



Canadian War Brides and Families

Summer 2014

Greetings from President Jean

The days are quickly passing by till we gather again in London, Ontario. I am really looking forward to this, as I hope you are as well.

Our committee down east has put quite a lot of effort into making our visit very pleasurable with our usual singing and dancing. Therefore, I hope we have a good response.

Take care everyone and see you soon.

As ever,

Jean

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 10:00 am in the Chelsea Green Room at the Delta Armouries Hotel, London, Ontario. Meeting is open to all members.

War Bride, Olive Minning's husband receives special honour

In May of this year, Al Minning, husband of War Bride Olive Minning, by order of the President of the Republic of France, was awarded the rank of Knight of the French National Order of the Legion of Honour for his involvement in the liberation of France when he landed with other Canadians on Juno Beach, June 6th, 1944. The medal was awarded at a commemorative banquet in Vancouver, where he was pinned by the B.C. Consulate of France, along with others of the Regina Rifles Regiment. Since then he has received many accolades including letters from the Queen, the Prime Minister, the Premier of Saskatchewan and the Mayor of Regina. Al was born in Lanigan, Saskatchewan and joined the army in 1942. He was deployed to England and trained for the D-Day landing. He was injured in France a few days after D-Day and was sent back to England to recuperate. While he was back in England recuperating, he met his future War Bride, Olive.



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

The **Canadian War Brides & Families** look forward to welcoming over 100 registrants to the **Reunion 2014**, August 8 to 10 at the London Delta Armouries

Hotel Information: London Delta Armouries Hotel
325 Dundas St., London, ON
N6B 1T9
Phone: (519) 679-6111 or 1-800-668-9999



Information for those attending the reunion

When you enter the hotel, turn Left to register for your hotel room; turn Right to register for the Canadian War Brides & Families Reunion.

Registration for the Canadian War Brides & Families is in the West Atrium of the hotel lobby from 2:00 – 4:30 pm on Friday, August 8th.

After registering, you are welcome to join other participants in our 'Hospitality Suite', taking the elevator to the Elgin Parlour, Room 218. Along the glassed-in hallway, you will see pictures and displays from the RCR Museum, including many of the 1st Hussars from 1890 and both WW I and II. There is a portrait of King George VI, and somewhere there are several pictures of the Royal Visit in 1939.

Friday evening, events start with 'Happy Hour' at 5 pm in the Armouries Foyer, with dinner at 6 pm in the Armouries Ballroom. Our President, Jean Fells, and VP Joan Reichardt will welcome you, Dolores Hatch is our emcee, and Mayor of London's representative, Judy Bryant, will be with us. The sing-a-long will be helmed by our inimitable Betty Simpson with her hat tour.

Saturday afternoon – 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. – Presentation at the Central Library by artist, **Bev Tosh** titled, "**War Brides: One-Way Passage**". MP Irene Mathyssen, well known for her work to help veterans, will be in attendance.

Assistance will be available, for those who require it, to travel the one block to the Central Library. The hospitality suite at the hotel will be open once again from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Saturday evening starts with 'Happy Hour' at 5:00 in the Armouries Foyer. Dinner is at 6:00 in the Armouries Ballroom with James Reaney, London Free Press Entertainment columnist and reporter, as Emcee, and with MP Bev Shipley in attendance. Dance/sing to the music of 'The Music Makers'.

Sunday a.m. – 9:30 Ecumenical Service – Chelsea Green Room, our Officiant is Rev. Ian Mills, son of War Bride, Elsie Mills

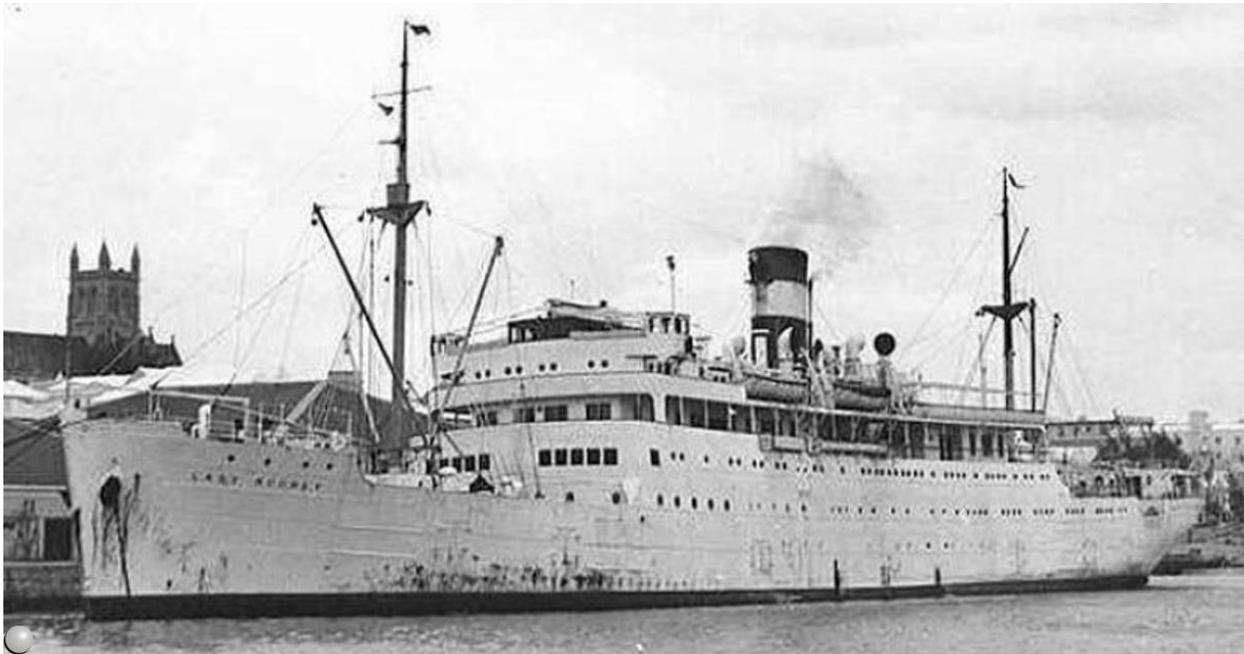
10:30 a.m. – Brunch and Sing-a-long

For further information please phone Bonnie at 519-472-2768

The Ships you came onLADY RODNEY

LADY RODNEY

Launched in 1929, the Lady Rodney was a 8194 ton, 133m long Passenger-Freight vessel operated by Canadian National Steamships as part of a fleet of five luxury liners.



These sailed from Canadian ports via Boston to the Caribbean. Lady Rodney accommodated 130 first-class, 32 second-class and 56 third-class passengers. She could carry 9300 cubic meters of general cargo with an additional 410 cubic meters refrigerated. A two week luxurious round trip cruise cost \$95. Fruit, especially bananas, were kept fresh by a refrigeration plant maintaining 11°C. War brides called these Ladies “banana boats”.

The so-called Lady Boats were named after the wives of British Admirals. Lord and Lady Rodney moved to Fort Saskatchewan in 1919. They established Cottesmore Farm and farmed for over 40 years. Lady Margery Rodney, the daughter of Lord Lonsdale, was the first Alberta Provincial Commissioner of the Girl Guides. In 1963, they retired to Victoria, British Columbia. Lady Rodney died in 1973.



**Lady & Lord Rodney,
In Fort Saskatchewan**

Sailing from Montreal in 1939, Lady Rodney was radioed that war had been declared. The crew immediately painted the white ship a dull grey. In Bermuda, it was said that Canada was not at war. Going to the Bahamas, they repainted the ship her original white. At Nassau, the company advised that Canada was NOW at war and the ship must be painted wartime grey! While contemplating this, Captain Edward LeBlanc, was confronted by an excited female passenger concerned that her family was waiting for her in the States while he intended to sail to Jamaica through German U-boats. “What should I do, Captain,” she demanded. Replied LeBlanc: “Watch out for wet grey paint!”

During the war, four of the Lady Boats were sunk or badly damaged. Lady Rodney had a couple of narrow escapes when she was spotted by U-boats. By war's end, Lady Rodney had sailed 109,640 miles to carrying 59,568 service personnel and another 66,000 passengers.



In 1946, the two surviving Lady Boats, Nelson and Rodney, were assigned to bring war brides and their children from Britain to Canada through Halifax's Pier 21. These "Diaper Specials" continued for about a year making about 9 trips each with about 250 war brides aboard.

The ships were then extensively refitted and returned to their old West Indian routes. In 1952 they were sold to Egypt. Lady Rodney was renamed MECCA. She was scuttled in the Suez Canal during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.

MECCA Shortly After Sinking in 1967



Dominica issued a stamp commemorating the Lady Rodney and her role in the economy of the Caribbean Island. One of very few stamps showing a smaller war bride ship. Joan Corney nee Burrows, Joan Reichardt and Annie Sharp, were among the approximately 2250 war brides and dependents who arrived in Canada and Newfoundland aboard the Lady Rodney.

Respectfully submitted, Terry Lyster

Remember When

Remember when going to the seaside was a big event of summer? It could be a group outing on a charabanc, sometimes a Sunday School treat, sometimes a family outing. We would drive from Richmond to Horsham, meet up with Auntie Elsie and Uncle Harry and the cousins, and proceed from there. It could be Littlehampton, or Bognor, maybe Lancing or Shoreham, but the objective was to get onto the beach. We always took a picnic and as a small child I thought sandwiches were called that because when we ate them at the beach the wind was blowing and 'sand' was definitely one of the ingredients! Going into the water was a challenge, sometimes tucking the frock into knickers and the men rolling up the trouser legs and just having a paddle! Sometimes it was actually getting into the water and actually swimming!



Getting into the bathing costume was tricky, requiring towels as screens - or getting back into the car. Uncle Harry was usually the first in the water. He would be wearing his straw boater and would dive under the water so that his hat floated - much to my delight! I have wonderful memories of the seaside, although often huddled into cardigan and blanket as it was chilly and windy. Remember that cold wind coming in from the sea? Of course, we had sandcastles to build, with moats and perhaps a flag, then watching as the tide came in and the wonderful construction project was washed away. Just before the war the family rented a beach cottage at Shoreham. The 'cottages' were actually old railway carriages hooked together - quite wonderful to me - and right on the beach! Auntie Mabel had knitted me a new costume, blue on the bottom and pink on the top. The knicker part had elastic across the back and the top had a drawstring around the neck. It was wool, of course, and immediately soaked up the salt water making it so heavy, it pulled down! Oh, the embarrassment! To go into Shoreham we had to cross a toll footbridge which cost a ha'penny each way! There was a concert party that put on a show every night. I loved it and usually managed to convince someone to go. I don't think I missed a performance! One evening Auntie Mabel's sister and her friend (both student nurses) decided to go for a midnight swim and took me with them. As we approached the water we were hit with a terrible smell of rotting fish. It was a dead dolphin! There was no swim that night, but great excitement next day when a crew came to remove it! I do like to be beside the seaside still! No matter where we lived in Britain, we were never far from the sea. When I arrived in Canada on the Prairies it was hard to believe how far away it was!

Submitted by Joan Reichardt

Membership Renewal Time!

It's that time of year again when we need to renew our annual membership for the Canadian War Brides & Families. Membership renewals will go from August 1, 2014 – July 31, 2015. A Membership Renewal form is attached to this newsletter. For those of you attending the Reunion in London, Ontario August 8 – 10th, Membership forms will be available at the reunion and you can renew your membership at that time.

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