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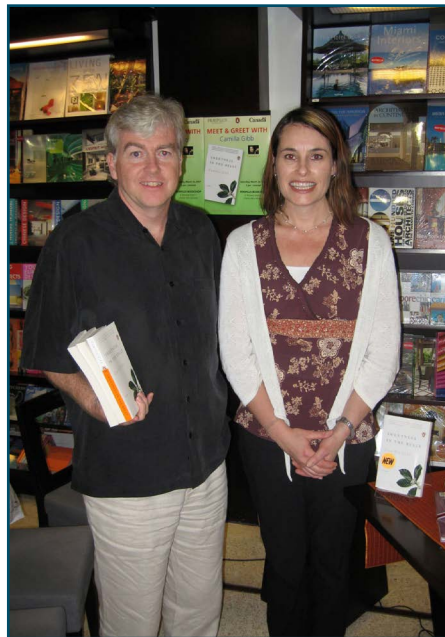
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Bali: The Canadian Connection

By John T. Holmes



The author with Camilla Gibb at the festival.

The idyllic Indonesian island of Bali is about as far from Canada as one can get, both geographically and culturally. It lies east of Java, north of Australia and west of Komodo, home to the eponymous dragons of myth and reality. Bali is one of a string of volcanic and earthquake-prone islands that make up the 'Ring of Fire' (no relation to the Tolkien lore). Its tropical climate and verdant topography, dotted with rice paddies and beautiful beaches, have made Bali one of the most gorgeous tourist attractions for decades and an Edenic destination for many foreigners seeking escape from the rat race of modern society. The Indonesian government also uses the island as

a conference centre, hosting major international gatherings including the recent G20 Bali Summit.

Bali's syncretic fusion of Hinduism and local traditions has produced a remarkably vibrant religion and culture, distinct among the predominantly Islamic islands of Indonesia. Bali is dotted with a plethora of Hindu temples, from the spectacular Pura Lempuyang or 'Gateway to Heaven' to the hundreds of small shrines that line the main roads. The daily offerings left in front of the temples are a boon to the island's burgeoning canine population. One of the most interesting Balinese traditions is Nyepi, the Day of Silence. A day of self-reflection, all Balinese, and all visitors, are expected to remain in their homes or hotels eschewing most activities including the use of electricity. Having experienced it once, I can attest it is an eerie time, especially when evening arrives and darkness envelopes the island.

Despite the distance and differences, there are several fascinating links between Bali and Canada. Montreal-born composer Colin McPhee moved there in the 1930s and fell in love with Balinese *gamelan*, the hypnotic percussion-based music featuring gongs and drums. McPhee's musicological study helped revive gamelan in Bali and introduced the genre to the world. Through his own music and his friendship with

Benjamin Britten, among others, McPhee helped put Bali on the map, musically and culturally. McPhee's 1947 partial memoir, *A House in Bali*, is a fascinating deep dive into Balinese culture and music. His influence, plus that of such cheesy and culturally inappropriate films like *The Road to Bali*, one of the 'Road' movies made by Bing Crosby, Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour (ironically filmed on a lot in Hollywood), and the more recent *Eat, Pray, Love*, helped open Bali to the world, for better and worse.

Of the many foreigners who washed up on Bali's shores, looking for peace and a more tranquil lifestyle, were young Canadians John Hardy and Peggy Anne Berton, daughter of Pierre Berton. After sojourning around Asia in the 1970s, they settled in Bali and soon began a custom jewelry business, which John later expanded into a global franchise, John Hardy Jewelry, with his second wife, Cynthia. Although the company was later sold, it remains a vibrant



Madeleine Thien at the Ubud festival.

business employing hundreds in Bali. The Hardys' stunning and iconic open-air, bamboo home near Ubud, in the interior of Bali, became a model for the campus of the Green School in Bali, a holistic learning community which John and Cynthia began in 2008.

Despite its remote location and serene surroundings, Bali was not immune to the horrors of modern society. In October 2002, two suicide bombers launched an attack on a crowded and popular nightclub in Bali, killing 202 people, many of them Australian tourists and Balinese locals. Two Canadians also died in the bombings. The attack not only shocked the world but had a devastating impact on Bali's vital tourism industry.

There can, however, be good that arises out of tragedy, and one inspiring example is the Ubud Writers and Readers Festival, conceived by local resident and entrepreneur, Janet DeNeefe, in 2004, as a healing project. Celebrating its twentieth anniversary this year, the Ubud Festival has gone beyond a tourism promotion

venture, to become one of Asia's most influential writers and intellectual events, showcasing Indonesian writers on an international stage and bringing international literary stars to the region. Among the latter have been Anita Desai, Simon Winchester, Ian Rankin, Sebastian Faulks, Richard Flanagan, Vikram Seth and Val McDermid.

My spouse, Carol, and I first met Ms DeNeefe in 2007, during my first year as Ambassador to Indonesia, and Janet quickly sold us on the idea of using the Ubud Festival to highlight Canadian authors. Of course, the dearth of cultural funds and the Harper government edict discouraging the promotion of cultural events as such, presented a particular challenge. However, in October 2007, colleagues in the region banded together to bring renowned Canadian author Camilla Gibb to Southeast Asia and the Ubud Festival. Camilla's prize-winning novel, *Sweetness in the Belly*, a story of a Western girl's conversion to Islam and the positive impact the religion played in the development of her

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character and her humanity, was a brilliant way to dispel mistrust and foster dialogue among civilizations. Camilla's insightful and humorous speaking style made her a fantastic ambassador for Canada in Indonesia and the region.

As the Festival grew, Janet began to focus more on cross-cultural connections, including panels on immigrants from Asia and their experiences in their adopted countries. In 2008, we sponsored Madeleine Thien, a promising young writer from Vancouver whose 2006 first novel, *Certainty*, moved the main characters from Malaysia to Indonesia and finally to Canada. I arrived at Madeleine's panel too late to meet her beforehand, so I sat quietly at the back of the room listening to the panellists describe their experiences and influences. In response to the moderator's question of how the writers felt as immigrants in their new homes, Madeleine said that she saw herself as a Canadian, not an immigrant.

I jumped to my feet, clapping loudly and beaming with pride, only to notice that I was alone and the object of bemused and confused stares. Madeleine would make a return appearance in 2017, with the support of one of my successors, Ambassador Peter MacArthur, following the publication of her third novel, *Do Not Say We Have Nothing*, winner of the 2016 Scotiabank Giller Prize and the Governor-General's Literary Award for Fiction. Also attending that year was the renowned Montreal writer of Lebanese descent, Rawi Hage.

A number of other Canadians with Asian connections have appeared at the Ubud Festival over the years, including Lindsay Wong, Cynthia Dewi Oka and Tanya Evenson. Their presence, along with that of Ms Gibbs and Ms Thien, has done much to enhance Canada's reputation in Indonesia. In addition to promoting the country's literary acumen, the works of these authors have fostered

a positive image of Canada as a welcoming society.

Not all of the Canadian connections at Ubud have been positive in terms of promoting the country. In 2008, I attended a panel on mystery writers featuring Kathy Reichs. While American, Reichs herself and her fictional heroine Temperance Brennan both worked for the Sûreté du Québec as forensic anthropologists. Reichs spoke eloquently on how she honed her writing skills through early novels, *Déjà Dead* and *Death du Jour*. Although fascinating, I began to fidget nervously as Reichs recounted the plots of her books, which seemed to feature an inordinate number of horrific murders and serial killers, all of which happened in my beloved home province of Québec. By the time the panel was open for questions, I knew I had to act. I asked Reichs if she could reassure the audience that, should they visit Canada, their chances of being knifed, shot, bludgeoned or otherwise murdered were miniscule. Reichs laughed and stated that she loved Canada, especially her home base of Montreal. Pausing for a moment, Reichs then proceeded to bemoan the fact that most of her visits were during the winter and, despite her efforts to prepare herself for the cold, she would invariably recoil at the first blast of Arctic air and wonder why she had decided to return. Discouraged at this point, I yelled out from the back of the room, "You're not helping!" ■

Cartoon by John Graham



When we close on the ship, order them to leave Canadian waters!
Lorsque nous approcherons du navire, ordonnez-leur de quitter les eaux canadiennes !

John T. Holmes is a former Ambassador to Indonesia, Jordan, Turkiye and the Philippines, and should not be mistaken for other famous or infamous namesakes. For more stories on the Ubud Writers and Readers Festival, please see Carol Bujau's book, Triple Sex & Other Tales of an Ambassador's Wife (available at Burnstown Publishing, Perfect Books on Elgin St. and Books on Beechwood).

Souvenir d'une mission très spéciale à Djibouti

Par Paul Hitschfeld

J'étais en poste à Addis Abéba, en Éthiopie, au milieu des années 1990. Ma fonction principale était Chef de la Coopération, responsable pour l'Éthiopie, l'Érythrée, Djibouti et le Soudan. Mais, à l'occasion, je devais remplir d'autres fonctions.

Il faut environ une heure en avion pour aller d'Addis à Djibouti-Ville, la capitale de Djibouti. Djibouti est un des pays les plus chauds sur la planète, et c'est un choc que d'arriver là d'Addis, qui est situé sur un haut plateau et où il fait assez frais. Mais, l'inconfort est vite oublié, car à Djibouti on mange bien et la ville est assez sympathique. Comme d'habitude quand je voyageais dans les pays de ma région, je m'occupais principalement de questions dans le portefeuille de la coopération internationale, mais aussi, au besoin, de tous les autres dossiers ordinaires d'une ambassade : consulaires, politiques, commerciaux...

Au début de janvier 2006, je suis allé à Djibouti, peut-être pour la troisième fois. Un résident canadien, représentant une société canadienne, et un excellent contact, m'informait de la situation dans le pays et me recommandait des contacts utiles à rencontrer. 'Que fais-tu demain soir', il me demanda. J'ai dit : 'rien de prévu'. 'Bon, soit habillé chic, ne soupe pas, et sois prêt à neuf heures, on viendra te chercher à l'hôtel'.

Une jeep arriva devant l'hôtel à neuf heures et mon contact canadien était là, sur le banc arrière. Il y avait des insignes de l'Armée française sur le véhicule. Monte, il me cria. Il y avait un officier, à côté du chauffeur, en uniforme, avec des étoiles sur les épaulettes. On quitta la ville, sur une bonne route. Ensuite, on tourna sur une route de campagne, puis plus loin sur une piste de terre. Le chauffeur s'arrêta et embrancha les quatre roues



motrices. Nous quittâmes le chemin et roulâmes sur le sable, montant les dunes et descendant dans les ravins. Il n'y avait que la lune pour nous guider. Quelques kilomètres plus loin je voyais des lumières. Enfin, une dernière dune, et on descendit dans une vallée où on avait installé de nombreux cordons d'ampoules sur des poteaux. Au loin on entendait un groupe électrogène. Il y avait environ une trentaine de véhicules jeep et de camions. Au milieu de ce site on avait installé des planches, ce qui tenait lieu de piste de danse. À côté, des soldats avaient organisé une cuisine, des toilettes, et des tables avec fauteuils. Il ne faisait maintenant « que » trente degrés.

Mon ami me présenta au colonel et à son épouse, et aux autres officiers. Somme toute, et je venais de le comprendre, il s'agissait du haut commandement de la base militaire de la France à Djibouti, en brousse pour fêter les Rois. Le bar était ouvert et les officiers lui rendaient visite souvent (les soldats de service travaillaient et ne buvaient pas). Vers onze heures le souper fût servi. Fruits de mer, salades, pain frais, et mischwî, viandes grillées sur une grande rôtisserie de circonstance. Un officier m'a demandé poliment d'où je venais au Canada, et j'ai répondu Montréal. Ah oui, quelle rue? Je le lui ai dit, et il m'a demandé : qu'y a-t-il de spécial sur cette rue? Un grand parc j'ai dit. Bon, bon, merci. C'est

près du métro? Oui, Atwater. Ah... Attewattèrrre. Plus tard mon ami canadien m'a dit que c'était l'officier responsable pour la sécurité et il voulait vérifier que j'étais vraiment un Canadien authentique.

Vers minuit trente, on a baissé les lumières, et on entendit un clairon au loin. Tout le monde s'est levé. Des soldats sont arrivés avec les gâteaux des Rois, et les ont posés sur les tables. L'officier avec le rang supérieur à chaque table coupa les tranches. Ensuite le colonel a demandé aux convives d'identifier les rois et les reines. Par hasard, j'ai trouvé dans ma tranche une petite statuette et j'ai été couronné Roi de ma table. Le général m'a demandé de dire quelques paroles, aux noms des autres rois et reines. J'ai dit les phrases d'usage, surtout mettant l'accent sur l'amitié éternelle entre le Canada et la France, en admettant que cette fête des Rois serait, et de loin, la plus mémorable de ma vie.

Ensuite la danse. Des chansons françaises bien connues, et du rock and roll aussi. J'ai même dansé deux minutes avec la Madame du Colonel, mais ce fût difficile, car les planches commençaient à se disloquer. Vers trois heures j'ai retrouvé ma jeep, et on est rentré à Djibouti. Plus tard j'ai demandé à mon contact canadien si c'est toujours comme ça à Djibouti et il m'a répondu : 'pas aussi élaboré, bien sûr, mais si on voulait faire de quoi là, il fallait s'organiser.'

Quelques heures plus tard, j'ai fait ma visite d'un projet de l'ACDI, à 45 degrés à l'ombre. C'est à ce moment-là que j'ai regretté ma quatrième coupe de champagne plus tôt, ce matin-là, dans le désert de Djibouti. ■

Paul Hitschfeld a été agent de l'ACDI pendant 34 ans et a servi à Dar es Salaam et à Addis Abéba.

Consular Tales from the Raj

By *Stewart Henderson*

From 1981 to 1983, I was the Canada-based consular officer in India and Nepal. New Delhi was an exotic place in those days. The High Commission compound was new and spacious, with pool, tennis courts and clubhouse, and the city itself provided both diversions and challenges. I can no longer remember what I might have expected from my first posting, which was supposed to be in public affairs. But the consular files brought with them a more varied experience than I could have imagined.

The Serpent's Companion

Friends who are Netflix subscribers have told me about the current mini-series featuring Charles Sobraj and Marie-André Leclerc and their murderous journey through southeast Asia during the late 70s. I have not seen the program (one of the drawbacks of living in a rural area with very limited bandwidth: no streaming), but I have my own recollections of Ms Leclerc.

By the time I first met her, she had been convicted of accessory to murder, served a number of years in prison, and been released on probation. She could travel locally but was not allowed to leave India. Her case had received a lot of publicity in Canada, and she received monetary support from religious and charitable organizations. An order of Quebec missionaries working in India had also taken her under its wing. Her legal counsel was actively pursuing clemency.

External Affairs (as it was then known) had determined that the High Commission should be seen to be as supportive as possible. Marie-Andrée was allowed to visit the mission to call her family and friends

in Canada (at no charge - something not available to Canada-based staff) and to send and receive mail. Consular visits were provided at her convenience and at her residence.

My first impression of Marie-Andrée, when I paid my first consular visit at her apartment, was of a successful professional woman – lawyer, banker, aid consultant – who was at ease dealing with complex matters of finance and in-country mobility. She travelled out of Delhi frequently, and in a style that, if not luxurious, was comfortable enough to raise eyebrows of those familiar with her file.

During one of my visits, Marie-Andrée told me that she had just learned that she had ovarian cancer, and that she wanted to be repatriated while she was still able to travel. There were obvious difficulties here: the decision of the Supreme Court of India not to hear her appeal; the very real possibility that the medical report was fabricated or bought; and the conflicted approach of some in the Department in publicly supporting someone widely viewed as a murderer.

With the enthusiasm of first-posting officers everywhere, I determined that the first step would be to verify her medical condition. I asked Marie-Andrée to supply me with readily-authenticated x-rays, as well as a written and signed statement from her doctors. These I passed to our Immigration medical officers at the mission for their opinions. Once the diagnosis had been confirmed by them, I approached Ottawa for guidance/permission to assist on humanitarian grounds. I spoke to Marie-Andrée's legal counsel and determined that the best method of seeking clemency was to approach Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

This in turn led to an executive decision allowing Marie-Andrée to leave India. We then assisted with transport arrangements for her return to Canada. This was in the summer of 1983. I had ended my posting by that time and was scheduled to depart New Delhi. I was told that my own departure could not take place while Marie-Andrée remained in India. After another week of trying various flight options, she left India in early August, and I was able to depart a few days later.

Marie-Andrée Leclerc seemed to have received a warm welcome when she returned to her home town of Levis, Quebec. Some eight months after her return, she died of ovarian cancer. I was reprimanded for seeking the advice of Immigration Canada medical officers.

Clink

I was asked to interview a young woman who had come to the High Commission seeking consular assistance. She said that her passport had been lost while she was backpacking in northern India. We sat across from one another in the consular meeting room.

I was in an off-mood. Some months earlier, vanity had led me to wear contact lenses, and the New Delhi dust had a habit of playing havoc with my eyes. I had just decided to give up the lenses, and I had put on my eyeglasses shortly before the meeting took place.

As the young woman and I sat chatting about things to see and do in New Delhi, I heard a “clink” and felt a breeze around my face. The young woman had suddenly reached across the table and jabbed her fingers towards my eyes. Just as suddenly, she sat back in her chair and continued

her conversation as if nothing had happened. The “clink” was the sound of her fingernails hitting my glasses.

I ended the meeting as soon as I could. As she was packing up, I stole a glance at her hands – her fingernails were remarkably long and very dirty. The thought of them actually touching my eyes allowed me reconcile myself to returning to my specs. I have not worn contact lenses since.

What Money Sa'ab?

The Canadian tourist had not answered the hotel's cleaning staff's door knock in three days, and the Delhi police drug squad had arrived looking for a 'western dealer'. The hotel asked the police to wait until they called the High Commission. An hour later, I was in front of the hotel room door with three Delhi detectives and a very nervous front-desk clerk. The door was opened, and we entered to find - sitting two metres in front of us on the bed - a young man in a rigid position and holding a syringe inserted into his arm. The man was dead. Next to the bed was a briefcase which, opened by the police, contained \$5,000 in US notes. I made a note of the man's passport details and waited for the coroner's office to collect the body. The detectives allowed me to list the belongings and then confiscated the case with the dollars.

At the High Commission, we followed the usual procedures to inform the family in Canada. We were asked to ensure that the body would be available for repatriation and burial. When visiting the police station the following day, I was told that the body had not been sent for autopsy, but had gone directly to the Delhi morgue. I was welcome to go to the morgue to see the body, but was urged to do sooner rather than later, as bodies were often hard to identify after a day or so.

The visit to the 'morgue' was instructive. The underground room

where bodies were kept was not air-conditioned. There were no vaults; bodies were placed – without covers - on bunk bed-like shelves along the walls. Most “beds” held four or five bodies. Most had no identifying toe-tags, and there was no “attendance list” to know what bodies were in the morgue or where they were.

A search of the room finally revealed the Canadian tourist's cadaver. It had no ID tag, but I was able to recognize his face. I was assured that the body would not be disposed of without the High Commission being informed. I could do nothing else without the family's instructions. I then visited the police station where the detectives were based, to ask about the deceased's belongings. I was told that somehow the man's luggage and personal belongings had been “absconded”, most likely by hotel staff. I then asked about the money I had seen in the room. They all looked at me, and one of the replied: “Money? What money, Sa'ab”?

The body was never claimed.

It's a Nice Party. Where is my Husband's Body?

The 1982 Canadian expedition to climb Mount Everest was an ambitious affair. Sponsored jointly by Air Canada and TeleGlobe, media coverage was ensured by the construction of a full satellite-ground station to enable real-time AV reporting. A team of experienced Canadian climbers had been collected, and the Nepali authorities had cooperated fully in issuing licenses and permits, allowing imports of normally restricted technical components, and working with the climbers to recruit local support services and Sherpa guides.

We had no permanent representation in Nepal. Every few months, the High Commissioner in New Delhi would travel to Kathmandu to show the flag, visit the few Canadian-affiliated charity organizations, and do the rounds of the resident Embassies.

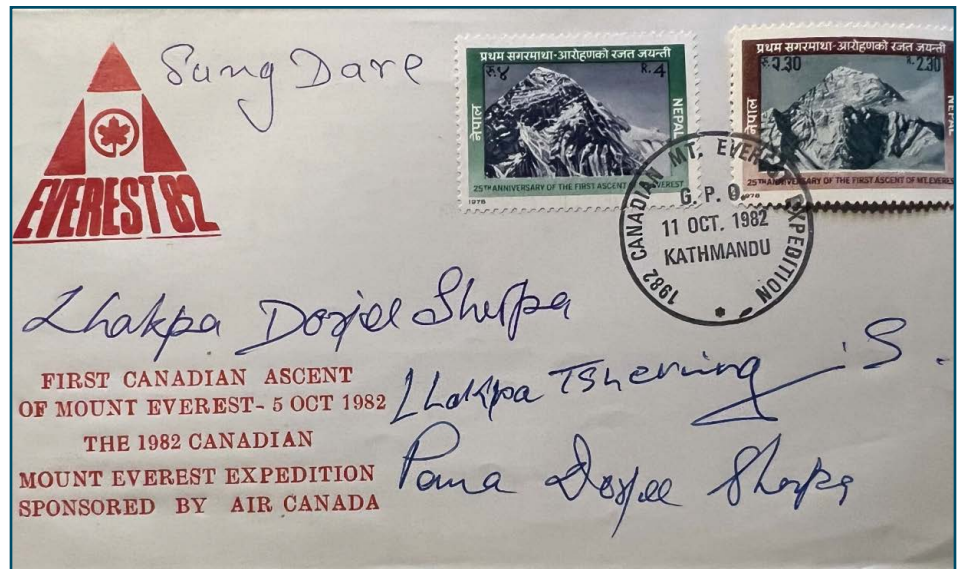
As the New Delhi-based consular officer, I was also responsible for Nepal, and for providing all



The Everest Summit party, at the airport in Nepal prior to the climb. Laurie Skreslet, who made it to the top (third from the left), gave the ice axe to the author. Pat Morrow, fourth from the left, was the team photographer killed during the climb. Photo courtesy of the author.

necessary assistance in the planning and execution of the expedition. This resulted in many trips over the Himalayas as the project took form, and many weeks of on-the-ground presence in Kathmandu during the climb.

I am not sure if climbing Everest was more or less dangerous in 1982. It was certainly a less-crowded experience, and there had never been a Canadian attempt. Weather determined the schedule and the pace of the actual climb. Some days after a storm had kept everyone at base camp for longer than had been expected, a break in the weather allowed the team to strike out. Two weeks later a sudden



A letter on the Canadian Everest Expedition, signed by the four sherpas of the expedition, from the author's collection.



Photo: Stewart Henderson

Stewart Henderson's ice axe, now in his personal collection

storm hit, leading to the deaths of three Sherpa guides. Two days later, a collapsing ice tower killed the team's Canadian photographer.

The climb was ultimately successful, with two Canadian and four Sherpa climbers reaching the top. An ice-axe that was planted on the summit was given to me by the returning team as a thank you gift.

After the climb and the Canadian team returned, there was a welcome-back party arranged at a hotel in Kathmandu, hosted jointly by the expedition sponsors and the Embassy. I was in attendance and at one point was asked by a young woman if she could have a private word. Off in a corner of the crowded room, the young woman said that she was enjoying the party, and she did not want to make a fuss. But she was anxious to see the body of her husband, the team's photographer, who had been killed a week earlier.

I can never look at the ice-axe or other Everest mementos without reliving that very quiet, discreet and dignified request. ■

After India and Nepal, Stewart Henderson served in Japan, The Philippines, and The Netherlands. After two years with the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe, he was posted to Brussels/EU, and then to Iraq.

Prière de ne pas vous perdre en avion

Par Robert Desjardins

N.D.L.D. A la retraite, Robert place l'aviation au centre de ses préoccupations. Il obtient sa licence de pilote avec la certification pour les vols de nuit et les vols aux instruments. A l'aéroport de Rockcliffe, il conduit et a enseigné le maniement des véhicules lourds d'entretien, en plus de mettre en place le système de sécurité de l'aéroport. Au musée de l'Aviation et de l'Espace, il travaille une décennie à la restauration du North Star. En prolongement de son service public, il œuvre à l'Association canadienne de recherche et sauvetage aérien (CASARA).

Pour Sauver de Vies, telle est la devise en recherche et sauvetage de l'Aviation royale canadienne et c'est avec fierté que les bénévoles, dont je suis depuis 2011, de l'Association canadienne de Recherche et Sauvetage (CASARA) se joignent à leurs efforts, partout au pays.

Quand un aéronef s'écrase au sol, une balise à bord émet un signal de détresse captable d'être capté par des satellites ou des avions volant dans le secteur.

Ou lorsqu'un aéronef n'arrive pas à destination dans les temps prévus, le Centre conjoint de Coordination de Recherche de l'Aviation se lance à sa recherche. Après une enquête rapide auprès de NavCanada, responsable du contrôle aérien, des aéroports de la région et de la police locale, le Centre décide des suites.

Si le signal radio de détresse persiste et qu'il n'y a pas lieu de croire à un écrasement, le Centre se tournera vers CASARA pour y envoyer un avion ou une équipe au sol afin d'identifier l'origine du signal.

Organisation bénévole, CASARA est financée par le Ministère de la Défense nationale avec pour mandat d'appuyer l'Aviation dans la poursuite de leur mandat, qui inclus recherche et sauvetage aérien sur tout le territoire national.

En Ontario, CASARA compte 250 membres regroupés en huit unités, dont une à Ottawa. Ses membres sont tous bénévoles et sont formés selon des critères strictes. Leur compétence

est évaluée par un agent de liaison de l'Aviation. Ces bénévoles sont pilotes, navigateurs ou observateurs, en avion ou en voiture.

S'il s'agit bel et bien d'un écrasement et afin de localiser le lieu précis de l'accident, le Centre déterminera la zone de recherche, à savoir l'espace entre le point de départ, des points intermédiaires si connus, la destination prévue et dix milles de chaque côté de cette ligne. Le Centre enverra soit un avion Hercules ou un hélicoptère, Griffon ou Cormorant, équipés pour la recherche et sauvetage. À leur bord, pilote et co-pilote et deux techniciens en recherche et sauvetage, triés sur le volet et parmi les mieux entraînés au monde.

La première étape d'une recherche consiste à voler à haute altitude afin d'identifier l'origine du signal radio et de localiser visuellement la source de signaux de détresse, que les survivants pourraient faire. Dans un deuxième temps, la zone de recherche sera quadrillée avec précision en secteurs de dix milles par dix, qui seront survolés à 1500, 1000 et 500 pieds d'altitude.

Au besoin, le Centre peut rejoindre l'unité CASARA la plus proche du lieu présumé de l'incident et envoyer une équipe, jour et nuit, investiguer, au sol ou dans les airs.

Les techniques utilisées par l'Aviation et CASARA sont les mêmes.

Si après quelques jours les recherches sont infructueuses, une équipe dédiée à cette recherche sera mise sur pied au Centre de coordination responsable de la région. Il y en a trois au pays, Victoria, responsable de la côte ouest, Trenton, dont le mandat s'étend des Rocheuses jusqu'à Québec et jusqu'au pôle



Une équipe de sauvetage en train de préparer une de ses opérations.

nord, et Halifax couvre la côte est et les maritimes. Un Maître de Recherche sera nommé et s'entourera d'une équipe de sept personnes, dont deux membres de CASARA, formés et certifiés comme Assistant-Maître de Recherche. Le Maître de Recherche identifiera l'aéroport le mieux placé afin d'y établir une base d'opérations. Y sera affecté un groupe expéditionnaire de logistique pour venir en appui au personnel et appareils déployés, e.g. Hercules, Aurora (si nécessaire), hélicoptères de l'Aviation mais aussi ceux de la Garde Côtière, de la police et ou du ministère des Ressources naturelles. S'y joindront cinq à dix avions et équipages de CASARA et jusqu'à 20 observateurs qui monteront à bord des aéronefs militaires et autres. Un dispositif impressionnant.

Au Centre de coordination, l'équipe planifiera toutes les sorties

de recherche par type d'aéronef, secteurs et altitudes et investiguera toutes sources d'information utiles : rapports météorologiques, données radar de NavCanada et de Norad, données téléphoniques des pourvoyeurs de service quant aux tours de transmission avec lesquelles les appareils des passagers ont communiqué, détails techniques de l'appareil en question (autonomie de vol, instruments de bord, équipement de survie et autres), compétence et expérience du pilote, information de la communauté aérienne et rapports de contact visuel des citoyens et corps policiers de la région.

Le Maître de recherche demeurera en contact avec les proches des familles affectées et répondra aux médias. La recherche se poursuivra jusqu'à ce que les survivants et l'épave soient retrouvés, ou jusqu'à ce qu'il soit déterminé que,

compte tenu des circonstances, des recherches supplémentaires resteront infructueuses.

Il faut souligner les efforts déployés ces dernières années dans l'Arctique. Des unités de CASARA ont été créées dans huit communautés et deux fois l'an, des pratiques à bord d'un Hercules ou d'un Twin Otter sont organisées. Nos collègues bénévoles innus ont acquis des compétences remarquables en tant qu'observateurs. Leur connaissance et reconnaissance de leur territoire sont exceptionnelles.

Les bénévoles de CASARA partout au pays contribuent directement au programme national de recherche et sauvetage. ■

Robert Desjardins est un ancien agent du service extérieur qui a partagé sa carrière entre Ottawa et l'Asie.

Trinity Archives: A Repository for Foreign Relations Documentation

By Kurt F. Jensen

Boxes. Lots of boxes. And what to do? Members of the Canadian Foreign Service may not be hoarders, but we do retain much too much. We travel the world and save mementoes, many of which are packed away not long after being acquired. We often have fascinating careers that provide us with ringside seats to history. A few become participants in the history. We save many of the significant papers acquired while we travel the world in the Foreign Service, or when we submerge ourselves in other, and sometimes very different, cultures. We end up with a lot of stuff. Now what?

Often, we harbour aspirations to continue research into subjects or events encountered in our travels.

And often we embark on this research. Members of the Foreign Service have a penchant for writing. We not only like to write; for many of us, it was what we did for a living – for decades! And at times we get carried away and fill additional boxes with material. Generally, most of the documents we acquire reflect events in our careers, papers we drafted, or opinions we held at various times. These are paper memories of who we are and what we did.

Much of the material resting in our basements is of value to us and may also be of value to others interested in the same topics. We witnessed history to varying degrees, and we sometimes have papers and documents that add insight or details to these events.

As we eventually reach the point of downsizing, we are confronted with the conundrum of what to do with this material. We know that our children will not keep and treasure these boxes cataloguing our lives and interests. They have their own memories and interests and are, themselves, putting aside things that they hope will be treasures to their children. Our children are unlikely to retain most of the papers that we're retained over the years. If truth be told, they'll likely retain none of them.

This article doesn't offer solutions for all the material we have acquired. Some are personal items requiring individual decisions. But for some documentary material, we can offer



The Trinity College Archives, located in the lower level of the main college building.

practical solutions. In late 2021, the Canadian Foreign Service Alumni Forum (CFSAF) began a conversation about ensuring the survival of some of the documents in possession of colleagues who had particularly eventful careers. Our research led us initially to Canada's national archives (Library and Archives Canada, or LAC), the official custodian of government records, including those of the ministries for which all of us have worked. LAC's documents are the official record of events from long ago. But official sources are only one dimension of events in which we participated. Some of the materials in our possession allow other perspectives on historic events, or added nuance and flavour to the events of the past.

In the past, LAC was the preferred repository for many of the more significant document collections of some of our colleagues (Skelton, Ritchie, et al.) But LAC has funding difficulties and restrictive acquisition policies. It is unlikely to be the repository of choice for those who want to deposit small collections, especially based on specialized careers.

CFSAF looked to other possible solutions. We found that Trinity Archives at Trinity College, University of Toronto, was in the

process of developing a specific archival resource that would aid researchers in pursuing a deeper understanding of Canada's international relations. We were surprised to learn that we weren't the first to discover Trinity's interests. Other colleagues - John Hadwen, Blair Seaborn, Tom Delworth, and Michael Shenstone among others - have already deposited their papers. Trinity College is an especially logical place for foreign affairs material because of its specialized International Relations program in what is called the "Margaret MacMillan Trinity One Program", and its association with the Bill Graham Centre for Contemporary International History and proximity to the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy. Trinity already hosts the papers of John W. Holmes, George Ignatieff and Michael Ignatieff.

We therefore developed protocols with Trinity Archives. These protocols may assist some of our colleagues to find a home for documents that might offer insight on a foreign service career or contain valuable perspectives on Canada's international footprint. While deposits of material must be made by the individual donors, we can assist people on the process, as well as facilitate the necessary contacts.

We now have a good idea as to what Trinity wants to have. We also know the descriptive detail that is required for Trinity to invite a contribution. This process includes the donor transferring ownership of the documents to Trinity (the College has a form for this purpose). In due course, the donor receives a tax charity receipt for the nominal value, which is determined by an outside expert. There is no cost to those who donate, except for boxes to hold the material for transit and the time to record the contents of the boxes. The process itself is surprisingly easy.

Several members of CFSAF have already made contributions. Some contributions arrived in a largish envelope, others in single or multiple boxes weighing from a few pounds to 125 pounds. Other individuals are in the process of making submissions, and some are considering doing so. For several of us, a deciding factor was that the material would be preserved and made available for the use of others in the future.

Some of these contributions included research material for the publication of books. Trinity generously expressed an interest in almost all the material I proposed to transfer, after the conclusion of my research projects. Large files of LAC photocopies in my boxes were welcomed for being accessible by a

researcher without having to visit the Ottawa archives. Some of the material was unique and had been collected in several countries. Other material in my donation is accessible in various places but not necessarily in Ontario. Possibly what was buried in my boxes is typical of what many of us have collected over the years.

Donating one's prized documents is an individual decision. You may already have a preferred destination. You may be looking to clean up the basement by trimming your holdings. But before you toss things out, and if you consider your documents of some historic interest, we would be glad to assist in explaining some of the steps to an archival donation. We now have experience with the process and can ease the path to preserving important papers. It is also possible to add a codicil to wills and estate plans for transferring documents at a later date.

I can be contacted at kurt.jensen4657@gmail.com, if I can be of assistance. Or send an email to edit.forum99@gmail.com. The

following are a couple of useful links to Trinity College and nearby programs:

<https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/study-arts-science/trinity-one/international-relations>

<http://billgrahamcentre.utoronto.ca>

<https://munkschool.utoronto.ca/>

Kurt Jensen is a retired Foreign Service Officer who wrote a few books and many articles, and has now sent most of his boxes of papers to Trinity College and researchers who shared his interests. ■



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C'est la faute de ma mère

Par Guy St-Jacques

Ma mère a toujours été très fière d'avoir un fils qui faisait partie du service extérieur. Pour elle qui aimait voyager, cela lui semblait le travail idéal, et qui lui offrirait la possibilité de découvrir de nouvelles destinations en venant nous rendre visite. À cet égard, elle a été bien déçue que ma première affectation en 1978 soit à Kinshasa au Zaïre (comme s'appelaient la République démocratique du Congo jusqu'en 1993) et n'a jamais exprimé le désir de venir nous visiter... Cependant, elle aimait beaucoup mon titre de vice-consul et ne s'attachait pas trop à celui de troisième secrétaire.

D'ailleurs, je fus très surpris lorsque, de retour au Canada pour un congé l'année suivante, elle me présenta à ses amies comme son fils « ambassadeur en Afrique ». Bien sûr, je l'ai tout de suite corrigée en lui disant que je n'étais pas ambassadeur mais bien 3e secrétaire et vice-consul. J'espérais aussi que mon ambassadeur, Raymond Chrétien, n'entende jamais parler de cette histoire. D'ailleurs, lorsqu'il arrivait à Kinshasa après des voyages à l'extérieur du pays, l'ambassadeur pouvait éviter la cohue aux douanes zairoises en se présentant au salon d'honneur où la procédure était simplifiée pour les ambassadeurs, ce qu'il appréciait bien évidemment. Un jour, il se présenta au salon en clamant: « Je suis l'ambassadeur du Canada! » pour se faire répondre: « Ah bien tiens, vous êtes le deuxième aujourd'hui! ». Le lendemain, l'ambassadeur me convoqua à son bureau. Il était encore offusqué de ce qu'il avait vécu la veille et me demanda de tirer tout ça au clair dans le but d'éviter que quiconque essaie de le personifier. En fait, ce qui se passait était assez simple : certains coopérants canadiens avaient compris qu'en prétendant être l'ambassadeur du Canada, l'agent d'immigration ne

regarderait pas trop leur passeport surtout s'il s'y trouvait quelques dizaines de zaires, la monnaie officielle du pays... Bien sûr, il m'aurait fallu consacrer pas mal de temps pour savoir qui avait voyagé récemment et déterminer si quelqu'un avait utilisé ce stratagème. Mais je me suis assuré de faire savoir que l'ambassadeur n'était pas content et il semble que la pratique ait cessé par la suite, en tout cas, l'ambassadeur n'a jamais fait face à une autre situation du genre.

Après avoir passé deux ans à Ottawa à mon retour de Kinshasa, mon agent d'affectation, Yves Gagnon, me proposa d'aller en poste à Pékin; il voulait en effet augmenter le nombre de francophones oeuvrant en Asie. Cette proposition m'a énormément plu car je trouvais le pays fascinant; j'avais d'ailleurs eu de bonnes relations avec des collègues de l'ambassade de Chine à Kinshasa. J'ai donc passé un test (en anglais) pour savoir si j'avais une aptitude à apprendre une langue étrangère. Je n'ai jamais reçu le résultat du test mais je me suis retrouvé à l'université chinoise de Hong Kong en septembre 1982 pour y apprendre le mandarin à temps complet pendant deux ans.

Deux ans plus tard, je suis arrivé à Pékin pour y faire du reportage économique (et de la promotion commerciale un peu plus tard). Une des premières activités organisées pour les nouveaux diplomates était une visite du Grand Palais du Peuple. Au cours de la visite, qui vois-je avec un groupe de diplomates africains? Mon vieil ami Zhang que j'avais connu à Kinshasa! Je l'aborde donc dans mon mandarin fraîchement acquis en lui disant comment j'étais heureux de le revoir. Il me regarde en fronçant les sourcils et je comprends tout de suite ce qu'il pense: je lui dis que j'arrive tout juste de Hong Kong où j'ai étudié le mandarin pendant

deux ans. Il me répond que c'est impossible de parler aussi bien chinois après deux ans et me reproche de leur avoir caché que je comprenais ce qu'ils disaient et que j'étais donc un espion. Je n'ai jamais pu le convaincre du contraire et il a refusé de me revoir. Ça y était, j'étais étiqueté comme espion!

Au cours de notre deuxième année à Pékin, j'ai décidé d'organiser un concours dans ma famille lors d'un congé à Noël. En effet, à cette époque, on pouvait échanger dix jours de vacances pour un billet d'avion aller-retour, plein tarif. Pour participer, il suffisait de m'écrire une lettre avant Pâques et de deviner combien de lettres je recevrais en tout des membres de ma famille (j'ai neuf frères et sœurs). Ma mère fit un pacte avec mon frère Claude : « Si je gagne, tu viens avec moi et si c'est toi qui gagne, j'y vais avec toi. » Claude prit l'habitude de nous écrire très fréquemment tout en s'enquérant auprès des autres s'ils avaient écrit récemment... Il devina le bon chiffre et le voyage commença à s'organiser.

J'étais très heureux de les recevoir mais cela me posait un problème: ma mère pensait toujours que j'étais ambassadeur. Heureusement, Dick Gorham était l'ambassadeur et il aimait bien rire et s'amuser. Un soir que nous revenions ensemble dans la voiture officielle après un banquet bien arrosé au maotai, je lui dis : « Monsieur l'ambassadeur, j'aurais une grande faveur à vous demander. Ma mère viendra nous visiter bientôt et elle pense que je suis ambassadeur. Accepteriez-vous de me prêter votre bureau pour une petite demi-heure? » Il eut un grand éclat de rire et me répondit : « Tu me diras quand elle arrive et on pourra arranger ça! » Finalement, la section commerciale où je travaillais en détachement emménagea dans de spacieux locaux qui allaient satisfaire ma mère. Je n'eus donc pas à emprunter le bureau de l'ambassadeur... ■

Lors de son dernier poste Guy St-Jacques était ambassadeur en Chine.

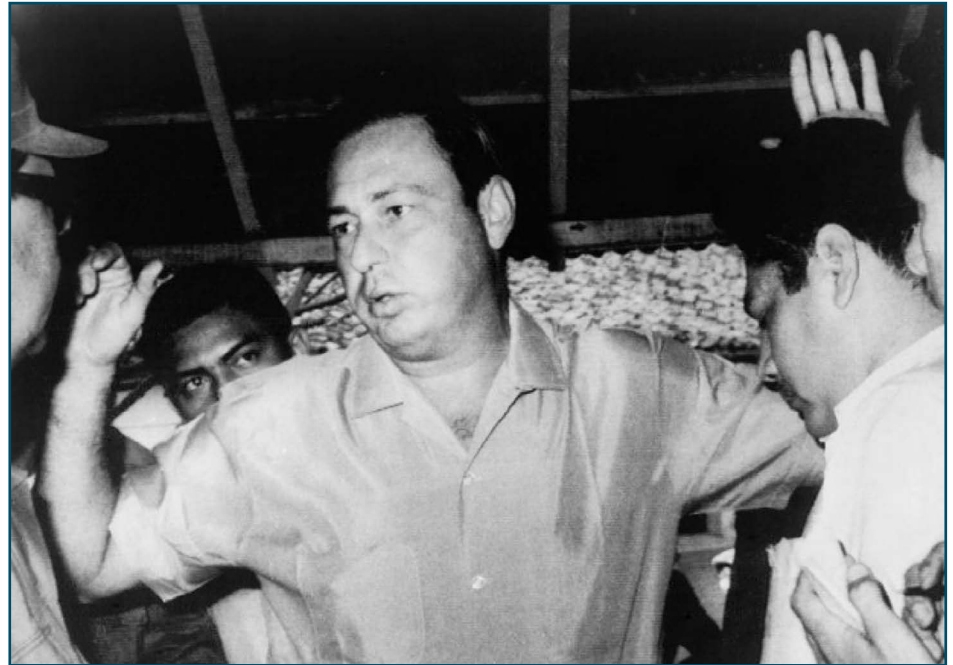
A Lament for Nicaragua

By Jack Adams

Nicaragua, Nicaraguíta. A song of love and joy, uncomplicated, composed by the Mejía – Godoy brothers Carlos and Luis Enrique, as they fought with the Sandinista Front in the Contra Civil war of the 1980's. The lyrics are captivating. Today, there isn't a Nicaraguan who doesn't know them and can't sing along whenever it is played at a gathering. It has become the unofficial National anthem of the country. Poignant throughout, it closes with the words "Pero ahora, que ya sos libre, Nicaraguíta, yo te ámo mucho más", meaning that "today, now that you're free, I love you so much more". The words were penned shortly after 1979, when the "Front" had overthrown almost fifty years of dictatorship under the Somoza family. What a shame! *The more things change; the more they stay the same.*

Today, I've been reading depressing press accounts of this Central American country, one known affectionately as their "paisito" by Nicas. I developed a great affection for the people and their country almost twenty-five years ago when posted there as Head of Mission with the Canadian International Development Agency. As resident Canadian diplomat, I was responsible for an office which managed our development assistance program, consular services and just about everything else. There were some fifteen of us in total, another Canadian and myself; the remainder being Nicaraguan professionals.

With this group we battled the ravages of Hurricane Mitch in late 1998, after which the entire team, both in Canada and Central America, received the CIDA President's Award of Excellence and the Public Service of Canada's Award of Excellence for their efforts. On



Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Cardenal, from an unknown source, c. 1978

the consular front, we assisted many distraught Canadians with their variety of personal problems, as well as the successfully- concluded drama of the kidnapping of a young mining technologist from British Columbia. This latter event took place in September, 1999, in the Wild-West atmosphere of north-east Nicaragua, in an area known as the "Triángulo Minero", the location of several gold mines. It is comprised of the small towns of Bonanza, Siuna and Rosita. The mine in Bonanza had been owned and operated by a Toronto-based company, until recently sold to a local syndicate.

Canada has long been a friend of Nicaragua. During our stay, our development assistance program had a budget of some ten million dollars spread over rolling five year periods. We worked in various ways – bilaterally, ie, government to government; through Canadian and international NGO's; and also through what we called "Counterpart Funds", funds derived from the sale

of Canadian products, paid for in local currency which were then in turn used to fund our projects within the country. Oxfam, Canadian Save the Children, Samaritan's Purse, the Mennonite Economic Development Agency, various United Nations agencies and many others were all Canada's partners there. Through collaboration with Canadian mining companies, we built and equipped a new hospital at a gold mine not far from the city of León, and equipped another in Bonanza. (I believe Canadian mining companies receive insufficient credit back home for the good works they perform overseas). We worked with police on gender sensitization and helped establish safe houses for women in need of escape from domestic violence. On the commercial side, Canada sponsored free trade talks with Nicaragua, as part of an overall Central America – Canada free trade agreement. This eventually ended in failure with Nicaragua, but a separate deal with Costa Rica was eventually signed

with a docking arrangement for the other countries, should they wish to join later.

Through our Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, managed out of our office by a very capable young Nicaraguan, we helped build new houses for those who had lost theirs during the Hurricane. Often this was in collaboration with Canadian NGO's, where the addition of our funds would make possible larger benefits. Visiting one project in the Matagalpa Region, I was embraced by one woman who tearfully thanked Canada for the house she was being provided through a loan scheme. She had only ever lived in single room, sun-dried, mud brick dwellings, which usually had to be rebuilt after each Rainy Season. Now she had a two-room structure of concrete block and a tin roof, for which she was extremely thankful. At times like this I wished Canadians, who are so quick to criticize our foreign aid program, could see what it really means to the less fortunate people with whom we work.

Solidarity loans were an important feature of our program here. These are loans given to groups of five individuals who lack collateral but rely on peer pressure from each other to repay the loan on a regular basis from its proceeds. We financed the buying of cattle, pigs, laying hens, and small business enterprises in this way, where the loan recipient would have the means to repay from the profits of their investment. This way, our funds reached a lot further than with simple grants. Uncollectable loans made up about only about 3% of our total portfolio using this mechanism.

Now, Canada has suspended its development assistance program to Nicaragua. President Daniel Ortega, and Vice-President Rosario Murillo, his wife, have orchestrated a complete about face from the days when Ortega was an idealistic young *Comandante* with the Sandinista Front. Ortega has come full circle since then. Today, Ortega and his

spouse have seized all power to themselves and their family. They are terrorizing the populace who once supported him. Under their regime, Nicaragua has once again become a dictatorship, a pariah state whose few friends are countries such as Cuba, Venezuela, Russia and China.

Many Nicaraguan government officials that I knew and worked with during our stay have now been imprisoned on fabricated charges. Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, now in his seventies, is one of them. He was Minister of Defense during my time, and we worked closely to get a Canadian Hercules aircraft into Nicaragua just after Hurricane Mitch. This transported tons of food from Managua to the port of Puerto Cabezas on Nicaragua's northern Atlantic Coast. There, with the co-operation of the British Embassy, helicopters from one of their aircraft carriers waited to pick up the supplies and take them into isolated Miskitu communities along the Río Coco. Their crops had been washed away in the floods as a result of the hurricane. Pedro Joaquín comes from a well-known Nicaraguan family and was a graduate of McGill University. He held at least two Ministerial posts in the former Alemán government, which held power from 1996 to 2001. His mother, Doña Violeta Chamorro, was the first President of the country elected after the failure of the wartime government headed by Daniel Ortega to win the first truly free elections of 1990. For five years, Doña Violeta's government, made up largely of a disparate group of technocrats, began to set the country on a viable, democratic path to the future for the first time.

Doña Violeta's husband, Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Sr., had been publisher of the influential newspaper *La Prensa*. His was the public voice raised against the hated dictator Somoza and his family. He was assassinated in 1978 in Managua, by a lone gunman in the pay of the

dictator, while driving to work one day. This set off the period of strikes and unrest, leading to the Somoza dynasty's downfall. The paper survived and was a bastion of truth, until recently silenced by the Ortega regime. More than twenty-five years ago, another of Doña Violeta's sons, Carlos Fernando Chamorro, began a separate weekly paper named *Confidencial*. This is now one of the most respected independent news sources in the country. It had its offices raided in the fall of 2021. Carlos Fernando and his staff fled to Costa Rica, avoiding immediate imprisonment. He has resumed publishing from there, expanding to an on-line format, covering the news for the Nicaraguan diaspora and those that can still be reached within the country.

Other adversaries of the Or-Mu regime now incarcerated include Francisco Aguirre, whom I knew as *Canciller*, or Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2001. He took all us foreign representatives on an unforgettable night to Leon to celebrate the *Fiesta de la Purísima* – a uniquely Nicaraguan celebration in early December in honour of the Virgin Mary, the country's patron Saint. Another was Dora Maria Tellez, whom I did not know but was well known during my stay in the country. In the 1990s, she broke with Ortega and formed an Opposition Party, MRS – the Sandinista Renovation Movement, later renamed *Unámos*. She was a former Sandinista guerrilla *Comandante*, and fought alongside Ortega during the overthrow of Somoza. She is presently serving her sentence in solitary confinement.

Altogether, there are one-hundred and eighty-one political prisoners, including seven aspirational presidential candidates from the November 2021 elections, all locked up in the infamous *el Chipote prison* outside Managua. According to Carlos Chamorro, in his acceptance speech of the Leopoldo Lopez



Pedro Joaquin Chamorro Barrios with his sister, Cristiana, prior to their arrests in 2021.

Freedom and Democracy 2022 award in May, 2022, “These political prisoners share six by seven foot cells, where they are not allowed to communicate with each other. None of them are allowed to access reading or writing materials, a bible, pen and paper, or communicate with their young children. All of the political prisoners are receiving insufficient quantities of food and show signs of malnutrition. They have all lost between twenty and sixty pounds, causing them severe physical and mental health problems. Torture and punishment practices include keeping the lights on day and night, or total darkness for weeks on end. They are denied access to sunlight and fresh air, and some are forced to sleep on concrete barracks without a blanket or a sleeping pad.”

Our staff and I knew *el Chipote* well during my stay. I visited the prison as consul on various occasions to check on imprisoned Canadians. It was a sordid place, where prisoners were preyed upon by others for any possessions that others wanted. Food had to be brought in daily by someone who cared for you. Despair ruled the day. We regularly took in newspapers and magazines to try to help keep up morale while they languished, waiting for their cases to be heard.

The slide into autocracy did not happen all at once. There were signs of it long before. In the early 1990s the Violeta Chamorro government, as a first order of business, precipitously cut the Sandinista armed forces from over ninety thousand strong to about thirty thousand. This threw many young Nicaraguans out of work, with only a small severance package. The remaining commanders, in order to set up a generous pension for themselves, sold off much of their military hardware – Russian supplied helicopters, aircraft, and other arms. This caused much resentment among the lower ranks, who had been discharged with little support and no pensions. The continuous lack of follow-up on promises made by the state eventually was a contributing cause to the kidnapping of the young Canadian to which I referred earlier.

But more than anything, the main cause of today’s Or-Mu dictatorship is Ortega’s ambitions and what happened after Hurricane Mitch in December 1998. Donors banded together with the BID (the Inter-American Development Bank) to pledge hundreds of millions of new dollars to the reconstruction of Nicaragua and its neighbouring Central American countries, to repair

the tremendous damage wreaked by that tropical storm. It was to be a new beginning. Optimism for the Central American region ran high.

But it was not to be. The next democratically-elected government of Arnaldo Aleman – *Górdoman* as he was locally known due to his huge physical bulk, in 1996 became what I would describe as a “smash and grab” government. Alemán and his cronies proceeded to skim off large amounts of these huge volumes of assistance funds arriving in a tiny country all at once. Suddenly, large new mansions and holiday homes appeared in their names; condos in Florida and Spain were bought, and money was spent lavishly by senior government officials. Few questions were asked; at least at first, as we were all focused on rebuilding the country. But cracks began to appear.

Ortega and his FSLN (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional) were the main opposition party in Congress. In 1990, before handing over to Doña Violeta’s newly-elected government, FSLN had staged a massive theft of privately-owned assets. Known ever since as the “Piñata”, Ortega’s government passed a law legalizing their seizure of property of those Nicaraguans who had fled the country during the civil war of the 1980s. In the early 1990s, after the end of the civil war and as the expatriate Nicaraguans began to return to claim their properties, the US funded a special court to adjudicate how each property case was to be dealt with. In 2002 when I left, there were still many cases still pending.

Even though losing the elections of 1990, the FSLN still had a large measure of public support. This was due to the fact that they had overthrown the Somoza Dictatorship and developed close bonds of solidarity with the people during the early years of the Contra war of the eighties. FSLN could be counted on to poll support of low to mid

thirty percent of the popular vote, as demonstrated in the Presidential elections of 1996 and 2001. Liberal and Liberal coalitions managed to win for a number of terms, but finally, in 2008 Ortega and FSLN had managed to manipulate the system so that they gained a sufficient majority to take over. This was largely due to the corruption of the Alemán government after Hurricane Mitch, and an infamous secret “Pacto”, made between Alemán and Ortega in the early 2000’s that would ensure one or other would stay in power indefinitely. Alemán eventually ended up in jail; Ortega, his wife and FSLN finally became firmly entrenched in power.

Ortega’s methods began with the use of strikes to oppose anything he disliked about legislation that the Liberal government tried to enact. Because of FSLN adherents’ fervor, he could count on substantial crowd turnouts in the streets. On many nights, driving about Managua we could expect to run into barriers of burning tires, or randomly scattered “dañielitos;” three-legged welded iron rebar devices looking like tank

traps, scattered across the roads, making them impassable. His more subtle activities were to take control of the pillars of state – the Supreme Court, Supreme Electoral Council, Congress, and the Contraloría, the financial auditing office of government spending.

Nicaraguans deserve better. When Somoza was overthrown in 1979, citizens who supported the *Frente* thought they were fighting for a Costa Rican style democracy. Instead, they were given a planned, centralized Soviet style economy that set up collective farms and communes. In the heat of the 1980s, they had to band together to fight against the US backed proxies – the Cóntras, who were actually some of their own families who had fled to Honduras when they saw what the Sandinistas were doing to their country. Later, with the defeat of FSLN at the polls in 1990, and the establishment of the Doña Violeta government, it looked again like democracy might prevail. But now Nicaraguans are finding they were wrong again.

What can Canada learn from all this? Looking around at today’s world, it’s obvious that democracy is under attack, from the far right and left, who propose simple solutions to complex problems. Democracy is fragile. It must be cherished and nurtured; never taken for granted. I’m afraid our older generation has let our children and grandchildren down. We have taken democracy for granted, even though we should have known better. I hope the next generation will not be taken in by those contemporary politicians willing to sell themselves to whatever section of the electorate that will put them in power, regardless of the consequences. ■

Jack Adams first joined CIDA in 1974 as a member of a team of three advisors to a mining project in Boyaca, Colombia. Following various postings, chiefly between south east African and Latin America countries, he retired in 2006 from the Canadian Embassy in Bogota, where he was responsible for the Development programs in Colombia and Ecuador. He presently lives with his wife, Marilyn on BC’s Sunshine Coast.



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Features

On photography

By Victor Rakmil

The five photographs I've selected for this article were taken with my "new" full-frame Nikon camera. It was released in 2017 at an unaffordable price. It's a bit cheaper now that digital cameras are giving way to mirrorless cameras. Full frame means huge files but at the same time more light on the sensor and more detail.

While these five photographs are representative of the main themes of my photography, they also speak to my being an opportunistic photographer. Four of these photographs were taken in downtown Ottawa, (including the beaver taken on the river near Billings Bridge).



The landscape and the osprey were taken just west of downtown Ottawa.

People with back gardens have a wonderful opportunity for photography nearly year round. Wish I had one. I make up for it

by choosing a lens and going for a walk. It doesn't hurt that I also get some physical exercise out of it as well.

The five photographs speak to my main interests: nature, urban/street and landscape photography.

Flowers form a major part of my portfolio. Flowers are particularly easy to find in home and city gardens, they can also help train your compositional skills.

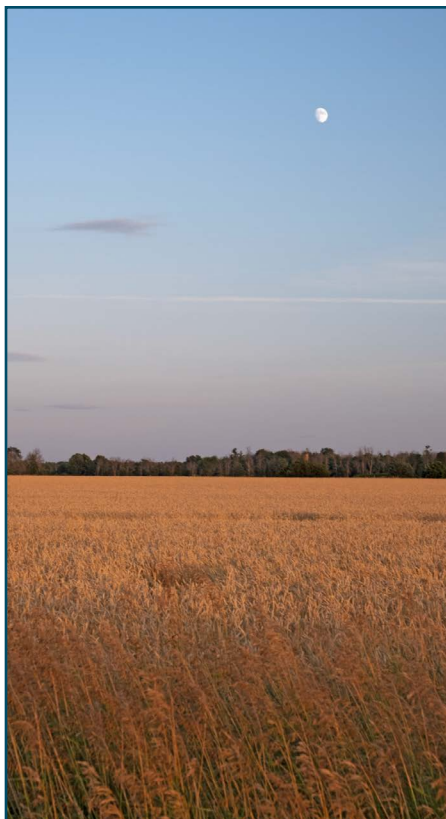
As part of my street photography I have done several photographs that use reflections to make for interesting compositions ("what the window saw" is how I have titled many of them), but I have also worked with reflections in water, polished cars etc.

Birds are a great challenge even if you have a long lens and stamina. Still it's a very worthwhile endeavour. The osprey shot was taken in Kanata towards the end of the nesting period. This Osprey decided to dive bomb my wife and I as we were taking our shots. If you have seen their talons you won't be surprised to hear that we fled.

The photograph of the fly on the flower really isn't macro or close-up photography. It was taken with a long lens and cropped. This photo

Photos: Victor Rakmil





post processing, but the evolving nature of the software means you are always learning new methods. It's part of the fun. My experiments with artificial intelligence programs have been positive, though I don't let the software take all the decisions, just the basics (e.g. white balance). I have also learned about the habits and environments of various animals (for example birds always take off into the wind).

One of the important elements of photography that I believe can only be learned by trial and error is composition. There are many books with rules on the subject, but many of these rules are not universally applicable, and your own style comes from learning what you like in the composition of your photographs. The questions that need answering are what to include, what not to



include, what angle of view to take and what exposure you meter for the photograph. Given enough time it becomes a habit to address these issues quickly (including, for example,

was taken a few blocks off Laurier Avenue West.

I do like to get very close to things and have the necessary gear for it. The fascination with this genre is that I get to see and show things not normally visible to the human eye. If you are interested, look up Nikon Small World to see how close you can get and the very small subjects some photographers take. <https://www.nikonsmallworld.com//>.

It's not the gear or technique that makes landscapes difficult; it's finding a good shot and good light. The golden hour when the sun sets is preferred by many pros. Still good shots can be had just outside the city in the middle of day and on cloudy days. The farther out of the city you go the better. I have driven by many beautiful sites only to find no place to park.

Another issue that these five photos illustrate is the learning curve and study that go into photography. A very few lucky photographers get it right in camera every time. Frustration is always on the horizon. Sometimes we can fix an issue in



lowering your exposure setting by one or two F stops to get snow white).

Things that have helped me include my website and blog. I might think a photo is brilliant, but I have an audience that can and does comment, or chooses to read my blog. There are websites like Nikonians, or Cambridge

in Colour, where you can learn and share photographs for comments. You will be surprised who visits your blog or website. I've had people in war zones, and the guy who processed the U2 shots for Adlai Stevenson during the Cuban Missile Crisis view my photography. Since I was a teenager with a manual camera,

three lenses and a light meter, I have sought out and welcomed advice. Without it I could not have taken these five photographs.

I hope my articles in the *Forum* have been helpful. Feel free to comment or ask a question via the *Forum* website at edit.forum99@gmail.com. ■

Foreign Service Reform

THE SENATE ON THE CANADIAN FOREIGN SERVICE

The Standing Senate Committee on International Relations and International Trade is continuing its hearings into the Canadian foreign service, under the leadership of Sen. Peter Boehm as chair of the committee, and Sen. Peter Harder as vice-chair. You can follow the Committee's work at the following website: <https://sencanada.ca/en/committees/aefa/44-1>.

This review by the Senate is aimed at recommending to the government measures to make the Canadian foreign service "fit for purpose" in a modern era of global engagement. It has heard from many witnesses and received numerous briefs. You can review all of this, including videos of past meetings of the Committee on the Senate's website.

If you have views, let the committee know. Briefs can be sent to the Committee clerk, as well as through members of the committee, and they can be reached through the Senate's website. This is an important topic, and there is every indication that the Senate will produce an interesting and useful report, on which the Government will take action.

PROGRESS REPORT BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

In a wide-ranging internal message to Global Affairs Canada on 3 Feb, 2023, the deputy minister of foreign affairs, David Morrison, reported that he would shortly be delivering to Minister Joly a report on "The Future of Diplomacy: Transforming Global Affairs Canada". This initiative was launched by Mme Joly in May, 2022, and will identify recommendations for action and a proposed way forward.

Once an action plan has been determined, the deputy indicated that he would set up "a transformation team, led by senior executive with a 2 to 3 year mandate, to drive the change-management process and ensure our organizational structures and systems support the new directions."

Those inside the department can expect continuing communications on this initiative for the next several months, including in "town hall" meetings in Global Affairs, where the main issues will be discussed.

Although Mr. Morrison's message was an internal one, touching on only the broad outlines of the eventual way forward, it is hoped that ways will be found for consultations with those outside the department, particularly stake-holders and partners, and with the retired diplomatic community.

Réforme du service extérieur

LE SÉNAT SUR LE SERVICE EXTÉRIEUR CANADIEN

Le Comité sénatorial permanent des relations internationales et du commerce international poursuit son audience sur le service extérieur canadien, sous la direction du sénateur Peter Boehm à titre de président du comité et du sénateur Peter Harder à titre de vice-président. Vous pouvez suivre les travaux du Comité sur le site Web suivant : <https://sencanada.ca/en/committees/aefa/44-1>

Cet examen par le Sénat vise à recommander au gouvernement des mesures visant à rendre le service extérieur canadien « fit for purpose » dans une ère moderne d'engagement mondial. Il a entendu de nombreux témoins et reçu de nombreux mémoires. Vous pouvez consulter tout cela, y compris les vidéos des réunions antérieures du Comité sur le site Web du Sénat.

Si vous avez des opinions, faites-en part au Comité. Les mémoires peuvent être envoyés au greffier du Comité, ainsi que par l'entremise des membres du Comité, et ils peuvent être consultés sur le site Web du Sénat. Il s'agit d'un sujet important, et tout indique que le Sénat produira un rapport intéressant et utile, sur lequel le gouvernement se prononcera.

RAPPORT D'ÉTAPE DU SOUS-MINISTRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES

Dans un vaste message interne adressé à Affaires mondiales Canada le 3 février 2023, le sous-ministre des Affaires étrangères, David Morrison, a indiqué qu'il remettrait sous peu à la ministre Joly un rapport intitulé « L'avenir de la diplomatie : transformer Affaires mondiales Canada ». Cette initiative a été lancée par Mme Joly en mai 2022 et permettra de formuler des recommandations d'action et la voie à suivre.

Une fois qu'un plan d'action aura été déterminé, le sous-ministre a indiqué qu'il mettrait sur pied « une équipe de transformation, dirigée par un cadre supérieur avec un mandat de 2 à 3 ans, pour piloter le processus de gestion du changement et s'assurer que nos structures et systèmes organisationnels soutiennent les nouvelles orientations ».

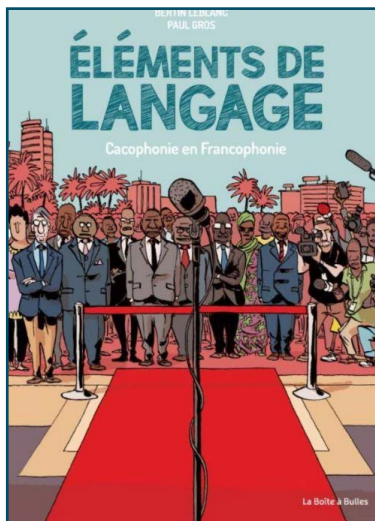
Les membres du Ministère peuvent s'attendre à ce que les communications sur cette initiative se poursuivent au cours des prochains mois, y compris lors de séances de discussion ouverte à Affaires mondiales, où les principaux enjeux seront discutés.

Bien que le message de M. Morrison soit un message interne, ne touchant que les grandes lignes de la voie à suivre, on espère que des moyens seront trouvés pour des consultations avec ceux qui ne font pas partie du ministère, en particulier les intervenants et les partenaires, et avec la communauté diplomatique à la retraite.

Books in Revue/ Critiques de livres

Éléments de langage, Cacophonie en Francophonie

Par Bertin Leblanc et Paul Gros,
La boîte à bulles, Paris, 208 p.



Par **Gérald Cossette et
Éric Pelletier**

Cette bande dessinée aurait pu s'intituler: La chute de Michaëlle Jean au titre de Secrétaire Générale de la Francophonie. Elle relate les deux dernières années de Mme Jean lorsque M. Leblanc était son porte-parole. Elle couvre les années 2016 à 2018 alors que les chefs d'État et de délégation rassemblés à Erevan en 2018 ont confirmé la nomination de Madame Luise Muchikabo, comme nouvelle Secrétaire Générale, suite à une machination franco-rwandaise.

Les auteurs ont choisi la BD qui se prête bien au genre de dialogue qu'on y trouve. Les phrases sont courtes et percutantes. Le nom des intervenants n'est pas modifié. On y retrouve Mme Jean, M. Jacques Bilodeau et tous ceux et celles qui constituaient la garde rapprochée de la Secrétaire Générale du moment.

Ce n'est pas une analyse de la situation, mais les interventions des protagonistes traduisent bien le climat qui devait régner à l'époque de Mme

Jean au secrétariat de l'OIIF. Les intervenants parlent de Madame comme d'une pédante, constamment insatisfaite. Son personnel n'est guère mieux alors que M. Leblanc est perçu comme un intrus par les gens qui s'occupent des communications de la Secrétaire Générale. M. Bilodeau n'est mentionné qu'une seule fois lorsqu'il est présenté à M. Leblanc.

L'ouvrage est consacré aux manigances franco-rwandaïses entre les Présidents Macron et Kagamé qui amènent Madame Muchikabo au 'pouvoir'.

Madame Joly, alors ministre de la Francophonie est dépeinte par Mme Jean comme celle qui ne comprend rien lorsque le Premier Ministre Trudeau essaie de la convaincre de ne pas faire de scène au Sommet de Erevan pour garder son poste. Mme Jean dira : 'Qu'est-ce qui vous permet de conclure cela, Monsieur le Premier Ministre ? Certainement votre ministre responsable de la Francophonie ! Elle n'y comprend rien, celle-la, vous êtes mal conseillé, ...' Le Président Macron, lui, quitte la salle des délibérations tout de suite après son discours qui, de loin, dépasse les dix minutes qui lui étaient allouées.

Compte tenu de la réputation de dépensière qui afflige Mme Jean, le nouveau gouvernement canadien dirigé par M. Trudeau (M. Harper était premier ministre lorsque Mme Jean a été nommée Secrétaire Générale) ne la supporte plus au sein de l'OIIF et, à Erevan, le PM essaie de faire comprendre à celle-ci que c'est le tour d'un.e africain.e, même si ce dernier ou cette dernière vient d'un pays dont le français est banni du curriculum scolaire depuis vingt ans. Il faut dire que lors de son passage au Canada, les journaux n'en avaient que pour les dépenses somptuaires de Mme Jean.

Le reste de la BD porte sur la vie au jour le jour de M. Leblanc, ses interrelations avec les différents

médias, ses vacances dans sa famille au Canada.

Cette BD n'est pas l'équivalent du Quai d'Orsay bien qu'elle soit présentée comme telle dans la publicité, mais pour ceux et celles qui s'intéressent à la participation du Canada et la contribution de ce dernier au monde francophone, cette bande dessinée fournit un coup d'œil de l'intérieur sur le fonctionnement (devrait-on dire le dysfonctionnement) de cette organisation.

Si M. Leblanc voulait réhabiliter Mme Jean, comme Secrétaire Générale de la Francophonie, après toutes les saletés que les médias canadiens ont dites et écrites sur son 'règne' à l'OIIF, son ouvrage n'y parvient pas. Il y a des choses que même le 'spinning' ne peut corriger. ■

Lors de son dernier passage à Affaires mondiales Canada, Gérald Cossette était sous-ministre délégué. Éric Pelletier a passé la majeure partie de sa carrière à travailler sur les enjeux américano-canadiens. Il a également travaillé au bureau du Secrétaire Général de la Francophonie à Paris.

Do you want to become involved in CFSAF?

We are looking for volunteers and regional representatives for our new organization. If you have interest, let us know at edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Avez-vous envie de vous impliquer dans le FASAF?

Nous sommes à la recherche de bénévoles et de représentants régionaux pour notre nouvelle organisation. Si vous êtes intéressé, faites-le nous savoir à : edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Annual General Meeting

Mark this in your calendar. The first in-person Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Foreign Service Alumni Forum will be held on Thursday, 27 April, at 4:00 pm, at a location to be confirmed. All benefactors, life members and annual members will be invited. Arrangements will be made for zoom or other transmission to those outside the Ottawa/Gatineau area.

Among the agenda items are the election to the Board of directors, briefings on various Forum initiatives over the past three years, in which we have been unable to meet in person, and an address by a distinguished speaker.

Benefactors and life members are automatically eligible to attend. If you are an annual member, please renew your membership in time to participate in the AGM. More formal invitations will be sent out closer to the date.

If you have questions about the event or your membership status, please ask at edit.forum99@gmail.com.

Assemblée générale annuelle

Marquez ceci dans votre calendrier. La première assemblée générale annuelle en personne du Forum des anciens du service extérieur canadien aura lieu le jeudi 27 avril, à 16 h, à un endroit à confirmer. Tous les bienfaiteurs, membres à vie et membres annuels seront invités. Des dispositions seront prises pour le zoom ou toute autre transmission à l'extérieur de la région d'Ottawa/Gatineau.

Parmi les points à l'ordre du jour figurent l'élection au Conseil d'administration, des séances d'information sur diverses initiatives du Forum au cours des trois dernières années, pour lesquelles nous n'avons pas pu nous rencontrer en personne, et une allocution prononcée par un éminent orateur.

Les bienfaiteurs et les membres à vie sont automatiquement admissibles. Si vous êtes un membre annuel, veuillez renouveler votre adhésion à temps pour participer à l'AGA. Des invitations plus formelles seront envoyées à l'approche de la date.

Si vous avez des questions sur l'événement ou votre statut de membre, veuillez les poser 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 further bother about renewals – is \$200. We also encourage “benefactors” who can join for life with a payment of \$250 or more, thereby providing us with an extra measure of financial stability. We encourage our annual members to upgrade to life membership, thus eliminating the need for annual billing and payments. Payment can be made electronically by sending a payment to the following address: finance.forum99@gmail.com. You can also pay by sending a cheque to the following address:

CFSAF/FASEC

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

If you have questions about your membership, send an email to edit.forum99@gmail.com. Those on annual memberships will be notified shortly by email about renewals.

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 rejoindre et à élargir notre adhésion. L'adhésion annuelle est de 25 \$. L'adhésion à vie - n'impliquant plus de soucis de renouvellement - est de 200 \$. Nous encourageons également les « bienfaiteurs » qui peuvent adhérer à vie avec un paiement de 250 \$ ou plus, nous offrant ainsi une mesure supplémentaire de stabilité financière. Nous encourageons nos membres annuels à passer à l'adhésion à vie, éliminant ainsi le besoin de facturation et de paiements annuels. Le paiement peut être effectué par voie électronique en envoyant un paiement à l'adresse suivante: finance.forum99@gmail.com. Le paiement peut être effectué par voie électronique à l'adresse suivante.

FASEC /CFSAF

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

Si vous avez des questions sur votre adhésion, envoyez un courriel à : edit.forum99@gmail.com. Les membres annuels seront avisés sous peu par courriel des renouvellements.

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.

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

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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.