



Canadian War Brides and Families

Winter 2015

Greetings from President Jean

Hello to one and all!

Yes we are well into the New Year with good things to look forward to. I do hope this will be a healthy and happy one for everyone. I am getting more settled each day in my new home. It is not a brand new one but is a well-built older home which I moved from a farm to the small hamlet of Lone Rock, which is located 17 km south and 9 km east of Lloydminster.

As I mentioned in my last message, I hope we all *Stay Supreme* for 2015 and lo and behold here we are. I must congratulate our Calgary group of organizers as they have done a wonderful job of keeping prices low and still providing a very well balanced program.

I am looking forward to greeting lots of new members and renewing friendships gained over the past few years. Calgary is sure looking forward to our visit!

As ever,

Jean

REUNION 2015 CALGARY, Alberta – Coast Plaza Hotel May 29, 30, 31, 2015

Your Registration form is included with this quarterly newsletter and we encourage everyone to join us for a fun filled week-end at the Coast Plaza Hotel. Hotel room rates start at \$119 plus taxes per night based on single/double occupancy and you should reserve your room early to avoid disappointment. Reservations can be made by calling the hotel directly @ 1-403-248-8888 or toll free @ 1-800-661-1464 and be sure to tell them you're part of the Canadian War Brides & Families Reunion Group. Our special room rate is also available 3 days before and 3 days after the Reunion week-end. This hotel provides complimentary airport shuttle service too.

Registration at the hotel will happen on Friday from 1:00 – 4:00 pm in the Foyer and we will have a Hospitality Suite in the Whitehorn/Pineridge Room open to all participants at specific times on Friday & Saturday. Come to the Hospitality Suite and enjoy a nice cuppa, a biscuit, and a good old chin wag!!! Our AGM will be on Saturday morning from 10 to 11 am in Garden Court 1 and we'd love to have a full house to discuss the future of our Organization and Reunion 2016 in Halifax. Our usual Church Service will be Sunday morning @ 9 am in the Whitehorn/Pineridge Room, followed by Brunch in the Garden Courts.

Due to a lot of hard work and effort of War Bride daughters **Lynn Martin and Joan Beaton**, we have received a very generous donation from the ANAVETS (The Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada) which has allowed us to reduce the registration fees to \$75.00 for our Canadian War Brides. Registration fees for everyone else are \$115.00 for members and \$130.00 for non-members.





We've also organized a bus tour for Sunday afternoon from Calgary to the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel for Afternoon Tea! Cost is \$95 per person which includes round trip transportation from our hotel to Banff and an Afternoon Tea Experience at the Banff Springs Hotel. You'll enjoy a selection of Fairmont brand teas and goodies such as fresh fruit, finger sandwiches, and pastries. Time permitting we will have a quick tour of Banff before heading back to our hotel in Calgary. Please complete the attached `Optional Tours` form if you are planning on taking in this additional tour.

We are still working on other bits of fun & entertainment for the week-end and promise that you'll have a wonderful time reminiscing with old friends & new. Hope to see you all in Calgary!

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Canadian War Brides and Families will be held on Saturday, May 30, 2015 at 10:00 am in the Garden Court 1 at the Coast Plaza Hotel, Calgary, Alberta . Meeting is open to all members

REUNION 2016 – Halifax, Nova Scotia **May 20, 21 & 22, 2016, Westin Nova Scotian Hotel**

We know, we know. You haven't got your Registration forms for Reunion 2015 submitted and we're already talking about Reunion 2016!?!? We're just so excited about celebrating the 70th Anniversary of when most of our War Bride Mums arrived in Canada, that we've started planning the PARTY!!! And of course, what better place than Halifax and Pier 21. For those of you that took the War Bride Train in 2006 from Montreal to Halifax, you'll be familiar with our hotel – the Westin Nova Scotian. Located at the VIA Rail Station and within view of Pier 21, this grand old lady will be the perfect location for Reunion 2016. We have the hotel dates secured, Pier 21 staff are excited to host an event for our War Brides & family members, and we're working on invitations for special guests to join us. The Stadacona Band from CFB Halifax/Maritime Forces Atlantic is tentatively booked and we've got lots of time to work on all the other details – we hope. So mark your calendars, start saving your Air Miles, and look for your Reunion Registration form for Halifax 2016 in our Fall newsletter.



The Military Museums in Calgary

Lindsey Sharman, on behalf of the Military Museums in Calgary, is offering to provide free round trip transportation to the Military Museums, as well as a tea while at the Museums for any of our Canadian War Brides and Family members attending the reunion. If you are interested in participating in this, please complete the `Optional Tours` form attached. Further details will be provided at registration on Friday, May 29, 2015.

The Military Museums consists of **eight** distinct museums and galleries under one roof. These include the Naval, Army, and Air Force Museums of Alberta, the four regimental army museums and The Military Museums Library and Archives (University of Calgary) in addition to The Founders' Gallery (University of Calgary). The Founders' Gallery is host to approximately five separate exhibitions every year. From May to August of 2015 two exhibitions relating to the liberation of Holland will be on view.

Trees Heeft een Canadees Dutch War Brides by Beverley Tosh

Brief romances with Canadian soldiers during the Second World War often grew into lifelong love and forever altered the lives of many Dutch women, thousands of who traveled to Canada to be with their wartime loves after the war. Artist Beverley Tosh shares many of their impressive stories in *Trees Heeft een Canadees*. *Trees Heeft een Canadees*, or *Teresa Has A Canadian*, is a popular Dutch song telling the common story of many of these women: like Loes who married in her Dutch army uniform and Olga who made her own wedding dress from a parachute. After their marriages the Canadian soldiers left for home and the young women waited for a ship to take them to their loved ones—a one way passage to Canada. Many would never see their families again. Upon arrival in a strange country they often found that their new home was a wooden cabin on the prairie and their existence was full of poverty and deprivation. But the occupation and liberation period had strengthened these young women and many would do anything for love.

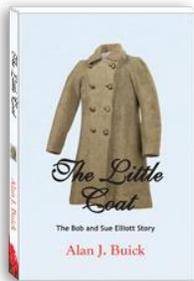
This exhibition will consist of 23 wedding portraits and stories of Dutch women meeting their Canadian soldiers, all researched by Beverley Tosh, herself a daughter of a war bride. The exhibition also includes an original wedding dress made from a parachute, and documents, photos and films showing stories of the deep connections between Canadian soldiers and the people of Holland.

The Maple Leaf and the tulip: The Liberation of Holland in the Second World War

This exhibit will include artifacts and photos related to members of the Canadian military serving in the Netherlands in the Second World War, as well as to Dutch civilians and members of the Dutch Resistance. Video oral history interviews will also be shown as a central part of the exhibit, to let visitors understand the firsthand experience.

The exhibit will open May 5, 2015, coinciding with the 70th anniversary of the final campaign to liberate the Netherlands. Full coverage of Canadian involvement in the Netherlands will be showcased, including the reduction of the Breskens pocket, the clearing of the Scheldt estuary, and the final campaign in 1945 towards Apeldoorn and beyond. Operation Manna, the resupply of the starving Dutch populace at the end of the war, will also be featured.

The Little Coat



This is the true story about a 10 year old Dutch girl who befriended some Canadian soldiers in 1944. The actual 'little coat' will be on display at the Military Museum in Calgary when our War Bride Reunion is on. For more information on the internet go to www.thelittlecoat.com. The 10 year old Dutch girl and the 19 year old Canadian tank commander ended up reuniting decades later, fell in love and were married.

SONIA D'ARTOIS



SONIA (TONI) ESMEE FLORENCE D'ARTOIS nee BUTT b1924 05 14 Eastchurch, Kent; d2014 12 21 Montreal, QC. Married Major Lionel Guy D'Artois DSO GM b1917 d1999. Served WAAF, FANY & SOE. Mentioned in Despatches & awarded MBE for dangerous wartime service in German occupied France.

(entry in Canadian War Bride Record, a project by Terry Lyster)

All war brides are notable. We note with regret the recent passing of an iconic Canadian war bride, Sonia D'Artois.

Born in Kent, Sonia was brought up by her mother in the south of France. At the outbreak of WWII, she returned to England and joined the WAAF where she performed clerical work. After transferring to the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry, she was recruited to the Special Operations executive, F Section for training as an agent. Here she met Canadian Army Officer Guy D'Artois. Nine days before D-Day she parachuted into North West France near La Crote as "Suzanne Bonvie" to help train the Maquis in the use of explosives and weapons.

She delivered messages, money and supplies over long distances by bicycle, often sleeping in barns and haystacks. In June she was stopped at a German roadblock, interrogated and locked up. Her papers stood up to examination and she was released.

While waiting for a container drop with the Maquis in the forest of Charnie, she barely escaped capture by the Gestapo in part due to the sacrifice of a fellow agent Eugene Bec. Her commander, Sydney Hudson, was encouraged by Sonia's refusal to let this near disaster get her down. After D-Day she engaged in behind-the-lines sabotage of trains, canals, bridges and fuel dumps as well as attacks on enemy troops. In August 1944, she helped reconnoiter the area between the Seine and the Marne Rivers, paving the way for successful attacks by Patton's US Third Army. She reunited with (then) Captain Guy D'Artois in September. They went to Canada after the war, settling near Montreal. They had three sons and three daughters and many, many further adventures.

Based on an obit in The Telegraph and web sources.



Article submitted by Terry Lyster

My Opa – A Canadian Soldier

Sherrie Rains, War Bride Oma, Olga Rains joined her on the Taz show on FM96 in London, Ontario on Remembrance Day 2014 to talk about her experience in occupied Holland during WW2 where she met a Canadian soldier, Lloyd Rains, that she would marry in the future. She also speaks about her amazing work reuniting over 4000 kids that were born after WW2 with their fathers.

My Opa, Lloyd Rains, a Canadian soldier from Sault St. Marie signed up to join the military when he was just 17 years old. He lied about his age so that they would let him fight. Lloyd fought on the front lines for 3 years in total, taking him through Italy, France, Belgium, Germany and Holland. It's amazing he didn't die, or even get seriously injured.

Opa was never one to talk about the war. He'd politely answer questions we had as kids growing up, but never offered more. He wanted to forget that it had ever happened. Regular nightmares and shrapnel in his hands and arms would not let him. He lost many friends and comrades. His best friend, Jack Purvous, stepped on a land-mine right in front of them in the closing days of the war in Holland. My Oma, Olga Trestorff, was a Dutch girl. Her father was a banker and her mother a cigar shop owner. They were quite successful until the Nazis invaded. They lost their business and starved for years. Food was scarce; they survived off of lard and tulip bulbs. Oma, just a teen, lived in fear every day knowing she might die any time.

Thankfully the war came to a close in 1945. It was a time of celebration and joy! Canadian soldiers were praised for liberating the country. Young European women and Canadian soldiers were finding love after a horrific 6 years. That's when Lloyd and Olga met. He stopped her on her bicycle and asked if he could take it for a spin. She said sure, for a chocolate bar. The rest is history. Lloyd and Olga got married, both the age of 20, at city hall in Haarlem. Olga was a talented seamstress and made her wedding dress out of a war parachute that was used to drop food for the starving Dutch people.



Olga then moved to Canada to start her new life with her Canadian soldier, in Hamilton. Three sons and many years later, Lloyd and Olga returned to Holland for a Remembrance Day celebration. The Canadian soldiers were honoured while marching in a parade. During the parade Lloyd and Olga noticed many young adults holding signs saying "Are you my Dad?". This didn't sit well with them. After taking the time to talk to a number of people they discovered how many European women were impregnated by soldiers in the celebratory summer of 1945, and were left to raise these kids on their own because the soldiers returned to their home country. Many soldiers didn't even realize they had gotten these young girls pregnant.

Lloyd and Olga made it their life mission to find these war children their Canadian soldier fathers, and spent decades of their retirement years committed to reuniting families. In a time without internet, nor any assistance from the government. There are many sad stories and many happy ones. All in all my grandparents found the fathers to over 4,000 war children. In fact, one of those war Children was Eric "Slowhand" Clapton. They've written many books, been on several TV programs and even had a movie made after them. My oma was also Knighted by the Dutch queen, Beatrix. As you can see, I am one proud granddaughter.

My opa passed away just after his 88th birthday (a year and a half ago). Oma, 89, is a whipper-snapper and still going strong! She often thinks about Opa and his comrade Jack being reunited in heaven. That makes her happy!

I know there are many of you whose fathers, grandfathers or great grandfathers also fought in the war so you realize how important this day is.

Thank you for listening to this very special part of my history. Please take the time to thank a veteran today, we cannot comprehend the lasting effects their courage and willingness to sacrifice on behalf of others has had on their lives. The pain they went through and devastation they witnessed first hand is unimaginable for most.

I'm honoured to be related to two real life heroes, Lloyd and Olga Rains. Opa, thank you for the legacy you left behind. I cannot wait to see you again someday.

By Sherrie Rains

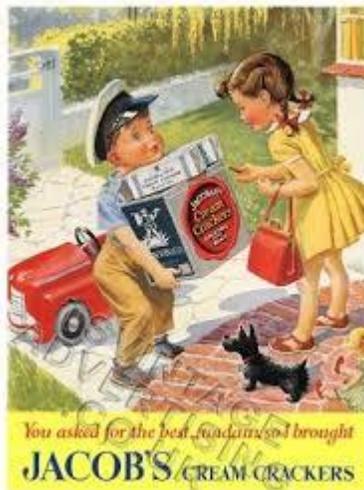
Remember When

Remember when we could buy a magazine for 3d - and it would have a couple of serials, a short story or two, helpful hints, the advice page - and very little advertising. I have a copy of Home Chat, dated March 21st 1945!! I have no idea why I kept it - or why I brought it to Canada with me or why I still have it. I can find nothing noteworthy in it but it is a real window on life as it was not long before the end of the war. On the cover (which is in colour!) it says 'Renovate your frock with knitting' and gives you the pattern inside! It also shows you how to turn what looks to me like my school uniform felt hat into something up to date and stylish! One of the ads tells us we can get a packet of Persil for 4d and 1 coupon! Would that have been from 'Points' or did we get separate coupons for soap? I don't remember.



It tells us that Mansion Polish is in short supply and to use sparingly and it tells us to send cash and coupons for our new corset, although maternity 'belts' are coupon free! It offers Camelia sanitary towels, with loops, and you can get 2 ounces of grey sock wool for 8d and 1 coupon. Jacobs Cream Crackers are 'available only within limited area until after the war'. Other items are only in limited areas, and we are told we have to wait for Peek Freans biscuits and Blue Cap processed cheese until after the War! We are told to use Jeyes Fluid as all the doctors are in the services! Lux Toilet Soap was 4d and 1 coupon, recipes include dried eggs and a stew made with neck of lamb. Mrs. Jim gives advice and one sad letter is from a girl whose fiancé is a prisoner of war in Germany and wants to break the engagement, and she says 'I'm so afraid he has tired of our love'. And then of course there is 'Beauty at Home', and the latest films, with Cary Grant in *Arsenic and Old Lace*. What a stroll down memory lane!

Cheers, Joan



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