



## Memories of Robert Andras

Raphael Girard

The Honourable Robert (Bob) Andras, P.C., M.P., was arguably the most influential minister of Immigration in the post-war years, but his legacy is largely unsung. He established a reputation as a troubleshooter in the first Trudeau government and was brought to Immigration in 1972 to deal with a breakdown in immigration control. Flaws in the regulatory structure championed by Tom Kent in 1967 had precipitated wholesale abuse of the immigration system—one of the factors that caused the Liberal government to go into minority standing in 1972. Minister Andras's vision of a more just system caused him not to settle for simply fixing what had gone before but to bring immigration legislation into the modern area with a complete overhaul—the first since 1952. Through the 1973 Green Paper on Immigration and the *Immigration Act 1976*, Andras established in law the promise that Ellen Fairclough had made when she universalized immigrant selection in the regulations of 1962 and laid down the principles for immigration to Canada. These principles remain the basis of immigration programming in Canada to this day.

Through an accident of complete serendipity, I joined his office in 1973 as a departmental staffer to help with ministerial representations on individual cases. I had joined the Immigration foreign service in 1963 after graduation from the University of British Columbia, and after training I spent seven full years abroad until I returned to immigration headquarters in 1972.

My first HQ assignment pertained to personnel planning, which involved forecasting and budgeting for the staffing of visa offices abroad. It was after more than a year in that role, during which time we began expanding the network of immigration offices abroad beyond Europe, that fate intervened. I was working late one night when a foreign service colleague, Terry Sheehan, passed by my office and seeing a light on, stopped in. Terry was the executive assistant to deputy minister Allan Gottlieb at the time. He asked if I liked my job. I replied that I liked it well enough but asked why he wanted to know. He explained that his assignment to the office of the deputy minister had inspired Minister Robert Andras to task Gottlieb to find a foreign service officer for the minister's office.

Not knowing anything about how headquarters assignments were arranged, I told Terry that I would be a candidate but was surprised when he said that if I wanted the job, the Minister would see me the next morning at 9 a.m. The meeting went well, and I started in the new job almost immediately.

My new responsibility of handling representations from other ministers and from members of parliament (MPs) from all parties was demanding, since the Minister had unrestricted authority to override the Act and Regulations if there were good reasons to do so. My job was to evaluate the facts in each case and recommend for or against special consideration.

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Fortunately, I managed to gain the Minister's trust early on. Within days of my appointment, a case came up involving an American with a record of several criminal convictions. This person had bought a failing General Motors dealership in the Montreal area that employed over 200 people. He had the wherewithal to pump needed capital into the enterprise to resuscitate its fortunes and save the jobs that would otherwise have disappeared. The background check, however, suggested that the applicant was likely a senior member of an organized crime syndicate and that he would be using the dealership to launder proceeds from the sale of illicit drugs.

When representations came in from a number of ranking Quebec MPs and senators, the Minister called me in. I explained that the criminal record was dated, making this applicant eligible to be considered rehabilitated, but a suspicion lingered that his recent crime-free years meant that he had graduated from the street to the boardroom of the criminal world. I asked the Minister if he thought that a car dealership could be used to launder drug money. Being a car dealer himself, his reaction was visceral. I gleaned the notion very quickly that the Minister believed this would be a distinct possibility. He then asked what we should do.

I explained that the issue revolved around either supporting the application of the *Immigration Act* to protect society from criminals or overriding it in favour of the labour market benefits for Montreal. I proposed that the priority should be to uphold the law. I suggested to the Minister that I would inform the representors and the media that the applicant was prohibited and that his application was properly refused. I went on to say that if the public reaction was overwhelmingly negative, the Minister could issue a statement reversing my decision and explaining that I had spoken without authority. Mr. Andras looked at me and exclaimed, "Holy s--t, who's the politician in this room". The refusal held.

Minister Andras's humanity dominated his approach to policy and to individual cases. I was the victim of his wrath when I recommended holding the line refusing an application from a Canadian-born veteran to resume his citizenship. The applicant wanted to return to Canada for cancer treatment that he could not afford in the U.S., where he had lived and worked for many years. The Minister told me that this man like many others had put his life on the line for Canada and that we owed him. He insisted that the application be facilitated and instructions be issued to make sure no other cases like it would be refused.

While the Minister did not hold back from using his equitable jurisdiction to approve meritorious applications brought to his attention by other ministers and MPs, he would not use it for cases in his own riding, even though they might have deserved such attention. He explained that the appearance of a conflict of interest was simply too great to allow him to reach out to a constituent. There were occasions, however, when some intervention was called for. Mr. Andras called me one Monday morning and with some embarrassment confessed that had enjoyed Polish night in the Lakehead (his constituency) a little too much and that he may have made unwise promises in the course of the evening. He asked that if I received any calls citing commitments from the Minister, he would appreciate it if I could do my best to make good on whatever had been pledged.

One winter night when he was to return to Ottawa from the Lakehead in a large government aircraft, he discovered 40 or 50 stranded passengers in the airport whose Air Canada flight had been cancelled due to bad weather in Toronto. Mr. Andras waved them all onto his plane, unaware that there was a per capita tab that the Ministry of Transportation would bill to his office. Since that total alone would have blown his travel budget for the year, his assistants did a pocket veto by hiding the invoice in a chair cushion, where it probably remains to this day. He never knew.

On another occasion, I got a nervous call from Mr. Andras's secretary, Agnès Jaouich, who told me that [Minister of Agriculture] Eugene Whelan was on his way to the minister's office in high dudgeon, claiming that immigration was sabotaging the fishing industry on the Great Lakes by ordering 13 Portuguese deported. Mr. Whelan, to say the least, was not an admirer of our minister, and Agnès was worried that he might have a case. With only minutes to spare, I managed to contact the Ontario Region for background and learned that all the individuals had obtained forged employment authorizations issued by a corrupt officer in Toronto who was under criminal investigation. A few minutes later I joined the two ministers in Mr. Andras's office. Mr. Andras asked if Mr. Whelan's support could be taken into account in dealing with the men who were needed by their employers. I replied that we certainly could. Since the 13 individuals had paid bribes to get their work documents, I indicated that in view of Mr. Whelan's concern, we would intervene to ensure that they were simply deported and not prosecuted criminally before removal. As I left the office, Mr. Whelan was red and Mr. Andras was grinning. From then on, I could do no wrong.

Not too long into the job, I received a phone call from Mr. Andras's wife, who asked if we really needed to send the files when a ministerial signature was needed for a permit or order-in-council submission. She explained that the Minister found the files absolutely fascinating and would stay up until two or three in the morning, reading the entire file so that he could get a proper context for his decisions. I assured her that there was a solution, and from then on, we prepared

summaries for the files needing his personal approval, thereby keeping the actual files in the office. The work carried on and the Minister ostensibly got more sleep.

Bob Andras's dedication to public service was probably a factor in his neglect of his own health, and that led to his premature death from cancer in mid-career. But his legacy lives on in an immigration program based on fairness and compassion for all, regardless of their race, religion, gender, or religious practice.

## **Bob Andras's Role in Modernizing Canadian Immigration**

Raphael Girard

Robert (Bob) Andras was a Montreal-born Lakehead businessman who was first elected to Parliament in 1965. In the first Trudeau government, he was named Minister without Portfolio, focusing mainly on helping Indian and Northern Affairs Minister Jean Chretien with aboriginal issues. There he developed an ambitious reform program to improve their conditions based on his experiences with a number of bands in northwestern Ontario. Prime Minister Trudeau, capitalizing on his drive and energy, moved him quickly through a series of ministerial portfolios in need of a steady hand, appointing him to Manpower and Immigration Canada in 1972 to remedy a program totally out of control due a logjam in immigration appeals. That backlog effectively prevented the removal of anyone seeking to appeal an order of deportation, so that the department no longer had control on who could enter and remain in the country.

The operational issues that demanded his immediate attention however, were not his main concern. The *Immigration Act* dated from 1952 and contained vestiges of racism and discrimination that had been part of immigration practice since the turn of the century. Andras wanted to engage Canadians in a dialogue that would govern immigration planning and programming into the distant future, because he understood clearly that declining birthrates made immigration the main determinant of population growth in Canada and consequently the main influence on the composition of the population and its diversity. He also insisted that rules regarding who would be prohibited from coming into the country had to be based on protecting Canadian interests in ways related to science and objective evidence rather than attitudes or suspicions about who would or would not make good citizens of this country. He fought hard against resistance from the Department of Justice to ensure that the new legislation would contain a preamble of principles upon which immigration would be based.

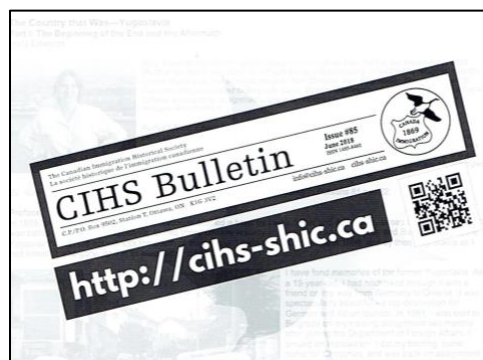
Andras was moved to the Treasury Board before the *Immigration Act 1976* was proclaimed, but his influence in shaping and guiding it through the parliamentary process was crucial.

**To CIHS Members: please mark your calendars!**

**This year's CIHS Annual General Meeting will take place on**

**Thursday, 17 October 2023.**

**Details will follow.**



## 2023 CIHS Molloy Bursary Winner Announcement

Charlene Elgee

The CIHS is pleased to announce that Liam O'Brien is our first recipient of the CIHS Michael J. Molloy Bursary.

Liam is a fourth-year student in the Honours history program (minor in geography) at Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario. He has demonstrated a high level of dedication to the study of history, gaining top marks in all of his classes. In keeping with the selection criteria for the bursary, Liam has taken several courses in Canadian history and he plans to pursue that interest in graduate studies. He has a special interest in the history of the Irish diaspora and of the Irish in Canada. He plans to put some of the bursary money towards his higher education.



In his response to our announcement, he says, "I will be sure to connect with the CIHS as I further my studies and research. The Michael J. Molloy Bursary will help me significantly, and I can't thank the society enough for selecting me".

We hope to hear more about his work in the future, and we wish him all the best as his studies progress.

### CIHS tax receipts are now paperless!

Effective 1 May 2024, the Society started to issue charitable donation receipts in electronic format, emailed to the address that we have on file. This change helps us to reduce our administrative costs (paper, envelopes and postage) and to simplify record keeping.

If we do not have an email address on file, we will print a paper copy of the receipt and send it to your postal address.

Thanks for your support!

### ***Who Gets In: An Immigration Story* by Norman Ravvin. University of Regina Press, 2023.**

Book Review by Charlene Elgee

That the author of this book has a dual mission is immediately evident in the title. The broader issue of who got into Canada in the early decades of the 20th century is addressed, but then as the subtitle indicates, the author takes us to a specific case. This is a family story: of Norman Ravvin's grandfather's dogged and persistent fight to stay in Canada in the early 1930s.

Yehuda Yosef Eisenstein left Poland to join his brother in Vancouver in 1930, leaving behind a wife and two small children. Jewish Poles were leaving their country to escape the rising tide of anti-Semitism in Europe. Eisenstein took the route that many young men did at the time: he declared himself single in order to get into Canada, the only way he could enter as a member of a non-desirable, or "unassimilable", class of immigrant. The author points to a 1928 parliamentary committee on immigration which specified the need to raise the bar "against Southern Europeans and Polish Jews".

Professor Ravvin, who teaches at Concordia University in the Religions and Cultures department, doesn't start the story in 1930. Rather, he goes back to the 1914 incident of the *Komagata Maru* to give evidence of a restrictive approach to immigration then practised by Canada. Ravvin sees this incident as an important indicator of an increasing trend at the time to exclude certain groups. Beginning with the 1921 census, the terms "Hindus, Negroes and Hebrews" were used to classify certain citizens rather than identifying them by their country of origin—the designation that applied to all other citizens. Professor Ravvin points out that Canada wasn't alone in this approach. The United States also moved to a more restrictive immigration policy in the 1920s. History tells us that for the Jews in particular, this was a disastrous shift from previous decades—even centuries—when North America was a haven for them.

The author spreads a wide net over Canadian history, especially immigration history, to give context to his grandfather's story. How necessary the broader narrative is to the story is dependent on the reader's familiarity with the topic. For those with a greater knowledge of the history of immigration to Canada, the book offers reminders of where we have been

although there are no surprises in the narrative. For those coming to this area of Canadian history for the first time, the book might appear quite dense with seemingly extraneous detail. But, by using a fascinating tale of one man's efforts to remain in Canada and to bring his family here as a way to introduce readers to a broader historical context, the book serves a valuable purpose.

As Eisenstein appealed to everyone and anyone who could help him stay, many players are brought into this family story: ministers of the crown, civil servants at the federal and provincial levels, officials of the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) and the Jewish Colonization Association, and a cast of local officials.

Ravvin spent many years trolling through archives, notably those of the CJC and of Library and Archives Canada, in developing this story. Indeed, the book launch was held at Library and Archives Canada, and he invited an archivist to speak, with equal billing to him. While Ravvin was left with some unanswered questions at the end of the day, he was able to identify one particular person who tore down the final barriers to his family being reunited in Canada. [Lillian Freiman](#) was a wealthy Ottawa businesswoman who wielded political power and numbered many federal movers and shakers among her friends and acquaintances. She also spent many years working very hard for the less fortunate of the world. The happy result for the Eisenstein family, it would seem, was another victory for her. Professor Ravvin notes that this influential woman lacks a proper biography. Perhaps researching and writing one would be a worthy next step for him. In researching and telling her story, he may be able to claim the final piece of his family puzzle and finish his family's story of how one Jewish family got to stay in Canada at a time when so many were turned away.

*Ed. Note: The following article was published originally in [Bout de Papier](#), which kindly agreed to its appearance here. Author Ian McGrath has written for us an update on the team's fortunes, which follows the original article. Photographs appeared in the original article and were provided by the author.*

## **Hockey Sock Diplomacy: Striking Gold in the Philippines**

Ian McGrath

*The author is a foreign service officer with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and currently on his third posting. When not at the rink in Manila or at the office, he will most likely be found at home with his wife and four children.*

When I recall the conversation that led to me coaching the Philippine Men's National Hockey Team, I can only smirk. I had been playing shinny with players from the National Hockey Team for a few months, got to know them pretty well, and was welcomed to their invitational golf tournament. We were sitting in the clubhouse after our round of golf, enjoying our San Miguel Lights, when the topic of the team roster came up. Feeling confident, I looked at the team captain, Steven "Swiss" Füglistner, and said "I could definitely crack this lineup. Who do I have to fight?" When the laughter died down, he calmly explained that they didn't need another player, they needed a coach.

As much as I've grown to love Swiss, I remember hating that answer. I was a player, not a coach. My hockey career was a long one and I had had some minor success playing junior hockey and at Carleton University. While I had a decent slapshot and a physical game, I did not have Philippine citizenship. The more I thought about it though, the more the idea of coaching began to appeal to me. I had to face it, I wasn't getting any younger and the opportunity to build a hockey program in South East Asia was a challenge I couldn't resist.

Whenever I mention that I'm a hockey coach on the Philippine National Team, everyone has the same two reactions: "The Philippines has a hockey team?" and "Isn't that cute!" Not a traditional hockey nation, the Philippines features one hockey rink in a country of 110 million people located at a shopping mall on Manila Bay. When I started playing here, the hockey community was very welcoming but fractured. A lifetime of hockey politics had splintered a small community into even smaller parts. In the absence of a "governing body", pre-pandemic hockey in Manila had been marred with scandals and in-fighting generated by over-involved parents, expats, and organizers. In hockey terms, the locker room was divided and with no possibility of trades. Even a bronze medal at the South East Asia games in 2019 in Manila could not fully repair the growing rift as, shortly after this win, the pandemic put a stop to hockey in the Philippines altogether.

When I arrived in 2021, hockey was just restarting but it was struggling, as participation was low. Many of the expats who had played in the league had left during the pandemic and the turnover in the head coach position created a lot of uncertainty within the hockey community. There was no league, there was no ice time, and the outlook for restarting the league was bleak. After a great outpouring of support at the grassroots level from the hockey community, the Philippine Ice Hockey Federation hired Juhani Ijas as the Head Coach. In South East Asia terms, this was a major signing as Ijas had won gold with Thailand in 2019 at the South East Asia games as Head Coach. Given all the turmoil within the hockey

community and the fact that the National Team had spent the last three years in lockdown, the announcement of Juhani's arrival was met with muted optimism.

Having spent my life in the hockey world, I knew immediately what a coach with Juhani's pedigree could do for hockey in the Philippines. For anyone still doubting his impact, they needed to look no further than what was happening on the ice. The league became organized, the game was being marketed to the curious locals, and players were getting better with his coaching. More importantly, he was a "no nonsense" coach who did not care about the internal conflict and whose sole focus was on building the best possible team to go to the World Championships in Mongolia.

After chatting with Juhani one day, it became clear that winning a gold medal would be the best thing for hockey in the Philippines. Nothing would let bygones be bygones like a victory on the world stage, so this is exactly what we set out to do. When I look back now, I think I had accepted to be his Assistant Coach before he even offered me the job. When he did offer me the job, I accepted before thinking about what it would mean for my wife and four kids. Caught up in all the excitement and the possibilities, I momentarily forgot my responsibilities.

Fortunately, my wife is a former professional hockey player herself and well understood that the opportunity to win gold at the World Championships is truly "once in a lifetime". As any great hockey player will tell you, it is hard work and the support of friends and family that make success possible. While I was coaching hockey four nights a week for the past three months, she managed a household of four kids under eight years old. Had she not been so supportive and understanding, my story would end right here. As it turns out though, her backing of this adventure made all that came next possible.

It is probably not a surprise to learn that the Philippines has never competed at a World Hockey Championship. Faced with the Division 4 World Championships in Mongolia three months away, Juhani and I set about to finalize the team roster. Having already played with many of the players vying for a roster spot, I had a good sense of the talent we were working with and felt cautiously optimistic about our chances of winning. We knew from past games that the Philippines could probably beat Indonesia and Kuwait, but that the real gold winning game of the round-robin tournament would be against Mongolia. With the competition set in our sights, the weeks leading up to the tournament were a grind as both players and coaches set out to prepare themselves to beat Mongolia on home ice.

As the Assistant Coach, my assignments were to work with the defencemen and special teams. In a sort of good cop/bad cop divide, Juhani and I also decided that the Assistant Coach who had played with the team for years could be the person players turn to when they have an issue they are too shy to bring to the Head Coach. I like to think that this approach created a positive atmosphere in the locker room and made a more receptive audience for coaching the team on defence, power plays and penalty kills. While we worked with the team four nights a week to refine their game, the team really began to mesh, and the excitement leading into the World Championships was palpable.

Prior to hosting the World Championships, Mongolia had never had an indoor rink. For the occasion, the President of Mongolia commissioned the construction of the Steppe Arena. Designed by a Canadian architect, the arena was a truly a



Celebrating our victory in front of the Philippines' flag and fans after the final game against Kuwait.

state-of-the-art facility that seated 3,500 fans and featured a giant video screen and scoreboard. When we first stepped into the arena, our jaws dropped at the quality of the dressing rooms and saunas. By contrast, our team had been dressing in a room at a shopping mall that had doubled as a storage facility. The ice surface itself in Mongolia was professional grade and maintained by two state-of-the-art Zambonis. The players actually took some time to get used to the speed of the ice surface. Again, for contrast, Filipino hockey players are used to playing on ice that is melting quickly and skating through thick fog for most of the third period.

Based on the quality of the rink and the police escort our bus received to and from our hotel, it was clear that we had arrived on the big stage. As coaches, we can only get the players ready and have to let them

play when the time comes. Would our guys be ready for the bright lights and roar of the crowd? We had been playing in near total silence and for a handful of curious mall shoppers up to this point. We ran through a few practices before our first game against Indonesia. Our message to the players at this point was that the pressure was all on Mongolia and we

needed to play “loose”, have fun, and no fighting. Mongolia had a new million-dollar rink, the President of Mongolia would be in attendance, and the game with the Philippines was marketed on national TV for the Saturday night time slot. For Mongolia, losing on home ice would not be an option, and it was clear that the pressure was all on them.

After practice, we returned to the dinner buffet at the Holiday Inn and checked out some local TV. Much to our surprise, we found that our team practice had been recorded and that a panel of pundits were dissecting our goalie’s weak spots. Growing up, I had heard of this sort of thing happening in international hockey events but had never imagined that I would be featured. In a way, it was both alarming and satisfying. If they were going to record our practices, then it was clear that they viewed us as a major threat. Let the head games begin!

Fast-forwarding through the March 23, 2023 Indonesia game, which we won 14-0, we were getting ready for the big game on March 25, 2023 against Mongolia. I should point out an interesting cultural difference between Filipino and Canadian players. Usually before a big game, Canadians like to put on loud music and build up some energy before hitting the ice. While Filipinos love music (and sing better than anyone I’ve ever hung out with), they stop all music in order to say a team prayer before taking the ice. This brief moment of introspection and gratitude is something I had never seen before with a hockey team but really did help to center them and momentarily remove any distraction.

For our goalies (who happen to be cousins), this quiet moment probably meant much more since the matriarch of their family (and the first Miss Philippines ever) had passed away the day before. With the added inspiration of playing for her, the stakes could not have been higher but our goalies remained mentally strong. Their goalie coach, J-P Lassila, had helped them with a few of the finer points on technique that set our goalies apart from others at the tournament. Despite the loss of their family’s matriarch, our goalies looked cool and confident as the bright lights and loud music welcomed them to the ice.

I still don’t know the words of the Filipino national anthem, but the moment I heard it played before this game, I felt an incredible honour to be standing beneath the flag with my team. While fighting back nerves, I had come to appreciate that my team had come together around a single goal, worked tirelessly to prepare for it, and was on the verge of achieving its objective. Win or lose, this was a truly special moment. The pride I felt at this moment was amplified by the enormous pride I felt as a Canadian diplomat. For better or worse, the world associates Canada with its love of hockey, and here I was sharing this passion with the Philippines. I was not the only Canadian badly wanting hockey gold for the Philippines as the support I received from my colleagues at the Embassy was overwhelming. Reading their messages of support on my phone while I took my position behind the bench (and should have been setting the lineup) only made me want to win the game even more. By all accounts, the stress of the situation was written on my face while I tried to play it cool.



The author at centre ice in Mongolia, testing his gold medal.

All too often, a big game hyped up like this one tends to disappoint, as it can never match our expectations. Without any doubt, the Mongolia game against the Philippines will forever be a classic. If you haven’t seen it, you can watch it on YouTube. It features an amazing back and forth, endless parades of minor penalties and high drama ending in OT.

As we were headed into OT, a strange thing happened. The crowd was deafening and shouting what I can only imagine are obscenities at the Filipinos. At this point, I had lost my voice from trying to shout encouragement over the roar of the crowd. Just when I had an inkling of doubt, I looked at my goalie and defenceman and saw them smiling. All I could think was, “Who smiles in a game like this?” Two minutes later, it was clear that only champions could smile at a moment like that because they have assured themselves of victory. We won the game 7-6.

Banged up and bruised, we defeated Kuwait 14-0 on March 26 and commenced the ritual celebrations. The contents of these celebrations will remain up to the reader’s imagination and will inevitably fall short of the reality. We returned to a hero’s welcome with photos and interviews at the airport. Clips of the game were all over the news in the Philippines, messages of congratulations from celebrities, and even a meeting with President Bong Bong Marcos himself. It felt surreal to see myself on the news and in messages, especially since I’m usually pretty closed off to social

media. Unfortunately, I caught COVID and missed the opportunity to meet the President but such is life. Most importantly, I learned that my kids watched me coach on TV and cheered every time they saw me. Even now, when my toddler sees hockey on the screen she points and says “Dada!” This is exactly what I want my kids to think of when they see hockey on TV.

After all was said and done, the Philippines had won its first ever world championship and has been promoted to Division 3B. For now, it's the off-season and we will restart the work of winning again in a few months. It's not clear what the roster will look like next year but hockey is gaining traction here. I was amazed to learn that kids are writing in their yearbooks that they would like to play on the Philippine National Hockey Team. It seems that the “spark” needed to grow the game here has been found and it will be up to us, as coaches, to keep the fire lit.

### **Ian McGrath's Update on the Team's Fortunes**

Since I wrote my story for *Bout de Papier*, the Philippine National Men's Ice Hockey Team has played at another World Championship tournament. The championships were held last February in Sarajevo, Bosnia, and the competition was much more physical. Along with the host Bosnia-Herzegovina, other non-traditional hockey nations like North Korea, Iran, Hong Kong and Singapore presented the best competition the Philippines ever faced. Falling just short of a bronze medal in the final game against Hong Kong, the Philippine Eagles left it all on the ice.

I have continued to manage operations in the migration section of Canada's Manila office by day and be the assistant coach to the Philippine Men's National Team by night. While the practices run late and the commitment in the lead-up to tournaments can be extreme, the experience really is too good to walk away from. From interviews by the *Hockey News* and the *Ottawa Citizen* to gaining the support of the Winnipeg Jets, ice hockey in the Philippines continues to capture readers' imaginations. For me, it's an honour to share a small piece of my Canadian experience with my new Filipino friends as we set out to strike hockey gold again.

### **CIC and IRCC Career Achievement Awards Citations: Judith Jewers and Robert Orr**

The Bulletin is pleased to highlight two more recipients of the CIC and then IRCC Career Achievement Award, which is presented to outstanding retiring employees who demonstrated consistent achievement in public service. Judith Jewers received the award in 2013 and Robert Orr received it in 2017. The following citations, reprinted here with the kind permission of IRCC Human Resources Branch and the awardees, are but two examples of the rich commitment to excellence demonstrated throughout the federal government's immigration continuum in Canada and overseas. Photographs below were provided by Judith Jewers and Robert Orr.

#### **Judith Jewers**

“Ms. Jewers first began her career as a summer student in the Canada Employment Centre for Students in Winnipeg in 1978. Following graduation from the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Law in 1982, she began full-time employment with the Department, then known as Employment and Immigration Canada. Her career has been devoted to the business of immigration. Her more than 20 years at Citizenship and Immigration Canada have seen her work across a large part of the immigration continuum. She was instrumental in the significant Settlement Renewal Exercise that took place between 1995 and 1997. As a member of the team that scoped out the possible parameters for the devolution of settlement services to the provinces/territories, Judith saw the field of complex federal, provincial/territorial relations first-hand. She was among a select group who were charged with the policy development, engagement strategy and negotiation of terms that saw Manitoba and British Columbia take on delivery of settlement services at the provincial/territorial level. Judith has been a thoughtful and measured voice on the need to balance attention to the economic dimensions of the immigration program with those devoted to family reunification and refugee issues. Unwilling to run blindly ahead on issues that seize the attention of ministers of the day, Judith has remained steadfast in her core beliefs about the value of an independent public service. She was highly valued and highly



Citizenship and Immigration Canada Deputy Minister Neil Yeates presenting Judith Jewers with the departmental long service award.



sought-after. In the last two years she had been playing a strategic role in shaping a redesign of Citizenship and Immigration Canada's Policy Committee and the launching of the Senior Management Policy Forum. A lifetime of policy and program work, plus a legacy of strong policy mentorship is difficult to capture in words and in deeds. Judith is dearly missed, and we wish her well in her retirement."

### **Judith Jewers**

« La carrière de Judith Jewers a débuté en 1978 lorsqu'elle a travaillé au Centre d'emploi du Canada pour étudiants à Winnipeg durant l'été. Après avoir obtenu son diplôme à la faculté de droit de l'Université du Manitoba en 1982, elle a commencé à travailler à temps plein au Ministère, qui, à l'époque, était Emploi et Immigration Canada. Elle a dédié sa carrière à l'immigration. Son expérience de plus de 20 ans à Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada lui a permis de travailler dans de nombreux domaines liés au continuum de l'immigration. Elle a joué un rôle clé dans l'important processus de renouvellement de l'établissement de 1995 à 1997. Elle faisait partie de l'équipe qui a défini les paramètres possibles du transfert des responsabilités aux provinces et aux territoires. Cette expérience lui a permis d'apprendre ce qu'est la complexité des relations fédérales-provinciales-territoriales. Judith faisait partie d'un groupe de personnes triées sur le volet qui étaient responsables de l'élaboration d'une politique et de la stratégie de participation, et des négociations des conditions qui ont mené à la prise en charge par le Manitoba et la Colombie-Britannique des services d'établissement au niveau provincial et territorial. Mme Jewers a été une protagoniste réfléchie et pondérée de la nécessité de trouver un juste équilibre entre la dimension économique du programme d'immigration et les questions liées au regroupement familial et aux demandeurs d'asile. Peu encline à aller de l'avant sans réfléchir sur les questions qui suscitent l'attention du ministre de l'heure, elle reste inébranlable dans sa conviction profonde de la valeur d'une fonction publique indépendante. Elle a été très valorisée et sollicitée. Au cours des deux dernières années, elle a joué un rôle stratégique dans la redéfinition du Comité des politiques de Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada et dans le lancement du Forum de la haute direction sur les orientations. Une vie consacrée aux politiques et aux programmes et l'héritage d'un solide mentorat dans le domaine des politiques sont difficiles à décrire par des mots et des gestes. Judith nous manque beaucoup, et nous lui souhaitons une belle retraite. »

### **Robert Orr**

"When we saw the category of Lifetime Achievement, we knew any award this year would not be complete without Robert Orr, or as staff and colleagues affectionately call him "Bob." His immense contribution to public service started in 1982 when he joined the Canadian Foreign Service, first with the Department of External Affairs and subsequently with Citizenship and Immigration, as it was known then, serving in Abidjan, Colombo, Damascus, Nairobi, and twice in London. He also held an impressive array of positions in Ottawa, including Director of Personnel and acting Director General of the International Region. From 2003 to 2005 he was Director General of Refugees. From 2009 to 2012, he was the High Commissioner of Canada to Tanzania, with concurrent accreditation to Zambia, the Seychelles, the Comoros and the East African Community. Bob became Assistant Deputy Minister for Operations at IRCC in June 2012. Since then, hundreds of thousands of new Canadians have arrived here. With such large numbers, it would be easy to be buried in the sheer heft of the business process, but he remained focused on the people behind those decisions. At the management level, his legacy is the overhaul of the processing system over the last few years; his focus on service excellence while being an ardent defender for the necessity of system integrity. Bob is highly regarded by all those he dealt with in the department and beyond. He distinguished himself as a man who looked after the considerable work under his responsibility, but also his people. He also took on the role of Champion for Values and Ethics, exemplifying for IRCC staff the value of "excellence" not only in his day-to-day work, but through his remarkable achievements over an extraordinary public service career. We will miss Bob's infectious laugh, his courteousness, directness and professionalism. Thanks for putting the service, in Public Service and Service Excellence."



A current photo of Robert (Bob) Orr

### **Robert Orr**

« Quand nous avons vu la catégorie « L'œuvre d'une vie », nous avons tout de suite su que la remise de prix cette année ne serait pas complète sans Robert Orr ou, comme ses collègues et les membres du personnel le surnomment affectueusement, « Bob ». L'immense contribution de Bob à la fonction publique débute en 1982, lorsqu'il se joint au Service extérieur canadien, tout d'abord au ministère des Affaires extérieures, puis à Citoyenneté et Immigration, le nom du ministère à l'époque. Bob a été en poste à Abidjan, à Colombo, à Damas, à Nairobi, en plus d'être affecté deux fois à Londres. En outre, Bob a occupé un éventail impressionnant de postes à Ottawa, dont directeur du personnel et directeur général par intérim de la Région internationale. De 2003 à 2005, il a été directeur général des Réfugiés. De 2009 à 2012, il a occupé le poste de haut-commissaire du Canada en Tanzanie, tout en étant accrédité pour la Zambie, les Seychelles,

les Comores et la communauté Est-Africaine. C'est en juin 2012 que Bob est devenu sous-ministre adjoint des Opérations à Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada (IRCC). Depuis, des centaines de milliers de nouveaux Canadiens sont arrivés au pays. Avec un chiffre d'une telle ampleur, une personne pourrait facilement se laisser écraser par le simple poids du processus administratif ; or, Bob est resté concentré sur les personnes touchées par les décisions. Sur le plan de la gestion, Bob a mené à bien le remaniement du système de traitement au cours des dernières années ; il a su mettre l'accent sur l'excellence du service tout en défendant ardemment l'importance de l'intégrité du système. Bob jouit d'une excellente réputation auprès des personnes avec qui il a travaillé tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur du Ministère. Il s'est également fait connaître comme un homme qui, en plus de s'acquitter de la lourde charge de travail dont il est responsable, prends soin de ses employés. Bob a assumé le rôle de champion des valeurs et de l'éthique en incarnant, pour le personnel d'IRCC, la valeur de « l'excellence » non seulement dans son travail au quotidien, mais aussi dans ses réalisations remarquables tout au long d'une carrière extraordinaire à la fonction publique. Le rire contagieux de Bob, sa courtoisie, son franc-parler et son professionnalisme nous manqueront. Merci Bob d'avoir incarné l'excellence du service à la fonction publique. »

## CIHS and National Public Service Week at IRCC

Gerry Maffre

CIHS was invited to open National Public Service Week 2024 at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) with a presentation about the 1999 evacuation of Kosovars to Canada. Consequently, before a live audience of thirty at IRCC NHQ and more employees online, CIHS President Dawn Edlund, board member Gerry Maffre, and PhD candidate Krenare Recaj, spoke on 10 June at IRCC headquarters.

Recaj and her PhD thesis research into the Kosovar evacuation has given CIHS both an excellent collaborator and many impressive elements to contribute to our marking of the 25th anniversary of the evacuation. Her immigration story and PhD research are featured in the May 2024 issue of the Bulletin, and she readily agreed to speak at this event.

Dawn Edlund led off the presentation, talking about past major refugee and refugee-like movements, from the Uganda Asians right up to the Syrian movement. She then outlined the CIHS's purpose and activities, including past Public Service Week presentations. As this was "day one" of this year's Public Service Week, her messaging emphasized the importance to people's lives of the everyday work of immigration personnel. Recaj talked about her family's experience as members of this movement and reinforced Edlund's point, stating that contributions to the Kosovar evacuation were made at all levels. She also mentioned the significant level of pride in their work shown by the officers and volunteers she interviewed for her thesis.

Gerry Maffre spoke to the European situation that sparked the need for a humanitarian response to the crisis. He then talked about the logistics and partnerships that underpinned the movement of people from abroad to settlement communities in Canada. He laid out some factors behind the success of the mission and emphasized the crucial importance of coordination, partnerships, and senior officials' trust in staff to do the right thing. In this presentation, he was greatly helped by notes that former director general Gerry Van Kessel had made.

The presentation included a number of photos donated by CIHS to the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21.

Questions from IRCC participants revolved around lessons learned and what to do to prepare for the next evacuation—whether caused by strife or disaster. As Edlund put it, "Immigration is now a top response option in the face of such situations". Recaj fielded several questions—clearly audience members welcomed the opportunity to speak with someone who had personal experience and knowledge from the other side of the immigration process. She drew on her thirty interviews with immigration staff and Red Cross personnel and volunteers, and also with Kosovar-Canadians who came here in 1999 to underline the difference immigration staff efforts can make in people's lives.



IRCC's CIHS National Public Service Week presenters and host (L-R): Krenare Recaj; CIHS President Dawn Edlund; host Craig Shankar, who is IRCC's Co-champion, National Public Service Week and Director General, Migration Health Branch; and CIHS Board member Gerry Maffre. (Photo provided by Krenare Recaj.)

## In Memoriam

### Bélanger, Guy

Guy Bélanger passed away in February 2024 at the age of 76. He joined the immigration foreign service from CIDA and served as a visa officer and immigration program manager, mainly in South America (Colombia, Chile, Peru).

### Jolicoeur, Alain

Alain Jolicoeur passed away in February 2024 at the age of 73. He served Canada as a public servant and deputy minister for many years and was the first president of the Canada Border Services Agency, retiring in 2008.

### Light, Michael

Michael Light passed away in February 2024. His career was principally in Citizenship and Immigration Canada's headquarters in Case Review and Enforcement branches. He is known by many in the department for these responsibilities and because he was frequently called upon by CIC to serve as an overseas temporary duty officer, both prior to and during his official retirement.

### Mitchinson, Jack

Jack Mitchinson, a long-time CIHS member, passed away in June 2024. In Bulletin 107, the Society highlighted his interesting career, which took him across Ontario in immigration program delivery and then overseas to conduct embassy audits. Upon learning of Jack Mitchinson's death, James (Joe) Bissett, CIHS board member emeritus, wrote:

Jack was a great guy. He was a solid Canadian and representative of the very best of the people of the smaller or medium-size towns and cities of Ontario. He was proud of the country and respectful of those who came before him. He was a model immigration officer, working endlessly to help newcomers get settled in their new country. His inherent kindness stood out but was supported by a realistic view of an imperfect world. Jack was always willing to work with "do-gooders" but only when he was able to steer them in the right direction. He was proud to be an immigration officer and took the policy seriously. When I was executive director, he would sometimes phone me at home to question some policy directive or make a suggestion. So sad to see him go, but his influence upon those who had contact with him will not be forgotten.

### Portelance, Luc

Luc Portelance passed away in April 2023 at the age of 63. From his obituary: "Luc had a distinguished 36-year career with the Canadian government where he retired in 2015 as President of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). He began his career with the RCMP in Shediac, New Brunswick, in 1979, and later moved to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) in 1984, holding several key leadership positions, leaving as the Deputy Director, Operations."

### Taylor, Ian

Ian Taylor, retired manager in CIC's Case Management Branch and CBSA, passed away in late June 2024 in Ottawa after a long illness. Ian joined CIC (CEIC) in Toronto in the summer of 1972. He dedicated his career to bolstering Canada's immigration enforcement program, especially its security aspect. He also completed an assignment in Kingston Jamaica. Plans have not yet been made for a celebration of life.

The Bulletin welcomes readers to submit remembrances about these individuals for future publication.

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 and Ian Rankin. Member emeritus – J.B. "Joe" Bissett IRCC Representative – Paula Pincombe Webmaster – Winnerjit Rathor Translations – Sylvie Doucet</p>
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