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Canada's Monument to Fallen Diplomats

By Daniel Livermore

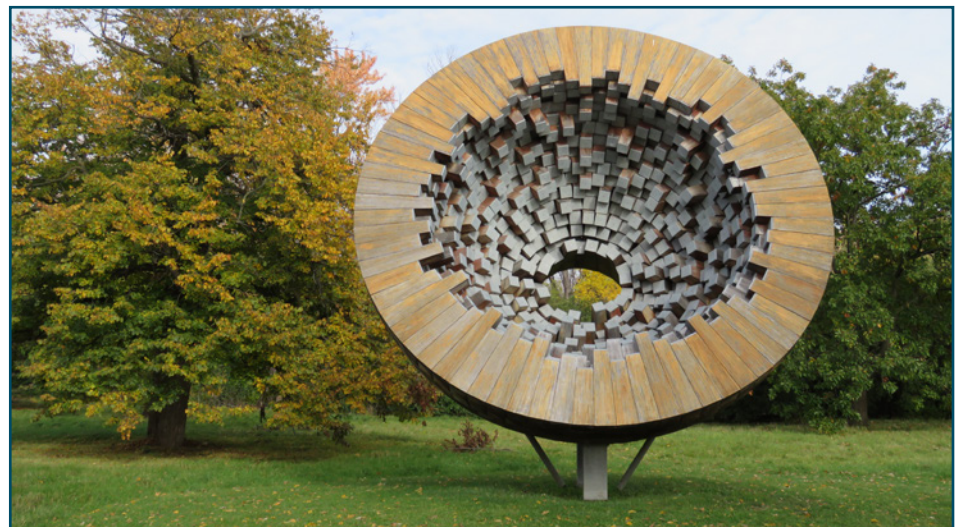


Photo: Daniel Livermore

The Monument to Fallen Diplomats, at the corner of Island Park Drive and the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway, Ottawa, 2020.

It's an unusual monument and memorial, at an intersection in Ottawa where the vehicular traffic is fairly heavy, parking is difficult to find, and the signage is poor. Partially concealed by growing trees, on the south-east corner of an intersection where the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway meets Island Park Drive, is the "Monument to Fallen Diplomats". Thousands of people pass the monument every day. Yet very few know its origins or purpose, and there are no large signs to mark its significance or identify it from a distance.

The monument was proposed more than a decade ago by the Turkish Embassy in Ottawa to honour the memory of Col. Atilla Altikat, the military attaché at the embassy.

He was assassinated at this corner in Ottawa on 27 August, 1982. An Armenian nationalist group claimed responsibility for the murder, although the perpetrators have never been identified or caught. It was one of three attacks against Turkish officials in Ottawa in the 1980s, all part of a global campaign of terrorism waged by an extremist group of Armenians. Earlier that same year, a commercial counsellor at the Turkish embassy was shot outside his home and left paralyzed. In 1985, the Turkish ambassador was injured in an attack on the embassy that claimed the life of a Canadian security guard. Few people in Ottawa are now probably aware of the terrorist incidents and



The dedication ceremony of the monument in 2012, with then Foreign Minister John Baird at the podium.

violence that rocked the capital in the 1980s.

The monument was proposed initially by the Turkish embassy to honour only Col. Altikat. But in consultations involving the Council of Turkish Canadians, its purpose was eventually broadened to honour “all diplomats and public servants who have fallen in foreign service.” It was designed by a Turkish team - Azimet Karaman, a sculptor; Levent Timurhan, an architect; and Reha Benderlioglu, an architect-sculptor. It was implemented by a project team led by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Completed in 2012, it was dedicated on 20 September, 2012, by the Turkish and Canadian foreign ministers.

According to the small sign adjacent to the monument, it “bears witness to the enduring principles of peace, freedom and co-existence shared by Turkey and Canada.” The monument is a large semi-sphere, symbolizing “the eternal resting place of the fallen. Its large open face is directed toward the “gateway of eternity”, while its smaller extremity points toward the earth, opening into the “gateway of time”. The metal prisms represent those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. The single prism located at the “gateway of time pays special tribute to Colonel Altikat.”

The monument was described by the press as “controversial” on the occasion of its dedication, portrayed as something of an “olive branch” by Canada to Turkey. In 2006 the Harper government had decided to recognize as a “genocide” the killings of Armenians by Ottoman Turks during the First World War. That recognition sparked a significant rift between Turkey and Canada, not entirely mended by the agreement of the Canadian government and the National Capital Commission to allow the erection of a monument where Col. Altikat was killed.

The unveiling of the Altikat memorial did not meet the objectives of many in the Canadian foreign

service community. They had been lobbying for a different and more appropriate memorial to members of the Canadian foreign service who had lost their lives abroad. Only a few years after the Monument to Fallen Diplomats was dedicated, representatives from PAFSO and the Retired Heads of Mission Association (now AmbCanada) spoke to senior management in what was then Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada to discuss the issue. Although the principle of recognition seems simple enough, it was subsequently described as a complicated issue, involving several departments with foreign service employees. Of greater difficulty, perhaps, was identifying the names that might qualify as honoured by the memorial. The main point, as the head of PAFSO at the time, Timothy Edwards, told the Ottawa Citizen, was that the memorial should be in a public space, unlike the memorial wall in the L. B. Pearson Building, which is no longer publicly accessible. Those efforts to locate and build an appropriate memorial to fallen Canadian diplomats continue. In the meantime, what would be nice is signage at the monument at Island Park Drive and the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway that could be read from a distance and that might identify the memorial more clearly.



The small signage adjacent to the monument, in English, French and Turkish; it is readable only by approaching the monument on foot.

The co-editor of FORUM, Dan Livermore lives two blocks from the Monument to Fallen Diplomats.

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How I Ran from Iran (*Part One*)

By Roger Lucy

When the US Embassy in Tehran was taken over by Iranian students on 4 November 1979, following a year of episodic demonstrations against the Shah, I was vacationing in Europe and did not return to Tehran until November 25. I missed the first three weeks of the drama. The following are my recollections of the role of the Canadian Embassy in Tehran in sheltering and, two and a half months later, exfiltrating six American diplomats who managed to escape the takeover of the US Embassy in Tehran.

I had gleaned from a colleague at Brussels NATO, that a few American staff had evaded captivity and were “house-guests” of the Canadian Embassy. This lapse in security resulted from a Tehran message to Ottawa that had slipped into the telegram pack that went to the Ottawa Operations Centre. There some diligent junior officer deemed it worthy of inclusion in the daily summary of interesting traffic circulated to the Department, missions abroad, and senior staff in other departments. Fortunately, the lapse was spotted, and distribution of telegrams from Tehran henceforth was tightly restricted to those with a need to know. I later heard that the

“house-guests” had been the subject of much Yule-tide party conversation in Ottawa following the security breach. Fortunately, the Cold War cult of secrecy still dominated, and social media had not yet appeared!

Returning to Iran, I was agog to hear what was going on, and learned that the “house-guests” were a closely guarded secret of which junior staff were unaware. Contrary to the movie *Argo*, the Americans were not at the Official Residence. US Consular officers Mark and Cora Lijek, Bob Anders, and the Agriculture Attaché Lee Schatz (who had initially taken refuge in the Swedish Embassy) were at the Staff Quarter of our Immigration Counsellor John Sheardown and his wife Zena. Two other US consular officers, Joe and Kathleen Stafford, were at the Official Residence, whose staff were told they were Canadian tourists stranded by the hostage crisis. An unlikely tale, but the staff were not fans of the Revolution. Both residences were large, detached houses in secluded suburbs in north Tehran.

My first meeting with our “house-guests” occurred a few days after I returned. To boost their morale John and Zena hosted an American

Thanksgiving dinner – albeit a week or so after the event. A turkey could not be found, but an Armenian butcher John knew produced a large ham. Ken Taylor brought the Staffords. From the start I got along well with all of them. I visited those at the Sheardowns frequently, loaned them books and on two occasions ferried them to my own apartment because the Sheardowns’ landlord wanted to show the house to a prospective buyer. We had an anxious moment on one trip when my car got stuck in the unploughed snow outside my house. Friendly passers-by helped push us out and fortunately asked no questions about why so many Ferenghis were in one small Peugeot. That was as close as we got to the strange scene in *Argo* when everyone takes a stroll through the Bazaar.

The mood on the streets in Tehran was tense, although nothing like the run-up to the Revolution. The hostage crisis heightened the power struggle continuing since the Shah’s overthrow the previous February. The newly formed Revolutionary Guards corps was flexing its muscles, and there were more checkpoints on the streets. Around Christmas, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, making the Iranians nervous. On New Year’s Eve the UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim arrived to attempt mediation. Someone unearthed a photo of him kissing the hand of the Shah’s hated sister (well, he was Austrian), and he was urged to depart by angry victims of Imperial oppression. At the US embassy, diligent “students” were rifling safes and piecing together shredded documents. The Americans were remiss in purging files, full of contact reports on Iranians they met who were placed at risk of arrest for treason for having expressed politeness (*tarof* in Persian) to their US interlocutors. Things were tense. But unlike in *Argo*, the streets were not filled with construction cranes festooned with dangling bodies. Despite the anti-western mood, I personally encountered little hostility.



A photo of the thirtieth anniversary reunion in Ottawa in 2010; at the centre is the former Canadian foreign minister, Flora MacDonald; to her left, standing is Roger Lucy.

While not all our staff knew about our guests, their presence was widely known in the Diplomatic Community: five had initially sought refuge with the British Embassy but the British chancery was attacked the same day as the US Embassy, and they were set adrift, although two British officers later provided transport to the Sheardown house. Lee Schatz, the US Agricultural Attaché, had escaped capture, as his office was down the street in the same building as the Swedish Embassy, where he sought shelter. Cecilia Lithander, the Swedish consular officer, put him up in her flat for a few days, until her Ambassador asked Ken Taylor if he would take him under his wing. In addition, Ken Taylor's two closest friends in the Diplomatic Corps Troels Munk, the Danish Ambassador and Chris Beebe, the New Zealander, were brought into the secret. They and some of their officers, particularly my counterparts Peter Tjerk and Richard Sewell, became close collaborators. Finally, the US Chargé Bruce Laingen, his No.2, and his security officer were stranded at the Iranian Foreign Ministry, where they had been discussing requests for greater protection. The Foreign Ministry gave them asylum (in the reception rooms of the Ministry) and allowed their diplomatic colleagues regular contact with them. They were also in contact with the Six and advised the Iranian MFA of their presence. Fortunately, there was no love lost between the MFA and the hostage-takers, who were not informed.

Our "house-guests" did not intrude on my attention for most of December. There was lots of other work. Ottawa wanted daily sitreps which Ken Taylor and I drafted at the end of each day in his office, on the glass table that he used as a desk, washed down with sips from his supply of Chivas Regal. Ottawa drew down ever more Canada-based staff, leaving only those deemed essential (I was inclined to think



The Canadian Embassy in Tehran, circa 1980.

“expendable”). I accumulated ever more “other duties as required”. This was not unlike my experience in the run-up to the Revolution, which had culminated in early February 1979 with the overthrow of the Shah's regime. As experienced the previous winter, the foreign press beat a path to our door needing to be briefed on events. CBC's Joe Schlesinger, Brian Stewart and others had been regular visitors then and became so again. In addition, bereft of their own home port, US journalists beat a path to our door as well. Ken Taylor would take care of the ‘Dan Rathers’ of the world; I tended the lesser fry, as well as the do-gooders who flocked to Tehran with solutions to the crisis.

Back in North America, a Canadian journalist, Jean Pelletier, was doing his sums and concluded that not all US diplomats had been captured. He reasoned that, if not in Iranian custody, they must be in ours. In mid-December, he approached our Embassy in Washington for a heart-

to-heart talk with senior staff. They persuaded him that going public with the story would be in no one's interest, least of all the “house-guests”. Fortunately, Pelletier, son of a diplomat, appreciated the need for secrecy and promised to keep quiet so long as he was the first to know, once everyone was safely out of Iran. Whatever Pelletier's assurances, we knew others were asking questions. As a precautionary measure, we rented a vacant house on a secluded street, to which we hoped our guests could be speedily transferred should their presence at the Official Residence or the Sheardowns be uncovered. Fortunately, it was never needed. Richard Sewell was immensely helpful in arranging this. I recall, when putting the finishing touches on arrangements, turning to him, and saying, “Oh my God, Richard, we are engaged in a covert operation!”

By late December, our guests were anxious that they had been forgotten by the US Government. They



At the Sheardown's staff quarter in 1980, with Roger Lucy, second from the right.

drafted a letter to the US Secretary of State, asking that he resolve their situation. Indeed, we and Ottawa were equally concerned that, while they were safe for now, this could not go on indefinitely. Or that if some solution to the Hostage Crisis were found that led to the hostages' release, what would happen when we popped up and told the Iranians we had six more! Moreover, other problems loomed. More and more airlines were ceasing flights to Tehran, and pressure was mounting that Canada

“do something” – at very least show solidarity with the US and impose harsh sanctions on Iran. Joe Clark's government was loath to do this, lest it invoke Iranian ire (the then Leader of the Opposition – Trudeau père – was particularly vocal in demanding action, although he had been briefed on our situation). In addition, Canadians were increasingly enraged by shots on TV of long visa lines outside the Embassy and demanding why we were issuing visas to Iranians. Complicating matters, Joe Clark's minority

government fell on 13 December.

Preparations for a solution were afoot by early December in Ottawa and Washington. Various exfiltration scenarios were devised in both capitals and we were asked for comments. We rejected exotic exit routes over the mountains to Turkey or a sea-borne exit from the Persian Gulf. We agreed that the best way out was through Tehran's Mehrabad airport and they should probably leave under Canadian cover (although what that would be was harder to define). On 13 January Ottawa sent us their preferred scenarios which we discussed with our “house-guests”. Options included a group of would-be language teachers, agronomists, oil industry people, or even press. I cannot recall which seemed the most suitable, but no one took very seriously one involving a film crew looking for a suitable location for a sci-fi movie. On 15 January I went to Mehrabad Airport to meet an ad hoc courier from Baghdad, bringing Canadian passports issued for our “house-guests”. There were never difficulties in doing dip-bag runs. A later regular red bag brought additional material to fortify the



BRING THEM HOME

**OUR FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE MICHAEL KOVRIG
HAS BEEN DETAINED ALONG WITH FELLOW CANADIAN,
MICHAEL SPAVOR, SINCE DECEMBER 10, 2018.**



THE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS
L'ASSOCIATION PROFESSIONNELLE
DES AGENTS DU SERVICE EXTÉRIEUR

new identities, including Canadian credit and health cards, drivers licenses and various sorts of what the spy trade calls “pocket litter”. Meanwhile Embassy staff had gone through their possessions to provide suitably Canadian items of clothing and luggage so nothing distinctively American would give them away.

Time was critical. Some foreign press in Tehran had replicated Pelletier’s math, and were asking questions. Someone called the Official Residence and asked for the Staffords. Departure of the “house-guests” became urgent. We proposed that the exfiltration occur in the wake of the Iranian presidential elections, scheduled towards the end of January (as I quipped at the time, their only resemblance to Canadian elections was that all the bars were closed).

D-Day was set for 28 January. Our Canadian staff was winnowed down to six: Ken Taylor, his secretary

Laverna Dollimore, me, our Communicator Mary O’Flaherty, and two MP Security Guards, Master Corporal Junior Gosse and Sergeant Claude Gauthier. (Along with Pat Taylor and Zena Sheardown, Junior and I are now the only survivors of this group – although our “house-guests” are still with us.)

As our staff departed, they were asked to carefully note airport exit procedures – especially the levels of vigilance and security. As far as foreigners were concerned, these seemed encouragingly relaxed. To satisfy popular demand at home, the Sheardowns were among those evacuated and I moved into their house to act as “den mother” for the “house-guests”. As the Sheardowns’ Filipina maid, Lolita, was leaving with them, the “house-guests” assumed cooking and house-keeping duties, while Junior Gosse acted as their guardian during the day, it being too

risky for them to answer the door if anyone called. I took on John’s task of discreetly disposing of empty wine bottles in the nearest garbage dump.

We were in the final days before the exfiltration. Tensions grew and everyone was anxious and eager for it all to be over. Final details were attended to as we eagerly approached D-Day and what would be the most anxious and dangerous moments of the exfiltration adventure.

[The next issue of FORUM will recount the final days of the Tehran exfiltration]

Roger Lucy joined External Affairs in 1971 and served in Chicago, Jeddah, Baghdad, Tehran, Oslo and Port of Spain before retiring in 2005. Since retiring, he has written about a dozen monographs on Canadian armoured vehicles, as well as a book on the Canadian Ram tank. Roger and his spouse, another External Affairs officer Susan Howell, reside in Ottawa with their cat Eudoxia.

Charmes linguistiques

By Jean-Paul Hubert

Lors de ma première affectation à l’étranger (Madrid, 1972-1974), le hasard a voulu que je vive deux situations inattendues impliquant... le Japon et la Chine.

D’abord le Japon.

Comme agent junior, c’est à moi qu’incombait la tâche de me rendre sur le trottoir face à l’ambassade accueillir les ambassadeurs qui venaient faire leur «visite de courtoisie» à leur homologue canadien. Un jour, la secrétaire de l’ambassadeur Ghislain Hardy me demanda de descendre recevoir le nouvel ambassadeur du Japon. À l’heure indiquée, je vis approcher une limousine aux vitres teintées; un chauffeur en descendit ouvrir la portière arrière. Je m’approchai du

véhicule prêt à souhaiter la bienvenue au visiteur, quand je vis émerger du véhicule un.... Africain!

Pris de court, je lui demandai s’il avait rendez-vous avec l’ambassadeur de Suisse, qui avait ses bureaux deux étages plus hauts que les nôtres. «Non, non», dit-il, «c’est avec l’ambassadeur du Canada». Intrigué, je le priai donc de me suivre, en lui demandant dans l’ascenseur de me préciser son pays. Quelque peu étonné par ma question, il me répondit «le Gabon». C’est alors que j’ai compris que, Japon/Gabon, il y avait eu méprise quelque part....

Manque d’expérience de ma part, je n’ai pas eu la présence d’esprit de prier le visiteur de prendre siège

à la réception pendant que j’irais, aurais-je pu dire, m’assurer que l’ambassadeur Hardy était prêt à le recevoir. Au lieu de cela, je le priai de me suivre en me dirigeant directement vers le bureau de ce dernier, croisant au passage sa secrétaire, aussi surprise que je l’avais été en bordure du trottoir quelques instants plus tôt. Je frappai à la porte, et dès que je constatai l’étonnement de mon ambassadeur qui lui aussi attendait un Japonais, je lui dis, question d’amenuiser le choc : «Monsieur l’ambassadeur du GABON», en haussant la voix sur «Gabon», dans l’espoir que M. Hardy se rendrait compte instantanément de la méprise.

Mais à mon grand désarroi, ce dernier regarda son visiteur gabonais

et lui dit : «Mais je ne vous attendais pas!» Je présume qu'il se rendit compte, face au visage déconfit du visiteur, que quelque chose n'allait pas, et invita donc ce dernier à entrer dans son bureau, non sans me jeter par-dessus l'épaule du visiteur un regard qui n'avait rien de rassurant.

La pauvre secrétaire m'expliqua qu'elle allait assumer la méprise et s'excuser auprès de l'ambassadeur Hardy. Le secrétariat de l'ambassade du Japon avait pris rendez-vous en espagnol, et elle avait confondu «Japón» et «Gabón». Pendant que se déroulait la visite, je me rendis dans mon petit bureau, attendre nerveusement la suite. Quelques minutes plus tard, je vis passer l'ambassadeur, accompagner son visiteur lui-même jusqu'à son véhicule, comme il en avait coutume. À son retour, il entra dans mon bureau, ferma la porte derrière lui, et.... pouffa de rire. Ouf! Moi qui m'attendais à une sévère réprimande....

Maintenant la Chine.

Le deuxième épisode «asiatique» à Madrid eut une tournure moins dramatique, bien qu'aussi reliée à une visite de courtoisie. Cette fois, c'est l'ambassadeur de Chine que l'ambassadeur du moment, Georges Blouin, attendait. Il avait

présenté ses Lettres de créance au Caudillo 20 minutes avant le Chinois, et avait donc préséance sur ce dernier. (Pour l'anecdote : la pratique voulait que les nouveaux ambassadeurs se rendent présenter leurs Lettres au palais du Prado dans un carrosse tiré par un bel attelage ; mais les Chinois avaient montré de la résistance à ce que leur ambassadeur, le premier sous Franco, doive se plier à un tel cérémonial jugé «bourgeois». Le protocole avait donc avisé les quatre ambassadeurs attendus par Franco ce jour-là qu'exceptionnellement ce sont des limousines qui viendraient les chercher à leurs chancelleries respectives, prétextant qu'une vilaine grippe s'était répandue dans les écuries de l'État. Une fuite ne tarda pas à révéler la véritable raison, soit les objections chinoises. Et par souci d'égalité, on avait décidé que «pas de carrosse pour le Chinois, pas de carrosse pour personne». Il s'était donc agi d'une grippe non pas espagnole, mais.... asiatique!)

Revenons à la visite de courtoisie. Le secrétariat de l'ambassade de Chine avait annoncé que l'ambassadeur serait accompagné d'un interprète. Ne sachant pas dans quelle langue l'interprète allait traduire les propos en chinois

de son ambassadeur, M. Blouin me demanda de l'accompagner, au cas où l'interprète traduirait en espagnol, langue avec laquelle il n'était pas familier. Les propos liminaires de l'ambassadeur de Chine furent effectivement traduits en.... espagnol. Ce que je m'empressai de traduire en français pour M. Blouin. Ce dernier répondit en français, que je traduisis en espagnol pour l'interprète qui à son tour traduisit en chinois. Ce chassé-croisé chinois-espagnol-français-espagnol-chinois se poursuivit donc pendant un moment. Jusqu'à ce que chacun des ambassadeurs en vienne à s'informer de l'expérience diplomatique de l'autre. Il s'avéra que le Chinois avait servi dans des pays anglophones. Ce qui amena M. Blouin à lui demander : «Do you happen to speak English?» «Sure», répondait aussitôt son interlocuteur. Exeunt l'interprète chinois et le deuxième secrétaire canadien!

Jean-Paul Hubert a pris sa retraite après 35 ans de carrière au MAECI, dont 17 à titre d'ambassadeur à Dakar, Bruxelles, Buenos Aires, Berne et à L'OEA. Il fut également sherpa des PM Mulroney et Chrétien pour les Sommets de la Francophonie.

**NOTRE AMI ET COLLÈGUE,
MICHAEL KOVRIG, EST DÉTENU
AVEC SON COMPATRIOTE CANADIEN,
MICHAEL SPAVOR, DEPUIS
LE 10 DÉCEMBRE 2018.**



Writing is Murder

By Janet Brons

I am reliably informed that some alumni are interested in writing murder mystery novels, or are in the process of doing so, and that my experience might therefore be of interest. Doubtless those looking to write in this genre have brushed up on the differences among the “cozy”, the “police procedural” and the “amateur sleuth”; have researched which publishing firms accept books in the mystery genre; and have been reading a lot of Christie and watching a lot of Morse re-runs. They might have weighed the pros and cons of hiring an agent, and perhaps wondered if the police *really* use those big white boards to post photos and scribble ideas.

Potential mystery writers probably already have a protagonist or two in mind. Even the most casual consumer of the mystery genre, either in print or on television, recognizes that successful sleuths are typically deeply depressed, withdrawn, brilliant and probably alcoholic. I’ve given some thought to this, and perhaps it’s that audiences in general dislike perfect people; Shakespeare didn’t make his reputation because Hamlet was well-adjusted or the Macbeths were a model couple. Or perhaps it’s because successful mystery writers are deeply depressed, withdrawn, brilliant and probably alcoholic.

I realize that I was extremely lucky that my first book was picked up by the first publisher to which I sent it here in Victoria (having written the outline about twenty years ago in Aylmer and somehow fantasizing that Random House might send me an advance). It was a medium-sized, local company, and I think my manuscript went to the right place at the right time. It was accepting “unsolicited manuscripts” in the mystery genre. The company later



Janet Brons at a book launch for “A Quiet Kill”, April, 2014.

decided not to publish mystery novels any more. I try not to take it personally.

Back then I didn’t know that publishers look at mysteries as potential series, until I was first contacted by my prospective publisher. When she inquired if it was part of a series, I rather breathlessly and utterly unconvincingly replied, “er, yes.” But it led to contracts for two more books, and, had I not run out of inspiration, could have resulted in more.

Clearly the “getting published” bit of writing has a little to do with talent and a lot more to do with luck and timing. I felt pretty confident after getting my first book accepted in relatively short order – less so, when a children’s short story which

I thought brilliant was repeatedly rejected and now sits, forlorn, in my bottom drawer.

Following acceptance of the highly-polished final manuscript (which my publisher later admitted is always considered in the industry as a “first draft”) comes the soul-destroying process of being edited, both for substance and detailed “copy”. At least these people are professionals and, as an FS alumna, I had become accustomed to the red pen (yes, that’s dating me).

My editor once questioned the mode of death of one of the characters in my first book, wondering if it were truly possible to be garroted with the ends of the wire suspending the victim from two of his own fur coat display racks – her insinuation being that my victim’s head might well have come off long before the police arrived.

She asked if I had checked this with a coroner. I rather snippily retorted that I didn’t know any coroners: did she? Well, yes, it turned out that she did, and in time said coroner and I became good friends, even if we did have the occasional stomach-churning conversation over lunch. (The answer to the question, in case you are interested, is that yes, one can be garroted and displayed in such a fashion.) All of which to say, it’s very useful to do something diplomats are very good at – building a network of contacts, including local police, RCMP, lawyers, forensics types or those with other areas of expertise that can bring authenticity to your story. I can’t remember who said that “if you get the details right, no one notices the big lie”, but it’s certainly true of mystery writing.

Once the book is published, you’re essentially thrown to the wolves, especially in these days of social media. It’s one thing to be red-penned by a respected diplomatic colleague or professional editor; it’s something else to be critiqued and

awarded star ratings by random people on GoodReads. Only when a dear friend commented to me that “these people probably couldn’t write a grocery list” was I able to deal a little less hysterically with these “reviews”.

One thing might be worth bearing in mind for those wishing to be published. I won’t try to suggest that it’s not a heady experience – to actually be recognized, to hold your book-launch party, to see your first book in print. It can leave you numb and thrilled at the same time. It might also, in very short order, take away

some of the joy of writing. When you write, before your computer screen with your own ideas taking shape on the “page”, you are alone, private, able to write whatever you want in whatever form you want. You create your own characters and they have adventures that you create for them.

Being published, though, is by its very nature a public affair. If you want to sell books, you have to get out there, try to arrange book-signings and talks (unless you snag a major publisher, you’ll be expected to try to find at least some such opportunities yourself), and you’ll be urged to use all possible social media to flog your

wares. (I don’t even have a Facebook account, so I was something of a disappointment.) And if from then on you’re still able to write freely and with confidence, without feeling your editor sitting heavily on your shoulder, you’re a stronger person than I am. Don’t forget that writing is the fun part – especially if your work is unpublished.

Janet Brons was with Foreign Affairs Canada from 1982 to 1997, with postings in Kuala Lumpur, Warsaw and Moscow; she has written three murder mysteries, and her first, A Quiet Kill, was short-listed for the Arthur Ellis Award and the Kobo Emerging Writer Award.

Vélo et diplomatie

Par François Larochelle



L’auteur, François Larochelle, au soleil.

Le vélo connaît son heure de gloire. Petits et grands le pratiquent de plus en plus. Les enfants profitent des rues allégées de leur trafic pour cause de pandémie, les jeunes urbains s’en servent pour aller au boulot. Et les retraités pour activer leur cardio et déroutiller leurs vieux os.

Dans mon cas la «petite reine», comme la surnomment les Français, m’a permis de perfectionner l’art de la diplomatie. Comment cela me demanderez-vous? Et bien voilà : avec un groupe de trois collègues, devenus amis et retraités comme moi. J’ai fait pas moins de 19 voyages cyclistes un peu partout en Europe, aux États-Unis et au Canada. Ces randonnées ont demandé planification, compromis, et patience. Des qualités drôlement utiles pour travailler au MAECI, comme on l’appelait.

Nous organisons nous-mêmes ces voyages. Il faut donc tenir compte des desiderata du groupe pour les hôtels, restaurants, transports, etc., comme pour les visites ministérielles ou celles de sénateurs grincheux et exigeants, mais sans rencontres officielles. Les maires des villes et villages traversés ne nous reçoivent pas.... Pour notre tour de la Bourgogne, l’un d’entre nous arrivait de New York, l’autre de Bruxelles et moi du Caire. Nous avons tous rendez-vous le même jour, au même hôtel à Macon. Belle coordination!

Malgré des recherches exhaustives sur internet ou dans des guides, il y a parfois des surprises. Comme cette fois où après une épuisante ascension en Autriche, nous arrivâmes à un hôtel qui n’existait plus... Il fallut se débrouiller pour crêcher ailleurs. Heureusement, un autre était disponible pas très loin. Nous avons frôlé la nuit (frisquette) à la belle étoile.

Je suis passé près de la catastrophe lors de notre dernier périple le long du Chemin du Roy entre Montréal et Québec. J’avais réservé, faute de mieux, un hôtel qui se trouvait le long de l’autoroute entre une station-service, un Saint-Hubert et un McDonald’s. Je sens encore d’ici les effluves de viande grillée et de patates frites. Heureusement qu’un ami qui connaissait le secteur m’a suggéré un autre endroit, m’évitant de faire face à un barrage de quolibets... Mais il y a eu aussi cette sympathique auberge dans le sud de la France où nous fut offert, pour l’accueil, le petit rosé local qui nous donna le courage requis pour remonter sur nos bécanes, sous la pluie battante pour faire bombance dans un resto du coin, et poursuivre la dégustation de rosé. Le retour à nos chambres se déroula dans un exquis brouillard éthylique...



François Larochelle à gauche.

La bonne chair est un critère essentiel, sinon le prétexte de ces tournées. Le souper doit être réparateur pour compenser les calories perdues au cours de la journée. De ce côté, chacun y a trouvé son compte. Il est important cependant de s'assurer qu'il y a toujours au menu, pour l'un d'entre nous, du bœuf, du saumon ou de l'agneau. Il y a toujours consensus sur le pinard. La nourriture quelque peu roborative le long de la Moselle, en Allemagne, ne fit pas l'unanimité.

Malgré certaines impatiences ou de petits conflits, notre groupe fonctionne dans l'harmonie, avec nos personnalités assez différentes. Le fait d'avoir vécu l'expérience de pas mal de postes, de partager anecdotes et style de vie aide à la bonne entente. Nous rions beaucoup, surtout de nous. Un mauvais calcul de ma part confondant kilomètres et miles, entre deux étapes le long du Rhin, ne fut pas très bien reçu. Le parcours fut pas mal plus long que prévu. Ça râlait au petit déjeuner.

Les grèves récurrentes des chemins de fer français nous ont aussi

souvent compliqué la vie. Patience et compromis sont de mise. L'un d'entre nous, pour une raison que nous ignorons, à part peut-être une nostalgie d'enfant de chœur, insiste pour visiter moult églises et cathédrales sur notre passage. Vous conviendrez avec moi qu'en Europe et au Québec cela peut faire beaucoup... Mais lorsque notre quota religieux de la journée est atteint, nous l'attendons patiemment sur les parvis. Je dois avouer que la patience est souvent du côté de mes compagnons. En effet, je suis toujours bon dernier à l'arrivée quotidienne, parfois de manière volontaire, car je veux profiter tranquillement du paysage, mais aussi parce que le mollet se fatigue. Ils m'attendent alors bien patiemment... Sauf la fois où, sous l'orage et la boue, j'ai glissé dangereusement vers le Canal du Midi. Sans un vigoureux coup de pédale, je me retrouvais, bien seul, avec les poissons. Mes comparses étaient loin devant et trempés. Ils ont raté l'épisode!

De ces équipées cyclistes ce que je retiens avant tout, c'est la grande amitié qui s'est développée entre

nous, les fous rires, les merveilleux coins du monde parcourus, sans oublier la bonne bouffe.

Heureusement qu'il y a eu Face Time et Zoom pendant cette pandémie pour garder le contact. Une fois que ce satané virus sera du passé, nous comptons toujours faire ce voyage en Irlande, prévue initialement pour juillet 2019.

Enfin, j'oserais terminer sur une recommandation pour notre ancien ministère et son institut de la diplomatie. Pourquoi ne pas organiser des « Canada Tours » en vélo pour ses recrues? Peu coûteux, ils seraient formateurs et un excellent moyen de contribuer à l'esprit de corps. Nos successeurs et successeuses y découvriront la géographie et les spécialités régionales du pays!

Et non! Je ne cherche pas de contrat comme consultant de voyage!

François Larochelle a été posté à deux reprises au Caire, ainsi qu'à Damas, Vienne et Bruxelles. Arabisant, il a surtout travaillé sur les enjeux du Moyen-Orient. Retraité à Montréal depuis 2014, il est fellow à l'Institut d'études internationales de l'UQAM.

Columns

Camera Mechanics

By Victor Rakmil

The creative use of depth of field is a powerful photographic tool; it determines what is in focus. It is just one of the features of most cameras, and I will describe a few more in this column. There is a short cheat sheet at the end.

To use depth of field creatively, an understanding of f-stops and apertures on lenses is needed. The f-stops on your lens read, for example, 2.8, 4, 5.6, 8, 11, 16, 22. Each of these represents an aperture (opening of your lens to light). The smaller the f-stop is, the larger the aperture. The larger the aperture, the smaller the depth of field (what is in focus) and vice versa with larger f-stops.

One myth is that, at any given f-stop, one-third in front and two-thirds behind the subject are in focus. It is sometimes true, but it depends on the focal length of the lens (a 50mm lens will act differently than 100 mm lens). But it is a useful guide. What is definitely true is that the larger the sensor in your camera, depth of field will be smaller for any given aperture.

To get a nice out-of-focus background, start with a large aperture and an f-stop like F4. The distance between you and your subject must be significantly larger; the larger it is, the more out of focus the background. The exact opposite is true if your camera is very close to a subject. Within a few centimetres, the depth of field shrinks, and we have to use a larger aperture to get a reasonable depth of field.

Sometimes out-of-focus backgrounds will turn creamy or, with some lens, a series of dots will appear (called Bokeh). These effects are favoured by pros. Depth of field can also help frame your subject by making sure your audience easily identifies your subject.



Landscape photography, where we want a considerable depth of field, benefits from smaller apertures. But to get as much in focus as possible, you want to find the hyperfocal distance that gives you the maximum amount of depth of field. There are calculators on-line and apps for smart phones that give exact numbers for specific cameras and lenses, but focusing one-third into your scene may work just as well.

Most cameras have four shooting modes: manual, shutter priority, program mode, and aperture priority. This article has explained why you may wish to use aperture priority, where you choose the aperture and the camera provides shutter speed for that aperture. With shutter priority, you choose the shutter speed and the camera decides the aperture. Higher shutter speeds stop motion like birds in flight at 1/1200th of a second. Manual mode lets you override the whole exposure system, which is sometimes good for macro, astronomy photography and other work. Some photographers use it all of the time. Program mode is where the camera decides shutter and aperture. This can be helpful for news photographers who do not have much time to change settings.

Another in-camera setting is ISO. This is the sensitivity of the sensor

in the camera to light, and most cameras have a range of ISOs you can use. The lower the ISO the less noise (noise can mean a sort of messy texture in your photograph). However using higher ISO gives you more flexibility in lower light to use aperture and shutter speed creatively. In some cameras like the ones I use, I can set an auto ISO function, so the camera chooses within a range that I set the ISO, allowing me to choose the aperture and/or shutter speed.

Most cameras today have built in light meters to measure the light and some mechanism to determine what should be neutral grey, so they can portray accurate colour (this is called white balance). In the best of all possible worlds, things work out in auto white balance. Cameras left to their own will turn snow blue, searching for neutral grey. So the ability to adjust white balance can be important, and cameras that only shoot JPG and not raw file formats cannot adjust white balance (another reason to buy a camera that permits adjusting all of the parameters). I have been asked what the perfect exposure is. It's hard enough to define that a book I bought on exposure said it was a choice. I disagree in part with that, and my next article will begin with a bit on exposure. After that I propose some virtual walks to make use of the details I have described.

There is a lot to keep in mind when shooting, but having a good starting point is key. I use lenses that do not change aperture as I change focal length (zoom in or out). The vast majority of time my camera is in aperture priority, I use auto ISO (the range set to the lowest ISO my camera can go, to the highest ISO I can use with limited noise). I use auto white balance because I shoot raw files and not JPG files (that don't permit changing white balance in post-processing). I start out with my aperture at F8, and I have the back of my camera set up to show me if I have burned out highlights. ■

Photo: Victor Rakmil

Challenges in Retirement or Survival Strategies: Downsizing Drama

By Kurt F. Jensen

Among the most traumatic five words uttered between couples living in retirement are, “We’ve got to start downsizing.” You’ve noticed that the chosen words begin with ‘we.’ This is the royal ‘we,’ meaning the one articulating the phrase wants the other partner to “Go down to the basement and start throwing out all that junk that’s there.”

People in the Foreign Service accumulate a great deal of ... junk. We travel the world, dining on the Left Bank in Paris, strolling the flea-markets in Amsterdam, hunting ancient Chinese pottery throughout South East Asia, and having the option to holiday in exotic locales, often within driving distance or a short flight of where we are posted. This lifestyle is a recipe for acquiring some wonderful treasures with no imperative to cull the accumulations. Hence, the growing deposits which rest untouched (and often forgotten) in our basements.

Downsizing can become a full-time occupation for a great deal of your time. Start early. Don’t wait until you finalize plans to move to a ‘manageable’ condo or apartment. We really have little idea of all that is hidden in the basement and elsewhere throughout our homes. While there are choices in how to tackle the task, none is easy. Choices of what to retain must be made. The children either want nothing or only the best things that you thought might remain with you. You, the retiree, must find a solution for all that remains.

There are options. Hauling a few boxes to the curb for the weekly garbage pickup is a lengthy process with minimal long-term impact. Hiring junk-removing firms is fast,



expensive, and often heartbreaking. When one of your kids or grandkids asks for something, you vaguely recall it disappearing in the arms of a junk dealer with a happy smile on his face. You can donate a lot to The Salvation Army and Thrift Shops, which requires sorting and a lot of driving.

The key decision, in my view, is to start early and take that magical trip of discovery to the basement. I was lucky. One of my daughters introduced me to Kijiji and suggested that I begin with a few unneeded chairs, bookcases, etc. These were things which were clearly superfluous to needs. That, in fact, was my first mistake. You must go big to have an

impact. After selling those first few things, I branched out into articles that I desperately wanted removed. Over time, I learned the first Commandments of the Kijiji seller: there is no junk, only treasures that someone else has yet to discover.

I quickly expanded my Kijiji adventure to include everything which was not used or nailed down. We had an old wooden picnic table with two benches, which we had acquired when our children were still toddlers. Now hidden behind bushes against the fence in a corner of the back yard, I put them on Kijiji and sold them within a couple of weeks to a young man entirely taken with the fact that they were made of cedar boards. He explained how he would carefully plane it all down and refinish the wood properly. I took my \$10 and was a bit embarrassed. That brings us to the second Commandment of Kijiji: carry not to the curb what

Special Cartoon, by John Graham



“It’s the Premier’s idea to accelerate vaccination”

« C’est l’idée du premier ministre d’accélérer la vaccination »

someone will give you a few dollars for and gladly take away themselves. Not only was I getting pocket money, but I didn't have to do any of the heavy lifting. An added benefit is that many of the buyers are very clearly pleased with their purchases, sometimes explaining how long they have been searching – which underscores that some of this stuff has really spent a long time in the basement.

I found that selling my 'lost treasures' on Kijiji did, in fact, take a long time. Some items stayed on my list for several years. But there was always someone out there who needed what I had and thought they had done well. That's the third Commandment of Kijiji: there's a reason you're referring to these things as 'junk,' so keep the prices down – someone will eventually come and realize that price, quality, and their need are in harmony. I sold a small roll of chicken wire to someone who just needed a little bit. I had bought it a decade earlier, used what I needed and felt I should keep the remainder 'just in case.' \$2 later the customer was happy and so was I.

Over the past three years I have been opening boxes in the basement and cleaning closets. More than two small moving trucks of 'stuff' have gone (some were big pieces, including a piano). But not everything sells easily

or fast on Kijiji, so here are some other options.

Most of us in the Foreign Service are over-educated and have large libraries which are heavy to move and take up much space. You can recycle the books in the bi-weekly paper curbside pickup or you can take them to used bookstores. There are a couple of these in Ottawa which give you a fair price on quality books (no airport romances or thrillers) – a hint, they're both on Bank Street. The stores may increase the payment if you take it in merchandise. I collect old leather-bound books (as do my daughters) and am building my collection slowly but cheaply.

I convinced one of my daughters to take a bundle of our phonograph records and found a shop which bought some of the leftovers at a fair price. The same applied to CDs, DVDs, and even some VHS tapes. The money is nice and pays for the gas to haul the remainder to The Salvation Army. My wife is sorting through the many formal gowns she acquired overseas while required to attend the cocktail circuit for fun and boredom. There are several places which accept quality clothing for commission sales, and the thought of receiving a few dollars makes the parting more palatable.

Kijiji has become a bit of a hobby. It's somewhat time-consuming but quite enjoyable, especially during the current pandemic, when one has exhausted the joys of Netflix in the afternoon. I was a stamp collector for most of my life and acquired a great deal of interesting material in which my kids and grandkids have little interest. By selling a lot of these stamps on Kijiji I have reawakened the joy I received from my erstwhile hobby, while helping others to acquire treasures difficult to find.

Downsizing only attains tsunami proportions once the final decision to vacate the family home for something more suitable to our age and family size has been decided. So far, because of our circumstances, we have not yet divested ourselves of anything which really held memories or emotional appeal. But we have seen a lot of unneeded (not useless) material walk out the door – and a little money walk in. It's a beginning, and it has been an interesting journey, one which must be started early.

Kurt F. Jensen served in the Foreign Service for 33 years, with postings to Stockholm, Bonn, Port of Spain, and Boston. He brought home a lot of souvenirs.

Announcements/ Annonces

If you have 'announceables', let us know, at edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Si vous avez des 'annonces', faites-le nous savoir à edit-forum99@gmail.com.

AMBCANADA'S Ambassador of Note Awards

by **Gaston Barban**

"It is a distinct privilege and honour to be able to represent and serve

one's country abroad as a member of Canada's foreign service."
AMBCANADA Website

Everyone who has served abroad, no matter at what level or in which capacity, appreciates the sentiment expressed in the above quotation. The special nature of a foreign assignment leaves one grateful for the experience. But, how can we help other Canadians understand what it means to represent one's country and, more importantly, demonstrate why it is essential to do our best to promote and defend Canada's foreign interests?

One way is to showcase those who have led our international efforts and to highlight how they have done so in an outstanding and distinguished fashion.

In an on-line ceremony on February 18, 2021, AMBCANADA, the Canadian Ambassadors Alumni Association (formally known as RHOMA, the Retired Heads of Mission Association), revealed the names of its newest Ambassadors of Note. Those ten individuals joined the twenty Ambassadors honoured in 2019 as distinguished men and women diplomats who, as

Canadian heads of mission and through their accomplishments and careers, served to advance Canada's interests and place in the world.

The 2020 Ambassadors of Note named (in alphabetical order) that day were: James Bartleman; Michael Bell; Donald Campbell; Raymond Chrétien; Léonard Legault; Jules Léger; Marie-Lucie Morin; Herbert Norman; James H. (Si) Taylor; and L. Dana Wilgress.

Over 130 persons from Canada and around the world attended the Awards event. AMBCANADA President Abbie Dann gave the introductory remarks describing how the Ambassadors of Note Awards support the Association's objective to raise understanding of the importance of Canada's diplomatic service. The ceremony's hosts, Gary J. Smith and Anne Leahy, both AMBCANADA Board Directors, hosted the bilingual event and formally announced the names of this year's recipients. They read short biographical sketches of each Ambassador of Note while photographs of the awardees were projected to the audience.

The highlight of the event was the acceptance speeches by four of the living recipients who were 'virtually present'. All made appreciative and thought-provoking remarks. James H. "Si" Taylor was the last to speak and said in part, "... diplomats can expect to be judged by the public, by their political masters, by the media, by foreign governments and peoples and by their peers. But the judgment of their peers will have a special value of its own, since it will be the judgment of those who have shared the life and work of diplomacy, and who know it best. Hence the value of these awards." The entire ceremony with the acceptance speeches is available via this link: [AMBCANADA YouTube](#)

The Ambassadors of Note Awards were established in 2019 by the then Retired Heads of Mission Association to mark the 110th anniversary of the creation of the Department of External Affairs in 1909 and to enhance public understanding of the vital role that diplomacy and diplomats play in advancing Canada's national interests and its place in the world. With these same objectives, AMBCANADA decided to add ten more recipients, bringing the total to thirty Canadian "Ambassadors of Note".

AMBCANADA members, numbering almost three hundred, were invited to submit nominations. The criteria for inclusion were as follows:

- Had to have been a Head of Mission (HOM).
- Could be living or deceased but no longer serving as a Canadian diplomat.
- Was involved in an ongoing activity or a single major event as a HOM which was out of the ordinary and had a significant impact on Canadian foreign policy or on how Canada was seen in the world.
- Set a precedent as a HOM in a way that set the stage for other diplomats to come.
- Was an individual who, by dint of their life-long accomplishments in the field of diplomacy and beyond, merited inclusion to highlight how Canadian diplomats as a profession have made a difference for Canada at home and abroad.

From some ninety nominations, a small committee of the AMBCANADA Board of

Directors made the final selection. In addition to Gary J. Smith and Anne Leahy named above, other members of the Ambassadors of Note committee were Gaston Barban, Richard Kohler and Louise Léger.

The aim of a balanced representation of men and women among the Ambassadors of Note is difficult given, until relatively recently, the male-centric nature of the foreign service and of ambassadorial appointments in the history of the Department of External Affairs. Indeed, women were not hired as officers in the Canadian Foreign Service until 1947 and the first female head of mission was only appointed in 1958. It may be difficult for many to believe, but until 1971, women Foreign Service officers who wished to marry were obliged to resign! As future nominations begin to include ambassadors from more recent generations and diverse horizons, we can expect Canadian diplomacy to better reflect Canadian society.

Recently, the AMBCANADA Board decided to proceed with a third edition of the Ambassadors of Note Awards recognizing their value to the Association's goals. With additional recipients, and with complementary outreach activities and publications, the goal is for the Awards to reach a broader audience and help raise understanding and appreciation of the important work of Canadian diplomats.

To learn more and see all the biographies and photos of the Ambassadors of Note visit the AMBCANADA website: [Ambassadors of Note](#) .

Gaston Barban is a director of AMBCANADA, Canadian Ambassadors Alumni Association.

The Serpent, Netflix Canada (and elsewhere)

Reviewed by Michael Welsh

NETFLIX

BBC/Netflix's *The Serpent* tells the story of Charles Sobhraj, a conman who murdered young travellers along the "hippy trail" throughout Asia in the 1970s. Canadians figure both as collaborators and victims in the saga. Marie-Andree Leclerc, a Quebecoise, fell under Sobhraj's spell and was an enabler during the crime spree of 1975-77 in Hong Kong, Thailand, India and Nepal. Avoiding several murder charges over decades, Sobhraj was finally convicted in 1994 for the murder of Franco-Manitoban Laurent Carrière in Nepal in 1976. Leclerc died of cancer after returning home from an Indian prison in 1984.

The eight-part story is told through flashbacks in different locales over several years, but the heart of the story plays out in Bangkok. The production captures the fashions of the 70's, from shaggy haircuts to wide ties. The colour palette reflects the washed-out look of 50-year-old photographs. Characterizations are generally strong, save for quibbling with Jenna Colman's accent as Leclerc.

The story's major focus is on the Dutch consular officer in Bangkok who was central to bringing Sobhraj to justice. Consular officials rarely appear in movies and never as heroes. Herman Knippenberg, Third Secretary at the Netherlands Embassy, bucks this trend. In investigating the disappearance of two Dutch backpackers, Knippenberg identified Sobhraj as a probable serial killer. Faced with indifference from Thai police and

scepticism from his ambassador, Knippenberg doggedly assembled evidence at considerable risk to his life, career and marriage.

Knippenberg is shown at work with a few expat associates. Surprisingly, locally-engaged consular staff are not given much credit, even though they are indispensable in consular work. Other embassies serve largely secondary roles, with the British getting the worst treatment. There is a small cameo for a Canadian Embassy figure, "Bastien", who provides Knippenberg with RCMP-sourced information on Leclerc's family in Quebec. In an interview from New Zealand about the series, Knippenberg said that the Canadian Ambassador, Bill Bauer at that time, was one of the few diplomats who had been helpful.

Despite playing the hero, Knippenberg is not likely to offer an archetype for more movies about consular work. Presented as lacking glamour or charm, he comes across as obsessive, with limited interpersonal skills and anger-control issues.

'The Serpent' attracted an audience of over 100 million worldwide. The consular angle reminds us that there are other compelling stories than appear in the "spy vs spy" tropes in popular foreign affairs dramas.

All Asia-hands will appreciate how well the series captured the locales and realistic atmosphere of the period. Every FS will find echoes of personal experience in scenes showing work within and between missions, interaction with local authorities, especially on behalf of citizens in need, and how work abroad often has serious impacts on our personal well-being and family relationships.

Michael Welsh was posted in Manila 1974-76 and later in Singapore, Hong Kong, Washington and Barbados. His last assignment was Director General of Consular Operations before retiring in 2009.

Jacques Roy Péripéties de diplomatie de la Gaspésie à Paris

Ottawa : Édition du Vermillon,
327 pages.

Par Jean Riopel

Dans son récit autobiographique, Jacques Roy nous dévoile une brillante carrière de 40 ans au service de la diplomatie canadienne. Cette carrière l'a conduit de sa Gaspésie natale à Ottawa et dans plusieurs capitales du monde où il a occupé des postes importants. Malgré une approche chronologique parfois agaçante, mais inévitable dans une autobiographie, ce livre mérite notre attention. Il présente un riche parcours que Roy termine au poste d'ambassadeur en France, sans doute l'un des joyaux de la carrière auquel peut rêver tout jeune diplomate.

Les cent premières pages portent sur son enfance à Ste-Anne-des-Monts et ses années de formation. Il fait son cours classique à Rimouski et opte à sa graduation pour le droit qu'il va poursuivre à l'Université Laval de Québec. Lors d'un voyage en Yougoslavie, il fait la rencontre de George Ignatieff, alors ambassadeur du Canada à Belgrade. Il en sort convaincu qu'il doit se destiner à la diplomatie. Après un séjour à la London School of Economics, il entre au ministère des Affaires extérieures en 1960, un peu comme on entrait en religion à l'époque, c'est-à-dire pour la vie.

Dans les chapitres intermédiaires, Roy fait la chronique de son apprentissage comme agent du service extérieur. Son mérite est de dire les choses franchement : la vie d'un jeune diplomate n'est pas un chemin parsemé de roses. Ses deux premières affectations se déroulent dans des pays communistes, la Tchécoslovaquie et Cuba, où la vie est pénible. À La Havane, la maison assignée aux Roy est en piètre état.

L'ambassade n'a pu obtenir les fonds nécessaires pour la réparer sous prétexte que le gouvernement cubain en est le propriétaire. Qu'à cela ne tienne! Roy plonge avec enthousiasme dans son travail où il doit régulièrement supporter les discours-fleuve de Fidel Castro sur la place de la révolution afin d'en faire rapport à Ottawa. Il dit que cela l'aide à améliorer son espagnol.

En quelques années, compétent et ambitieux, il monte rapidement en grade. On lui assigne des postes de responsabilités centrales : coordonnateur ministériel dans le bureau du ministre des Affaires extérieures et, par la suite, secrétaire adjoint du Conseil privé pour les relations internationales. Dans celui-ci, il joue un rôle de conseiller auprès du premier ministre Pierre Trudeau et l'accompagne dans ses déplacements à l'étranger et dans les rencontres de chefs d'État comme le G7.

Se succèdent à partir de 1981 des affectations de haut niveau à l'étranger : ambassadeur en Arabie Saoudite ; chef adjoint à Washington ; ambassadeur en Suisse ; ambassadeur auprès de l'Union européenne à Bruxelles ; et finalement ambassadeur en France. Ces affectations sont parfois entrecoupées par des postes à la centrale. De son passage à Washington, il note que son travail est très différent de ce qu'il a connu auparavant. Il passe beaucoup de temps à « faire du lobbying » pour promouvoir les intérêts commerciaux et économiques canadiens. Le dossier du bois d'œuvre, enjeu sempiternel des relations canado-américaines, l'occupe beaucoup. Plus ça change...

Le test le plus difficile qu'il a vécu comme ambassadeur est sans doute la crise du turbot entre le Canada et l'Union européenne en 1994. Si les Espagnols étaient les plus intransigeants du côté européen, ce rôle appartenait, côté canadien, au ministre des pêches Brian Tobin, inflexible et belliqueux, qui ne donnait pas à Roy l'appui et la

confiance nécessaires. Roy recevait donc ses instructions directement du premier ministre Jean Chrétien qui fut sans doute satisfait de ses talents de négociateur à Bruxelles, car il le nomma à Paris pour succéder à Benoît Bouchard.

De l'épisode parisien, Roy s'attardera surtout sur les tracasseries causées par le gouvernement péquiste de Lucien Bouchard alors au pouvoir à Québec. L'affaire du timbre-poste que le président Chirac souhaitait émettre pour célébrer le 30^e anniversaire de la visite du général de Gaulle au Canada en 1967 illustre bien le rocambolesque des relations triangulaires de l'époque. Suite aux pressions canadiennes, ce timbre ne sera pas émis, au grand dam du gouvernement du Québec et particulièrement de Bernard Landry qui s'en prit publiquement aux Québécois qui, comme Roy, détenant des postes de hautes responsabilités dans la diplomatie canadienne, les considérant à mots couverts comme des traîtres.

Roy demeure toujours d'une grande discrétion. Même s'il n'est pas tendre envers Brian Tobin et Bernard Landry, il n'y a pas dans ce livre de révélations croustillantes, ni de règlements de compte avec d'ex-collègues. Roy est un exécutant compétent et fidèle de décisions prises par les instances politiques. On aurait aimé qu'il parle des idées qui le motivaient et de ce qu'il pensait des grands enjeux de son époque, mais on reste sur notre appétit. Ce livre n'en demeure pas moins un témoignage important sur une époque révolue où les Jacques Roy, Raymond Chrétien, Gaëtan Lavertu, Louise Fréchette, Marc Lortie, Claude Laverdure, Marie-Lucie Morin et bien d'autres francophones rayonnaient au sommet de la diplomatie canadienne.

Jean Riopel a surtout fait carrière dans le secteur des relations canado-américaines. Il a été en poste à Bruxelles de 2004 à 2008 et a pris sa retraite en 2011.

David Lyon and David Murakami Wood, eds., *Big Data Surveillance and Security Intelligence: The Canadian Case.*

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2021.
Pp, xii, 290. C\$89.95, hard cover.

By Kurt Jensen

The intelligence world has changed. This book is about Big Data, the massive acquisition of information which exists in the electronic world. The book is focused on Canada.

The intrusion of Big Data is the collection of the metadata, the behind-the-scenes details of when, where, who, etc. Security agencies claim this is analogous to reading the outside of an envelope. Not so. The sheer volume of collected material provides intrusive details on communication participants. Sex, interests, religion, habits, medical issues, employment, etc., are relatively easily discernible. This shatters the barrier between legitimate collection and warrantless privacy intrusions.

Intelligence gathering in the era of social media and the Internet involves all citizens. The book discusses Big Data as it pertains to Canada and clearly lays out that everything is collectable. Only the law impedes such activity.

People in a free and open society have an expectation of privacy. There are legal obstacles to intrusive activities but no real technological difficulties. That is the thrust of the arguments in the book.

Big Data collection in Canada dates to about 2009, is still new with little understanding of how to analyze the material without causing harm while ensuring verifiable benefits. This is a new science, machine driven, with data manipulated by complex algorithms which may or may not be valid.

Big Data collection can “silently and secretly affect human rights, civil liberties, and the conditions for human flourishing in Canada.” Anyone can become a person of interest simply because an impersonal algorithm deems it so.

The book argues that the law protecting individual and personal privacy lacks legal clarity. This issue has governed all recent government commissions into security-intelligence activities. As well, there have been judicial bench findings, direction and demands which have been sought by federal judges to curb the exuberance of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service.

Testing of law is one means to attain accountability, but transparency is also necessary for accountability to be viable. The goal of Big Data collection is preemption or prevention of bad things happening. However, the authors contest that these activities silently and secretly affect human rights and civil liberties. The protection of the state must be reconciled with the protection of the rights of its citizens for this to flourish. That goal is not yet in sight.

Indiscriminate collection of Big Data puts state power and individual rights of citizens on a collision course. The authors contend that much of the data derived from Big Data collection in Canada often reflects a “garbage in, garbage out” problem of unreliable data.

One reason is that Big Data is big. As one author states, “... given enough data ... any hypothesis ... can be proven.” An algorithm which is 99% correct (never realistically attainable) and collecting information on 32 million Canadian adults could create 320,000 random false terrorist positives. Yet none of these 320,000 individuals may be guilty of more than bad luck.

Does Big Data work? The collection is not difficult, but does it advance societal security? Returns from Big Data collection are meagre. The US

NSA has used Big Data collection in 54 investigations since 2001. Not an impressive return.

In Canada, the conflict has been legislation permitting the collection of Big Data versus the Canadian Common Law principle that “everyone has the right to be secure against unreasonable search and seizure.” Search and seizure can be sanctioned by a warrant, requiring a focus on ‘who’ and ‘what.’ Bulk data acquisition, however, remain indiscriminate.

Indiscriminate collection creates a dilemma. Without human involvement, to contextualize the deriving analysis, the utilization of Big Data for security intelligence may remain slim. The results may be a lot of data compromising legal rights, privacy, human rights with negligible positive outcome.

Complicating the debate on Big Data is that “... members of the Canadian intelligence community have historically been willing to mislead judges and downplay questionable rationales of action to their reviewers.” Contempt for the law achieves little but public apprehension of security services.

This book puts forth a complex intelligence collection issue at the cutting edge of technology. It articulates the conflict between national security and fundamental civil rights. It seems an irreconcilable goal made difficult by secrecy and an unwillingness (or inability) to be transparent and made complicated by repeated lack of candor with judges.

The book is about protecting civil liberties and national security in the mega data era. The impact on the public has been great, particularly for those whose civil rights have been violated without cause. The impact on security of the nation has been less evident.

The book does not provide solutions but highlights an irreconcilable

conflict. Governments view Big Data as a solution to unsolvable challenges and seem dismissive of the inherent dangers to the public unleashed in the process. This is a dark book, but one which should be read.

Kurt F. Jensen wrote a more detailed review of this book, which appears in The Journal of Intelligence and National Security.

Paul Terrien, Lawrence Cannon – Mémoires politiques

Édition de l'homme, 328 pages.

By **Éric Pelletier**



Il est probable que le nom de Lawrence Cannon vous semblera familier. Après tout, Lawrence Cannon est un abonné de l'actualité politique québécoise depuis 1971.

Paul Terrien, ancien journaliste, militant conservateur et chef de cabinet de Lawrence Cannon dans ses deux portefeuilles fédéraux, raconte, dans un style clair et direct, la remarquable carrière politique de Lawrence Cannon. Les chapitres du livre se déclinent chronologiquement au fil des grandes étapes de la carrière de M. Cannon.

Né à Québec, Lawrence Cannon est issu d'une famille irlandaise bien arrimée aux francophones, très active politiquement, associée surtout au parti Libéral, tant à Québec qu'à Ottawa. Il se démarque de son père, grands-pères et grands-oncles par sa formation. Au lieu du droit,

presque héréditaire chez les Cannon & Power, il complète plutôt un baccalauréat «*ès arts*» spécialisé en science politique du Collège Loyola en 1971. Il complétera une maîtrise en administration des affaires de l'Université Laval en 1979. À Paris, beaucoup plus tard, il s'adonnera à des cours en histoire de l'art, géopolitique internationale et en relations internationales.

Tout d'abord, il militera, influence familiale oblige, au sein du parti Libéral du Québec. Puis, il décrochera le poste de secrétaire particulier de Robert Bourassa durant la période mouvementée de 1971 à 1976. C'est la période des incessantes crises linguistiques ; de l'après-coup de la traumatisante crise d'octobre 1970 — voir en annexe du bouquin la dernière lettre de Pierre Laporte, otage, à Robert Bourassa ; des conflits de travail parfois violents ; de l'épopée de la Baie James ; de la saga de l'organisation des Jeux olympiques de 1976 ; jusqu'à l'élection du Parti Québécois. C'est à couper le souffle !

Il est forcé à une pause studieuse tout en étant rattaché au Conseil exécutif puis à la Société de développement industriel du Québec. Il faut bien qu'il fasse vivre sa première famille. Finalement, il fait le saut en politique active comme conseiller municipal à Cap-Rouge.

Au retour de Robert Bourassa en 1985, il se fera élire député de La Peltrie dans la région de Québec. Il assumera plusieurs fonctions tant à l'Assemblée nationale qu'à la table du Conseil des ministres. C'est aussi une période mouvementée au Québec. Il suffit d'évoquer l'échec des accords du Lac Meech et de Charlottetown, puis la crise d'Oka.

Au retrait de M. Bourassa, Lawrence Cannon quittera la politique provinciale. Ayant obtenu un poste chez Unitel, il s'installe avec sa nouvelle jeune famille en Outaouais. Après un bref passage à Unitel, il fondera sa propre boîte de communications.

Puis, les sirènes de la politique se font entendre de nouveau. Cette fois, il est élu au conseil municipal de Gatineau (fusionnée) en 2001. En outre, il sera le président de la Société de transport de l'Outaouais de 2002 à 2005.

En 2006, il saute dans l'arène politique fédérale. Il se porte candidat sous la bannière conservatrice. Élu député dans Pontiac, il accède au conseil des ministres. Il sera d'abord le ministre du Transport, de l'Infrastructure et des Collectivités.

Sa conversion au parti Conservateur de Stephen Harper avait de quoi surprendre. Il ne faut pas s'étonner qu'il partage avec nous ses motivations. D'abord, une évidence : Lawrence Cannon est issu d'une société québécoise fortement influencée par les courants nationalistes des années 70-90. Comme ministre des Communications du Québec, il a même porté l'affirmation des compétences québécoises. Dans un autre contexte, il cite dans le livre de Terrien la doctrine énoncée en 1965 par Paul Gérin-Lajoie : «*les prolongements externes des compétences d'une province canadienne relève du gouvernement de cette province tout autant que ses aspects internes, et que le gouvernement chargé de mettre en œuvre une entente internationale doit pouvoir conclure et signer lui-même cette entente*». Doctrine, inutile de préciser, pas tellement prisée sur la rive gauche de la rivière Outaouais. Il ne faut donc pas s'étonner que Lawrence Cannon ait été réceptif à l'engagement de Stephen Harper de pratiquer un fédéralisme d'ouverture et de s'attaquer au déséquilibre fiscal alors que le parti Libéral fédéral était empêtré dans le scandale des commandites et des lendemains mouvementés du rapport Gomery. Lawrence Cannon ne devait pas non plus porter dans son cœur la position du parti Libéral fédéral relative à l'accord du Lac Meech. Mais, plus important encore, ce Québécois libéral dans l'âme n'aurait

pas à appuyer d'éventuelles prises de position des conservateurs sociaux.

Il deviendra ministre des Affaires étrangères peu après l'élection fédérale d'octobre 2008 jusqu'à sa défaite en mars 2011, victime d'une vague orange inédite au Québec.

Lawrence Cannon souligne avec justesse que «*l'ordre du jour d'un ministre des Affaires étrangères est souvent dicté par des événements imprévus survenus à des milliers de kilomètres du Canada*». Et ce ne sont pas ces développements qui ont manqué alors qu'il était le chef de la diplomatie canadienne. Le livre en répertorie d'ailleurs une longue liste partant des enlèvements et séquestrations, dont ceux de nos anciens collègues Robert Fowler ainsi que de Louis Guay en mission pour l'ONU au Niger ; de la défaite au Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU en 2010, du tremblement de terre en Haïti, de l'Arctique, de l'Afghanistan, des printemps arabes et de son impact dans plusieurs pays.

Quelques mois après son départ des Affaires étrangères, une autre perspective s'ouvre à lui : il devra maintenant apprivoiser «*la pratique quotidienne du métier de diplomate dans l'un des postes les plus importants du réseau canadien*» et comment compliqué, en raison de plusieurs facteurs, entre autres, un certain Charles de Gaulle. S'agit-il d'une relation rectangulaire ou triangulaire ? Je n'ose même pas entrer dans ce débat.

Dès l'avant-propos du livre, Lawrence Cannon nous précise que ce livre n'est pas une autobiographie. Son but, comme il l'articule clairement, n'est pas de mettre «*en valeur le rôle que j'ai joué, bien modeste au regard des grandes figures politiques que j'ai eu le privilège de côtoyer, mais d'abord et avant tout pour éclairer un peu plus l'époque que j'ai traversée et décrire le métier que j'ai choisi*». Il insiste sur le fait que ce sont des mémoires politiques et non pas un récit exhaustif d'une vie.

On n’y trouvera pas non plus des grands regrets ou des remises en question. Certes, comme il fallait s’y attendre, particulièrement dans la période fédérale de sa carrière, il ressent le besoin de contextualiser, quitte à prendre à revers les perceptions publiques et médiatiques sur certains enjeux : L’élection artistique de 2008 ; les ratées de l’élection au Conseil de sécurité en 2010 ; Israël ; l’aide à l’Afrique ; le manque d’écho favorable aux mesures de protection de l’industrie aérienne contre les sociétés faucons du Moyen-Orient (nommément « Emirates » et « Etihad »).

Cependant, ce qu’on y trouve : c’est un voyage fascinant à travers 40 ans d’histoire politique du Québec et du Canada, de ses acteurs, de ses grands enjeux, distillé à travers trois niveaux de gouvernement. Lawrence Cannon est un témoin attentif et un acteur engagé. Il n’est pas très idéologique, mais plutôt motivé par des approches concrètes. Par exemple, nous lui

devons d’avoir piloté efficacement et adroitement dans les méandres du gouvernement Harper la construction de la nouvelle chancellerie du Canada sur la rue du Faubourg St-Honoré, au cœur du VIII Arrondissement de Paris à un jet de pierre de l’Élysée. Belle note finale sur une longue carrière publique bien remplie.

Éric Pelletier été posté à Londres, Los Angeles, Atlanta et à l’Organisation internationale de la Francophonie à Paris. À Ottawa, il a œuvré, entre autres, au secteur des États-Unis.

Kim Darroch, *Collateral Damage – Britain, America and Europe in the Age of Trump,*

London: William Collins, London, 2020, 374 pages.

By Vicken Koundakjian

Kim Darroch was posted to Washington as the UK’s Ambassador

to the US in January 2016. By November of that year, Donald Trump was elected as President of the United States. For the balance of his time in Washington, until his resignation as ambassador in July 2019, Darroch went through the roller-coaster we have come to associate with the Trump era. The information and views that Darroch sent to his headquarters read very much like the cables that HOMs from all countries are expected to send to their political leadership – frank and unvarnished. That was clearly not what some people, and by all indications some at No. 10, wanted to see. Darroch’s initial messages were leaked, prompting Nigel Farage, leader of the pro-Brexit UK Independence Party, to criticize Darroch. Trump then pushed for Farage to be the Ambassador to Washington. Prime Minister Theresa May shot down that idea. However, the next PM-in-waiting, Boris Johnson, the Foreign Secretary

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in May's government, was not willing to stand by his Ambassador. When Darroch's messages between 2017 and 2019 were leaked, the absence of any support by Johnson led Darroch to submit his resignation. He left both Washington and the Foreign Office on December 31, 2019.

Darroch's book, "Collateral Damage, Britain, America and Europe in the age of Trump" came out in 2020, to very favourable reviews in the British press. The stories are what we in the foreign service all know: landing in a new place, trying to figure out who's who and what real power and influence they really have, and making friends with people you may not necessarily make at home. Darroch managed to secure an early meeting between Trump and Theresa May by getting through to both Steve Bannon and Kellyanne Conway (she of the "alternate facts"), and May won the laurel of becoming the first foreign leader to meet with Trump.

In short, Darroch did what all of us know well, by making sure that his country's interests came first and foremost, and by getting to know the key players, winning their confidence, and getting them to agree to help you.

Darroch's initial cables about Trump and his people were clear: they would never get better; and they remained "inept" and "totally dysfunctional". The Trump team would never get over the "sense of burning injustice" and "deep grievances" that seemed to animate the entire White House, including Trump. We knew that none of that was a secret – it was all over social media, and it was a regular component in many if not every speech given by the now-former President. Darroch did his job. So the question that remains is why he was not supported by Prime Minister Boris Johnson, even privately? Darroch received his accolades on his return to Britain from the former Prime Minister, Theresa May, who

proposed that he be made a "Peer of the Realm" by the Queen.

A question on which Darroch chose not to speculate was why he was "outed" in the way it was done. While discretion is a virtue in the job, why write a book about such close proximity to the Trump White House and not share any fresh insights? Leaks ended Darroch's career, and the final question is still unanswered: what is the status of the governmental investigation into the leaked reports? Messages with that kind of commentary from a head of mission are surely highly classified, and they were probably sent to only a restricted number of individuals in the British government. So why is such a breach of the Official Secrets Act still not resolved? I hope to read about it soon.

Vicken Koundakjian is a FS officer currently assigned as Senior Adviser in the Office of Protocol. He joined the Department in 1990 as a political officer and has served in Riyadh, Tehran, Caracas and Abuja.

Vignettes from the Archives of the Department/ Vignettes des archives du ministère

Old Soldiers do Die

By Buck Arbuckle

The people who once handled telegraphic communications between headquarters and the field were called "communicators". Technological change eliminated their jobs, but as a group they retained an esprit de corps unique in the history of Canada's foreign ministry. We hope to reintroduce readers to some of their stories, which were written up over the years by "Buck" Arbuckle, the one-time head of the Telecommunications Division, assisted by several colleagues, and then recorded in the communicators' website, Ofarts.ca. This is one such story.

By its very nature, External Affairs (and its successor names) generated a lot of classified material. The Telecommunications Division had

the responsibility of disposing of the secret waste. Day-to-day paper accumulations presented no particular problem, and were burned before we acquired shredders. But what about the machinery that had outlived its usefulness but retained a SECRET classification? We could not throw it out, and could not shred it. In a ministry responsible for hundreds of secret machines scattered at embassies around the world, the disposal problem was of extraordinary proportions.

One communicator at an embassy in the Middle East broke his retired machines into small pieces, loaded them onto a boat, and slowly tossed pieces overboard as he moved about a nearby lake. But he was observed by the local constabulary, who were

already suspicious of everything that foreigners did in his country. After his arrest, it took the ambassador a lot of fast talk to get our man out of a jam. After that, the radio equipment went back to Ottawa.

In Ottawa, we struck a deal with the manager of a foundry to burn and melt our old equipment on successive Saturday mornings. But the materials in the equipment, although slow to ignite, began to burn furiously and generated so much heat that they melted a hole in the side of the foundry furnace. So ended that relationship.

Now, what to do? We found a scrap yard where we could take the equipment and supervise as it was run over by a bulldozer. The machines came out flat, but we were not sure that the wiring had been destroyed. We had to assure our security authorities that nothing

was recoverable. So the obsolescent material kept piling up.

Someone then got a brain wave. The government was contracting to build a new building for External Affairs on Sussex Drive. We contacted the contractor, who agreed to help. Arrangements were made to spread out our excess machines on the ground at the building site, where he poured hundreds of tons of concrete on them. Thus, our machines would be unavailable for close examination for a hundred years. Security was ensured.

Ironically, the telecommunications group put itself out of business by adopting new technology. However, its obsolete technology will still support the headquarters building and all of the Department's operations for many years to come.

Images can be Deceiving

By Buck Arbuckle and associates

When the Lester B. Pearson Building was opened in 1973, the Department

of External Affairs took exceptional pride in a new building where a large collection of art was soon dispersed in the foyer and its four towers. The building and art were soon shown off with great enthusiasm, sometimes conveying the impression that everyone in the Department must be a connoisseur of fine art.

The Telecommunications Division was one of the early occupants of the building, and one of our technicians saw artistic opportunities in a particular piece of styrofoam that we received in the normal course of receiving shipping crates of delicate technical material. The styrofoam block had lots of bumps, hollows and curves, and he spray-painted it in multiple hues, glued on a brass name plate on which he engraved the word "Woman", and printed out a price tag of \$1500. Then he surreptitiously hung it on the wall to the entrance to Tower A in our new building.

The piece was removed within a few days. On the day it disappeared, the Under Secretary of the Department,

Basil Robinson, walked past the entrance on his way to his office and noticed that the work was no longer there. Asking one of the commissionaires about the work, he was told that it was a fake, created by a member of the technical staff. A man with a great sense of humour, Robinson asked that the piece be located and re-hung, as it was better than a lot of the stuff for which the Department had paid good money. It was found, re-hung, and draped with a red "first prize" ribbon. There it remained for a few more weeks, to the delight of everyone who passed by it.

Thurlow Ernest "Buck" Arbuckle was born in Ottawa in 1923 and died in 2011. He joined External Affairs in 1948 following service in the RCAF, and eventually became head of the Telecommunications Division. In retirement, he became an inveterate recorder of departmental stories and was instrumental in maintaining the history of the CM, CS, EL and other groups. Many recollections by Buck and others are now contained on the Ofarts website, which can be accessed by clicking on [Mainpage \(ofarts.ca\)](#).



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In the meantime, our work goes on. We are already working on the next issue of FORUM and would welcome your reactions and suggestions. If you have ideas or wish to contribute, contact us at edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Thanks in advance!

Daniel Livermore and Gérald Cossette

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En attendant, notre travail continue. Nous travaillons déjà à la rédaction du prochain numéro du FORUM et nous serions heureux de vos réactions et suggestions. Si vous avez des idées ou voulez faire une contribution, contactez-nous à : edit-forum99@gmail.com.

Merci beaucoup!

Gérald Cossette et Daniel Livermore

FORUM

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