



## Canadian Settlement Services from 1950 to 1980: for Whom and by Whom

Robert Vineberg and Raphael Girard

*Authors' note: The source material for this article has been drawn largely from our personal experience and from Robert Vineberg's book, Responding to Immigrants' Settlement Needs: The Canadian Experience, published in 2012. Readers wishing to learn more or seeking references to the following material should refer to this book.*

### Introduction

Beginning with the creation of the original Department of Citizenship and Immigration (C&I) in 1950, the immigration program was revitalized with respect not only to overseas selection and recruitment but also to domestic settlement. This short article will discuss the debate that took place during the period 1950 to 1980 over who should be delivering settlement programs and to whom they should be directed.

### Background

Even before Canada's confederation, governments, railway companies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) helped newcomers settle—mainly on farmland. The Department of the Interior established a large settlement infrastructure, particularly on the prairies. By 1911, there were over 50 "Immigration Halls" offering free accommodation for immigrants on their way to their land grants, managed by the Dominion Lands Office, also part of the Department of the Interior. Settlement officers helped immigrants get to their land grants and visited often to offer advice on farming techniques and to monitor progress, as the land grants of 160 acres were contingent on clearing 40 acres for farming and building a farmhouse. The government neither encouraged nor discouraged urban migration in any of the various colonization schemes. In the 1930s, due to the Great Depression, there was no immigration to speak of and no institutional response to questions of settlement. The government dissolved the Department of Immigration and Colonization and placed a small Immigration Branch in the Department of Resources. The government allowed the Immigration Service to atrophy during the Depression and throughout the Second World War. However, Canada was rapidly industrialized during World War II, and in the postwar period, urban migration became the principal source of additional manpower for an economy that continued this rapid industrialization.

### Creation of Citizenship and Immigration

The government's response to the growing postwar demand for immigrants was to create the Department of Citizenship and Immigration (C&I). The new department established a coast-to-coast network of settlement offices staffed by public servants, directed by a Settlement Branch within the C&I headquarters. C&I opened new visa offices abroad, mostly in Europe. Those in the U.K. also had settlement officers who were often able to arrange employment for intending

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immigrants even before they departed for Canada. The role of the settlement officers in Canada was to meet, greet, and help newly arrived immigrants find jobs. Another unit, the Citizenship Branch (not to be confused with the Citizenship Registration Branch), gave financial assistance to provinces providing language training to immigrants and assisted voluntary organizations providing counselling services to immigrants.

From the very outset, there was serious institutional antagonism between C&I and the National Employment Service (NES), housed in the Department of Labour, which was mandated to find employment for unemployed residents of Canada, including immigrants. As early as 1950, in Cabinet, Minister of Labour Humphrey Mitchell accused the Immigration Settlement Service of duplicating the work of the NES. However, due to their workload and performance criteria, the NES officers could not devote the time required to provide immigrants with the additional attention required to prepare newcomers for the Canadian job market, as opposed to native-born clients.

Settlement officers provided new immigrants with a priority service focussed on their needs which went beyond simply finding a job. The settlement officers helped new immigrants connect with all the things needed to function in the society of which they had become members. Walter Harris, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, successfully defended his department, and the issue was laid to rest for a number of years. However, following the election of the Diefenbaker government in 1957, the new Minister of Labour, Michael Starr, wrote to Ellen Fairclough, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, arguing that placement of immigrants ought to be the sole responsibility of the NES. Fairclough replied with a forceful defence of the settlement service. A third attempt came from the opposition during a House of Commons Question Period in 1961, when Liberal Jack Pickersgill, formerly Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, accused the settlement service of duplicating the work of the NES. This was particularly disingenuous, as when Pickersgill had been minister, he defended the settlement service, and Treasury Board determined that the settlement service was essential to immigrant reception and ought to remain an Immigration Branch function.

### **Disbanding Citizenship and Immigration and the Settlement Service**

In 1965 the Liberal government embarked on a major government reorganization, and the centrepiece of the project was a new department responsible for “manpower” that would include the Immigration Program but not the Citizenship Program, which the reorganization placed in the Department of the Secretary of State (now Canadian Heritage). The Settlement Branch was disbanded, and officers in the field were moved into local Canada Manpower Centres (CMCs) to serve the public at large, including newly arrived immigrants.

The 1966 White Paper on immigration reinforced the view that immigration was primarily a component of the labour market. It also signalled the government’s intention to reinforce the changes to the *Immigration Regulations* of 1962, which largely eliminated discrimination in immigrant selection. It accomplished this in the 1967 *Immigration Regulations*, which removed the few discriminatory provisions still in the *Regulations* after the 1962 changes, and by creating the “points system” to ensure an objective application of the new criteria.

CMCs had more employment-oriented programs to offer to immigrants—such as language and skills training—but the hands-on work of connecting new arrivals with such non-employment services as health insurance, schooling for children, banking, finding a place to live and so on, went by the boards. Furthermore, there was no longer provision for language training for dependants not intending to enter the labour force. This shift occurred precisely when changes in immigrant source countries, due to the new regulations, resulted in more immigrants without experience in a modern industrial economy. The focus on enhancement of programs to lift barriers to employment had cast aside the meet-and-greet function. Consequently, a void was created at the same time that a larger and more diverse group of immigrants was arriving with a growing need for immigrant-specific settlement services. Furthermore, at Manpower and Immigration Canada headquarters, there was no centralized policy or operational responsibility for immigrant settlement.

The federal government, through the Department of the Secretary of State, funded some community-based programs that had a mandate to prepare permanent residents to become citizens. However, this department did not have a network of offices across the country for citizenship preparation; instead, it funded NGOs that applied for grants to do this work largely carried out by volunteers. With the demise of the federal government’s settlement field offices, these volunteers had to deal with some of the new arrivals’ more immediate needs, as they had no immigrant-specific service agency to assist them. Faced with growing demand to meet the settlement requirements of new arrivals, the NGOs petitioned the Secretary of State for more and more funding in order to be able to respond. By 1973, its involvement in funding NGOs—which had spontaneously filled the void created in 1966—had grown to the point that it was not clear where the demarcation was between their mandate for citizenship preparation and that of Canada Manpower and Immigration for immigrant settlement.

### **Recreating the Settlement Service**

To avoid duplication, the two ministers involved, Secretary of State Hugh Faulkner and Immigration Minister Robert Andras, agreed in 1973 to reaffirm Manpower and Immigration’s responsibility for providing settlement services to new

arrivals, while the Secretary of State would focus on longer-term issues related to preparation for citizenship. The problem for Immigration was that it had neither a headquarters structure nor a field service to deliver on these settlement responsibilities. A survey of the situation on the ground convinced immigration policy makers that the NGO network funded by the Secretary of State was doing very well in helping newcomers settle and in connecting them directly to their communities. Rather than duplicate or supplant their efforts, the government decided to co-opt these agencies, continue to support them, and to expand the network country-wide. Regional offices of Manpower and Immigration Canada created new directorates for settlement services, whose mandate was largely to liaise with the NGOs, monitor their performance, and ensure adequate funding for their activities. At the local level, partnerships between NGO volunteers and Canada Manpower Centres and provincial government agencies were developed, whereby NGOs took charge of new arrivals, directing them to sources of government services such as language training, health care, and recognition of professional and technical credentials. In the process, interaction between the volunteers and immigrants provided very strong social linkages to the community, and this remains one of the most important factors contributing to the success of immigrant settlement in Canada.

Unfortunately, the new settlement regime was vastly underfunded for the expectations that it had created, and most NGOs' requests for funding were, therefore, unmet. Its total budget was \$810,000 in 1975/76. Minister Andras put forward a proposal for a major increase in funding for settlement and language training to bring funding to \$5 million annually. However, his request coincided with the government's anti-inflation program and went nowhere.

In the meantime, Minister Andras tabled in parliament a Green Paper on Immigration. Following national consultations by a special Joint Committee of the House of Commons and the Senate, the committee issued a comprehensive report. Many of its recommendations found their way into the minister's immigration bill. This led to the 1976 *Immigration Act* and the 1978 *Immigration Regulations*. Included in the legislation was a provision for the private sponsorship of refugees that would turn out to be crucial to Canada's response to the Indochinese Refugee Crisis.

During the Indochinese Refugee Crisis, the Canadian government offered to sponsor one refugee for every refugee sponsored privately, up to a total of 25,000 private sponsorships. The response by Canadians was overwhelming. The government increased its matching commitment, and, ultimately, Canada accepted some 60,000 Indochinese refugees. The vast majority of these refugees did not speak English or French. The government realized that only a massive refinancing of the settlement system could provide NGOs with the resources to provide reception and orientation services as well as language training to these newcomers, both those intending to work and those who would not be working outside of the home. The government's response became the model for federal immigrant settlement services and the incentive for the first large permanent increase to settlement funding in the modern era, most of which was directed to funding voluntary groups to deliver services on behalf of the government.

### **Conclusion**

In the final analysis, a decision taken for the wrong reasons and essentially blind to the needs of an important clientele ultimately provided an opening for a community response that in every respect was and continues to be superior to anything the government itself could provide directly to new immigrants. In the Canadian model, new immigrants get hands-on personalized service from people who will become their neighbors over time. It is the kind of social outreach and welcome to newcomers that cannot be duplicated by government programs.

Following thirty years of dispute over who within the public service and the general public should deliver settlement services and for whom these services should be available—only immigrants destined to the labour-market or all immigrants—Canada made the decisions that have led directly to what many consider the best and most comprehensive settlement services of any country.

**To CIHS Members: please mark your calendars!**  
**This year's CIHS Annual General Meeting will take place on**  
**19 October 2023.**  
**Details will follow.**

## **Canada Employment Centre—Cambridge, Ontario**

Doug Dunnington

*Ed. Note: The author's previous articles about his experiences in Canada's immigration foreign service are available in earlier issues of the Bulletin. The Dunnington family relocated to the Kitchener-Waterloo area in 1976, and the author became a non-rotational employee of Manpower and Immigration Canada. This article explores the author's responsibilities at the Canada Employment Centre in Cambridge, Ontario until 1980, which included immigrant and refugee settlement program delivery.*

In August of 1976, I joined the Cambridge Canada Employment Centre (CEC) as an employment counsellor. During my nearly four years in this position, I delivered a wide range of programs designed to bring people into the Canadian labour force, be they Canadian citizens or newcomers to this country. The scope of some of these responsibilities expanded well beyond that mandate because of my previous immigration background, into welcoming newcomers as Canada's refugee resettlement program grew. I outline these developments after providing readers with the basics of CEC programming.

### **Delivery of CEC Programs**

Like my colleagues, I was assigned responsibility for a group of clients registered in a particular occupation code in the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations<sup>1</sup>. Mine was the "600 group" of service occupations, and I was expected to find jobs or provide counselling and referral to federally purchased community college courses or on-the-job training as appropriate. I could use the CEC Mobility Program to send workers to other cities or give them specialized aptitude and achievement testing. I was also to deliver to clients the CEC Creative Job Search Training and Group Briefings on CEC programs and services. We purchased 90 percent of the courses from the Cambridge campus of Conestoga College, and so I also became the federal liaison officer with the college. Given my immigration background, I was also put in charge of the overseas recruitment program for employers and settlement services for new immigrants and refugees.

### **Subsidized Training at Conestoga College**

My first surprise was the amount of program money a CEC had at its disposal for the Canada Manpower Training Program. With various sources of funds available, we could pay the tuition costs for a client to attend Conestoga College for a total of two years if required.

Ontario community college rules required that a prospective student had to have a certain academic standing before being admitted into a skills course. Most of our clients had not finished high school, and so they had to take and pass courses in English, mathematics, and science to achieve the entrance requirements. The Ontario government paid students for one year to achieve this goal. Only then could they spend one year in a skills course.

As the CEC liaison officer with Conestoga College, I had some influence in both course content and discipline. Most of our clients had not finished high school, precisely because they had trouble with English, math, and science. There seemed little point in forcing them back into the same defeatist environment. Since leaving school, most of our clients had some work experience and an attitude change, so I felt we were wasting our money on pure academics. We were, however, obliged to follow the province's rules, as Ontario had jurisdiction over education under the *British North America Act*. On occasion, the college would contact me when students missed classes or did not complete their coursework. I would do what I could to help. In those situations, I was a bit like a high school vice-principal: I simply reminded the student that the Canadian taxpayer was paying tuition and a living allowance so would not be pleased with any abuse of the program. I would be willing to intercede with the school if there were problems that I could correct; otherwise, school was over.

English as a Second Language (ESL) courses at Conestoga were offered as a federally funded program and students were eligible for cost-of-living subsidies. As we began to receive more Southeast Asian refugees, that program became even more popular, as few had experience that could be immediately applied to the Canadian labour market.

### **Subsidized On-the-Job Training (Canada Manpower Industrial Training Program)**

Our office had almost a million dollars to spend convincing employers to take the time to train our clients on their premises. The Canada Manpower Industrial Training Program (CMITP) was not simply a grant per working hour; the employer had to sit down with a training expert from Conestoga College and establish a learning program beneficial to both our client and the employer. Employers had to teach skills as well as offer a per-hour wage. The percentage and length of subsidy depended upon the degree of skill.

There was also special consideration for clients with learning difficulties or other bars to employment. I would often use the program for refugees and immigrants lacking marketable skills. Many employers were of course leery of government intervention and paperwork, and so we had to do a sales job. We also wanted to attract solid companies with healthy futures. Too often we had firms of dubious economic worth coming to us desperate for a financial lifeline.

## **Requests for Foreign Workers**

Another program which I administered was evaluating employers' requests for foreign workers. I worked on that issue at Immigration headquarters, and I was eager to put it into practice in the field.

Visa offices could award immigrant applicants credits on our point system for a job offer in Canada, but there had never been a formal evaluation process. We changed the requirement so that an employer had to prove to a CEC that advertising had been done and consideration made for training a Canadian before offering the position to a person seeking to immigrate. I used the application as a flag that the employer needed a training plan to protect Canadian workers. If the case was approved, it was usually contingent on establishing with Conestoga College a training program, which would be eligible for a CMITP on-the-job subsidy.

## **Refugee and Immigrant Settlement**

Settlement was of real interest to me, as I had selected a lot of refugees and immigrants. There was little direction from headquarters in this area. Refugees received a good reception in Cambridge. There was a local motel, the Galtview, which served as a temporary landing spot for the new arrivals. My contact was Rita, who I think was the owner. I observed that she liked having a steady and secure income stream with our clients, but she also genuinely wanted to help our refugees. She had her kitchen make meals that our clients enjoyed and I am sure that she acted as a sort of surrogate mother to some.

Eastern European refugees were my first arrivals. They had solid machine skills and could be quickly hired in local factories. I had phoned a major machining factory ahead of time, and it was interested in recruiting new immigrants. The owner and his two sons were Czech, and their plant was an established machine-tooling company of national renown. All three of my newly arrived candidates were offered permanent, well-paying jobs in the skill set of their experience. The company would take care of their apartments, furniture, and some expenses, and so I gave the owner my information and told him to send me the bills. The company would also take the kids to school. Would that all my new folks would be established so easily! Language was also not a problem, as the company was a veritable United Nations. Plenty of English was spoken at the plant, and so there was no need to spend six months in a subsidized English course at Conestoga College.

## **Southeast Asian Refugees**

Soon thereafter, we started to get Vietnamese refugees. There was no established Vietnamese community to assist us with interpretation and hands-on help. Fortunately, a bright woman among my first few families spoke enough English to act as my translator and interpreter. Quan's contributions to the program became essential, as the number of Southeast Asians increased. Few had any marketable skills upon arrival in Canada, and so we enrolled the adults in ESL and their children in the schools nearest to their apartments.

It soon became obvious that the growing number of refugees required more time than I had available, as I had other responsibilities. I therefore contacted the major faith communities, explaining that the federal government would pay all the settlement costs if they would handle the settlement tasks. My memories of this work were that these local agreements were settled with simple handshakes. It was a win-win for the refugees, the faith groups, and the immigration department.

Our work was satisfying and challenging but sometimes caused disruption at home. My wife, Barbara, told me on my departure one Friday morning to be sure to come straight home from the office as she had a special surprise. The day was hectic as usual, but by the afternoon it looked as if I'd be able to get away on time. A phone call from regional headquarters changed that. A family of 10 Vietnamese was en route. One member was very pregnant and another a grandmother with medical problems. I needed to get the Galtview Motel ready to receive and feed them for the weekend, the hospital forewarned, and my interpreter ready to help. In the meantime, I had to deal with a bit of a crisis at the college. Barbara was rather cool when I finally got home after 7:30 p.m. "Better check your pool," she murmured. "It has turned bright green!" Dashing out the back door, instead of a disaster, I saw a brand-new barbecue and a cooler with two steaks and a few libations. I told her the delay was due to the exigencies of government service. After her initial concern, she soon realized that our newcomers had needed help and told me to handle the steaks while she did the fixings. She was and has always been a supportive partner wherever we lived and whatever my profession required.

## **Challenges**

The work civil servants do is not all hearts and flowers. We had to deal with a number of challenges. We were concerned that Canadians not think badly of all immigrants and refugees because of the actions of a few bad guys. During my time working at the CEC, several misunderstandings arose about acceptable Canadian conduct, and I worked to de-escalate the situations and bring about fair resolutions. I recall that most of the problems were minor and short-lived and were by far the exception in an overall very successful program. I have good memories of my years at the Cambridge CEC, coordinating newcomer arrivals and helping people to find work.

## **Auf Wiedersehen, Cambridge**

In 1980, when I qualified for a position at the Canada Immigration Centre (CIC) in Kitchener, Barbara and I were feted by the CEC staff at a Saturday night dinner. The highlight was a letter from the mayor of Cambridge, thanking me for my contributions and granting me a special Mayor's Lifetime Permit for admission to the City of Cambridge. The next Monday, I walked from our home to my office at the Canada Immigration Centre in Kitchener.

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Manpower and Immigration Canada introduced the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations (CCDO) in 1971. It was [replaced](#) by the National Occupational Classification (NOC) in 1992. The CCDO catalogued, described, and analysed occupations in the Canadian labour market, such as those in the service sector, and rated them on different scales, such as degrees of complexity and responsibility.

## **Hearts of Freedom: The Canadian Southeast Asian Refugee Historical Research Project**

Peter Duschinsky

The Hearts of Freedom (HOF) project is reaching its culmination. The project is based on the personal experiences—described in video interviews—of refugees during their flight from Southeast Asia and their resettlement in Canada. Many of the project's wide-ranging results are already available to the public, while others will become available in 2023 and 2024.

The project has finalized 175 oral history interviews, most in both official languages, and some in the interviewees' mother tongues. With the agreement of interviewees, 162 interview videos are accessible to the public on the project's [website](#). This collection of interviews includes 84 Vietnamese, 28 Cambodian, and 22 Laotian, and 28 with Canadian politicians, public servants, non-governmental (NGO) representatives, and private sponsors. The number of interviews with each refugee ethnic group largely reflects each group's weight within Canada's population.

The project's core contains 147 stories of heart-wrenching suffering and deaths—of escaping from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos—and the successful integration in Canada of often deeply traumatized people. These stories are important contributions to Canada's immigration history: they preserve a record of the largest non-European refugee movement to date for future generations, and they show how refugees have contributed and can continue to contribute to Canada.

Interviews with retired foreign service and domestic service immigration officers and two retired Quebec immigration officers describe the challenges encountered in selecting and resettling the refugees. Interviews with NGO representatives and private sponsors highlight the important support the refugees received from the people of Canada. Of particular interest to CIHS members may be the interviews with former prime minister Joe Clark ([interview HOF175](#)), former immigration minister Lloyd Axworthy ([interview HOF110](#)), and former president of CIHS Mike Molloy ([Interview HOF026](#)), which describe Canada's political decision to accept and resettle the refugees and its implementation.

The HOF project was initiated in 2015 by Dau-Thi Huynh and Minh Nguyen of the Vietnamese community in cooperation with Colleen Lundy, Professor Emeritus of Social Work at Carleton University. Not long after, others such as Professor Emeritus of Social Work Allan Moscovitch at Carleton University, CIHS members Mike Molloy and Peter Duschinsky, and Stephanie Stobbe, Associate Professor at Menno Simons College, a College of Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg were brought on board. Lundy, Moscovitch, Molloy, Stobbe, and Duschinsky have formed the project's central research team.

A management committee was established that included the research team and members of the three refugee ethnic communities, as well as representatives from the Canadian Museum of History, the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, Carleton University Archives, and CIHS. The CIHS representatives were Anne Arnott and Charlene Elgee. Following persistent efforts and work by the research team, especially Lundy and Moscovitch, Carleton University agreed to be the lead institution for the project and Heritage Canada agreed to provide financing for it. The HOF project was approved by Heritage Canada for three years and started in 2018.

The project began by hiring [an extensive working team](#) that included Ginette Thomas as project co-ordinator, Mondy Lim as media coordinator and website creator, and groups of interviewers and coordinators with the three ethnic communities. Training sessions were held on the historical background of the project and the acquisition of technical competence to conduct oral history interviews.



The financial support initially provided by Heritage Canada for the project fell short of the project's requirements. Additional resources came from private donations, crowd funding, the DeFehr Foundation, and Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). As a result, the team was able to conduct interviews in Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa/Gatineau, Toronto/Southwest Ontario, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Calgary, and Vancouver.

Allan Moscovitch, Colleen Lundy, Mike Molloy, and Ginette Thomas shared the complex task of meeting Carleton University's and Heritage Canada's reporting requirements and maintaining steady contacts with the management committee and all of the project's stakeholders. Moscovitch and Thomas controlled the budget. Through the life of the project, Peter Duschinsky provided historical research and texts for the initial project submission, the training sessions, the website, and the travelling exhibition (see below). In addition to creating the public website, Mondy Lim set up a detailed restricted website for the team, tabulating the progress of the interviews and providing a statistical analysis of the interviews.



HOF research team at the opening of *Stories of Southeast Asian Refugees Travelling Exhibition*, Canadian Museum of History, 22 February 2023. L-R: Allan Moscovitch, Stephanie Stobbe, Mike Molloy, Peter Duschinsky (Absent: Colleen Lundy)

Private funding and a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council enabled Stephanie Stobbe to coordinate, curate, and tour the *Stories of Southeast Asian Refugees Travelling Exhibition* across Canada. The exhibition opened on 22 February 2023 at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau. Many of the members of the HOF research team and working team participated in the exhibition's opening ceremony. Mike Molloy gave a memorable speech, summarising the HOF project's achievements and importance. The exhibition remained in Gatineau until 16 April 2023 and then travelled to British Columbia. With the enthusiastic support of the Pacific Canada Heritage Centre - Museum of Migration and B.C. ethnic communities, the exhibition is enjoying broad exposure at a number of locations in B.C., including at the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, and Victoria's Government House. From August to December 2023, the exhibition will be at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax; from January to early April 2024, it will be at the Manitoba Museum in Winnipeg. For people unable to visit the exhibition in person, a digital exhibition has been prepared and can be viewed online.

Sheila Petzold, a well-known Canadian documentary filmmaker, generously volunteered her time to provide technical training and to prepare a documentary film based on the interviews and using contemporary documentary footage. Petzold and her team, with the support of Moscovitch and the ethnic communities, produced *Passage to Freedom*, which had its premiere on 6 April 2023 at the Canadian Museum of History. The film has been shown to audiences at a number of locations in B.C. and Ottawa. Audience reaction to it may be summarized in the words of Dr. Hieu C. Truong O.C.: ".....very emotional, touching, and powerful documentary. It was a true, epic, historical, real-life tragedy, captured on film for posterity. Your film narrates this human episode of the Vietnam War in a poignant, true-to-life way, not found in any of the previous Vietnam War related films thus far."

As interviewing reached the final stage in 2020, work started on a book based on the interviews: *Hearts of Freedom: Southeast Asian Refugees in Their Own Words*. The challenge was to create a focused narrative based on all the interviews, a very difficult undertaking requiring intense discussions among the five members of the research team who were the book's co-authors. McGill-Queen's University Press, publishers of *Running on Empty* in 2017, will publish this second volume. Following two years of hard work that included analysing all the interviews and considerable additional research, the final draft of the book was completed in February 2023 and sent to the McGill-Queen's editor, who has forwarded it to peer reviewers. The peer reviews should be received within the next several months. Modifications based on the reviews and a final edit will follow, and the book will probably be ready for publication in spring 2024. It is hoped that it will be a fitting continuation of *Running on Empty* and that the two books will present a full picture of the Southeast Asian refugee movement to Canada.

As the HOF project reaches its culmination, its participants agree that it was a worthwhile undertaking that has made a significant contribution to Canadian immigration history. CIHS may be proud that several CIHS members have played an important role in this project, which fits under the mandate of our society.

## Minister MacKinnon Welcomes the First Flight of the Federal Air Charter Service, 1948

*Ed. Note: this item consists of notes for a speech by J.A. MacKinnon, Canada's acting minister responsible for immigration, to new immigrants from the United Kingdom. Built upon an initiative launched by the Ontario government of the time, this federal immigrant transportation pilot seems to have lasted for one year and was replaced by another in 1950 (see note). The speech was provided by Library Services, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. The photograph and caption were provided by Library and Archives Canada and formatted by the CIHS for Bulletin publication.*

On behalf of the Government and of the people of Canada I wish to extend to you a very warm welcome to our country. This is an auspicious occasion marking as it does the inaugural flight under the Canadian Government Charter Air Service, whereby the Government of Canada is making provision for the transportation to Canada by air of 10,000 immigrants from the United Kingdom by March 31st, 1949. Canada is the first country in the British Commonwealth to initiate a Federal Government air immigration movement.<sup>1</sup>

Arrangements have been made through the Canadian Immigration offices in the United Kingdom to provide persons desiring to emigrate to Canada with adequate information and advice. This service includes the provision of information on living conditions and employment in each province, wage rates, climate, educational facilities, and social services. Officers of the Department of Labour, stationed in each immigration office, advise on the prospects for employment and, whenever possible, arrange definite placement in jobs in Canada before the immigrant leaves the United Kingdom. Extensive arrangements have also been made for the reception and assistance of the British immigrants when they arrive in Canada.

It is not sufficient for a country merely to welcome people to its shores. The real test is how well it provides opportunities for employment and also the public and community services which enable newcomers to make a quick and satisfactory adjustment to their changed surroundings. I can assure you that this larger aspect is always to the forefront in the plans of the Government of Canada for immigration. Extensive plans have been made to be of assistance to you in becoming happily settled in Canada.

Canada is actively encouraging immigration. A steadily increasing number of persons are coming by land, sea, and air. Over 64,000 immigrants came to Canada during 1947 and over 32,000 in the first four months of this year. Canada is particularly dependent on a continuous flow of newcomers like yourselves. It is a country rich in resources and offers you the opportunity to employ to the full all your skill, training, initiative and energy. We fully appreciate that it was not easy for you to break the ties with your homeland. We admire your courage and are greatly pleased that you have chosen Canada as your new home. Throughout the years tens of thousands have taken the same [decision] to their own advantage and to that of Canada.



Immigrants from United Kingdom arriving from Prestwick, Scotland, welcomed by James A. MacKinnon, acting Minister of Mines and Resources; Dorval, June 1948.

James A. MacKinnon, Ministre par intérim des Mines et ressources, souhaite la bienvenue à Dorval à des immigrants britanniques arrivant de Prestwick en Écosse, juin 1948. (C 49401 National Archives of Canada/ Archives publiques du Canada)

<sup>1</sup> In 1951, the United States Senate Committee on Commerce [reported](#) the following:

*During 1948, TCA [Trans Canada Airlines] flew 175 westbound charter flights carrying more than 6,000 immigrants under contract first with the Ontario Province and later with the Canadian Government. It is presumed that most of the charter revenues of \$2,146,917, or 20 percent of the international division's total revenues came from this particular activity. In 1949 and 1950, when the program was no longer in force, charter income dropped to \$879,191 and [illegible] respectively. While TCA officials have disclaimed any subsidy in this charter operation, other reliable sources believe the airline received indirect [illegible] through this scheme. The extent of any such subsidy is difficult to measure.*

*In December 1950 the Government entered into a revised air immigration contract with TCA. In this instance the Government has agreed to pay the difference between \$160 and the full one-way fare between London and Montreal of \$375. It is reliable [sic] reported that for the first 6 months of 1951, about 3,000 immigrants were brought to Canada under this arrangement.*



***Prisoner #1056, How I Survived War and Found Peace*** by Roy Ratnavel, Viking Canada, 2023, 272 pages  
Book Review by Robert Orr

Forty years ago, for one week in July 1983, Sri Lanka witnessed a disastrous outbreak of communal violence by the majority Sinhalese population against the minority Tamil population. While there had been ethnic tensions since independence in 1948, the events of that week marked the start of a bloody civil war that lasted until 2009.

Canada's response to the events included the creation of "Special Measures" for Sri Lankans. Those applying for immigration had to be sponsored by a relative in Canada and demonstrate that they had been personally and directly affected by the violence. Given the nature of the program, it was overwhelmingly Tamils who qualified. As the tensions and war continued, many other Tamils made their way to Canada to apply through the asylum system. During the civil war, about 130,000 Sri Lankans, mostly Tamils, emigrated to Canada, making Sri Lanka a major source country of immigrants.<sup>1</sup>

I worked as a visa officer in Sri Lanka from 1986 to 1989, assessing many applications to determine who qualified under the special measures. Most of the interviews of that time are now a blur to me, but one interview I do recall was in 1987 of a young man, just 18 at the time. When asked how he had been affected by the events, he lifted his shirt and showed significant scars that were the result of torture. He was clearly intelligent and motivated, and spoke good English, all of which made it easy to accept his application.

Fast forward to 2017, and it was my final week working at Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) headquarters. I received a message from an individual at CI Investments, a major investment bank headquartered in Toronto. I returned the call and found that it was Roy Ratnavel, the young man whom I had interviewed in 1987. He had clearly succeeded, as he was now executive vice-president of the bank. I was astounded that he had remembered my name and tracked me down. We met on a couple of occasions in Ottawa after this initial phone call, and I learned some of what happened after he arrived in Canada. Others can also now learn of his experiences, as *Prisoner #1056* has recently been released by Viking and was briefly a national non-fiction Canadian best-seller.

It is a remarkable story of determination and perseverance. Roy was born in Sri Lanka in 1969 and remembers his early years positively. While his family was proudly Tamil, his father's closest friend was Sinhalese, a colonel in the army. After July 1983, the political situation deteriorated rapidly and the island endured horrific fighting and violence. In 1987, 17-year-old Roy, along with many other Tamil youths, was randomly rounded up by the army and held without charge in a grim prison camp. He was prisoner #1056. It was his father's friend who managed to get him released.

Given the deteriorating situation, his father determined that Roy should go to his uncle in Canada and start anew. Roy movingly tells of his interview at the Canadian High Commission and his departure from the island nation, leaving his parents behind. A theme throughout the book is how Roy came to terms with the legacy of his father. Tragically, Roy's father was killed by the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) two days after Roy arrived in Canada. His father's lessons and expectations took on heightened importance and set the parameters for many of Roy's subsequent decisions. He felt that he was "living a life for two".

Most of the book details Roy's history in Canada. Soon after his arrival, he started work in the mailroom of CI Investments—the company where he is now a senior executive. He sponsored the immigration of his mother, who sadly endured serious mental health issues. He finished high school, married, completed a degree at the University of Toronto, and moved up the corporate ladder. He is very frank about his challenges along the way. He is generous in describing the individuals who were his mentors and helped him navigate a new country and a new culture. His personal drive is impressive, but he does not shy away from revealing difficult personal moments, major setbacks, some bad decisions and his own character flaws. His candour and conversational style make for an engaging and revealing narrative.

In the last two chapters, he changes tack. He does not hold back in attacking "cancel culture" and its attendant risk to free speech. He sees a tendency for individuals to avoid personal responsibility and argues Canadians must "lower the barrier but not the bar" (that is, Canadians must lower the barriers that make it difficult for many to achieve high standards but those high standards must remain in place). While recognizing incidents of racism, he takes issue with those who criticize Canada for being systemically racist. He strongly endorses resilience, meritocracy, and mutual respect. Above all, he emphasizes his gratitude to and admiration for his adopted country.<sup>2</sup>

Former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney wrote about the book, "...one cannot help but hear a familiar refrain that will resonate with millions of Canadians, because at its core it is the story of the immigrant experience. And in the final analysis, we are all children of immigrants". To a visa officer, this book is a reminder of the impact a decision can have on someone's life: what is routine to the officer can be life changing for an applicant.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Steven Seligman, "Explaining Canadian Foreign Policy toward Sri Lanka under Harper Government", *International Journal*, 2016 Vol7(2) pp 249-265.

<sup>2</sup> Edited excerpts from Roy Ratnavel's book also appear in *An Immigrant's Story*, [Quillette magazine](#), May 2023.

***Beyond the Village: My Grateful Journey*** by Rajiv Samant. Baico Publishing, 2022.  
Book Review by Peter Duschinsky

This autobiography describes the Canadian integration experience of Dr. Rajiv Samant, an Ottawa oncologist, from his birth in India until the end of his medical internship in Regina, Saskatchewan.

The book starts by describing the family's roots in a remote Himalayan village. Reached by walking on rough paths through high hills, the village had no modern conveniences, not even usable toilets. Domestic animals lived with people in simple dwellings. Rajiv's father reached adolescence in the early years of Indian independence and was able to pursue his education through scholarships, despite opposition from some of his family. He completed his studies at an Indian college and obtained a graduate scholarship in Canada in 1964. He married 18-year-old Jayanti, a village girl who only learned to read and write at the age of sixteen. When Rajiv's father travelled to Canada, he left Jayanti behind with two small boys, one of them the new-born Rajiv.

After a four-year separation from his father, Rajiv arrived in Canada in 1968 with his young mother and six-year-old brother. The first years were strange; all social interactions had to be relearned. Cold weather and abundant food were new experiences. Rajiv's early school years were in Halifax where his father had a government job. Before entering school, Rajiv spoke little English, but he was an outgoing boy who learned the language quickly. As he was also an excellent student and enthusiastic athlete, his integration was relatively rapid and easy. The family purchased a modest house. Rajiv made friends. Pizza became his favorite food. His father worked hard; his mother was mostly responsible for raising their children, including a third son born in Canada. Jayanti found learning English relatively difficult. Her life revolved around the family. She was an excellent cook of Indian food, still strange in 1970s Canada. While aware that he was different from most of his schoolmates, Rajiv became Canadianized rapidly, while retaining ties to his parents' culture within the Indian immigrant community.

College years at Dalhousie went by rapidly; Rajiv carpoled to university with his elder brother, a physics student. He found university harder than high school—he was surprised by a difficult psychology course that convinced him to study much harder than he did in high school. He rose to the challenge and eventually got through the enormously competitive hurdle of medical school applications and was accepted by Dalhousie's medical school. At the same time, his elder brother pursued graduate studies in physics.

After graduating, Rajiv moved to Regina and describes the technical challenges of his medical internship there in great detail. This was the first time he was away from his family and in a fully Canadian environment, yet he does not appear to have felt strange or alienated. Many of his fellow interns and members of the hospital staff were non-European immigrants like him. The autobiography ends with Rajiv Samant finishing his internship and becoming a fully-fledged Canadian medical doctor.

This book demonstrates that however distant a non-European immigrant's cultural background is from Canadian social norms, rapid and successful integration in Canada's diverse society is possible. In Canada, highly motivated children of a professional father usually do not find it difficult to become part of the Canadian mosaic. It is noteworthy that, except on a couple of very minor occasions, racism was not a major issue for Dr. Samant. With the support of a close, highly motivated family, he became a successful Canadian professional. As he states, his "life has shown him that we can only truly survive and thrive in our new homes with the love and support of friends, neighbours and entire communities".

*Beyond the Village: My Grateful Journey* is available in Ottawa at **Singing Pebble Books** and **Black Squirrel Books** and may also be purchased on Amazon.

## Donations to Pier 21

Gerry Maffre

The Canadian Immigration Historical Society (CIHS) has a well-established partnership with the Canadian Museum of Immigration History at Pier 21 (Pier 21) and is pleased that the museum has accepted more donations of immigration artifacts as described here.

### Operation Syrian Refugees Medallion

In June 2016, John McCallum, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (IRCC), and Anita Biguzs, Deputy Minister of IRCC, presented this medallion to members of the department who were involved directly with the resettlement of Syrian refugees to Canada. This medallion was offered to the museum by Robert Orr.

On one side of the five-cm medal is a maple leaf marked with the figure “25,000”, the target number of Syrian refugees to be resettled to Canada that year. That image is encircled by the words “2015 Canada’s Humanitarian Tradition 2016 Une Tradition Humanitaire du Canada”.

On the reverse side, there is a map with a plane flying from the Middle East to Canada. Around that image appear the words “2015 Operation Syrian Refugees 2016 Opération Réfugiés Syriens”.



### Donations by Debbie Farnand

Working in collaboration with Debbie Farnand, a former Citizenship and Immigration Canada employee, we proposed—and Pier 21 accepted—that it take possession of two additional items. The first is a bilingual chronology (below) of immigration officer uniforms through the years up to the 1990s. It was prepared by Carrie Hunter and formatted for the CIHS Bulletin.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER UNIFORMS	
1920 –	Military uniform. Dark navy blue jacket with black braid, “Immigration Canada”, Tudor crown brass buttons, and stand-up collar, navy blue pants, white shirt, a hat.
1950s – 1971	Military uniform. Dark navy blue jacket with “Immigration Canada” and Edwardian crown brass buttons, pants, Melton overcoat, “Immigration Canada” hat, white shirt, black tie, black socks.

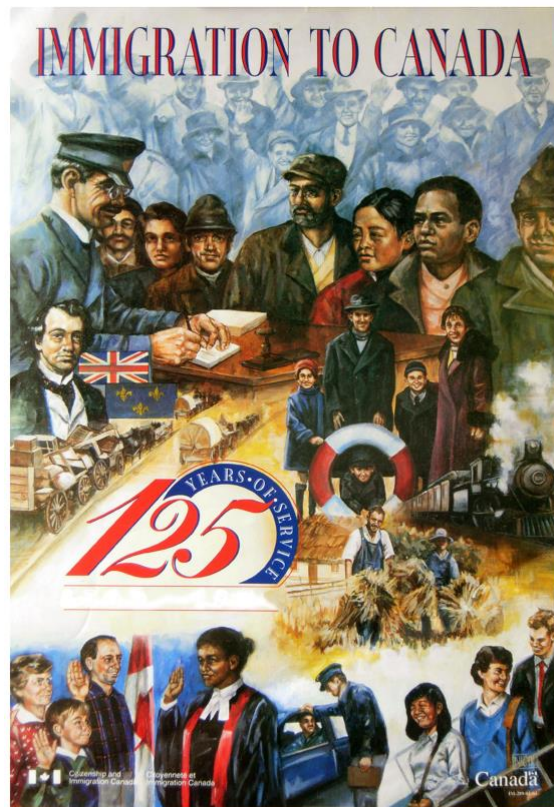
1971 – 1974	<p>Selected by Minister Bryce Mackasey.</p> <p>Male: Maroon jacket, pink shirt, grey tie, grey bellbottom pants.</p> <p>Female: Pink dress and jacket, pink pillbox hat, gloves, shoes, leather purse and coat, “Immigration Canada” brooch.</p>
1975 – 1976	<p>Selected by Minister Bryce Mackasey.</p> <p>Male: Houndstooth pants, safari jacket, brown jacket, beige or white shirt, sweater vest, brown mix tie, beige all-weather coat.</p> <p>Female: Plaid brown and blue skirt, brown skirt, turquoise jacket, brown mix sweater vest, beige blouse, turquoise polka dot on beige blouse, turquoise blouse with brown motifs, two matching scarves.</p>
1977 – 1985	<p>Male: Beige or brown pants, brown jacket, beige or white shirts, brown mix tie, beige sweater vest, belt, all-weather coat.</p> <p>Female: Beige or brown pants, beige or brown skirt, brown jacket, beige or white blouse, beige sweater vest, belt, brown mix scarf, all-weather coat.</p>
1986 – present	<p>Male: Steel blue jacket and pants, white shirt, navy blue sweater, navy and red striped “Immigration Canada” tie, black leather belt, grey all-weather coat, grey parka.</p> <p>Female: Steel blue jacket, skirt, pants, maternity jumper, white shirt, navy blue sweater, navy and red striped “Immigration Canada” scarf, black leather belt, grey all-weather coat, grey parka.</p>

#### UNIFORMES D'AGENT D'IMMIGRATION

1920 –	<p>Style militaire.</p> <p>Veston bleu marin avec soutaches noires et col montant, boutons en laiton affichant le logo « Immigration Canada » et la couronne Tudor, pantalon bleu marin, chemise blanche, et shako.</p>
1950s – 1971	<p>Uniforme militaire.</p> <p>Veston bleu marin, boutons en laiton avec logo « Immigration Canada » et la couronne style Edouard. Pantalon bleu marin, chemise blanche, cravate noire, bas noirs, pardessus, et shako.</p>
1971 – 1974	<p>Choisi par le Ministre Bryce Mackasey.</p> <p>Homme : Veston bourgogne, chemise rose, cravate grise, pantalon gris à pattes d'éléphant.</p> <p>Femme : Robe, veston et chapeau rose et, en beige, les gants, souliers, sac à main et manteau de cuir, l'épingle « Immigration Canada ».</p>
1975 – 1976	<p>Choisi par le Minister Bryce Mackasey.</p> <p>Homme : Pantalon pieds de poule brun, veston safari, veston brun, chemise beige ou blanche, débardeur, cravate brune, imperméable beige.</p> <p>Femme : Jupe à carreaux brun et turquoise, veston turquoise, débardeur, blouse beige à pois turquoise, ou turquoise à motifs bruns, foulards assortis.</p>

1977 – 1985	<p>Homme : Pantalon beige ou brun, veston brun, chemise blanche ou beige, cravate de tons brun, débardeur, ceinture, imperméable.</p> <p>Femme : Pantalon et jupe beige ou brun, veston brun, blouse blanche ou beige, débardeur beige, ceinture, foulards de tons bruns, imperméable.</p>
1986 à ce jour	<p>Homme : Veston et pantalon bleu acier, chemise blanche, pullover marine, cravate marine à rayures rouges et logo « Immigration Canada », ceinture noire, imperméable, parka gris acier.</p> <p>Femme : Veston, jupe, pantalon, tunique de maternité bleu acier, blouse blanche, pullover marine, foulard marine à rayures rouges et logo « Immigration Canada », ceinture noire, imperméable, parka gris acier.</p>

Debbie Farnand's second donation is CIC's poster created by artist [Brock Nicol](#) to mark the 125th anniversary of Canada's first Immigration Act, in 1869. This is an image of that poster.



The Museum's "acquisitions committee" recently decided to accept these items into their collection. As of this writing, the donors are arranging shipment of the material to the Museum at the latter's cost.

### CIHS Veterans Meet IRCC Foreign Service Recruits

Robert Orr

The Canadian Immigration Historical Society (CIHS) has always enjoyed a friendly, informal relationship with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Not only does CIHS receive an annual contribution from the department, but the close person-to-person links allow for valuable exchanges of information and perspectives. The Society benefits from its interaction with individuals throughout the department, and particularly with the Communications Branch and the Research and Data Branch. Before being interrupted by the pandemic, we also made an annual presentation to IRCC on a topic of mutual interest during National Public Service Week. CIHS believes this relationship is mutually beneficial and is keen to preserve it.



As one way to maintain links with IRCC, members of the CIHS accept regular invitations to speak to new cohorts of foreign service recruits during their extensive training. In a 90-minute session, our members talk to the recruits about the work of the Society and its efforts to record the development of Canadian immigration policy and operations from the point of view of those who were directly involved in it. We also point to Canada's strong and proud immigration tradition. We encourage the recruits to join the Society, and as an incentive, they are offered a free one-year subscription.

These sessions usually develop into a question-and-answer conversation about life in the foreign service. The CIHS panel shares frank views on the value of this career, the importance of local knowledge in immigration decisions, and thoughts about life abroad. Society members usually have a broad range of experiences, overseas and in Canada, which are of real interest to the recruits. What was your favourite posting? How do you keep connections with your friends and family in Canada? What was your biggest mistake? How do we maintain good relationships with locally engaged staff? It's rare that recruits get the opportunity to put questions of this sort to individuals with plenty of lived experience. The quantity and high calibre of questions attest to the real value of these sessions to the recruits.

Members of CIHS who participate are always impressed by the new visa officers. They are enthusiastic, remarkably well-qualified, and ask thoughtful, penetrating questions. It bodes well for the future!

## **In Memoriam**

### **Delisle, Jean-Paul**

Jean-Paul Delisle passed away suddenly in May 2023. He joined the immigration foreign service in 1973. He served overseas in Jamaica, Yugoslavia and Nigeria, then returned to Ottawa for approximately four years of headquarters assignments. He was then posted to Paris, Egypt, and finally to Hong Kong as an immigration control officer. After that posting, he became an independent consultant who specialized in anti-counterfeiting and forensics. We invite readers to send in remembrances of Jean-Paul, which will be published in the next issue.

#### *Remembered by Jean Roberge*

Jean-Paul Delisle was a great friend, trusted colleague and real gentleman. I first got to know him when I returned from an extended New York posting in 1985. Jean-Paul was active in the Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers' executive but was about to go himself on a posting abroad. Unwritten rules called for the executive member to find his own replacement on the board. He buttonholed me until I agreed to replace him. The fact that I remained on talking terms with him is a testament to his character, likeability and charming demeanour!

We reconnected in Hong Kong where he had stayed after leaving the immigration foreign service. He was then working for the software giant Microsoft as a fraud expert, trying to tackle forged and pirated Microsoft products. He returned to Ottawa when he retired from Microsoft, but continued acting as a consultant on software piracy. His death deprived us of a true mensch. Rest in Peace, amigo!

### **Majid, Victor**

Just before going to press, the Society learned from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada that Victor Majid, retired immigration foreign service officer, passed away suddenly in early May 2023. Victor had postings in Hong Kong, Riyadh, Singapore, Shanghai, Colombo, Manila, and New York, as well as at national headquarters. IRCC reported in a recent announcement that he leaves behind his wife Ju and children Jasmine and Jaden. If readers wish to submit remembrances, they will be published in a future Bulletin.

### **Shalka, Robert J. (Dr. Bob)**

The CIHS was shocked to learn of Robert Shalka's passing in early June 2023. Known by his colleagues as "Dr. Bob", over the years he was a major contributor to many interests, among them the CIHS, being at various times the board secretary and Bulletin editor. Above all, Bob was a writer: one of four co-authors of the CIHS's book Running on Empty and a regular contributor to the Bulletin. We are including below an edited version of the eulogy delivered by Peter Duschinsky at Bob Shalka's funeral.

*Dr. Robert Shalka, Eulogy by Peter Duschinsky, 13 June 2023*

I am Peter Duschinsky, an old friend and colleague of Dr. Robert Shalka. I stand here to praise Dr. Shalka, a special human being whom I first met almost fifty years ago, when we both arrived in Ottawa for training as newly minted immigration foreign service officers. Rapidly, Shalka became affectionately called Dr. Bob by his fellow trainees. This name fit him since his questions and comments during training sessions showed him to be an extremely intelligent historian.

Bob and I had a lot in common. Discussing our family backgrounds, we soon found out that Bob's father originated in a village in Central Slovakia, just 12 kilometres from the small Slovak town my mother came from. Our training officer, big Hercule Raymond, often confused the two of us, calling me Shalka and him Duschinsky. For Hercule, who was from Quebec City, people with East Central European roots looked the same.



Very recently, Roberta, Bob's intelligent and beautiful young daughter who is following in his footsteps and has already been a federal immigration professional for the past five years, shared with me a large body of written material that Bob had been working on. It is quite amazing. It describes Bob's working life, his experiences both abroad and in Canada. The amount of detail in these descriptions has convinced me of what I had suspected for some years: Bob must have had close to a photographic memory. Tragically, he did not have a chance to finish his writing, but even these unfinished drafts have considerable historical value.

The main themes of Bob's working life were a sense of duty and the desire and ability to do the best job he could. He was fiercely loyal to his Canadian heritage and Alberta roots. Following his first posting to Stuttgart, Germany, as the Southeast Asian refugee crisis was heating up in late 1978, he was asked to shoulder the difficult challenge of establishing, with another officer, Murray Oppertshauer, the Canadian visa office in Bangkok, Thailand. They faced the daunting task of selecting first Laotian and later Cambodian and Vietnamese refugees in distant camps under difficult conditions. Soon Murray and Bob were joined by a large team to perform high-pressure selection trips to the camps and rapid processing of refugee cases—vital steps to allow homeless, traumatised people to have new lives in Canada.

In the 1980s, Bob experienced firsthand the decline of the Soviet police state during a Moscow posting. He was already highly committed to his mother's Ukrainian roots, and his Moscow posting provided the opportunity to travel to Ukraine and steadily deepen his knowledge of Ukrainian culture. Over the years, he became an expert on Ukrainian history and literature. Then followed a posting to Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, through which, in the course of wide travels, he learned about the cultures of the Arabic Middle East. Bob was an inveterate and curious traveler. For him, a major pleasure was to be exposed to different people and cultures around the world.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, during his posting to the newly opened Canadian embassy in Kyiv, Bob had the great joy of being one of the first Canadian diplomats to work in independent post-Soviet Ukraine. In Kyiv, he met Elena, a lovely Ukrainian who became his wife and the mother of Roberta and son Philip. The Kyiv posting provided Bob the opportunity to travel widely in all parts of Ukraine and many areas of Eastern Europe. He deepened even more his exposure to Ukrainian culture. The next assignment was to Singapore, where he was responsible for many Southeast Asian countries, again traveling widely in the region.

The final posting was back to Germany, the country of his first posting. By now a seasoned, experienced manager, he oversaw the major challenge of moving the Canadian visa office from Bonn to the new Canadian embassy in Berlin, the capital of united Germany. The rest of his career, until his retirement in 2010, was spent in Ottawa. In Ottawa, he was deputy director and a senior analyst responsible for the coordination of geographic and program operations; he had a major hand in establishing Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC's) Foreign Credential Referral Office and was director of the Government-on-Line project.

As retirees, Bob and I had temporary assignments in the Canadian Building on Laurier Avenue in Ottawa. We talked about immigration cases and we often ate lunch together. We had frequent conversations on historical and literary topics. It was a great pleasure to witness Bob's deep knowledge on a range of interesting subjects. I learned a great deal about Ukraine from him. Along with Mike Molloy and Kurt Jensen, Bob and I also became co-authors of *Running on Empty*, a history of the Indochinese refugee movement to Canada, which contains chapters based on Bob's experiences in Thailand.

A few days ago, Lena reminded me that news of Putin's invasion of Ukraine arrived on an evening when Bob and I were having one of our lengthy Zoom conversations. Over the past sixteen months, I watched helplessly as Bob's heart bled for the suffering of the Ukrainian people. In my last telephone conversation with him, when he was hopeful and doing well a

few days after his operation, the last thing we discussed was the translation into Ukrainian of *Taras Bulba*, by the great Ukrainian-Russian writer Nikolai Gogol. At that time, Bob felt good and had hopes for a full recovery.

Recently, I learned from our mutual friend and colleague Gerry Maffre that Bob was starting to plan with Gerry the 50th anniversary celebrations in 2024 for our “group’s” joining Canada’s immigration foreign service in 1974. His spirit will surely be with us for the celebrations.

Dr. Robert Shalka was a truly good man, a good husband and father, and a good colleague who performed valuable work and helped many people around the world. May he rest in peace.

*Remembered by Anne Arnott*

I never worked directly with Bob, yet I have known him my whole career. Bob was a kind man, above all. I remember taking the business immigration course with him many years ago, and standing on the sidewalk in Winnipeg gaping at the amazing northern lights above us. More recently, I worked with him on the CIHS board where he demonstrated his deep love and knowledge of immigration history.

*Remembered by René Bersma*

Bob and I first met in Stuttgart in the spring of 1977. We shared an interest in the German Bundesliga, in part because one of the teams is called Schalke’04, pronounced exactly like his name.

Dr. Bob and Murray Oppertshauer opened the Bangkok office during the Indochinese boat movement with its concomitant land migration from neighbouring Laos and Cambodia. Bob introduced me, fresh off the plane, to conducting interviews at the refugee camp at Ubol Ratchatani in eastern Thailand. His knowledge and experience of this new program were of invaluable importance to those of us sent for temporary duties or regular postings. He was a hard-working and conscientious person.

*Remembered by Diane Burrows*

When “Dr. Bob” was deputy director of Control and Enforcement in External Affairs and International Trade Canada’s new O-Branch in the early 1990s, I joined his small team, and became his sole foreign service officer employee.

I didn’t know what to make of Bob when I first arrived—he was a gentle soul, in a tough job, and absolutely nobody worked harder than he did. It seemed that he knew everything! I had to acquaint myself quickly with what seemed like a few hundred topics that spanned the expertise of several branches at Employment and Immigration Canada. Bob had all that information at his fingertips, and I had a lot to learn. I had many coaches, but Bob was the anchor. A keen writer, Bob became “the pen” on a very sensitive file, a position of trust that absorbed Bob’s energies for many months. Del McKay was the director, and while their approaches to issues and stress could not have been more different, they shared a clear understanding of how to divide the work to exploit their various strengths most efficiently.

Even as we worked hard and crises blurred together, Bob would find a way to lighten the mood. When Bob quoted Ukrainian poetry and aphorisms at the drop of a hat, we often groaned, but it was good for morale. When he hummed or whistled the tune “We’re in the Money”, we knew that it was payday. We had thoughtful discussions about working at headquarters, his duties as a PAFSO representative, and the upcoming “crossing the river” in 1992 (the transfer of the immigration foreign service program and associated resources from External Affairs and International Trade in Ottawa, to Employment and Immigration Canada in Gatineau). In the summer of 1992, we gave a big send-off to Bob, who was en route to Kyiv to be that office’s immigration program manager; a dream come true for him.

*Remembered by Scott Heatherington*

I am sorry to hear this sad news. Dr Bob was a fantastic colleague on so many fronts, including the management of a particularly sensitive refugee case. I also appreciated his sage advice on the provincial government’s policies with respect to autism, when I was chair of a non-profit group providing therapy to persons on the autism spectrum. What a loss.

*Remembered by Kurt Jensen*

I had heard about Dr. Bob long before I met him (our Ottawa tours conflicted) and I only really got to know him after we both retired. We worked together on the CIHS Board, the annual CIHS Gunn Prize panel, and with Mike Molloy and Peter Duschinsky in writing *Running on Empty*. Bob was quiet and extremely capable, respected by all who knew him. He had strong analytical skills, as demonstrated to me by his work on the Gunn Prize. He could recount wonderful anecdotes. Bob and I spoke several times about Vic Meilus, who had been a mentor for us both early in our careers. Bob was a very solid individual, very proud of his family, and made an impact on the world, particularly with his consular efforts following the Chernobyl disaster. He will be missed by many.

*Remembered by Gerry Maffre*

Bob and I first met on 2 July 1974, when we and 19 others started our foreign service officer careers in immigration. After a few days at the old Bourque Building, we moved to a classroom in the Institut Canadian-français d'Ottawa on Dalhousie Street. Over the course of several weeks, Bob and I would often lunch together and share our thoughts on many matters, big and small. Under the tutelage of Hercule Raymond and Jacques Vinette, we were trained in the Immigration Act, regulations and processes till the curriculum sent us off on different phases. That juncture marked the last time Bob and I worked together till retirement gave us each time for active involvement in the CIHS.

Bob was a proud Canadian and Albertan. He had a deep understanding of his family's history and his grandparents' migration from the Ukraine. He was a real historian with a passion for the immigration program and had a very eclectic store of facts as well as anecdotes from older colleagues with whom he worked. These traits made him a valuable collaborator in putting together an inventory of the locations of Canadian visa offices from 1950 to 2000, especially as we traced the office locations in post-war Germany. He also produced for the Society's website a guide on sources for those pursuing immigration or genealogical research and was intimately involved in the research and writing of *Running on Empty: Canada and the Indochinese Refugees—1975-1980*.

Bob's family was important to him and he was clearly proud that his daughter, Roberta, joined the immigration department. Bob was a highly respected officer and person. He will be missed.

CIHS thanks its corporate members - IRCC and Pier 21 - for their significant support as well as its life and annual members. All these contributions allow us to pursue our objectives and activities.

<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 – Dawn Edlund; Vice-President – Anne Arnott; Treasurer – Don Cochrane; Secretary – Robert Orr; Editor – Diane Burrows; Past-President – Michael Molloy Members at large – Brian Casey, Charlene Elgee, Raphael Girard, Kurt Jensen, Gerry Maffre (Communications), and Ian Rankin Member emeritus – J.B. “Joe” Bissett IRCC Representative – Paula Pincombe Webmaster: Winnerjit Rathor; Website translations: Sylvie Doucet</p>
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