



# Canadian War Brides and Families

Spring 2017

## Greetings from President Joan

We are on our countdown to Ottawa and hoping for more Reunion registrations as our numbers are disappointing. I have spoken to several War Brides who are just not able to travel and we know our numbers are dwindling.

The Canadian War Brides & Families Association started out as a determined idea from War Bride Jean Fells in 2010. I attended that last Saskatchewan War Brides reunion at the Hilton Garden Inn in Saskatoon with my 2 older daughters. We immediately joined with Jean to make her dream a reality. We met again in 2011 in Saskatoon where Jean became the Association President, I was Vice-President, Lynn Martin was our Treasurer, and my daughters Lorna & Janet took on the jobs of Secretary & Director. This was not the plan but there were few volunteers for Executive positions. At Reunion 2012 at the Bessborough Hotel in Saskatoon, Lynn Martin was moving to Scotland and Janet took on the Treasurer's job! At this same Reunion Sandi Jeffs became a Director and we ended up with a 'quartet' of Executive members all from Nelson, British Columbia. The four of us have worked well together and kept everyone 'in the loop', put in countless hours to make sure each & every War Bride reunion was successful & enjoyed by our membership, and given a whole new meaning to 'scrounging' for donations to help offset the Reunion registration fees.

Early last year I was diagnosed with a serious and very painful back condition. I had to cancel my trip to England to see Bev's paintings at Canada House and barely managed to get to Halifax for Reunion 2016. As the Association President, I struggled to chair that Annual General Meeting, but in pain and heavily medicated with painkillers, I was not at my best. I was most definitely not prepared for the unexpected chaos and fury that occurred at this meeting. We later realized that we had allowed non-members into this meeting and that there were also members in attendance that were 'members not in good standing' due to unpaid membership fees.

We had not properly screened those that attended the Annual General Meeting and later discovered that during the Elections we had unknowingly allowed non-members to nominate other non-members for Executive positions. In the end after consulting with our governing body – Saskatchewan Corporate Registry – and the Royal Canadian Legion, we had no choice but to call the 2016 Election – NULL & VOID. This was a very difficult and time consuming process but I am confident that the right decision was made.

Sadly, not everyone has agreed with the Executive's decision which has unfortunately led to nasty e-mails directed to members of the Executive and warnings from other supportive members to 'watch your back' and 'look out for factions within our organization'.

The Canadian War Brides & Families Association was the result of War Bride Jean Fells' dream to honour & support War Brides and to keep our histories & contributions to Canada & Canadians alive! Your Executive has done an incredible job by working countless hours as volunteers and they all deserve your support - NOT CRITICISM!

After such a difficult year, I have decided to not stand for re-election. Our War Bride numbers are decreasing every year and who knows how long this organization can carry on. I wish the new Executive much luck and hope that your efforts for the Canadian War Brides & Families Association will be appreciated and respected by the entire membership.

Cheers!

Joan

## Canadian War Brides & Families Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Canadian War Brides and Families will be held on Saturday, May 20, 2017 at 10:00 – 11:00 am in the Les Saisons – Level 3 at the Westin Ottawa Hotel, Ottawa, Ontario. Meeting is open to all members and we would request all members to please bring their membership card with them.

Anyone interested in putting their name forward or nominating someone for an executive position, can contact Jean Fells, Nominating Committee Chair by email at [canadianwarbrides@netidea.com](mailto:canadianwarbrides@netidea.com)

In order to nominate someone for an Executive position, BOTH THE NOMINATOR AND THE NOMINEE MUST BE MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING.

Our current Executive for the year August 1, 2016 – July 31, 2017 is as follows:

President - Joan Reichardt  
Vice-President – Lynn Martin  
Secretary – Lorna Staten  
Treasurer – Janet Leahy  
Director – Sandi Jeffs  
Director – Grace Shewan  
Past-President – Jean Fells

The current incumbents for President, Secretary, Treasurer and both Director positions WILL NOT be letting their names stand for any Executive positions.

## WAR BRIDE STORIES

Our website includes a page for `War Bride Stories` and anyone wishing to submit their story or their War Bride Mum`s story may do so at any time. We know there are many more amazing War Bride stories to be told and if you would like to share your story and help keep the War Bride`s story alive, you can submit your story anytime by mailing it to Canadian War Brides and Families, c/o 215 West Beasley Street. Nelson, BC V1L 3K4. You can also download the form from our website: ([www.canadianwarbridesandfamilies.ca](http://www.canadianwarbridesandfamilies.ca)).

To check out the stories already posted to our website go to:  
<http://www.canadianwarbridesandfamilies.ca/war-bride-stories/>

# Calling all War Brides & Family Members!!!!

## Reunion 2017 – May 19 – 21, 2017

### Westin Ottawa Hotel, Ottawa, Ontario

What better way to celebrate Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> Birthday than to spend a warm & sunny week-end in Ottawa for Reunion 2017!!! The annual Tulip Festival will be in its final week, the Rideau Canal is right outside our hotel, and the beautiful Parliament Buildings are just a short walk away! We can't promise sunny weather but we are confident that it will be a fun & memorable week-end at the Ottawa Westin for our 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian War Brides & Families Reunion!!!

We are still accepting registrations for the Reunion and the Ottawa Westin has a few rooms left in our block space. Registration fees & hotel costs are definitely higher for this Reunion but we are in the Nation's Capital during a very special & busy year. Don't forget that if you call the hotel and find out that our block space is sold out, arrangements have been made with the nearby Ottawa Novotel for the same nightly room rate of \$199 plus taxes. Both hotels are located by the Rideau Centre shopping mall where you'll find lots of stores & restaurants to explore.

The Canadian War Brides & Families Association began in 2011 as a Registered Corporation with the Saskatchewan Corporate Registry office. Our first Reunion was held at the Ramada Inn in Saskatoon in August 2011 (76 Registrants), our second at the Delta Bessborough Hotel in Saskatoon in August 2012 (81 Registrants), our third at the Fairmont Empress Hotel in Victoria in April 2013 (198 Registrants), our fourth at the Delta Armouries Hotel in London in August 2014 (126 Registrants), our fifth at the Coast Plaza Hotel in Calgary (90 Registrants), our sixth at the Westin Nova Scotian in Halifax in May 2016 (142 Registrants), and now we're heading to Ottawa and the Ottawa Westin Hotel for Reunion 2017. Our Registration numbers for Ottawa are not as high as expected but also not surprising when you consider that none of us are getting any younger and the costs of travel, hotels, & Reunion fees have increased.

Your Executive's Reunion Committee puts in countless hours to make our annual Reunions as enjoyable & affordable as possible. We hope for good health, safe travels, and lots of fun & laughs at Reunion 2017 in Ottawa!!!



*Canada's 150<sup>th</sup>  
Birthday Tulip*



## Remember When . . . .

Remember when we walked up that gangplank onto the ship that was to take us so far away? Remember looking back as England faded away, wondering when we would see the land of our birth again? To sail across the Atlantic was a totally new experience for almost all of us - I had never been on anything on water bigger than the little steamers that took day trippers up and down the Thames.

It was truly a leap of faith, faith in the men we had married, faith in our own ability to adapt and survive in a new country, faith in the future!



I have referred before to all those ships that brought us to Canada as an 'Armada of Optimism'! Was that optimism misplaced? I think most of us who are still around would say 'no'. We have survived, we have adapted, we have brought up our families to be good Canadian citizens but also to be aware of the proud history we brought with us.

Now we celebrate the 150th birthday of Canada! We have been part of Canada's history for almost half of that, we have contributed to this country in many ways.

We have been volunteers involved in the communities wherever we settled, and we have produced many, many new young citizens! We now have some of our 'girls' who are great-great grandmothers! We never saw that happening.

So, Happy Birthday, Canada - or as we used to say 'Many happy returns of the day'!

Submitted by Joan Reichardt

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

*Our Website: [www.canadianwarbridesandfamilies.ca](http://www.canadianwarbridesandfamilies.ca)*

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