



Canadian War Brides and Families

Spring 2014

Greetings from President Jean

Once again I hope you are planning on joining our hosting committee from London, this August 8 – 10 for our annual reunion. We do look forward to renewing old friendships and meeting new acquaintances that I am sure will become friends.

Our time together is very special as we reminisce and maybe find someone who may have known one of our past friends. We love the camaraderie that these gatherings allow.

Therefore, I sincerely hope to meet everyone and enjoy our 2014 weekend together.

As ever,

Jean

Bev Tosh, War Brides: One-Way Passage

May 10 – August 5, 2014
Red Deer Museum + Art Gallery, Alberta

Based on hundreds of personal interviews, photographs and letters, artist Bev Tosh has created visual stories representing the leap of faith taken by thousands of women who built lives far from home.

To mark the upcoming 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, this display will include the portraits of 70 war brides. While the experiences of women are often overshadowed in the historical record, Bev Tosh shines a spotlight on ordinary women in extraordinary times.

Red Deer Museum + Art Gallery
4525 – 47A Ave
Red Deer, Alberta T4N 6Z6
403-309-8405 www.reddeermuseum.com



NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Canadian War Brides and Families will be held on Saturday, August 9, 2014 at the Delta Armouries Hotel, London, Ontario. Meeting time and room location at the hotel will be provided in the next newsletter.

Canadian War Brides & Families Reunion 2014 - August 8 - 10, 2014



Delta London Armouries Hotel
London, Ontario
August 8,9,10, 2014

We have a block of rooms set aside at the Delta London Armouries Hotel with a room rate of \$119.00/night. You can reserve your hotel room by calling 1-800-668-9999. The block of rooms is booked under *Canadian War Brides & Families*.

Your Reunion Registration Package is included with the newsletter. Registration for the weekend's events are \$100.00 for Canadian War Brides; \$125.00 for members; and \$130.00 for non-members.

We do hope you are planning to attend. Please complete the application and mail with your cheque or money order to:
Canadian War Brides & Families,
215 West Beasley Street, Nelson, BC V1L 3K4.

We would like to have registrations in by ***June 30, 2014.***

Also included with your newsletter is a list of other places to visit while you are in London.

For more information
Email: Canadianwarbride@netidea.com
or call War Bride Grace
@ (519)285-2617

Transportation from the London Airport

The hotel usually recommends `Checkers' limousine taxi, which should be \$22.00-\$23.00 from the airport to the hotel. In the next newsletter you will find our number to call to have a ride from either the London Airport or the Robert Q London station (if you`re flying in to Toronto).

2014 REUNION - Programme

For the entire month of August, the London Public Library will host a display of War Bride artifacts, and our own Bev Tosh will speak there on the Saturday afternoon at 1:30 p.m., both for us and for the public at large. This venue is one block from our Reunion Hotel, the Delta London Armouries.

At the Saturday night banquet, you will hear from our respected dignitaries, before you dance the night away! Among our sing-a-long leaders, we hope to have someone whom many of you enjoyed tremendously on the VIA Rail War Bride Train to Pier 21 in the "Year of the War Bride".

WAR BRIDES BY AIR

A few Canadian war brides arrived by air both during the war and after. Wives of RCAF officers may have "hitched" rides on long range bombers or military passenger flights.



Lancaster bomber

Avro produced a passenger variant of the stalwart Lancaster bomber which could cross the Atlantic Ocean with refueling in Iceland. These war brides paid full air fare.



Avro 691 LANCASTRIAN

Sideways seating with bunks above.

The first DC-4 flew on February 14 1942 in military markings (as the C-54 Skymaster). 1162 were built through the war years. Most were sold to the world's airlines, post-war. Trans-Atlantic fleets of TCA & American Airlines carried many war brides.



Douglas DC-4, a post-war airliner

A more familiar seating arrangement

War brides who arrived by air included Joan Burton, Emmie Ferrie, Agnes Megaw, Peggy Jean Price, Winifred Ellis and Mary Francis.

Respectfully submitted, Terry Lyster

A WAR BRIDE'S STORY

Edith Metcalfe Wallace, War Bride

June 29, 1922 - Nov 29, 2010

My mother was born in Rotherham, Yorkshire, the third child of Esther Barrett and John Metcalfe. Her older siblings were Edward (Ted), born 1914, and Mary, born 1918. Mother began training as a nurse in 1942 in Newcastle on Tyne. She remembers nursing German POWs - one in particular was very young and frightened, quite a sweet boy, she said.

In November 1944 Mother travelled to Richmond (in Yorkshire) to attend a friend's wedding. It just so happened that my father, Earl Wallace, along with several of his army buddies, joined the wedding party at the local pub, the Richmond Arms, I think. My father, who grew up in Port Arthur (Thunder Bay) Ontario, had signed up in 1941 when he was 22. He then spent at least two years training in Aldershot, Surrey, UK. Finally, he was sent to Italy in November 1943. (These dates are approximate.) In February, 1944, he and his friend Millard Ross were sent back to England to enter OCTU - Officer Cadet Training Unit - at Aldershot. He was made a Lieutenant in March 1945, eventually becoming Captain in the reserves around 1952.

It was love at first sight that night in November, and Edie and Earl quickly became engaged. Mother's wedding was in Sheffield, classier than Rotherham - she had to say she lived in her sister Mary's parish to qualify for marriage in St James Church. Dad's family sent their ration coupons for Canada for sugar, etc. so my grandmother could make the cake. Mother wore a lovely beaded satin wedding dress which she lent to a friend afterwards, who altered the neckline and wrecked it, according to Mother. (I still have her dress and veil.) It was a windy day April 2, 1945 - in the photos, the dresses are blowing. Dad had just been made a lieutenant so it was a coup for the family - Edie was marrying an officer. Dad was supposed to go off to fight Japan after Germany surrendered on May 8 - then Japan surrendered Aug 11 1945 and Dad was demobbed and sent home, without Mother because by then she was pregnant with me and was not allowed to travel.



She couldn't travel with a baby under 6 months, so it was a year later, around July 26/27 1946 that the three of us reunited in Dad's boyhood home on River St (now McVicar St) in Port Arthur (his parents were both dead). I have my entry paper issued when we landed July 23, 1946 in Halifax at Pier 21 - I was listed as 5 months. Then Mother faced a 3 or 4 day train trip to Port Arthur, in a train full of war brides and screaming kids. She said I caught whooping cough on the Queen Mary (that was a free trip, once you showed your marriage certificate stating your husband was a Canadian soldier). Because she was an officer's wife, she was assigned a 1st class cabin on the Queen Mary, but there were at least 4 women to a cabin and sick kids everywhere.

In March 1949, mother sailed back to England on the Queen Elizabeth with three kids in tow - my brother David, 18 months, my sister Penny, 5 months, and me, 3 years. Dad sold his parents' house on River St to partly pay for the trip. (In 1949 the Port Arthur vets were placed in newly-built rental houses called wartime houses.) In addition to his day job, Dad would have been paid for staying in the reserves - they had regular meetings. He bought Mother a fur coat which she took with her to England - it caused quite a stir in Rotherham! She also took a big ham that my Uncle Elgin contributed from his job as butcher at Joe Woods's store on Arthur St (which store Elgin later bought). The wax-coated ham, transported in a specially built box, was a huge hit with the family in Yorkshire, who were still on rations. When she came back to Port Arthur in late July 1949 with the three of us, Dad had moved into the "war-time" house at 109 Ray Blvd. He gave Mother a very nice amethyst brooch and earrings and I got a "trike" - he told me that I asked him if I could ride my trike on the footpath! We came late at night by train from Toronto after flying from NYC to Toronto, then trekking to the Royal York Hotel, where we were NOT met by Dad's relatives (they went to the King Edward Hotel by mistake). Mother waited in vain with 3 babies in the lobby of the Royal York until the manager took pity and gave her use of a hotel room until her train came (probably we were lowering the tone of the place). So we were in Rotherham about 4 months, in Nanna's wee prefab house built after the war. What a trip! ship, plane, train. I have a photo of me on the Queen Elizabeth at the kids' party - I'm wearing a paper party hat. Also have photos of Nanna in the prefab and David and I playing in her tiny garden - Penny in the carriage.

That was quite a trip. So by the time I was 3 and my mother was 27, we had crossed the Atlantic 3 times by ship (2 Queens). The next time I sailed was September 1977 when I travelled on the Russian ship Alexandr Pushkin. When I went through immigration at Tilbury, just east of London, UK, the little official looked at my passport (it said birthplace - Rotherham, Yorkshire) and chirped "Welcome home, dearie!"

Submitted by Susan Wallace, War Bride Daughter

If you would like to share your story/pictures please e-mail to canadianwarbride@netidea.com or mail to Canadian War Brides & Families, c/o 215 West Beasley Street, Nelson, BC V1L 3K4

Remember When

Remember when we looked up into a blue June sky and saw hundreds of planes, some pulling gliders, all heading in the same direction, and we knew IT was on! The invasion of Europe! It was D Day of course. I woke up early because of the drone of all the aircraft and I remember looking out of my bedroom window and seeing this amazing, incredible air armada, carrying so many young men - some to their deaths! When I got off my train in London (I was working on Holborn High Street) the planes were still coming. I have told the story many times of the bowler hatted, umbrella carrying business man standing beside me as we waited to cross the road, saying " I wonder how many of those boys will still be alive at the end of the day".

We were part of history. We had seen the buildup of troops, especially in the South of England. Roads crammed with military vehicles of all kinds. The numbers of soldiers had been increasing for some months, and we knew the invasion was coming, and June 6th here it was! For some of us our Canadian husbands or boyfriends were among the many thousands being dropped from the sky or landing on the Normandy beaches or part of the air offensive raging over the landings. We waited that day to hear how it was going. My family was always optimistic and hopeful and I remember being excited and confident that we would finally see an end to this war that had gone on for so long. When the media talk about the world changing that day, one thing we rarely hear is that the Canadians were the only force that made their objectives, advancing into France further than the rest! Something to be proud of, eh?



June 6, 1944 – June 6, 2014
70th Anniversary of D-Day

Joan Reichardt

Happy Mother's Day!



*Happy Mother's Day Wishes to all of our
 War Bride Mums
 On
 Sunday, May 11, 2014*

If you have a story/photos you would like to share in the newsletter, please email to canadianwarbrides@netidea.com or mail to 215 W. Beasley St., Nelson, BC V1L 3K4