill C-6
Birthright	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Residence	5 years	5 years	3 years	4 years	3 years
Language	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Knowledge		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Test Ages			18-64 (18-54 2005)	14-64	18-54
Dual nationality	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Values	“good character”	“good character”			
Intent to reside	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Retention	Declaration before age 22	Declaration before age 25	Declaration before age 28	First generation limit	
Revocation (fraud)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Revocation (terrorism/ treason)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No

**Revocation for terror or treason:** While provision for revocation was included in both pre-Canadian citizenship and the 1947 *Citizenship Act*, this was dropped in the 1977 Act because the criminal justice system was deemed a more appropriate form of punishment. It was resurrected in the 2014 Act because of concerns over increased terrorism; its repeal was announced in 2016. Table 1 provides a high-level comparison of the major citizenship acts, and how they have addressed these issues.

**Applying for Canadian Citizenship**

The study guides used to assist immigrants prepare for their Canadian citizenship interviews and

tests have evolved with legislation, societal trends and government preferences. The first, *How to Become a*

*Canadian* (1947), devoted most of its content to the procedures required to become a citizen. The current guide, *Discover Canada*, has a heavy emphasis on history, government, society, and rights and responsibilities. The announced planned revision, yet unnamed, will be in line with the current government's overall diversity and inclusion agenda and changes to the citizenship program.

Similarly, administration and operations have evolved over time, sometimes accompanying legislation, but often making substantive changes that have equally influenced citizenship uptake. Examples include changing operational definitions of knowledge and language requirements, means of assessment, the respective roles of citizenship officials and judges in interviewing applicants, and the shift from decentralized to centralized application intake.

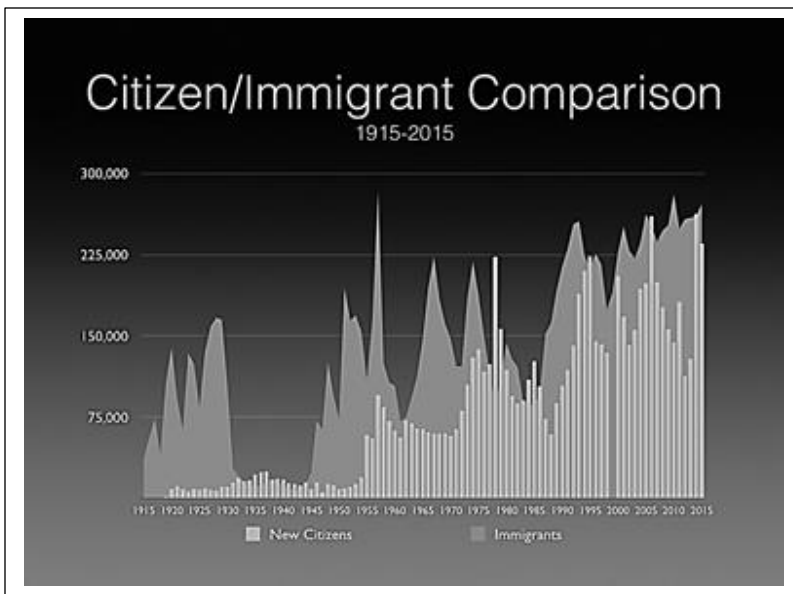
While maintaining their general format, citizenship ceremonies also have evolved, reflecting the attitudes of the government of the day through the speeches of citizenship judges, the material distributed, and the presence of dignitaries. But the core elements have remained: remarks by a citizenship judge on the meaning of citizenship; reciting the oath together, generally in both official languages; individual presentation of citizenship certificates; and the singing of "O Canada".

In making these policy and operational choices, governments have had to decide between a more facilitative approach—making it easier to become a citizen, and an approach that focused on meaningfulness—making it more difficult. In general, compared to other countries, including such immigrant-based countries as the U.S., Australia and New Zealand, Canada has adopted a more facilitative than restrictive approach, encouraging all immigrants to become Canadian citizens.

### Citizenship Uptake

Chart 1 shows the number of new Canadian citizens contrasted with immigrant arrivals for the past hundred years. It reflects changes in demand as well as operational constraints (the earliest naturalization statistics date from 1915). Pre-1947 naturalization was particularly low in relation to immigration except for the Depression years, after which there was a general correlation between the two; however citizenship shows greater variation in the last 15 years.

CHART 1



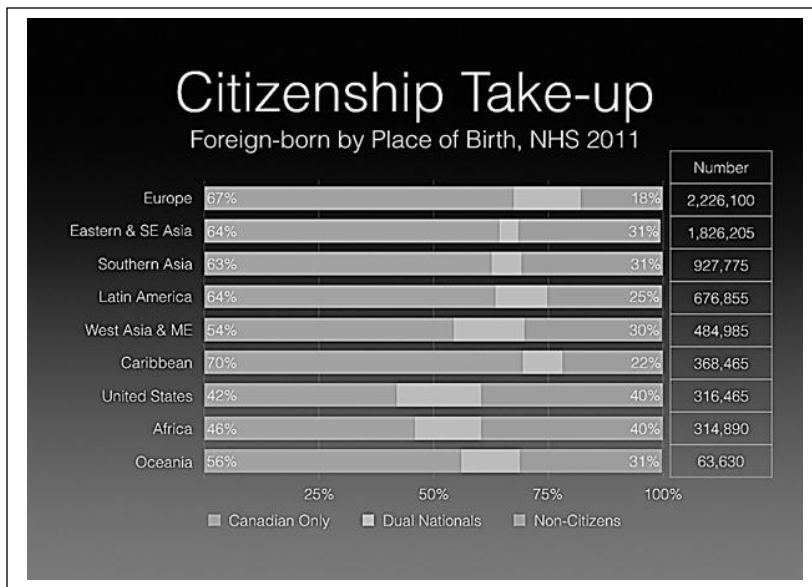
As the diversity of immigrants changed, so did the diversity of new citizens. Before 1947, 98 percent were of European origin, with a naturalization rate of 71 percent (1941 Census). By 1991, more than 20 years after the introduction of the colour-blind immigration point system, Asian immigrants formed the largest share of new citizens (39 percent) compared to those of European origin (28 percent).

Chart 2 breaks down immigrants by regional place of birth and their respective take-up of citizenship; earlier waves of immigration had generally higher rates of citizenship.

### British Subjects and "Proto-Canadian" Citizenship

Prior to the *Canadian Citizenship Act* of 1947, Canadians were either British subjects or "aliens", as captured in the 1867 *Nationality Law*, 1906 and 1910 *Immigration Acts* and 1914 *Naturalization Act*. Granting of British subject status reflected the general race-based immigration restrictions and prejudices of the time and is set out in the citizenship certificates of the time:

CHART 2



“...This is therefore to certify to all whom it may concern, that under and by virtue of the said Act, [name] has become naturalized as a British subject and is, within Canada, entitled to all political and other rights, powers and privileges, and is subject to all obligations to which a natural born British subject is entitled or subject within Canada, with the qualification that he shall not, when within the limits of the foreign State of which he was a subject (or citizen) previous to the date hereof, be deemed to be a British subject unless he has ceased to be a subject (or citizen) of that State in pursuance of the laws thereof or in pursuance of a treaty or convention to that effect”.

The underlying philosophy at the time can best be summed up by Sir John A. Macdonald’s assertion, “A British subject I was born—a British subject I will die.” Canadian legislation at the time reflected British legislation. The 1910 *Immigration Act* created a separate subset of British subjects who were born, naturalized or domiciled in Canada. The main application with respect to immigration was who had the right to enter freely and remain in Canada. This separate subset of British subjects was further strengthened in the 1921 *Canadian Nationals Act*, which allowed Canada to participate in international forces or military expeditions separately from Britain. Both Acts were essentially subsets of British nationality legislation at the time in terms of their substantive provisions.

However, within this overall context, the particulars of naturalization as British subjects reflected many of the standard issues of birthplace, residency, language and knowledge requirements. The 1914 *Naturalization Act*, for example, established birthright citizenship, five years’ residency (up from the previous three), knowledge of English, and “good character”. While male British subjects could pass on their citizenship to their legitimate children, female British subjects, if married to non-British subjects, could not. Moreover, women automatically became “aliens” if their husbands were or became aliens. Children born out of wedlock outside Canada could not be granted citizenship.

Responsibility for naturalization was placed with the Secretary of State, who had considerable administrative discretion in the modalities of granting citizenship. In 1917, a Department of Immigration and Colonization was created. In 1936, immigration was reduced to a division within the Department of Mines and Resources. In 1950, the first Department of Citizenship and Immigration was created.

The wording of the citizenship oath from 1910 to 1936 was: “I, [name], swear by Almighty God that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty, King George the Fifth, his Heirs and Successors, according to law”.

But within this overall context of being British, a separate Canadian identity was being formed, as the following statement by Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier in 1910 attests: “I am a Canadian. Canada is the inspiration of my life. I have had before me as a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day a policy of true Canadianism, of moderation, of conciliation”.

The 1917 *Wartimes Election Act* disenfranchised naturalized citizens from enemy countries, accompanying such measures as internment camps for immigrants from the Austro-Hungarian Empire (the largest group being of Ukrainian origin). The Act was repealed following the war. Administration of the *1914 Naturalization Act* was tightened during the Depression years, with higher rates of refusals and revocations. Amendments to the 1932 *Imperial Act* made married women’s citizenship status less dependent on men by making them aliens

only when they automatically acquired foreign nationality upon marriage. If women acquired foreign nationality during their marriage, they could apply separately for British status; loss of British status was no longer automatic.

### 1947 Canadian Citizenship Act and Evolution of Idea of Being “Canadian”

The 1947 Act created a formal, legal and independent Canadian citizenship. While many of the naturalization requirements remained unchanged, citizens were no longer “Canadian British subjects” but rather Canadian citizens, with British subjects domiciled in Canada being automatically converted to Canadian citizens.



The key provisions included: birthright citizenship, five-year residency requirement out of the previous eight years (except for British immigrants whose required residency was one year); adequate knowledge of English or French and the responsibilities and privileges of Canadian citizenship; good character; and intention to reside in Canada. Retention provisions required a declaration before age 21 and being resident in Canada at the time. Language requirements were waived for immigrants who had been in Canada for 20 years or more. Knowledge and language requirements were waived for British subjects.

The wording of the new oath was: “I, [name], swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King George the Sixth, his Heirs and Successors, according to law, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada and fulfil my duties as a Canadian citizen. So help me God.”

Canadian fathers could pass on their citizenship to their children born in wedlock, but women could not if married to a non-Canadian. However, a child born out of wedlock abroad to a Canadian mother had birthright citizenship.

While dual nationality was not allowed for Canadian citizens who applied formally for citizenship of another country, it was tolerated for those with an existing non-Canadian nationality when they applied for Canadian citizenship.

Revocation of citizenship could occur in cases of fraud or misrepresentation, being outside of Canada for six years or more without any “substantial connection” to Canada, or being engaged in treasonous behaviour—“if out of Canada, has shown himself by act or speech to be disaffected or disloyal to His Majesty, or, if in Canada, has been convicted of treason or sedition by a court of competent jurisdiction”. Loss of citizenship for naturalized Canadians could occur after 10 years’ continuous absence from Canada.

The language of what it meant to be a Canadian continued to evolve. In 1947 William Lyon Mackenzie King placed Canadian citizenship in a broader international context: “Canadian citizenship is not a citizenship which relates itself merely to the immediate community in which we live. As Canadians we have a national citizenship, a Commonwealth citizenship and a world citizenship. Each carries with it a certain responsibility, a responsibility which it is our duty to recognize and our privilege to assert”.

John Diefenbaker’s focus on citizenship-related human rights issues was seen in his opposition to the deportation of Japanese-Canadians after World War II and citizenship revocation in general, in addition to his



1960 Canadian Bill of Rights: “I am a Canadian, a free Canadian, free to speak without fear, free to worship in my own way, free to stand for what I think right, free to oppose what I believe wrong, or free to choose those who shall govern my country. This heritage of freedom I pledge to uphold for myself and all mankind.”

In addition to the immigration policy changes mentioned earlier, a Multiculturalism policy was announced in 1971 with the support of all political parties.

**Citizenship Guides and Tests**

There used to be no formal citizenship test, rather language and knowledge were assessed through an interview with a judge (British subjects were largely exempt from this interview requirement.) The first citizenship guide, *How to Become a Canadian Citizen*, was issued in 1947, updated and re-titled as *Guide to Canadian Citizenship* in 1963, and as *Canada: Guide for Citizenship* in 1976.

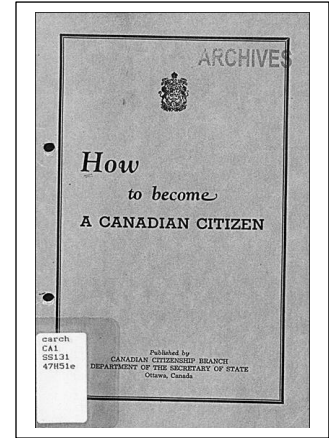


Table 2 highlights the emphasis in *How to Become a Canadian Citizen* on the application procedures and study questions, rather than specific content about Canada. However, as Sobel notes, the guide sets out a narrative of a citizen with good character and an adequate knowledge of Canada. Canada is presented as defending freedom and believing in democracy, with strong ties to the United Kingdom and British traditions. The underlying ideology is that of assimilation to traditional Canadian values. The guide stresses basic obedience to Canadian laws and loyalty to Canada, and is silent on more active civic participation.

TABLE 2: HOW TO BECOME A CANADIAN CITIZEN (1947) - 62 PAGES

Citizenship Procedures	Study Questions	History	Geography	Gov. System	Economy
46%	25%	9%	9%	7%	4%

TABLE 3: GUIDE TO CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP (1963 EDITION) - 94 PAGES

Citizenship Procedures	History	Geography	Govt System	Economy	Society	Rights & Responsibilities
4%	17%	14%	22%	17%	20%	6%

Table 3 highlights the changing emphasis in the *Guide to Canadian Citizenship*, which no longer focuses on procedures and study questions but on imparting greater knowledge of Canada. Sobel characterizes the narrative as one of a responsible citizen committed to Canadian political and social organizations. Canada appears as a welfare state with a growing culture, strong ties to the U.S. (in contrast to the previous emphasis on the U.K), and a leading economic position in the world. The guide acknowledges the post-World War II immigration-driven diversity of Canada but still emphasizes mainstream traditions and values: citizens should obey the laws, respect the rights of others, and volunteer.

There were also companion booklets to assist new Canadians integrate. *Introduction to Canada* (1965, 41 pages) was written in plain language (defined as “in a language which will not be too difficult” and using about 1,000 of the most important words). The booklet covered Canada’s past, government, a citizen’s rights and responsibilities, the land, produce and industry by region, the arts, and how to become a Canadian citizen. History and the government comprised about half of the content.

*What it Means to Become a Canadian Citizen* (undated, likely prepared as part of the 1967 Centennial celebrations, 21 pages) is in the form of a background narrative on the evolution of Canadian citizenship, the key provisions of the 1947 Act, how new Canadians were “full partners in the Canadian community,” and a discussion of both the “hesitation” in becoming a citizen and the sense of belonging that citizenship



engendered, rights and responsibilities. It puts considerable emphasis on citizenship ceremonies from the perspective of new Canadians and those individuals organizing ceremonies or related receptions.

### Applying for Citizenship

At the time of the 1947 Act, applications for citizenship were made directly to regular courts of law. If the judge was satisfied that the applicant met the requirements of citizenship, the court would recommend the applicant to the minister, who could either grant citizenship or not. If the minister was unsatisfied that the applicant had met the requirements, he could refer the case back to the court for a re-hearing and final decision. If the applicant was rejected, there was no means of appeal. At this time, citizenship was seen as a privilege rather than a right. British subjects were exempt from judicial hearings and related language and knowledge requirements.

With increasing immigration to Canada, the government began establishing special “Citizenship Courts” in the mid-1950s to remove the burden on regular courts. The term “citizenship judge” or “citizenship court judge” gradually came into use, and citizenship courts were established in major cities. For the Centennial, special citizenship ceremonies were held and the certificate of citizenship was redesigned. The application fee for a grant of citizenship was set at \$5, increased to \$10 in 1954.

*Ed. Note: This article will continue in the next Bulletin*

### Une Nuit sans Lune - A Moonless Night



Since 2012, as by-product of the work on the Society’s forthcoming book on the Indochinese refugee movement, *Running on Empty*, we have been encouraging members of the Vietnamese, Laotian and Cambodian communities to tell and record their stories. The 2013 conference at York University and its follow-up activities, such as the recently released special issue of the journal *Refuge*, the 2016 Nansen Medal gala, and our participation with Carleton University in the “Hearts of Freedom” project are all means to that end.

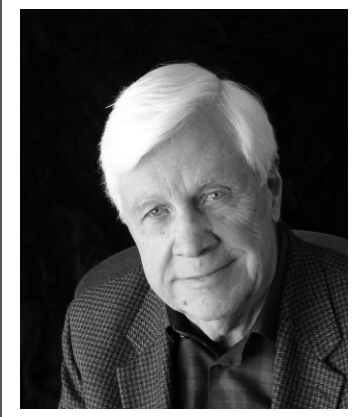
A meeting at the Nansen gala with Thi Be Nguyen, a Montreal-based employee of the National Bank, demonstrated that the desire to preserve the history of the boat people is widespread. Peter Duschinsky and Mike Molloy attended private showings of a new documentary produced by Thi Be Nguyen and directed by Marie-Hélène Panisset. The 120-minute film seamlessly weaves together the personal stories of a number of Vietnamese refugees— from the dangerous decision to escape from Vietnam to rebuilding their lives in Quebec. Skillfully interspersing contemporary interviews with historic film footage, this highly professional documentary is dramatic and fast moving, but

never maudlin. A shorter version is being produced at the Ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur du Québec for use in schools. *Une Nuit sans Lune* deserves to be shown nationally.

The Mennonite Central Committee has set up a [site](#) to mark its involvement in sponsoring refugees, with several photos from the early days of the Indochinese movement.

# The Unintended Consequences of Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program

Tom Denton



Tom Denton is Executive Director, Administration & Sponsorship, at Hospitality House Refugee Ministry in Winnipeg, a position he has held for 10 years. He is 82 years of age and still working more than full time, sponsoring refugees under Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program. Hospitality House is the largest single sponsor of refugees in Canada, operating under authority of both the Anglican Diocese of Rupert's Land and the Roman Catholic Archiepiscopal Corporation of Winnipeg. In 2016 it will land in Canada more than 1,200 refugees it has sponsored.

## Preface

Our lives take many twists, and plans often lead us in unplanned directions. At the outset of a working life now spanning 58 years and a dozen jobs, I planned to be a lawyer, not a corporate executive or a newspaper founder, and certainly not a rescuer of refugees. My life's decisions have filled it with unintended consequences, as I suspect is true for most of us; but these enrich the saga of our lives. What follows is my own experience and the observations are entirely my own.

"The law of unintended consequences", found within the social science of economics, holds that actions always have unanticipated or unintended effects. This is particularly true of actions by governments. And just as long as this has been true, the reality has tended to be ignored. So it is with Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSRP).

## Early Days

The program began in the late 1970s just in time to respond to the appalling plight of refugees from Southeast Asia in the aftermath of the war in Vietnam. It was a plight brought home to Canadians through images on their television screens, and it provoked a remarkable response. I was privileged to be a part of that response then, and I am still involved with the commendable program that developed from it.

Canada's government had to respond to the crisis. Canada is a responsible and mature member of the community of nations, and this would not be its first such gesture, nor its last. The extraordinary size of this particular response, however, was unique. During the 273 days of the short-lived minority government of Joe Clark, his Secretary of State for External Affairs was Flora Macdonald, and she told me how it happened.

Minister Macdonald's staff advisors came to her with a recommendation that Canada respond to the "Boat People" crisis by offering rescue and resettlement to 5,000 of them. This was on top of the previous government's commitment to take 12,000. Ms. Macdonald had to take this recommendation to Cabinet for approval. But in doing so, she added a zero and converted the recommendation to 50,000—and Cabinet approved it. For her department, it was probably the first appearance of the law of unintended consequences in the PSRP.

Thus began an astounding landing of what turned out to be over 60,000 refugees from Southeast Asia in about eighteen months, earning the "People of Canada" the United Nations' Nansen Medal. But the unintended consequences for the PSRP and for Canada went very much further. These refugees and their progeny have helped to build our country.

## Mechanisms

The program began as a simple invitation to Canadians. I persuaded my small-town (Selkirk) Rotary Club to respond and remember going to a government office in Winnipeg and simply signing three cursory papers on behalf of the club. In short order, our Vietnamese refugee family arrived, was welcomed by a delegation of our members and spouses, and was resettled in a comfortable rented bungalow in a good neighborhood. All worked out well.

It was not long, however, before more formal structures evolved. What were termed “Sponsorship Agreement Holders” (SAHs), most often reflecting the organizational structures of the mainline Christian denominations, entered into agreements with the Canadian government that not only empowered them to sponsor refugees under the program but also detailed their responsibilities while doing so. The details of the agreement now run to many pages plus several pages of appendices.

Over time the roster of SAHs has diversified in terms of faith and purpose and, while waxing and waning through the years, today numbers more than one hundred. They have, with government encouragement and funding, formed their own organization to act as a concerted voice and offer organized support to the program. With my once-lawyer hat on, I handled the federal incorporation as a member of the association’s executive.

What is sometimes overlooked by SAHs, as they argue with government for one point or another, is that their existence can be seen as entirely dependent on the life of a Canadian government immigration program that can be changed or cancelled at the drop of a hat. But in the meantime this substantial SAH refugee resettlement lobby, representing in one way or another all the large faith groups in the country (as well as ethnic and community collectives), is a force to be reckoned with—and another unintended consequence of the original framing of the PSRP.

Two other sponsoring mechanisms were written into the refugee sponsorship process: Community Sponsorships, for an established and qualifying group to sponsor in a limited way; and Groups of Five, for five qualifying individuals to undertake a refugee sponsorship. While the former has been used sparingly, the latter has become a major factor of the PSRP and typically has accounted for about 30 percent of cases filed.

### **Transmogrification**

Since the Boat People crisis, tens of thousands of refugees have been resettled in Canada under the PSRP. At the beginning, Canada’s immigration officers were bent on rescuing as many as they could, mindful of that 60,000 target. I have listened to some of their tales [See Bulletin #73]. The paperwork was definitely secondary to the rescuing. It was the PSRP’s swashbuckling era, its finest hour. And very different from today! The program has become thoroughly bureaucratized, and the proper paperwork takes precedence. In the 1980s, the sponsorship of a person and his family took two sides of a sheet of paper. Today a single individual’s paperwork fills 21 pages; for families the complexity can approach nightmare proportions.

Those initial arrivals were selected by Canada’s visa officers abroad, but it was not long before this approach changed dramatically. The refugees who came now wanted their relatives and friends saved too. Thus began the transmogrification of the program. Through my 20 years’ association and work with Winnipeg’s International Centre (the principal refugee resettlement agency in the city at that time), I participated in making it happen.

### **The Insurance Scheme**

Sponsorship Agreement Holders have been most active in Winnipeg. Despite having only two percent of Canada’s population, during the sponsoring heyday from 2009 to 2011, it accounted for a third of new cases.

Historically there were two reasons for this. First, a few strong individuals and groups pushed sponsoring. Notable among these were Sister Aileen Gleason, backed by her order, the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions, who founded Hospitality House Refugee Ministry; and Ed Wiebe of the Mennonite Central Committee. I pushed too, using the capacity of First Presbyterian Church. Then there was the North End Sponsorship Team (NEST), a collective of United and Lutheran churches; “Haven”, a group of south-side United churches; St. Ignatius Roman Catholic church; and Crossed-Hands Refugee Committee, a partnership of Anglican churches.

Under Wiebe’s leadership, the sponsoring community formed the Manitoba Refugee Sponsors in 1995. The group met monthly to share sponsoring information and encourage its members, and it still does. But by far the most compelling reason for Winnipeg’s dominance was the creation of the Winnipeg Private Refugee Sponsorship Assurance Program in the fall of 2002.

Sponsors are nervous about using their government-derived capacity to sponsor while at the same time relying on the local “family link” to come up with the required one year of financial support for its “named” relatives once landed in Canada. What if the family doesn’t, or can’t? Perhaps the head of the local family dies or loses his or her job. It happens in only one percent of the landed cases, but if it happens to your sponsoring group, it can be a financial calamity.

The known, quantifiable risk cried out for an insurance solution. I came up with the idea for funding and managing the scheme, explained it to my long-time friend and associate Marty Dolin, and he “sold” it to the city’s then-Mayor Glen Murray at his annual public birthday party. The city, seeing it as a device to build its population, put up \$250,000 and an annual operating grant of \$30,000, and “WPRSAP” was born.

The scheme succeeded beyond all expectations. Thousands of sponsorships were “insured” and submitted to Canada Immigration. That in itself was an unexpected consequence. But the unintended consequence for the Manitoba refugee sponsors and for all Canadian sponsors was the reaction of the federal government.

As the backlog of unprocessed private sponsorship cases built up overseas (by the end of 2011, it exceeded 34,000 persons), the government just marginally expanded the permitted private sponsorship yearly landings in Canada, to about 6,000. Its annual “Levels Plan” pie had only a small slice for refugees, and that wasn’t about to change in any significant way. And so, instead of managing the build-up in the PSRP inventory by expanding its slice of the pie or enlarging the pie, the government began a regime of “capping” the number of new cases to be sponsored. That capping regime has continued for the past five years and in some form is now likely to continue forever, notwithstanding the need of families to rescue their refugee relatives or the desire of sponsors to sponsor. The number of new cases allowed will be a reflection of the number of refugees being landed.

### **“Unnamed” vs “Named” Sponsoring**

During the first decade of the program, there was a degree of tension and debate between those who felt that those sponsored to Canada ought to be refugees selected by the government (like the original boat people), and those who wanted to bring in at-risk relatives of refugees already here. This distinction acquired the epithets “unnamed” for the former (government selected), and “named” for the latter (refugees nominated by their relatives in Canada). There was an implication that the “unnamed” were more in keeping with the intent of the program than were the “named”, and hence somehow more worthy in the refugee pecking order.

Marty Dolin was an advocate for the “named” approach and, at a national meeting of people involved in the program, memorably noted that all refugees had names and posed the question to an advocate for the “unnamed” approach: “What makes your refugee better than my refugee?” That really nailed the issue and destroyed the dichotomy. While the distinction still continues, the “moral superiority” of one selection method over another has disappeared.

### **Selection and the Great Unintended Consequence**

Today the selection distinction is more likely to be described in one of three ways:

- “visa office referred” for “unnamed” cases offered for sponsorship by Canada and chosen by a Canadian sponsor;
- “full-sponsorship” for refugees, whether “named” or “unnamed”, who have no supporting relatives in Canada and must therefore be the sole financial responsibility of the sponsoring group; and
- “family-linked” cases, where the real financial support of the refugee throughout the resettlement process is coming from relatives and friends in Canada already.

Examining the demand and the landings under these three categories reveals the greatest unintended consequence of the PSRP. The overwhelming number of cases initiated in recent years is family-linked—probably 95 percent or higher. Overseas refusals by Canada’s selection officers will only affect “named” cases, while the “unnamed” ones are typically pre-approved by Canada, and so the landing percentage (family-linked) has been somewhat less, but still in the 90 percent range.

The recent movement of Syrian refugees to Canada has adjusted the dynamics of the PSRP and brought into the sponsoring picture many good-hearted Canadians who may not have any connection to the refugees being sponsored. It remains to be seen whether this will be a permanent feature or a passing phase.

The shift in the PSRP to family-linked sponsorships, the “great unintended consequence”, in hindsight can be seen as inevitable, for four fundamental reasons.

First, Canada is a hard country to get into as an immigrant. The rules are restrictive, and the annual total of immigrants has been essentially frozen at about 250,000 for years. The demand is three times that. Thus programs for nannies and live-in care givers, for temporary foreign workers, and indeed for privately sponsored refugees, tend to become—however limited their number—the release valves for pent-up family reunification that cannot be satisfied in any other way. The new Liberal government of Justin Trudeau has pushed the annual target to about 305,000, but stopped there because of lack of available and trained overseas staff. The processing system is currently at its capacity. It needs expansion.

In a very real sense, and although the candidates must still be bona fide refugees, the PSRP is an immigration program in the guise of a refugee rescue and resettlement program. It is therefore effective both as a national contribution to the planet’s refugee crises and as a mechanism for family reunification when Canada’s current immigration laws permit no other for people of this ilk. The more refugees Canada admits (whether government-sponsored or privately sponsored), the greater is the demand for family reunification through the PSRP. It is called “the echo effect”. For most people who enter in this manner, it is either the PSRP or family separation forever. This cruel reality is also an unintended consequence of Canada’s generosity in the first place.

Second is the “pull” factor. At 20 percent, Canada has the largest percentage of foreign-born citizens of any country, rivaled only by Australia. Many came to Canada as refugees themselves and now are the instrument for rescuing the rest of their family, whom they are often already supporting by remittances via personal carriers or agencies like Western Union and Amal Express. As these dependent relatives settle in Canada and become self-supporting, they eliminate a serious financial drain on their family already settled here.

The third reason for the growth in family-linked sponsoring and the decline in “unnamed” sponsoring is money, or rather the lack of it. Traditional churches in Canada, the main source of “unnamed” sponsorships in the past, are in general decline, both in membership and financial resources. Fewer congregations can afford to undertake the increasing expense of refugee resettlement support. The churches have therefore tended to shift their approach to one where they use their legal capacity and credibility to sponsor, knowing that the cost will be underwritten by the family link.

The fourth reason for the growth of family-linked and “named” sponsoring is the legislatively allowed Group of Five (G5) and Community sponsorships. These cases come about because someone in Canada wants to bring in a particular “named” refugee. In almost every case this will be a relative. My view is that the government doesn’t like G5 applications because it cannot control their number and has concocted special requirements and processing delays to frustrate them. SAHs shouldn’t like them either because G5 applications erode their ability to get the spaces they want in the current era when new sponsorship spaces are severely limited. But as another instrument of family reunification they are praise-worthy.

### **Demand and Restrictions**

The demand for new sponsorships is huge and mostly unsatisfied. I see it firsthand. I am personally turning down requests at an estimated rate of 5,000 refugees a year; and these requests are coming from Canadians, whether citizens or permanent residents, wanting to rescue their family members still in pathetic or dangerous refugee circumstances overseas. This number does not include all those refugees without family connections in Canada who contact me daily via the internet and plead for personal rescue in a “full-sponsorship” way. I estimate this number at 1,000 a year. If one person receives this volume of requests, what must the total demand be? One can only imagine, given that there are about 15 million refugees worldwide and another 50 million internally displaced people living like refugees.

Although there are limits to anyone's capacity, the hard choice to turn down these people is not mine: Canada has set limits on the number of refugees admitted annually under the PSRP. For several years it was 6,000. In 2016, it was raised to 17,800 to address the backlog, with the aim of clearing it up in a couple of years. The number of refugee sponsorships submitted by the end of 2011 had reached about 34,000; consequently, processing and landing in Canada were taking five to seven years or longer. With the recent Syrian movement and Canadians' response, the PSRP backlog was still at 35,000 in May of this year. It was necessary to limit the number of new cases being filed to allow the program to catch up to a more reasonable processing time (12 to 18 months being the goal). Those limitations have been in place since 2011, and I don't expect them to lessen in severity until 2018. I and others who sponsor must turn down applicants every working day in numbers I find depressing. It is the toughest part of my job.

### **Paradoxes**

It is a paradox that, while governments of immigrant-seeking states are motivated to satisfy their perceived labour market needs or, in the case of refugees, to meet international obligations, a principal driver of human migration has always been its "family" connectivity. It is estimated that more than 80 percent of immigrants to Canada, no matter the program through which they have entered, chose Canada because of this relational connection. It is the elephant in the room, the human factor seldom or only grudgingly acknowledged by government, but amply illustrating the law of unintended consequences.

Because of the relational aspect of human migration, within any labour market immigration strategy lurk two more unintended consequences. The first is better resettlement success. Those who arrive with a family connection in place, with a ready community network to tap into, are more easily resettled and have better opportunities for future success. This is of course common sense, but I can attest to it from 37 years of being a direct observer of the resettlement of more than 20,000 refugees—both government-sponsored with no relatives to assist in their resettlement and privately sponsored with family links. The second consequence is a strong nation-building component. We often say that the strength of the nation lies in the strength of its families or families are the building blocks of the nation, but our immigration policies seem to miss this fundamental. In Canada there is a Family Class component, but it is circumscribed by quotas and restrictive definitions. Yet we land many family members anyway because of the relational aspect underlying immigration in all its categories.

A collateral paradox is that Canada's PSRP, while fundamentally intended as a humanitarian gesture abroad and a way of encouraging community involvement and tolerance in the multicultural state at home, is today for the most part a family-reunification program. This unintended consequence suggests both a resettlement model for other countries and a nation-building technique that complements more common labour-market strategies. After all, the carefully selected immigrant intended for the labour market has typically only a 30-year working life, perhaps less—but the second generation will have a lifetime to help build Canada.

### **A Wiser and Better Immigration Policy**

I have long held the view that Canada's current and longstanding immigration policy is wrong-headed. It is too small. It is only superficially rational in its labour market thrust (designed to protect vested interests in the short term); it significantly ignores the fervent wishes of a large segment of Canadians wanting family reunification; it is only minimally humanitarian; and it side-steps the fact that Canada is by far the least densely populated industrialized country on the planet. We have the space and could experience the wealth and political clout that come from a larger population.

In 1910, Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier's famous speech about the 20th century belonging to Canada reflected his vision that by the year 2000 we would have a population of 100 million, not the 36 million of today. In 1913 we received 400,000 immigrants when our population wasn't much over eight million. We have never reached that level since. The vision was lost. An equivalent number today would be 1,750,000, but that is far greater than the number that actually wants to come here. The notion that the world has its bags packed, waiting to come to Canada, is a myth. The reality is that only three percent of the world's population, despite all we hear about human migration, lives outside its country of birth. The ties of home are strong. As things stand now, inevitable population decline awaits us in about 40 years.



## The Gun of HMS *Sackville*



HMS *Sackville* gun turret

Long-time immigration employee and CIHS member Stan Noble was instrumental in persuading the Irish government to include the aircraft gun when Canada's last remaining World War II Corvette, HMS *Sackville*, was returned to Canada to become a floating museum in Halifax. CIHS has a long memory for such things, and Mike Molloy took these photos of the *Sackville* and the gun when it came to Ottawa.

Fast backward to November 1978: CIHS has a photo of visa officers from Singapore interviewing Hai Hong refugees in the shade of an identical gun mount.



Malaysian minesweeper KD *Brinchang* used for interviewing Hai Hong refugees (photo: Ian Hamilton)

Carleton University has won a Canadian Premier International Education Award in the School category based on its work on the Ugandan Asian collection. The citation says: "In recognition of Carleton University's dedication to international education, global affairs, and its concerted efforts to highlight and publicize the plight of Ugandans through its 'Uganda Collection'". President Roseann Runte accepted the award at a gala event on 22 September in Ottawa. You can see details about the awards on the [CPIEA site](#).

## Reconnections

*Ed. Note: Bulletin 75 (December 2015) included an article about the [Iranian Baha'i Refugee Program symposium in Ottawa](#). In that article we mentioned federal lawyer Afsoon Houshidari, who fled Iran as a four-year-old child. What we didn't mention is that she was sitting on a panel with Dennis Scown, the Immigration officer who signed her family's IMM1000 landing paper, allowing them to move to Canada and start a new life. The account that follows is taken from two articles by Nicholas Keung published in *The Toronto Star* in June of this year.*

Born in Tehran, Houshidari was four in 1984 when her father (an agricultural engineer), mother (a teacher), and elder sister flew to Zahedan, an Iranian border city, and walked two days through the desert to reach Pakistan to escape persecution from the Iranian regime. "We only had two small bags. There was nothing to eat or drink". She still recalls a letter arriving at her family's tiny room in Lahore; it was from Canadian officials arranging an interview almost 400 kilometres away in Islamabad for their resettlement to Canada.

"Getting the letter was a cause for celebration. My mom had us put on our best clothes for the interview," said Houshidari. Her father went on to become a businessman and her mother resumed being a teacher. When Houshidari finished law school at the University of Toronto, she got a job with the justice department in Ottawa specializing in immigration law.

When [Afsoon Donna Houshidari](#) started practising refugee law, she pulled out her family's old documents and found the worn-out IMM 1000 landing paper issued by the Canadian visa post in Islamabad in 1985—the ticket that allowed her, her parents and older sister a way to escape a life in limbo as persecuted Baha'i for new opportunities in Canada. That began her personal search for the visa officer who interviewed her family and forever changed their lives. There was one problem: the signature on the landing paper was barely legible. She could make out the initial "D" and a short last name that ended with "own".

Then, at an event in 2014, she met Mike Molloy of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society, who said, “I think there was a Dennis Scown working out of Islamabad when you were there”. Little came of her search for the retired Scown. But three decades after the 45-minute immigration interview, Houshidari was invited to sit on a panel with the now-retired immigration officer at a conference in Ottawa about Canada’s resettlement of the Baha’i.

“Never in a million years would we have thought we would meet the man who made the decision that changed our lives,” an exhilarated Houshidari said about her reunion with Dennis Scown in September.

Not knowing if it could be the same Scown, she invited him and his former colleague, Mark Davidson, also a speaker on the panel, for dinner at her home in Ottawa, where she pulled out the landing paper. “He was sitting there, looking at the IMM 1000. After 15 seconds, he said, ‘Oh my God, that’s me.’ We were both in tears and sat in silence,” Houshidari said.

“I wanted to find him to say thank you and say, look, this is who we are now. You came into these people’s lives and spent 45 minutes with them. The decision you made touched the lives of so many people. We were all overwhelmed with the improbability of our reunion”.

Throughout his 35-year career with the immigration department, all but six years in overseas visa posts, Dennis Scown had interviewed countless prospective immigrants and thousands of refugees hoping to come to Canada for a life away from war and persecution. By his own estimate, he had personally interviewed more than 100 Baha’i families in his three years in Islamabad.

“You always wonder how all these people you sent to Canada would do. You take ownership of a case. You want to make sure the decision you make is good for the family and good for Canada,” said Scown, 69, who has an undergraduate degree in history and a master’s in political science from the University of Calgary. “But the chance of me remembering an individual family I have interviewed is nil”.

Scown gave it little thought when he received a dinner invitation from Houshidari. “I thought this is pretty cool and we would have a chance to talk and get to know each other before the conference,” he said. “I had worked in immigration and I thought she was interested in the process and the nuts and bolts of that. Of course, I couldn’t recognize them. I had black hair and a black beard then. Last I saw her, Afsoon was four. We were sitting side by side and Afsoon brought out this IMM 1000,” recalled Scown, who retired in 2008 after his final posting in Damascus, Syria.

The next day, sitting next to Houshidari at their panel discussion, Scown said he broke down in tears at one point. “Afsoon and her family are an example of how good Canada’s refugee program can be. It is what Canada was founded on. I’m just so proud of them. It summed up the best part of my job,” said Scown. “She is the poster child of a successful refugee story”.

Canada’s leading journal on refugee matters, *Refuge*, has just released a [special issue](#) that grew out of the 2013 conference on Indochinese refugees cohosted by the Centre for Refugee Studies at York University and CIHS. We will review the issue in the next Bulletin.

## Letter to the Editor

I read with great interest the article entitled "Doctors on the Move" in the June 2016 issue of the Bulletin.

It brought to mind a meeting between the then-Assistant Deputy Minister (Immigration) Dr. Robert Adams and two directors general from the Department of Health and Welfare that took place in the fall of 1972, a few

months after I had arrived in Ottawa from New Delhi for my first headquarters posting. Health and Welfare had requested the meeting, and Dr. Adams had asked the Foreign Branch to have an officer attend. I was chosen.

The Health and Welfare directors general wanted the immigration to Canada of foreign physicians stopped because each new immigrant doctor meant an additional physician billing a provincial health insurance plan and driving up costs to the federal and provincial governments. They took the position that Canadian medical schools produced enough doctors to meet the demand.

Dr. Adams's response (and I do remember his exact words) was "No f-----g way"! He went on to accuse the Health and Welfare officials of fronting for the Canadian Medical Association in an attempt to keep physician incomes high by reducing the supply of doctors. The Health and Welfare directors general beat a huffy retreat, saying that the matter would be taken up at the political level. It was, and later the number of points allocated to medical doctors under occupational demand was reduced to zero. The result was refusal of all those who applied as independent applicants or nominated (later assisted) relatives.

While the Bulletin article links the restrictions on the immigration of physicians to the 1976 Immigration Act, my recollection is that it took place before that—possibly following a federal-provincial meeting of health ministers. In any case, the 1976 Act did not come into effect until 1978. I do not recall the names of the Health and Welfare people, but one was in charge of what was then called Health Manpower. [Dr Adams died in 2009.](#)  
*Donald Cameron*

Dues for 2017 annual memberships are now payable. Members may pay in cash or by cheque at the AGM, or mail cheques to  
Box 9502,  
Ottawa, Ontario,  
K1G 3V2

ERRATUM: On page two of Bulletin 77, the photograph identification should have read "The Swinson family".

## In Memoriam

### Remembering Wilf Greaves

*Nestor Gayowsky*

Wilf was my first overseas boss when I arrived in Copenhagen in January 1959. This wet-behind-the-ears officer, fresh from about 18 months of training and cross-Canada tour, came to appreciate the effort Wilf put into the job. He worked particularly hard on proselytizing the idea of emigration to Canada and traveled the country spreading the message, learning enough Danish for the task. Wilf helped me understand the care and attention needed for documenting the immigration process. His attention to detail was extraordinary. I learned a great deal from him and told him so many years later when we ran into one another. A fine colleague.

*Brian Le Conte*

My wife and I happened to be visiting some of her relatives in England when I heard about Wilf's death. Since our itinerary also included the beautiful city of Oxford, I had a special thought for Wilf when we passed through the place where he was born.

Wilf became very special to me early in my career, when he arrived as program manager in Kingston in the summer of 1974. By that time, I already was a hardened veteran of the place, which I believe at the time was Canada's busiest immigration office. We all felt overworked and under-appreciated, and morale was a bit low. Wilf's sunny disposition quickly perked staff up. We realized later that it was at some personal cost, because he had a cardiac incident in the summer of 1975. Fortunately, he had sensed that something wasn't right, got

himself to a nearby clinic just in time, and was able to enjoy many more years of life (unlike his daughter Sherry, who passed away suddenly a few years ago after a massive heart attack).

Wilf forever endeared himself to me and my then-wife when he was the first to drop by to visit our new baby son, whom we just had brought home from that very same clinic after his birth in October 1974. As he took the precious little bundle of my firstborn into his massive arms, this giant of a man with his bushy beard said in his deep voice that “babies are good for the soul”. We left Kingston in 1976 (by that time, with two sons) and, although I never worked for him again, I always was glad to see him whenever our paths met. In fact, I later heard that he put in a good word for me when my current wife asked her friend Sherry Greaves what she knew about me.

Thanks for everything, Wilf. You also were good for the soul. Blessings upon you.

### Alexander Lukie



Alexander Lukie, born 29 December 1942, died peacefully 21 September 2016. Al was the eighth of eleven children and grew up on the family farm in Grandview, Manitoba, strongly rooted in the Ukrainian and Catholic tradition. He attended St. Vladimir’s Minor Seminary in Roblin and earned his BA at Windsor University in Ontario. He then travelled to Europe, where he fell in love with the world.

Al entered Canada’s immigration service in 1966, embarking on an exceptional 40-year career that took him to Denver, Chicago, New York, Islamabad, Nairobi, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Warsaw among other places. During various Ottawa assignments, Al developed a deep expertise in personnel, finance and budgeting. He was especially proud of his role in helping thousands of refugees reshape their lives in Canada, particularly the Ugandan Asians and Indochinese boat people. As manager of the Singapore operation at the height of the Indochinese refugee movement in 1979 and 1980, Al recognized the need to re-orient the Canadian effort toward the growing refugee population building up in Indonesia. He was soon overseeing air lifts of refugees through both Kuala Lumpur and Singapore—84 flights in all, carrying 26,700 refugees—one of the great accomplishments of the Canada’s immigration service.

Al retired in 2006, only to be diagnosed months later with Parkinson’s disease and then Lewy Body Dementia. Despite this, his faith and humour never left him, allowing him to bear a terrible illness with exceptional courage and grace.

Al is survived by his wife Angela, four daughters, Natalya (Christopher), Christina, Amanda (Greg), and Stefanie (Perry); two granddaughters and many nieces and nephews.

Larger than life, a lover of life, our lives were richer for having him as a colleague. Vichnaya Pamyat, Al. Kansas City, here he comes.

*Al’s former colleagues are invited to share their reminiscences in the next issue of the Bulletin.*

*Ed. Note: We hope to have a commemoration of Jack Lavoie in the next issue.*

<p>The Canadian Immigration Historical Society (www.CIHS-SHIC.ca) is a non-profit corporation registered as a charitable organization under the Income Tax Act.</p>	<p>The society’s goals are:          - to support, encourage and promote research into the history of Canadian immigration and to foster the collection and dissemination of that history, and          - to stimulate interest in and further the appreciation and understanding of the influence of immigration on Canada’s development and position in the world.</p>	<p>President - Michael J. Molloy; Vice-President - Anne Arnott; Treasurer - Raph Girard; Secretary - Gail Devlin; Editor - Valerie de Montigny; Members at large - Brian Casey, Roy Christensen, Peter Duschinsky, Charlene Elgee, Kurt Jensen, Gerry Maffre (Communications), Ian Rankin and Gerry Van Kessel Member emeritus - J.B. “Joe” Bissett IRCC Representative - vacant</p>
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