

Contents | Contenu

Lead Articles

- 1 Putin and the Russian People
- 6 Gorbachev, Canada and Bill Warden
- 7 Souvenirs de la reine Élisabeth II
- 8 Playing the Royals
- 10 What's in a Name?
- 11 A Farewell to Arms?
- 13 The unexpected challenges at small posts

Features

- 14 Passages/passages
- 15 On Photography
- 14 Announcements/
Annonces
- 17 Books in Revue/
Critiques de livres
- 20 Announcements/
Annonces
- 22 Volunteers / Bénévoles
Membership in
the Forum / Se joindre
au Forum

News, comments, announcements or suggestions? Let us know at edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Nous invitons nos lecteurs à envoyer des lettres aux éditeurs axées sur le contenu de ce bulletin à : edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Putin and the Russian People

By *Jeremy Kinsman*



Photo: Samuel Jeronimo, Unsplash

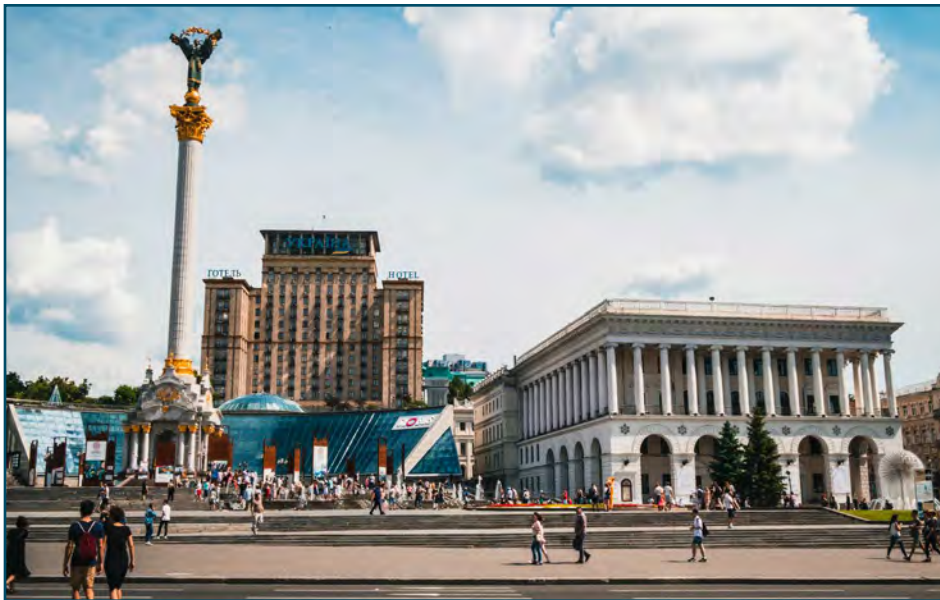
Part one: The Despot's War

For weeks before Russia invaded Ukraine on February 23, US intelligence agencies had publicly predicted it was Putin's intention. Most experts and commentators, even most NATO countries, believed he was bluffing to intimidate Ukraine into debilitating concessions. If Russians did cross the border, they expected only a limited demo thrust of armour, to cow Ukraine into submission. A brazen full invasion was deemed unthinkable - an 18th century power play that had no place in 21st century Europe. Besides, how could Russia occupy a country of 44 million?

In ordering his armed forces to take the capital, Kiev, to de-capitate the Ukrainian government, to occupy the country and end its existence as a sovereign state, Putin stared down the objections of a stunned world trying to grasp how it got Putin so wrong.

Putin's obsession with making Russia great again has indeed been spun into confusion of reality by addiction to 18th century assumptions beyond our imagination, mainly that "might means right."

But having mis-read almost everything, Putin's plan of conquest is failing. For the sake of the world, it must fail.



City of Kïev before the war.

The old English adage of “Cometh the hour, cometh the Man” has a worthy personification in President Zelensky. At the outset, US officials even offered to spirit him to safety from the expected Russian juggernaut speeding to Kïev. Zelensky curtly retorted that what he needed and expected were arms to fight with, “not a ride.”

He has unified a divided Ukraine to staunch the invasion, out-soldiering the Russian army which seemed incompetent in every task save criminal abuse of those places it briefly occupied.

The high-tech arms for Ukraine to fight with have been invaluable, the US providing already over seven

times the value of Ukraine’s annual military budget.

Putin has miscalculated on every level. He believes a long war will work in his favour as Western will fractures against divisive wear and tear of energy shortages and consequent inflation. But he has woefully underestimated the unity of Western countries, as Chancellor Scholz, leader of the critical EU country promised recently in Prague, “for as long as it takes.” Longer-term, the prognosis for the Russian economy is crippling. Russia’s principal market for oil and gas; Europe, has already reoriented long-term supply.

Born in the midst of Russia’s horrible 20th century, Putin is truly “homo sovieticus,” suffering from limitations a closed totalitarian society imposed on its citizens, including ignorance about what makes the rest of the world, especially Western democracies, tick. He misunderstands as weakness and decline the normal democratic cacophony of competing voices and forces in liberal democracies. He simply doesn’t

FORUM

Daniel Livermore
Gérald Cossette
Co-editors

Jan Soetermans
Graphic Designer

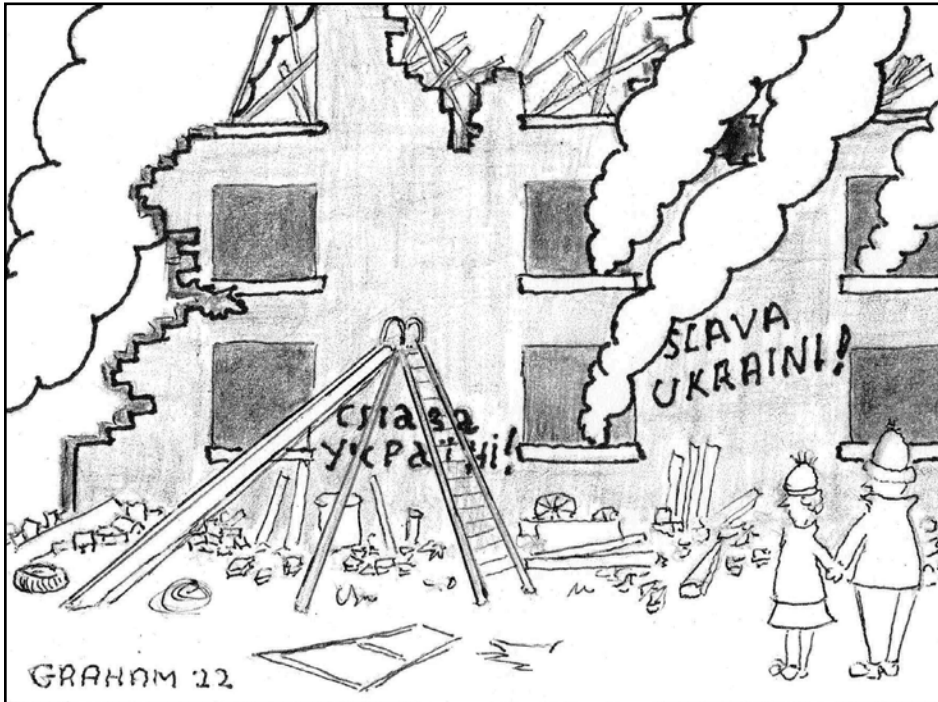
Editorial Board

Daniel Livermore
Gérald Cossette
Kurt Jensen
Lillian Thomsen
Jean Riopel
Ian Ferguson
Guy Archambault

Email: edit.forum99@gmail.com
Web: www.forumdiplocan.ca
ISSN# 2563 – 6952



Putin is the worst combination of ego, autocratic instinct, and longevity in uncontested power.



get it, and so he has got wrong the “rapport des forces” at every level of comparison, except possibly that of thermonuclear posture.

He is the worst combination of ego, autocratic instinct, and longevity in uncontested power. His competitive nature insists he be seen as the smartest person in any room. He is the nation’s only decider, unnourished by contrary opinion, seeing himself as the only one strong enough to do the really rough things that his mission calls for. His belief in the decisive impact of power is a great danger. He brandishes nuclear threats, believing his adversaries will buckle before him.

He is consumed by grievance over the perceived relegation of his country from imperial and superpower greatness to the world’s B Team. He has sought a counter-narrative of Russian exceptionalism spun from cult-like historical musings of leadership of a Eurasian civilization. But his notion of “Russkiy mir,” a “Russian world sphere,” will mean a Russia alone in the world

Putin especially doesn’t get the post-World War Two normative interdiction of invasion of a neighbour.

To Russians, World War Two was about defending the motherland. To other victorious allies, the war’s lesson for the ages was about “Never again,” the adoption of an irreducible new norm that would make Europe’s murderous wars unimaginable.

Putin didn’t get that our normally short-term-obsessive competitive democratic leaders would defend the inviolable norm against invasion as an existential global necessity.

He was probably pleased when President Biden and some others in the West at first described the Ukraine War as a “clash between democracy and autocracy,” knowing that it would turn off much of the world’s ‘silent majority’ where democracy was absent, distrusted, or struggling to deliver. He hasn’t expected that the wider world would increasingly wish to safeguard its dependance on the post-World War Two norm of defence of sovereignty.

Even China and India have begun to express growing misgivings over the disruption of his war.

The champion of “whataboutism,” Putin thought that the ultimately catastrophic US/UK invasion of Iraq in 2003, undertaken without international support (as enjoyed by the 1991 UN expulsion of Iraq from Kuwait), provided cover as a precedent.

But just as Americans eventually rejected the Iraq invasion as self-destructive, Russians will sooner or later turn against Putin’s losing war on another country’s soil. On September 21, the roughly 60% of Russians who were trying to ignore the war swiftly understood when Putin ordered a partial military mobilization, that the war was now coming for them.

It is increasingly apparent that Putin gets the Russian people about as ineptly as he gets global norms. He should ponder that the 18th century ended in epic revolutions as the people of America and then France rose up.

Part Two: The People “Why Can’t We Be Normal?”

Probably the two-word answer to the ordinary question, “how are things?” (как дела?) we heard most in Russia in the early 90s was “Vsyo normalno....” (все нормально). Everything’s normal.

It could mean anything.....eg.,

“my life is as much a sea of shit as ever”

“what can we expect in this circus of a country?”

“the thieves are getting richer”

or from a policeman to a rubber-necking driver slowing to gape at roadside bodies, “move on”.

But the fatalistic acceptance of what is “normal” has a flip side that

expresses the Russian wish to have “normal” lives, by the standards of the European world they welcomed joining thirty years ago.

In October, 1993, a violent attempt to overturn the young democratic Yeltsin regime terrorized Moscow, the result of a struggle between the reformist executive and the Soviet-era parliament that resisted reforms amid rampant social and economic upheaval. The parliament declared a new President, and sent its private army of Afghan War vets armed to the teeth on flatbed trucks racing along the ring road, shooting up the city and the TV tower, blanking the news out. No one knew who would win. By Monday morning, TV was back on to show tanks firing on the insurgent parliament (all but two shells were blanks), enough to end the coup. But 173 had died from the weekend’s street fights. (not from the tanks, as some faulty Western memoirs have it).

That morning, traumatized TV panels asked, aghast, “Why can’t we be normal?”

There had been nothing “normal” about Russia’s horrible 20th century. Its impact continues to hobble Russians 3 to 4 generations after the Bolshevik revolution in 1917.

In 1938-39 about 1000 citizens were executed a day, including 70% of the General Staff. Bullets to the back of the neck in the Lubyanka basement over two years of madness - artists, intellectuals, wise guys, and nobodies, 700,000 murdered, their families and tens of millions of others left traumatized.

PTSD can be an affliction to whole peoples, not just to traumatized individuals, even intergenerationally, as Helen Epstein describes in “Children of the Holocaust.” Some countries cope with it: Henry Kissinger termed Germany “a normal country with an abnormal memory.” But Russia has not “normalized.”

Putin especially doesn't get the post-World War Two normative interdiction of invasion of a neighbour.

Not every Russian has PTSD, nor do all who do display it as passive. Some like Putin, are combative.

The Russian people knew two major breaks in oppression in the 20th century.

In 1941, Hitler’s invasion substituted an external threat for internal terror. Russians ultimately prevailed at the appalling cost of 26 million lives.

Does Putin grasp that The Great Patriotic War of 1941-45, since revered as the touchstone of inherent Russian greatness, is the only war in 170 years the Russians have won? Because they were defending their homeland.

Otherwise, they lost to the British and French in Crimea in the 1850s, to Japan in 1905, and to the Finns in 1940. The Russian Imperial Army collapsed in 1917, precipitating the October Revolution. And then Afghanistan.

In each ignominious defeat they were the invaders, defeated by peoples defending their homelands as Ukrainians are doing today.

Perhaps it explains why Putin is so keen to declare as annexed the still unpossessed parts of the Donbas, to rally dubious Russians to a concocted script of patriotic self-defence.

The second major break from Soviet oppression was Gorbachev’s decision in 1986 to award citizens their freedom - glasnost.

Gorbachev believed the burden of the past was too much to enable

citizens to undertake the massive and unprecedented transformation from communism to its opposite that he intended - without knowing really how or what. (Who did? Certainly not Western “advisers” who didn’t have a clue, apart from “shock therapy”, which was much more shock than therapy.)

For a few years, euphoria reigned. Gorbachev created Memorial, the NGO devoted to researching the mass crimes conducted against citizens, that Putin later suppressed and that has shared the 2022 Nobel Peace prize.

The secret police were stood down from oppressing citizens. Gorbachev ended the Cold War. America was “approved” by 80%, Gorbachev by not much less.

It fell apart, along with what David Remnick termed the “wreckage of everyday life.” The cops weren’t banging on the door at 3 AM: they were hitting on citizens at every traffic junction for a bribe. Men drank themselves to death not knowing what to do with their “freedom.”

Russians then supported the break-up of the USSR, which Yeltsin brokered in order to replace Gorbachev, ushering in the most non-violent end of any empire in history. But its loose ends stranded millions of ethnic Russians as minorities in new republics.

Russians began to feel like losers.

At the conclusion of their frightful century, they placed their hope in a new president whose only promise in his New Year’s Day acceptance speech was to sustain democracy.

In return, Russians accepted to settle down as part of a bargain in which Putin would deliver stability and security to the wrecked country.

Putin built his reputation on always doing what he promised. He should provide a caveat - “what I promise and believe in.”

He never understood democracy and began to subtract still fragile democratic space from Day One.

He did deliver prosperity - or rather the soaring price of energy did. But after hunkering down for a decade, professionals, students, and the many who by then had travelled and experienced norms everywhere in the West, impatient over their own state of imposed political infancy asked again, "Why can't we now be more normal?"

They poured into the streets in 2011. He cracked down with batons and jail.

Today Russia has reverted to the old normal of a police state.

Putin boasts that Russians are resilient, and will prevail in a long war.

Analysts assess that 60% of Russians have gone along passively with Putin's war by not thinking about it, keeping their heads down out of PTSD muscle memory.

But Putin is right to fear the counter-resurgence of more powerful Russian DNA. He saw revolution in East Germany. It scared him in 2011 in Russia. It is why he has tried to kill Navalny. He knows that Russians can rise up.

When things fall apart, it happens all at once.

By attacking a neighbour whose people were integrated into Russian psychology and habit, not as vassals as Putin thinks, but as family, he riskily tested how far he can manage how people think. He has servile vassals - once superficially smooth international operators like foreign minister Lavrov and former President Medvedev who now recite Putin's preposterous lies about Ukraine's "nazi" regime, illustrating the damage done to the Russian psyche by living under lies for three generations.

Now, with mobilization, and least 80,000 body bags, the war is



Photo: Egor Ljyfar, Unsplash

coming home to ordinary people. Inevitable escalation in long-range bombing of Ukrainians who are defeating Russian soldiers close-up every day, won't win many hearts and minds. As the young and bright take Russia's future to the exits, apprehension of generalized economic loss is growing. There is shame apparent that the very name "Russian" has been debased, undermining the most important asset of a leader in war, - that even Stalin had in 1940-45, that Zelinsky has massively - the support and commitment of the people.

There was, several years ago, a scholars' debate in Russia as to whether it was indeed "Putin's Russia" - or alternatively, whether he might be just "Russia's Putin," that

anyone in that job would be doing more or less the same.

Then, when what he was doing divided from what many people wanted, the aspirational slogan emerged of "Russiya bez Putina" - "Russia without Putin."

Can Putin be fired? Sidled out? Usurped? By whom?

In time, the people will decide Russia's fate. They have made Russian history before and will again. ■

Jeremy Kinsman was a foreign service officer for forty years, serving as Canadian ambassador to Russia, and in London, Rome and Brussels. He resides in Victoria, and is a regular commentator on CTV news and a Distinguished Fellow of the Canadian International Council.

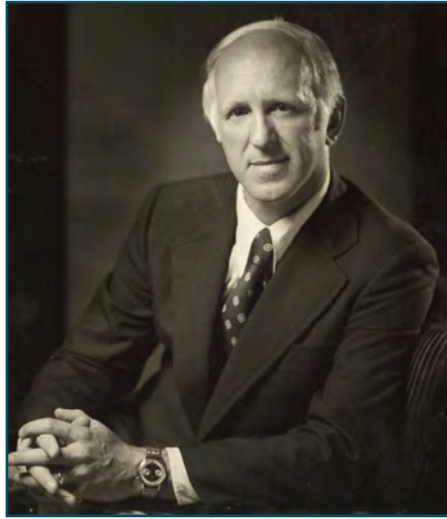
Gorbachev, Canada and Bill Warden

By John Graham

Many of us will recall that Mikhail Gorbachev, who died in Moscow August 30, played a leading role in the dismantling of the Soviet Union and the conclusion of the Cold War. A few, including Jeremy Kinsman, will remember his other major accomplishments and extraordinary character. Fewer will know of his special and very positive connection with Canada. In the spring of 1993 Gorbachev flew to Canada with a large delegation, spent productive time with Brian Mulroney, then Prime Minister (they had a high regard for each other), and then visited and lectured in ten Canadian cities.

His schedule was arranged so that he, a former tractor driver on a collective farm, would be exposed to new developments in Canadian agriculture. Both Russian and Canadian participants acclaimed the visit a success. By the end of the tour, the University of Calgary-Gorbachev Joint Trust Fund (UCGF) was established, with Russian and Canadian government (CIDA) funding. It supported Russo/Canadian research projects intended to advance public policy, as well as understanding and building democracy in Russia.

Sadly, the Fund is now dormant. But for many years it rose to the expectations of its creators, producing more than forty research and training projects in different parts of Russia. The principal architect of Gorbachev's visit and its primary manager-in-chief was our former colleague, the late Bill Warden. Having retired from the foreign service (last post – high commissioner in New Delhi, first posting Moscow, from which he had retained serviceable Russian), Bill had become the director of the International Centre at the



Bill Warden, official photo, Foreign Affairs Canada

University of Calgary and chair of the UCGF. Bill later went on to write his memoirs, entitled “Diplomat, Dissident, Spook”, a fascinating book with insights about how our foreign service (and intelligence service) works and occasionally and disastrously fails (Air India).

When asked if he would be prepared to write some words of introduction for Bill's memoirs, Gorbachev offered an unstinting accolade that included the following words: “It is difficult to imagine that this significant

undertaking could have been accomplished without Bill Warden. He was the driving force behind the Russo-Canadian program of the UCGF, putting into it his intellect and tireless energy. It was in those years of our close partnership, that his talent as a brilliant administrator, true professional, convinced democrat and wonderful human being were revealed in full to me and my colleagues at the Gorbachev Foundation.”

And while Gorbachev's death triggered numerous tributes, it may be apposite to include two sentences from David Remnick, editor of the New Yorker (Sept 12): “...he (Gorbachev) possessed both the idealism and the political skill to generate something in the world that is, at this dark historical moment of illiberalism and malevolence, exceedingly rare: a sense of decency and promise. Here was someone raised in a totalitarian system who came to believe in democracy, the rule of law, and the peaceful orderly transfer of power. Imagine... .” ■

John Graham, foreign service officer, OAS senior official, and distinguished cartoonist, lives in Ottawa.



Bill and Laine Warden with Mikhail Gorbachev, 1993

Souvenirs de la reine Élisabeth II

Par Guy Saint-Jacques

L'annonce du décès de sa majesté la reine Élisabeth II m'a attristé et rappelé les occasions où j'ai pu la rencontrer alors que j'étais haut-commissaire adjoint à Londres de 2004 à 2008. Même si elle avait déjà 78 ans quand je l'ai rencontrée pour la première fois lors d'une cérémonie à Westminster Abbey, j'ai découvert son sens du devoir ainsi que l'énergie, le dévouement et l'enthousiasme qu'elle consacrait à ses tâches; son programme était très chargé pratiquement tous les jours.

La reine aimait beaucoup le Canada et rencontrer des Canadiens. Avant de venir en visite officielle au Canada en 2005 pour le centenaire de l'entrée de la Saskatchewan et de l'Alberta dans la confédération, le palais de Buckingham nous avait informés qu'elle désirait offrir une réception au palais pour 300 Canadiens. Le haut-commissaire, Mel Cappe, et moi avions préparé une liste d'invités pour lui permettre de rencontrer des Canadiens venant de tous les milieux (affaires, arts et culture, étudiants, etc.) et d'un peu partout au Canada. La soirée avait été un grand succès

et elle avait fait le tour de tous les invités, échangeant avec chacun (le haut-commissaire lui fournissait des détails avant d'arriver à chaque groupe). C'était clair qu'elle s'était préparée avec soin et qu'elle était très au courant de la situation politique au Canada et trouvait quelque chose de pertinent à soulever avec chacun, s'intéressant à leur parcours et à leur patelin d'origine.

J'ai eu aussi l'occasion de voir que la reine aimait rire à l'occasion et qu'elle ne se prenait pas toujours au sérieux. Au mois d'août 2005, peu de temps après que le premier ministre Paul Martin eût annoncé que Mme Michaëlle Jean serait le prochain gouverneur général, les médias avaient commencé à questionner ses allégeances fédéralistes ainsi que celles de son mari, Jean-Daniel Lafond. J'avais reçu un appel d'Ottawa me demandant d'organiser une rencontre urgente avec sa majesté pour calmer les esprits. J'avais répondu que cela pourrait être difficile car elle était en vacances à son château de Balmoral. J'ai quand même rejoint Sir Robin



Photo: Ryan Johns, Unsplash

Janvrin, le secrétaire particulier de la reine, pour savoir si cette dernière accepterait de la rencontrer. Il me dit qu'il allait en parler à sa majesté et me rappeler le lendemain. La reine, qui suivait l'actualité canadienne de près, comprit très bien la nécessité du voyage et accepta de recevoir Mme Jean quelques jours plus tard. Sir Robin me précisa que la rencontre serait informelle.

Après un programme d'une journée à Londres que Mme Jean visitait pour la première fois, je l'amenai à l'aéroport où le groupe prit l'avion pour l'Écosse où les attendaient les gens du palais. Les photos prises à son arrivée à Balmoral furent rapidement diffusées à la presse canadienne ce qui permit de mettre fin à la controverse. À son retour à Londres le lendemain, Mme Jean flottait encore sur un petit nuage. Elle me révéla que la reine et le prince Philip, en compagnie du prince Edward et de son épouse Sophie, les avait reçus chaleureusement et que la conversation s'était déroulée entièrement en français autour de l'apéritif (la reine parlait un excellent français; d'ailleurs les menus au palais de Buckingham sont uniquement en français); la reine lui posa beaucoup



Balmoral Castle, Scotland.

de questions et était très intéressée par sa vie.

Puis, la reine se tourna vers son mari et lui dit: « Philip, c'est le temps de partir le B-B-Q ». Elle-même se dirigea vers la cuisine pour préparer le repas qui s'avéra délicieux. Le thé fut ensuite servi au salon avec les digestifs puis la reine se leva pour aller faire la vaisselle, suivie de Sophie. Mme Jean n'en croyait pas ses yeux: la reine faisait la vaisselle elle-même! Elle se leva donc pour donner un coup de main. J'ai demandé à M. Lafond comment il avait réagi. Il me dit:

« J'étais estomaqué. J'ai regardé Philip qui restait assis, même chose pour Edward, j'ai donc décidé de rester avec les hommes au salon ». Quand j'ai reparlé avec Sir Robin après la visite pour le remercier, je lui ai dit que j'avais finalement compris ce qu'il voulait dire par « visite informelle ». Il m'expliqua que les vacances à Balmoral étaient le seul moment de l'année où la reine pouvait mener une vie normale, sans serviteur et faire la cuisine elle-même par exemple.

La reine prenait son rôle au sérieux et a dévoué toute sa vie adulte à

ses fonctions officielles. Malgré ses lourdes charges protocolaires, je l'ai toujours vue de bonne humeur et intéressée par les gens qu'elle rencontrait. L'un des bénéfices d'une affectation à Londres fut de me donner la chance de la rencontrer à quelques reprises et de voir que c'était une vraie professionnelle mais aussi une personne normale. J'en garderai un excellent souvenir. ■

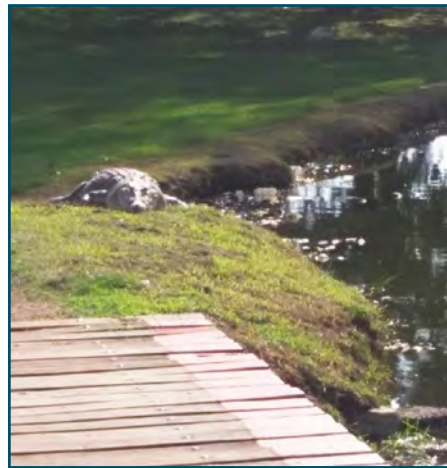
A sa dernière affectation, Guy Saint-Jacques était ambassadeur du Canada en Chine. Il a également été posté à Kinshasa, à Washington, à Londres et en Chine comme agent du service extérieur.

Playing the Royals

By David Stockwell

In 1977 I played the Royal Colombo golf course in Sri Lanka while on leave during my assignment to Pakistan and Royal Colwood on my return to Canada. I thought it might be a challenge to try to play a few more Royal courses, but I had few opportunities immediately thereafter. However, in 1980, I played the red course at Royal Montreal with my father-in-law, Dr. Harry Scott, who was the longest-playing member of the Club. His great-grandfather, James Aird, had been the first Secretary of the Club when it began in 1873 on Fletchers Field in the heart of Montreal. I asked him about the prefix Royal and he gave me enough information to pique my interest.

There are no Royal golf courses; the right to use the prefix Royal is granted by the British Monarch to golf societies (Perth and Burgess in Scotland) and golf clubs (64) not to golf courses. Two of these 66 play on municipal courses: the most famous of which, the Royal & Ancient, uses the Old Course in St. Andrew's for most of its competitions. The other is Royal Epping Forest, where members



Crocodile at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

use the Chingford municipal course in Essex just outside London, on land that was part of the Royal Forest where both King Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I hunted. Two other "Royals" in Scotland do not have their own courses and their members play on public courses: Royal Montrose, which uses the Montrose Medal or Broomfield Links course, and Royal Perth, which uses the North Inch Course beside the River Tay, where golf has been played for more than 500 years. Royal patronage is a

separate honour and currently only 18 of the 66 have royal patrons.

The procedures to request royal patronage and the addition of Royal to a club's title have evolved over the years. In Canada, the application is made to the Office of the Governor General. If there is merit, and if approved by the Governor General, the request is sent to the monarch through the British Deputy Prime Minister's Office. Queen Elizabeth II granted the privilege to use the prefix Royal for golf clubs only 8 times during her 70-year reign. So the chances of approval are slight. There are clubs that use the title without permission (like "Royal" Tara in Ireland, "Royal" Papineau, Bromont, Charbourg and Laurentian in Quebec, and Niagara, Ashburn, Woodbine and Downs in Ontario).

As of January 1, 2015 there were 66 "Royals": 19 in England, 10 in Scotland, 8 in Australia, 6 in Canada, 4 in South Africa, 3 in Northern Ireland, 2 in the Channel Islands, Wales, Ireland and New Zealand and 1 in each of Kenya, Zimbabwe, Malta, Sri Lanka, the Czech Republic, India, Papua New Guinea and Germany.

A posting to London in 1981 presented the opportunity to pursue



Stockwell at Royal Household Golf Club in Windsor

vigorously playing more Royals. My research indicated there were then about 60 worldwide, with Troon in Scotland being the most recent Royal, added to the list in 1978. By the time I returned to Canada in 1985, I had played 13 in the UK bringing my total to 16. Personal and official travel, family and golf holidays, and two assignments to Africa until my retirement in October 2004 brought the total to 28. Other trips, including trips to Australia and New Zealand (2012), the Czech Republic (2013), England and the Channel Islands (May 2014) and finally Malta (October 2014) brought my total to 60.

With the completion of number 60, I thought there were three remaining (the full story is in the September, 2015, issue of "Flagstick"). But with two additions to the list and one in Ireland returning to the fold, it turned out there were still six courses left to play. My original plan was to save playing the courses in Saskatchewan and Alberta to the end. However, it was difficult to arrange a

time to play at the Royal Household Golf Club in Windsor, England. So instead, in 2016, I flew to Papua New Guinea (Royal Port Moresby Golf Club), Germany (Royal Homburger Golf Club) and Ireland (Royal Curragh Golf Club). In a trip to western Canada in 2019, I played at the Royal Regina Golf Club and the Royal Mayfair Golf Club in Edmonton. Only one left; and then COVID arrived and I stayed put!

I had a narrow window to travel this past August to play the royal course at Windsor. I sent a message to the Palace Foreman, who with great courtesy, arranged a game on August 25, late in the afternoon after his day's work at Windsor Castle. The golf course, in the 655-acre Home Park is unique. The Home Park is the private retreat for the monarch when in residence at Windsor Palace, and Queen Elizabeth II was the Royal Household Golf Club patron.

When Edward VII, a keen golfer, came to the throne in 1901, he wanted his own, private golf course. As Prince of Wales, he had become

the first member of the Royal Family to be Captain of the Royal & Ancient in 1863. Located to the east of Windsor Castle, the course has 9 holes, but there are 9 alternate tees, so it plays at different lengths for the first 9 holes compared with the second 9. Par is 66, and the total length is 4925 yards. (There are only two nine-hole courses among the 66 "Royal" courses.) There is no cut rough; you go from fairway to the rough, which can be waist high depending on the season. It is like a links course in a parkland setting, but without the links. The course is surrounded by mature oak and beech trees. There are about 175 members of the Club; their playing guests do not pay green fees. Most of the members are current or past Palace employees or police who have served at the Palace.

The Clubhouse, a small octagonal building, was built in 1905, but not as a clubhouse. It was the King's tea room. Its balcony was where King Edward VII watched the cricket games being played nearby. It now called the King's Pavilion in his honour. Below the balcony is a small room that has an even smaller bar area for Club members and their guests!

The Palace Foreman met me at one of the gates into the castle grounds, and armed police let us in. The day started out with heavy rain, but as usual in England, showers gave way to clouds and the sun came back just before we teed off. The course had suffered mightily during the recent drought but the greens were mostly green. There are many excellent views of the Castle from several points on the course. We then shared a beer at the Kings Pavilion- a perfect end to a perfect day; and a perfect way to end a 46-year journey. ■

David Stockwell retired in 2004, after 38 years in the Foreign Service, including two assignments as Head of Post. More importantly, he has played more than 550 different courses in 50 countries.

What's in a Name?

By John Holmes

Forty years ago, External Affairs hired the largest cohort in its history, some 120 young officers divided between the political, trade and immigration streams. I was part of the first group hired, along with about forty colleagues who appeared

name. You see, John W. Holmes was already a legend in the Department, having worked with Lester Pearson and other luminaries of the golden era of Canadian diplomacy and had later headed the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. I



John T. Holmes and Carol Bujreau, courtesy of the author.

at the doors of Fort Pearson. We were an enthusiastic, idealistic and ultimately naïve lot, ready to take on the world and already impatient to begin the climb to the heights of diplomacy and attain that glorified title of ambassador. As we sat around the room where our two-week orientation session was held, we inevitably succumbed to the all too human conceit of sizing up our competition and wondering who, besides oneself, would make the grade.

I had not a shred of self-doubt at that point (the Department would fix that hubris pretty quickly), not only because of my degrees in PoliSci/History and Law, but also because I had a special advantage: my

first discovered him in high school when my parents purchased the World Book encyclopedia and John W. contributed numerous articles to their annual updates. On arrival in the Department, I learned what a giant of an academic Mr. Holmes was and I had no intention of missing this opportunity to inject a bit of ambiguity into my responses, leaving inquirers unclear as to whether I came from such distinguished lineage.

There were, however, two slight problems. First, we were not related. Second, the Canadian academic was not the only prominent John Holmes in the world. And, rather unfortunately, the most infamous was the preeminent American porn actor of the era, John C. Holmes, the

“star” of the Johnny Wadd films and numerous other porn flicks. I learned of my namesake during the midnight to eight shift at my summer job with Customs Canada, where colleagues deemed it their duty to review seized reels of film to determine whether they were indeed pornographic. While one might admire the diligence of these civil servants, their morals were undoubtedly suspect.

As I embarked upon my career, I held onto the hope that colleagues from such an exalted department as External Affairs would know only the former diplomat and would be clueless as to the other insalubrious namesake. How naïve. I soon learned, upon introducing myself, that there were three categories of colleagues in the department: the intellectuals who knew only the diplomat; the perverts who snidely asked if I was the “real John Holmes”; and, those who knew both – surprisingly, the largest bunch. It didn’t help matters that the year before joining the Department, the biographical documentary, *Exhausted: John C. Holmes, The Real Story*, appeared in cinemas (and no doubt in customs posts across Canada). Having seen the film in Blaine, Washington, during an unsanctioned sojourn while on our tour of Canada, my colleagues and I spent a few lunch hours trying to figure out whether the porn legend’s claim to have made love 14,000 times was indeed feasible.

A year later, my young family and I headed off on our first assignment to Bridgetown, Barbados. There were many reasons why we were thrilled to be going but, for me, I was getting tired of the teasing over my namesake and was fairly certain that John C.’s stature was limited to North America. A few weeks after arrival, I was disabused of that notion. Carol and I were having lunch with new friends at a formerly posh hotel on the Barbadian coast, where the wait staff maintained the colonial tradition of formal dress, if a little frayed at the

edges. I handed over my credit card and diplomatic ID when presented with the bill and sat waiting for the waiter to return with the receipt. After an inordinate delay, we looked towards the bar for our man only to see that he was surrounded by all the staff – waiters, cooks, busboys – all of whom were giggling and pointing over at me. Noticing my glare, the waiter sheepishly sauntered over and, with a smirk across his face, had the temerity to ask if I was the real John Holmes. Before I could snatch my cards and scold the waiter, my dear wife replied in a loud voice, no doubt wishing to ensure that the whole restaurant heard, “Trust me, he’s no John Holmes!”

It was a retort that my spouse revelled in using and the opportunities

continued long after the death of John C. in 1988 – unsurprisingly of complications due to AIDS. Ironically, the porn star died within weeks of the more illustrious John W. Holmes. I thought their passing would eventually diminish interest in and knowledge of my namesakes, but it was not to be. In 1997, the film *Boogie Nights*, rekindled interest in John C. Holmes and his involvement in the infamous Wonderland murders. In 2003, Val Kilmer starred as John Holmes in the biopic, *Wonderland*. I began my ambassadorial assignments in that same year and learned, to my dismay, that my name had a truly global reach. In Jordan, Indonesia, Turkey and the Philippines, colleagues, acquaintances, wait staff, cabbies, and many more all seemed to know the legend of the porn star.

I tried unsuccessfully to capitalize on the infamy by hinting that it had been a summer job for me in my wayward youth, but Carol always seemed to appear from nowhere to literally and figuratively cut me down to size.

Ultimately, I learned to live with the coincidence. After all, what’s in a name? ■

*John T. Holmes joined External Affairs in 1982 and served abroad in the Philippines, Turkey, Indonesia, Jordan, Ghana and Barbados and at Canada’s UN mission in NY. He is married to Carol Bujeau, formerly a communications strategist with the department and the author of *Triple Sex & Other Tales from an Ambassador’s Wife* (available through Burnstown Publishing and at Books on Beechwood and Perfect Books).*

A Farewell to Arms

By Louis Delvoie

When I retired from the Canadian Foreign Service over 25 years ago, I little thought that I would end my writing career as an amateur journalist producing columns for the *Kingston Whig Standard*. And yet that is the way things turned out. In the last eight years I have published over 400 columns in this newspaper. What started out as a pleasurable challenge has slowly morphed into a burden and an obligation. The fun has gone out of it, and I have decided to pack it in. After all, I am now 83 years old, and it is probably as good a time as any to retire fully. This decision has prompted a bit of reflection on my professional life.

I joined the Foreign Service in 1965 after having completed a BA degree in history and philosophy at Loyola College in Montreal and an MA degree in history at the University of Toronto. In the next thirty years I served my country in assignments

in Ottawa and in postings abroad in Lebanon, Egypt, Turkey, Algeria, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Great Britain and Pakistan. It was a remarkably varied career, in the course of which I found myself working in political relations, trade promotion, intelligence and security, and defence and arms control. It was also a remarkably rewarding career. Some of the rewards were more immediately tangible than others. Contributing to the increase in the value of Canadian exports to Algeria from \$30 million to \$500 million a year was particularly satisfying in the knowledge that it was creating jobs and corporate revenues in Canada. Being part of the group that secured the return of 6 American diplomats caught up in the Iranian revolutions of 1979 was also very gratifying. So too was the conclusion of the Conventional Forces Agreement in Europe in 1990, a process to

which I had contributed for over 17 years. Managing a programme of assistance for Afghan refugees during my time in Pakistan was a not insignificant contribution to the welfare of a population traumatized by 10 years of war.

These and a host of other experiences made my life in the Foreign Service challenging and interesting. Sometimes I found myself in uncomfortable situations. During my time in Cairo I accompanied my ambassador on a trip to Sudan, our country of secondary accreditation. We boarded a train, and my ambassador got himself involved in an altercation with a train guard who threatened to punch him out. I hustled the ambassador into his compartment physically and then turned my attention to pacifying the railway employee. All in a day’s work in the foreign service. At a far more exalted level, I found myself in a difficult situation involving my Minister and the Prime Minister of the time, Pierre Elliott Trudeau. The Prime Minister had decided to embark on a wide-ranging attempt

to reverse the downward trend in East-West relations, something which became known as the Trudeau “peace initiative”. I was appointed to head a working group supporting the Prime Minister in this endeavour. The problem was that neither my Minister, the Secretary of State for External Affairs (as the foreign minister was then known), nor my Department believed in the wisdom of this endeavour. For six months, I found myself in the uncomfortable position of having to balance my loyalties, and to try and emerge unscathed from the experience. I managed to do it and was rewarded with an assignment as Deputy High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.

When I retired from the Foreign Service in 1995, I found a new home in the academic world at the Centre for International Relations at Queen’s University. It was a welcome change. The pace of activity was far more relaxed, with deadlines being counted in weeks and months rather than hours and days. It also required a certain amount of adaptation. A colleague who had earlier made the transition had told me that what I would miss was not the big house and the hot and cold running servants, nor the chauffeur-driven car or the large staff. What I would miss was my secretary, and he was so right. I soon found myself spending 25 per cent of my time doing work which my secretary had once done for me. Another change was the relative informality of the academic world. I had come directly from a mission where 150 employees called me either “sir” or “High Commissioner”. At Queen’s, the janitor was calling me by my first name within a week of my arrival. I did not mind, but it was certainly different.

For seven years I went on to become an adjunct professor of international relations at Queen’s and at the Royal Military College. I found some interesting differences between the student bodies at the two institutions.

Above all was the fact that RMC students had less time to devote to their studies than their counterparts at Queen’s. RMC cadets had their days partially filled with military exercises, obligatory sports and the need to become bilingual. These took away from the quality of their academic work. The pressures on Queen’s students were somewhat different. For many, financial pressures required them to take part-time jobs during the academic year, to find summer employment and to worry about post-graduation jobs. RMC cadets, on the other hand, were fed, housed and paid by the government and had assured employment in the Canadian Forces following the completion of their studies. I do not know which system produced the better human beings, but I do know that in marking essays and exams I handed out far more A’s and B’s at Queen’s than at RMC.

My teaching career at Queen’s and RMC was relatively uneventful. I do, however, vividly remember one episode. At the end of a lecture on Canadian foreign policy at Queen’s, a student stood up and asked me a simple but unusual question: “Sir, did you ever smoke pot?” I was caught a bit off-guard. On the one hand, I did not want to lie. On the other, I did not want to offer any encouragement to the inhaling of marijuana. So I simply replied: “I was a university student in the early 1960’s” and left it at that. The class broke out into laughter as I left the room.

My teaching career came to an end in 2002 due to budgetary cuts suffered by the Department to which I belonged. So I embarked on a new mini-career as a public lecturer. Over the next ten years I gave some 120 lectures to audiences assembled by Later Life Learning in Kingston and Belleville. I also lectured to chapters of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs across the country. And I also became involved in teaching short courses

on Canadian foreign policy at the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Immigration in Ottawa.

Lecturing to adult audiences is in many ways far more rewarding than teaching undergraduates. They bring to the question and discussion periods a wealth of lifetime experiences which make for stimulating exchanges. Over the years I lectured on a wide variety of topics ranging from the Arab conquests of the seventh and eighth centuries to the Atlantic slave trade. In a series on “Blunders in World History” I ranged over Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union to George W. Bush’s invasion of Iraq. But, as time went by, I found myself tackling topics which were far removed from my core competences. Whereas in the early years I could prepare a lecture in 7 or 8 hours, I found myself working 30 hours on a single lecture. The task became too demanding, so I gave it up in 2012.

At a loss for something to keep me out of mischief, I phoned the editor of the Kingston Whig-Standard on a whim. I asked him if he would be interested in publishing articles which I might produce on Canadian and international affairs. His response was enthusiastic, perhaps because I was offering them free of charge. And so began my final career as an amateur journalist. It has been great fun, and I have enjoyed it, but as I indicated at the start of this article I think that the time has come to pack it in.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my passages in life from diplomat to professor to public lecturer and finally to newspaper columnist. I have had the opportunity to work over the years with some truly remarkable people whose lives and experiences enriched mine. And so I bid farewell to my professional life with no regrets, but with a deep sense of satisfaction. ■

Louis A. Delvoie, retired Canadian diplomat, Ambassador and High Commissioner, continues to reside in Kingston, Ontario.

The unexpected challenges at small posts

By Paul Hitschfeld

While on posting at our High Commission in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in the 1980s, I was asked to carry out “other duties”, apart from my main job as an aid officer. One of these was being the visiting Canadian Consul in Madagascar. It would be better to say Consul-in-a-Suitcase, as consular services were only offered when I went to Madagascar, every three months or so, for a few days. I would take a suite in a hotel in Antananarivo, the capital, Tananarive (in French), often just called Tana. I placed ads in the local papers to advise that I was in town. Resident Canadians and some Malgache citizens would see me at the hotel.

This easy gig got considerably more complicated after two Canadian young men were put in prison on a charge of spying. They hailed from southern Ontario, knew no French and were naïve. They were missionaries of the Divine Light Mission, sent to Madagascar by its leader, the Guru Maharaji, to proselytize. It was said that they were able to levitate, though neutral observers all over the world never did see anyone of the Guru’s people actually float above the ground. But levitation was strongly believed to occur, by the devoted, especially during transcendental meditation.

Madagascar’s leader at that time was Admiral Didier Ratsiraka, president in name, dictator in practice. His secret police kept a lid on any form of protest, so the two Canadians with tourist visas only, who wandered the countryside promoting a better life to rural Malgache populations through the practice of transcendental meditation, were seen as a threat. They were arrested. That they did not speak French was suspicious, as in Madagascar it was believed that all Canadians spoke French, since nearly

the only Canadians who went there were Francophones. The security service was convinced that they were CIA spies, though they were not formally charged. They were parked in a jail in a suburb of Tana, and forgotten about.

We may never have heard of them, except that a Canadian religious brother, who had spent his entire adult life in Madagascar and spoke the local language fluently, somehow learned of the situation and got word to the High Commission in far-off Tanzania.

I flew to Tana a week later, and visited the brother, who gave me a detailed briefing. Then I went to the foreign ministry to introduce myself and request a visit to the jail. When I went the next day, I was appalled at the conditions. The two young men, just zealous boys on a mission, lived in a cell with other prisoners. It was very smoky, as Tana is at an altitude where the evenings are cool and where people keep wood fires going, even in jail cells. The Canadians were very pleased to see me when I arrived unannounced. They had no lawyer and little idea what would happen to them. Food was a problem, since most food for prisoners was provided by family members from the outside. I asked to see the prison director, who told me they were a special case, and that there was no timetable for a trial, hearing, or release. He also feared that they would escape by levitating over the prison walls, so they were not allowed into the open yards within the prison.

I left the prison, went to a local store, bought biscuits, chocolate, some fruit and some bottles of water and juice. At every step of the way back, between the entrance gate and their cell, I was “taxed” by guards, so that by the time I gave them the supplies, only about half of it was left. The

boys divided that small amount into two piles, half for themselves, the other half for the other prisoners in their cell.

Every few months I returned to Madagascar, for regular aid and consular business, but mostly to support the two prisoners. I learned what provisions they liked the most, and what the guards and other prisoners would like too. I would arrive at the gate with two large boxes, and, as before, the boys would get about one quarter of what I had brought. It was their good luck that they did not need drugs or medical treatment, which would have been a major challenge. But to this day I wonder about the condition of their lungs, because of the smoke. I looked into getting them a lawyer, but everyone I consulted said that “security” cases fell outside of the usual judicial process, and no one was interested. Or they were just plain scared.

The boys showed surprisingly good humour during my visits, believing that their travails were “normal” for apostles who are seeking to change the world. I was the only person who visited them. On my return to Dar, I sent reports to Foreign Affairs, including quotes from the boys. The gist of my memos was communicated to their parents, who provided money to the Department, which I accessed to buy more supplies for them on subsequent visits. But their “security prisoner” status never changed.

Fortunately, a major CIDA-funded aid project was coming up for refinancing, and, smoothly, the continuation of talks on the funding was associated with the release of the two Guru Maharaji missionaries. After one year of incarceration, they were told one day to pack up, were driven to the airport and put on the next plane to Paris.

Though I tried to find out what happened afterwards, I was off the case, my job done. I always wondered, after all these years, how these young men moved on in life. Alas, I have no pictures of these events, as cameras were not allowed anywhere near the prison. I also knew that cameras were not appreciated by local authorities (I have albums filled with pictures I took during my many travels to developing countries, but none in Madagascar).

In preparation for my next posting in the 1990s, again as a CIDA officer, I asked for training in consular affairs. I put that training to good use on two major consular cases in Ethiopia.

(I hope that you'll read about these in a future article.)

As an aid officer, I had not thought that my work would take me into a jail, and I had to learn fast what to do. I was impressed with the consular service in Ottawa and the support and guidance I got from them. I feel that as a citizen today, I would be supported overseas if I got into trouble there. Better yet, I know not to try to discuss, much less promote, religious or political beliefs while on a trip.

Meanwhile, alas, since the 1980s, Madagascar has only known political strife, ecological disaster (deforestation) and global warming problems. It is one of those

unfortunate countries not moving forward in any way. This quote from the internet: 56 years after its independence, Madagascar is among the least developed African countries with 91% of the population living with less than \$2 a day and 77% of the population living in what is considered extreme poverty, with less than \$1.25 per day. ■

Paul Hitschfeld was a CIDA office and director, from 1973 to 2007. He served in Dar es Salaam and Addis Ababa, and was also seconded for two years to the Treasury Board Secretariat. While aid was his principal function while on postings, he enjoyed assignments on consular, political and trade issues.

Passages/passages

In Memoriam: Deborah Chatsis

By Vicken Koundakjian

Friends and colleagues were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Deborah Chatsis on June 9, in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. As a member of the Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation and as the first-ever First Nations woman to be named an ambassador of Canada, Deborah was an inspiration to so many, and she was honoured for her contributions by being appointed as a member of the Order of Canada.

Deborah's 30-year career spanned 7 international postings, including as ambassador to Vietnam and to Guatemala, as well as multiple assignments at Headquarters and a secondment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. She also received a Master of Public Administration degree from Harvard University as a Fulbright Scholar. She was an expert in human rights and humanitarian issues, and she was respected as an excellent lawyer with a keen mind and as a great international negotiator. Notably, on her posting to Canada's mission in Geneva, she helped

negotiate the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Deborah was a beloved friend and mentor to many at home and around the world. She was a trailblazer and a role model to Indigenous colleagues, and her commitment to the empowerment of Indigenous peoples is a legacy at her alma mater, the University of Saskatchewan, where she and her sister established the Chatsis Family Award for Indigenous students in law, engineering and the health sciences. As well, the Canadian Ambassadors Alumni Association and the Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers have set up a scholarship in her name at Carleton University for Indigenous students studying in the area of international affairs.

In her retirement, Deborah continued to work with students of all ages and within Indigenous communities, focusing on diversity in diplomacy. Despite her impressive accomplishments, Deborah had a quiet humility, humour and



confidence, and she never promoted herself as an Indigenous leader—she simply became one.

After a hard-fought battle with cancer, Deborah passed away peacefully at home with her family in Saskatchewan.

For those wishing to make a charitable donation in Deborah's memory, you can donate to the Chatsis Family Award at the University of Saskatchewan, or the PAFSO/AmbCanada Indigenous Scholarship in international affairs at Carleton University (see the following: PAFSO and AMBCANADA are pleased to announce the new Deborah Chatsis Indigenous Scholarship in International Affairs - The Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers. Online condolences can also be sent to the Beau "Lac" Funeral Home (external link). See also her obituary in Diplomatic community mourns loss of Prince Albert's Deborah Chatsis - Prince Albert Daily Herald (paherald.sk.ca) ■

Features

On photography

By Victor Rakmil

There are three reasons photographers talk about gear:

1. they are being paid to do so; 2. G.A.S. (Gear Acquisition Syndrome); and 3. to pass on what they have learned. I'm in the third category.

What concerns me is that people have the information to make choices that suit them. Especially now that Nikon and Canon are getting out of the DSLR business and into mirrorless cameras. The good news is that with adapters (that even the pros use) it's possible to use most of your old lenses if you move to a newer camera.

Many pros will tell you that lenses (good glass) are where you should focus your money. That does not mean spending a fortune; it's more about knowing what you need and can afford.

One of the fallacies in the market is what's said about cropped frame sensors increasing magnification.

Full frame means the size of 35 mm film that most of us used back when. A cropped sensor is roughly half the size. But there is no advantage in focal length. A 35 mm lens is still a 35 mm on a cropped sensor, but because of the crop, the field of view looks magnified by approx. 1.5 times. There are other ways the lenses differ, and a large number of photographers who can afford to buy full-frame lenses for cropped sensor cameras. They are better on the whole, but the prices are higher than for cropped sensor lenses. It's a choice, but quality lenses cost more.

Some lenses do not always let you determine depth of field. F-stops/apertures do matter. They govern depth of field. The smaller the number the larger the aperture and the smaller the depth of field. The larger the number the smaller

the aperture and depth of field. In addition you get less light on the sensor with smaller apertures. So if a lens is advertised as F 5.6 - F 8, what it's telling you is that as you zoom out the aperture will change, meaning less control of how much is in focus. A lens that is advertised as F 2.8, gives a full range from F 2.8 to F 16. I prefer the latter type of lens but if funds are an issue, limited-aperture lenses are less expensive. The Nikon 200-500 has a minimum aperture of 5.6, but it's a great and relatively inexpensive lens for birds.

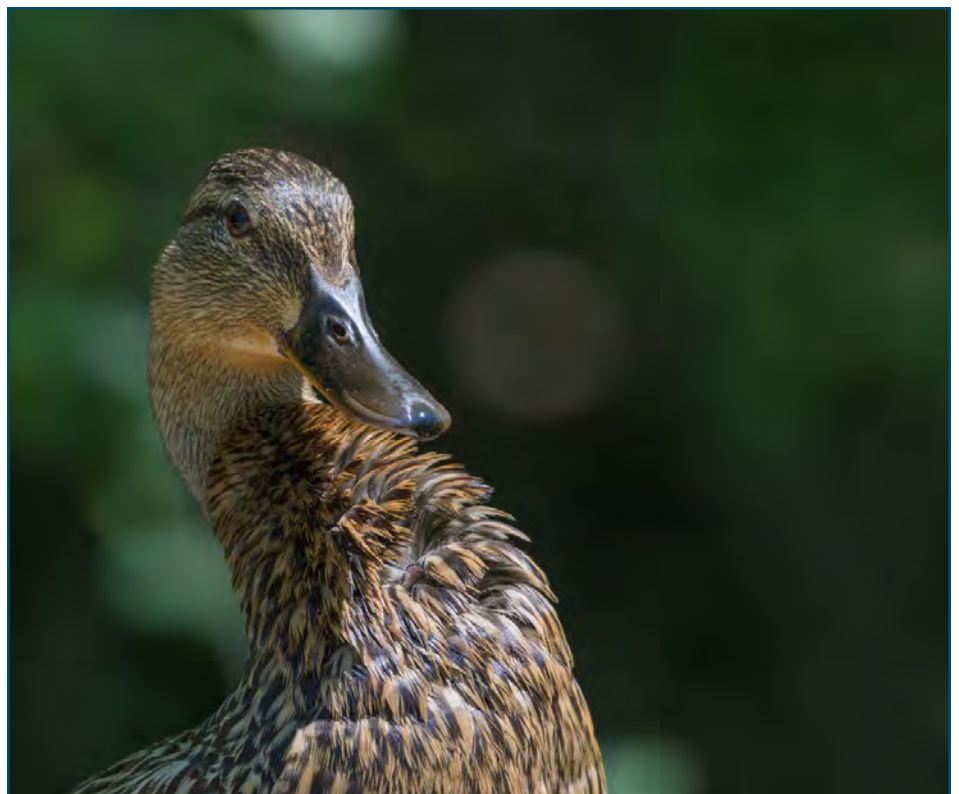
Prime lenses, lenses that don't zoom, are usually better than zoom lenses, and are preferred by pros. But it is not always convenient to carry around several lenses.

Lenses should be thought of in terms of their use. While you can use a telephoto lens (defined as more than 50 mm) for landscapes, the usual choice is a wide angle lens defined as less than 50 mm. 50 mm lenses closely resemble the proportions seen by the human eye. Full frame 50 mm lens are very useful and relatively cheap. They are good all-round walk

about, family portrait, travel lens. There are very specialized lens for macro photography, and tilt and shift lenses for architecture (they make it possible to avoid buildings tilting backwards when photographed at ground level). Very long telephoto lenses are good for sports, concerts and wildlife etc. A good basic kit used to be a 24-70 mm lens and a 70-200 mm lens. But newer lenses (e.g. Nikon's 200-500 f.5.6 lens) cost less than either of those lenses and are great for wildlife.

The "kit" lens sold with many cameras is often said to be inferior. The Nikon 18-55 mm F 3.5 - 5.6 (F 3.5 at 18, and F 5.6 at 55 mm) is pretty good, even if the camera decides the aperture. Lenses are generally better one stop up from their minimum which limits the lens in terms of depth of field. However, the 18-55 mm focuses closer than many more expensive lenses (you can move closer to your subject). It's still good starting out for family, street and landscape photography.

As they get more proficient, photographers look for lenses that



Photos: Victor Rakmil



enhance backgrounds. The number of blades in the lens' physical shutter affect the out of focus areas, the more blades the more artistic the blur. However, the formula for good out of focus backgrounds does not change - the distance between the camera

and the subject should be a great deal less than the distance between the background and the subject. More expensive lenses make it easier to get good Bokeh (a fancy term for out of focus backgrounds with circles).

When you have a deep landscape like a valley, it's difficult to get everything in focus, even with the smallest aperture. Hyper-focal distance maximizes what is in focus. Many photographers use an app on their phone to calculate hyper-focal distance or simply focus at F16 and one-third of the way into the landscape and find it's good enough. The mathematical formula is $H = \frac{f^2}{Nc}$, which is deeper than I ever intend to go in photography.

Lens optics are changing dramatically but slowly. Lenses with fresnel screen technology are making once extremely heavy and awkward telephoto lens smaller and lighter. Older discontinued lenses can offer excellent cheaper options in some cases. My 20 year old 105 mm macro lens beats today's offerings by the same company.

Finally, I suggest getting advice from someone who has hands on experience. Don't get sold a lens. ■

Tradex[®].ca  since 1960
depuis 1960
mutual funds for the public service
fonds mutuels pour fonctionnaires

**In challenging times,
you need a trusted
partner.**

**Tradex has been assisting
public servants reach their
financial goals since 1960.**

Contact us for a free
no-obligation
portfolio review

Tradex Management Inc.
www.tradex.ca | 1604-340 Albert St., Ottawa, ON K1R 7Y6
Email: info@tradex.ca | Call: 1-800-567-3863

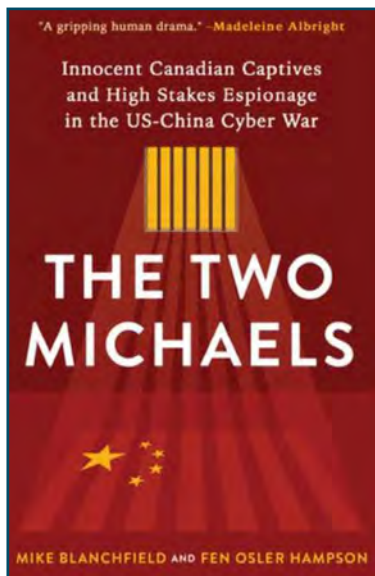
- Not-for-profit
- Unbiased advice
- Low cost
- Custom portfolios
- Cash flow projections

Commissions, trailing commissions, management fees and expenses may all be associated with mutual fund investments. Please read the prospectus before investing. Mutual funds are not guaranteed, their values change frequently, and past performances may not be repeated.

Books in Revue/ Critiques de livres

The Two Michaels: Innocent Canadian Captives and High Stakes Espionage in the US-China Cyber War

By Mike Blanchfield and
Fen Osler Hampson,
Sutherland House, 2021.



Reviewed by Gar Pardy

The taking of hostages has become a frequent if not a commonality in the conduct of international relations. The seventy-five years since the end of the Second World War have seen frequent examples of the playing out of the idea, to the point that to describe the period as the age of the hostage would not be an exaggeration.

The taking of hostages along with its common companions of kidnapping, hijacking, abduction, capture and seizure seldom leave the political agendas of countries in dealing with the wider world. That prominence has energized all governments in seeking answers for its elimination and, in specific instances, the saving of lives.

There is nothing new in this. Hostage-taking has long been an instrument used in the relations between states as a guarantee of promises made in

negotiations. Today, the concept has become less noble. It is now a means to extract concessions from others, and is a common tool for persons and groups seeking large changes. In this, unfortunately, its uses range from the narrowly criminal, to the seeking of political change, or to the influencing the conduct of relations between states.

It is the use of hostages in the conduct of relations between states that is of interest today. Canada has just emerged from such a three-year, three-country saga involving itself, China and the United States. The two Canadians involved, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, could not have been more innocent victims, even if cast by Hollywood.

This has now been exhaustingly and competently examined by two other Canadians, Mike Blanchfield and Fen Osler Hampson, in their book *The Two Michaels – Innocent Canadian Captives and High Stages Espionage in the US-China Cyber War*. For those of us who have or continue to earn the king's coin in services international, this is a must read. Our chances of being victims is high enough to warrant understanding as to what may be involved.

And what is involved does not offer faith in governments when faced with the dilemmas created by the taking of hostages. For Canada, its trajectory went back to 1968, when Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau initiated negotiations to overcome the folly of believing a small island of less than twenty million people legally represented the China of more than a billion people. Not surprisingly, when such nonsense was exposed to fresh thinking and fresh air, it soon became an understood and accepted change for the larger world. This singular act created the China with which the worlds interacts today.

In the process, China changed as well. The days of leadership by persons with both feet stuck in the stupidities of the past gave way, helped by their departure

to imaginary glories beyond the Middle Kingdom. Leadership today supposedly reflected the importance of the country not only to the Chinese but to the rest of the world. Large change was underway and, indirection was used – Communism with Chinese characteristics – being the most prominent of explanations. More accurately it is Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics.

It created a level of acceptance that both comforted and attracted our involvement until darker manifestations of policy not without precedent in the history of China. The central feature of the new China is not unknown in other countries when large change is underway.

In China, the change, more than anything else, involves ensuring that when prayers were offered, they were all directed towards Beijing. Tibet, Tiananmen Square and now with the Uyghurs were large bumps on the road of change, which the rest of the world was willing, if not to accept, then accommodate within the larger context of a successful China within the world we helped to create.

For Canadians, that process was dramatically interrupted on December 1, 2018 when Mme Meng Wanzhou, an executive with Huawei Technologies, was arrested at Vancouver Airport, following arrival from Hong Kong and en route to Mexico. If Mme Meng was largely unknown to Canadians both within and outside of government, that changed overnight when Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, nine days later, were arrested in retaliation by the government of China. In every sense of the word, they were hostage to the fortunes of Mme Meng.

And Mme Meng's fortune was tied to the ugly machinations of the government of the United States. It was and is stumbling towards a coherent policy in its relationship with the new China. At the time of the arrests of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, it was headed by

the most incompetent and ignorant person to have ever graced the US presidency, Donald Trump.

Mike Blanchfield and Fen Hampson's book in painstaking detail recounts the story of the three governments in avoiding recognition that this was a hostage situation no different than those which had engulfed hundreds of Canadians and thousands of others throughout the world. The fact that governments were responsible was incidental and, if anything, should have made resolution of the hostage situation easier.

Sadly, and tragically, it made the situation worse. Again, as the book demonstrates, the three governments danced in their own make-believe rooms without exits, while the two Canadians were sequestered in rooms with only one exit protected by armed guards. Mme Meng was equally sequestered in Vancouver, but without the armed guards.

The government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was especially incompetent, although it had the largest responsibility for protecting the interests of the two Canadians. The Prime Minister surrounded himself with vacuous announcements about its concern for the "rule of law" and the potential dangers for untold numbers of Canadians if it were to take action to protect two Canadians in real day-to-day dangers. And in the early days of the hostage taking, the government fired its Ambassador in Beijing, who had expressed understanding that this was a hostage situation.

As the book makes clear and was known at the time, neither of these concerns had particular value for the government of Canada in meeting its primordial responsibility of protecting Canadians in danger. Instead, it took a change in government in the United States to assume that responsibility by using its own version of the "rule of law" to negotiate the release of all three persons. For Canadians concerned with the erosion of our

sovereignty, this was a large and unnecessary example of transferring our sovereign responsibilities to the United States.

The book by Blanchfield and Hampson should be high in our collective readings because there will be other Kovrigs and Spavors in the days ahead. I have only one suggestion for the authors, and that is not to dehumanize the victims by succumbing to the publishing imperative of using catching titles such as "The Two Michaels." They are not two Michaels; they are two unique Canadians who have gone out into the world in an effort to provide us an understanding of that world.

And for readers interested in the issues involved, I would recommend another account of the dangers in the world around us. That is the book by Amanda Lindhout and Sara Corbett "A House in the Sky" providing details on Ms Lindhout's 15 months of captivity in Somalia. A companion book is Lorinda Stewart's "One Day Closer," an account of a mother's efforts to free her daughter, Amanda, from captivity. They are valuable additions to the book by Mike Blanchfield and Fen Hampson, for they tell the story of hostage taking by the victims. ■

Gar Pardy is retired from the foreign service having served in a variety of places, and lastly as Ambassador to countries of Central America. His books Afterwords from a Foreign Service Odyssey and China in a Changing World are available on line. His new book The Scary World of Nuclear Weapons will be published later this fall. He can be reached at garp@rogers.com.

Silence sur Venise

Par Marie-Gervais Vidricaire,
Août 2022.

Critique par Claire Poulin

Ce récit de Marie Gervais-Vidricaire nous fait parcourir des sentiers sinueux, mais historiques. En sept jours, il nous amène de Vienne



à Venise en passant par Gênes. Anecdote et chargé d'histoire, le roman nous fait mieux connaître les fameux Proust et Wilde de ce monde. Avec eux, on en apprend davantage sur les mœurs d'une « belle époque » où l'art domine, mais où l'homosexualité reste taboue, voire punie.

La musique de Wagner à travers son opéra Tristan et Ysolde nous fait voyager dans le temps tantôt avec Mahler à Vienne, tantôt avec Toscanini à l'opéra de Venise (au fameux Teatro La Fenice). En plus des notes qui coulent tout au long des pages du récit, la littérature prend toute la place et on en profite pour philosopher sur tout. On discute de Ruskin, on réfléchit sur Freud, on a recours à Zola et on se réfère à Gide, à Daudet ou à Mallarmé, pour ne nommer que ceux-là.

L'essence du roman se déroule au cours d'une journée exceptionnelle, celle du 3 juin 1900. On y découvre Venise et ses palais tout en s'imprégnant au sein d'une rencontre fabuleuse entre Marcel Proust, Oscar Wilde, Stefan Zweig et Mariano Fortuny.

En fait, l'écrit romanesque de Marie est très dense. Les quelque 165 pages du roman sont chargées d'histoire et d'arts (musique, littérature, philosophie, architecture, photographie, tapisserie, décor et même arts vestimentaire et culinaire). On s'imagine fort bien toute la recherche que Marie a dû accomplir ainsi que les voyages sur

place qu'elle a dû faire pour pouvoir s'imprégner du mode de vie de l'époque et se plonger au cœur de Venise, la « Sérénissime ». Mais, surtout, on pense aux longues heures où elle a dû s'approprier les ouvrages des Ruskin, Wilde et Proust pour en faire ressortir l'essentiel et reproduire ces instants de vie par procuration. Pour s'attaquer à la lecture dudit roman et en savourer pleinement la densité, mieux vaut connaître quelque peu les ouvrages auxquels Marie fait

référence ou, du moins, avoir entendu parler des célébrités de cette époque fastueuse puisque les échanges entre les principaux personnages enrobent le récit... et donnent surtout à réfléchir.

Bref, le décor est majestueux. Les protagonistes célèbres sont travestis en personnages de film. Comme le mentionne si bien Marie à travers la pensée qu'elle prête à Mariano Fortuny, « il faut donner aux choses une double résurrection, celle du souvenir et celle de l'art ».

Le roman de Marie Gervais-Vidricaire est tout cela : résurrection des grands à travers l'imagination de l'auteure en se laissant transporter dans une Venise flamboyante... pas aussi silencieuse que cela! ■

Claire Poulin a fait des études en littérature et civilisation avant de rejoindre AMC. Elle fut DG et chef du Protocole au Parlement du Canada ainsi qu'Ambassadeuse à trois reprises avant de prendre sa retraite.

Political Stream Class of '72 Reunion

By Ian Ferguson



The class of '72 (Political Stream) enjoyed a 50th reunion drinks-dinner event on June 13, 2022 at Working Title (Former All Saints Church) in Sandy Hill. Twenty-four guests attended, including spouses and out-of-town retirees from Montreal and Florida. There were a couple of regrets from B.C. and one couple stranded while travelling in the N.W.T. The 1972 enrolment totalled fifty officers, following several years of limited or no recruitment. Training was mostly “on-the-job” in those days. Smoking and the sound of typewriters provided atmosphere in the downtown offices of our initial assignments (e.g. East Block, Langevin, Daly Buildings, Old Post Office) before the Pearson Building opened in 1973. Former

colleagues who have passed away were respectfully remembered with a moment of silence. Several participants shared anecdotes of early experiences in their careers, not all of which would be printable.

Among the many anecdotes was the following, courtesy of Terry Colli. “About a year after joining ‘External Affairs’, as it was then known. I accepted a posting to Barbados, and my family and I soon found ourselves heading south to serve in our newly created High Commission with Larry Smith as the High Commissioner and Peter Hancock as the Head of Chancery. That winter we received notice that former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker and Mrs. Diefenbaker

would be visiting Barbados. The day of their arrival I was duly assigned to handle the luggage. While the High Commissioner was entertaining the Diefenbakers in the VIP lounge, I was at the luggage carousel, watching an endless stream of bags go round and round. But there were none tagged for the Diefenbakers, and the bags were still in Toronto. I arranged for them to be put on the next day's flight. With trepidation I went to inform the High Commissioner, who gave me the pleasure of telling the Diefenbakers. Just as I had finished, Mrs Diefenbaker piped up with a couple of sharp nudges to her husband, “John, John – do you know what this means? We haven't slept without pajamas for years!” ■

Announcements / Annonces

PAUL HEINBECKER'S ORDER OF CANADA

Congratulations to Paul Heinbecker for his appointment to the Order of Canada, announced in June, 2022, “for his significant contributions as a career diplomat and for his visionary leadership in the development of Canada’s foreign policy.” A well-deserved honour, which we heartily endorse.

ORDRE DU CANADA DE PAUL HEINBECKER

Félicitations à Paul Heinbecker pour sa nomination à l’Ordre du Canada, annoncée en juin 2022, « pour ses importantes contributions en tant que diplomate de carrière et pour son leadership visionnaire dans l’élaboration de la politique étrangère du Canada. » Un honneur bien mérité, auquel nous souscrivons de tout cœur.

AMICITIA : UN MONUMENT NATIONAL DÉDIÉ À L’AMITIÉ ENTRE LE CANADA ET LA FRANCE

« Amicitia France-Canada » est l’expression latine pour « amitié fraternelle France-Canada », et c’est le nom choisi pour le monument prévu à Ottawa pour reconnaître plus de quatre siècles d’histoire et de patrimoine communs et plus de 90 ans d’engagement diplomatique officiel entre la France et le Canada. Situé au cimetière Beechwood, le monument témoignera de notre étroite relation de coopération et de notre engagement à travailler dans le monde entier pour atteindre des objectifs communs. Pour en savoir plus sur le projet, consultez le site Web du cimetière Beechwood : Amicitia: un monument national dédié à l’amitié entre le Canada et la France | Beechwood (beechwoodottawa.ca)

AMICITIA: A NATIONAL MONUMENT DEDICATED TO THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN CANADA AND FRANCE

“Amicitia France-Canada” is the Latin phrase for “France-Canada fraternal friendship” and is the name chosen for the planned monument in Ottawa to recognize more than four centuries of shared history and heritage and over 90 years of official diplomatic relations between France and Canada. Located in Beechwood Cemetery, the monument will demonstrate our close cooperative relationship and our commitment to working together around the world to achieve common goals. Read more about the project on the Beechwood Cemetery website: Amicitia: un monument national dédié à l’amitié entre le Canada et la France | Beechwood (beechwoodottawa.ca)

GLOBAL AFFAIRS THROUGHOUT THE DECADES

Global Affairs Canada has updated its website with a history of the Department, entitled Global Affairs Canada throughout the decades. It begins with the origins of the old Department of External Affairs in 1909 and has a variety of links that takes the story to about 2008. Click on this hyperlink to see the introductory pages: Global Affairs Canada throughout the decades (international.gc.ca)

AFFAIRES MONDIALES AU FIL DES DÉCENNIES

Affaires mondiales Canada a mis à jour son site Web avec un historique du Ministère, intitulé Affaires mondiales Canada au fil des décennies. Il commence avec les origines de l’ancien ministère des Affaires extérieures en 1909 et possède une variété de liens qui ramènent l’histoire aux environs de 2008. Cliquez sur cet hyperlien pour voir les pages d’introduction : Affaires mondiales Canada au fil des décennies (international.gc.ca)

Announcements / Annonces

DIPLOMATS WITHOUT BORDERS

A group of diplomats from 13 countries (apparently none from Canada) met in Bellagio, Italy, this past summer to develop an organization consisting of former diplomats and experts who could provide services that would strengthen international peace and stability. The diplomats signed the Bellagio Declaration, outlining the principles that would guide the work of this organization, through a roster of members who would be available pro bono to help in international preventative and mediation work.

The full story is contained in PassBlue's 10 August edition, in an article written by Kees Rade. To get background articles on this new organization, google PassBlue, Diplomats without Borders, Kees Rade.

The founding declaration of the organization can be found by clicking the following link: [DWB-BELLAGIO-DECLARATION-FINAL.pdf \(bu.edu\)](#)

DIPLOMATES SANS FRONTIÈRES

Un groupe de diplomates de 13 pays (apparemment aucun du Canada) s'est réuni à Bellagio l'été dernier pour mettre sur pied une organisation composée d'anciens diplomates et d'experts qui pourraient fournir des services qui renforceraient la paix et la stabilité internationales. Les diplomates ont signé la Déclaration de Bellagio, exposant les principes qui guideraient le travail de cette organisation, à travers une liste de membres qui seraient disponibles bénévolement pour aider au travail international de prévention et de médiation.

L'histoire complète est contenue dans l'édition du 10 août de PassBlue, dans un article écrit par Kees Rade. Pour obtenir des articles de fond sur cette nouvelle organisation, google PassBlue, Diplomates sans frontières, Kees Rade.

La déclaration de fondation de l'organisation peut être trouvée en cliquant sur le lien suivant: [DWB-BELLAGIO-DECLARATION-FINAL.pdf \(bu.edu\)](#)



280 Beechwood, Ottawa - 613-741-9530 - www.beechwoodottawa.ca
Owned by the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation and operated by The Beechwood Cemetery Company.

The Canadian Foreign Service has played a vital role in the promotion and protection of Canada's national interests around the globe.

Beechwood is proud to acknowledge the contribution of Foreign Service by providing a significant saving on many of Beechwood services.



CFSAF

Please visit Beechwood's Foreign Service and Canadian Foreign Service Alumni Forum page for more details.



Annual General Meeting

We are still looking forward to convening our first annual general meeting for all members of the FORUM. Members will receive information in due course, and we hope to conduct the meeting with “zoom” capabilities for those who live outside of the Ottawa/Gatineau region.

Regional representatives

To ensure that Forum is a national organization, reaching out to all parts of Canada, we would like to include regional representatives on our board. If you would like to serve in that capacity, let us know at edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Volunteers

We are still on the hunt for volunteers, to help on projects, the FORUM, and our website. If you have some spare time and want to become involved, let us know, at edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Assemblée générale annuelle

Nous sommes toujours impatients de convoquer notre première assemblée générale annuelle pour tous les membres du FORUM. Les membres recevront de l'information en temps opportun, et nous espérons mener la réunion avec des capacités de « zoom » pour ceux qui vivent à l'extérieur de la région d'Ottawa/Gatineau.

Représentants régionaux

Pour nous assurer que le Forum est une organisation nationale qui s'adresse à toutes les régions du Canada, nous aimerions inclure des représentants régionaux au sein de notre conseil d'administration. Si vous souhaitez servir à ce titre, faites-le nous savoir à edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Bénévoles

Nous sommes toujours à la recherche de bénévoles, pour aider sur des projets, le FORUM et notre site Web. Si vous avez du temps libre et vous souhaitez vous impliquer, faites-le nous savoir, à edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Membership Renewals and New Members

Thanks to our new members and those of you who renewed earlier this year. We encourage all of our readers to join and expand our membership. Annual membership is \$25. Life membership – involving no bother about future renewals – is \$200. We also encourage “benefactors” who can join for life with a payment of \$250 or more. Payment can be made electronically by sending a payment to finance.forum99@gmail.com, or by sending a cheque to the following address:

CFSAF/FASEC

c/o 11547 13th Ave NW
Edmonton, Alberta T6J 7A8

If you joined last year as an annual member, and you want to switch to a life membership, you can use that \$25 fee as a credit this year towards your life-time membership. Send us \$175 by cheque or electronic transfer (see first paragraph).

Renouvellements d'adhésion et nouveaux membres

Merci à nos nouveaux membres et à ceux d'entre vous qui ont renouvelé plus tôt cette année. Nous encourageons tous nos lecteurs à nous joindre et à élargir notre adhésion. L'adhésion annuelle est de 25 \$. L'adhésion à vie – sans se soucier des renouvellements futurs – est de 200 \$. Nous encourageons également les « bienfaiteurs » qui peuvent adhérer à vie avec un paiement de 250 \$ ou plus. Le paiement peut être effectué par voie électronique en envoyant un paiement à finance.forum99@gmail.com, ou en envoyant un chèque à l'adresse suivante :

CFSAF/FASEC

a/s 11547 13th Ave NW
Edmonton, Alberta T6J 7A8

Si vous vous êtes inscrit l'année dernière en tant que membre annuel et que vous souhaitez passer à un abonnement à vie, vous pouvez utiliser ces frais de 25 \$ comme crédit cette année pour votre adhésion à vie. Envoyez-nous 175 \$ par chèque ou virement électronique (voir premier paragraphe).

FORUM

Letters to the editors/ Correspondence aux rédacteurs:

We want to hear from our readers. Send your letters or emails to the editors, focused on the content of this bulletin, at: edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Nous invitons nos lecteurs à envoyer des lettres aux éditeurs axées sur le contenu de ce bulletin à: edit.forum99@gmail.com.

FORUM is published three times annually by the Canadian Foreign Service Alumni Forum (CFSAF). This is a new non-profit, non-governmental association embracing all retired (or soon-to- retire) members of the Canadian foreign service. FORUM does not sell or otherwise distribute the email addresses of its subscribers. If recipients do not wish to receive further issues of FORUM, they should send us a one-word email, with the word “unsubscribe” to edit.forum99@gmail.com.

For any other matters relating to this issue or the association, please contact us at the same email address.

FORUM est publié trois fois par année par le Forum des anciens du service extérieur canadien (FASEC). Il s'agit d'une nouvelle association non gouvernementale à but non lucratif regroupant tous les membres retraités (ou sur le point de prendre leur retraite) du service extérieur canadien. FORUM ne vend ni ne distribue les adresses courriel de ses abonnés. Si les destinataires ne souhaitent pas recevoir d'autres numéros de FORUM, ils doivent nous envoyer un courriel avec le mot « se désabonner » à edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Pour toute autre question relative à ce numéro de FORUM ou à l'association, veuillez nous contacter à la même adresse courriel.

News, comments, announcements or suggestions? Let us know at edit.forum99@gmail.com.