

**Newsletter**  
**Volume VI Edition I**  
**Spring 2006**

*In this issue:*

- ❖ A story of Romance
- ❖ Ball Caps
- ❖ Letters of Interest
- ❖ Final Comps

***Editors Ramble***  
**By David Smith**

I blinked – and there went 2005! But not before we enjoyed our 2<sup>nd</sup> and especially memorable national CM Reunion oh-five. Here I thought we would have plenty of time to prepare and before I knew it, it was time to get “dressed for the party”. And what a party it was – led off by a Friday evening of meets and greets, complete with a historical artefacts display, a slide show of “The way we were” and a photographer to record the evening for posterity.

Saturday evening was all we hoped for and more. A great meal, lots of prizes, a very exciting presentation by our “Belly Dancers” and the highlight of the evening, a keynote speech by our former Secretary of State, Miss Flora MacDonald.

Already people are asking when the next reunion will be. Good question and first we must catch our breath and review the event for ways to ensure your continued enjoyment of these occasions to meet former friends and colleagues.

It was the highlight of the year for me – I hope it was for you also!

Happy Reading.

# The Communicator



This Newsletter is published by and for members and associate members of the Association of Former Foreign Service Communicators. Check us out at: [www.affsc.ca](http://www.affsc.ca)

***A Story of Romance in External Affairs - Part I***  
**By George Levasseur**

It all began in October 1962 in Paris where I had been posted two years before. A new communicator was being posted from Ottawa to Paris and as was the custom then, a staff member from our office would go to the airport to pick up the new employee. As I happened to be the only single person in the office at the time, Jean Bleau our supervisor asked me if I felt like picking up that new employee. I already had been advised that the employee was female so of course I agreed to go, at least to check out the “moychandise”. At the airport, we usually got to go on the tarmac where we could hold up a “Canadian Embassy” sign in order to make it easier for the new arrivals.

The mission driver and I were both standing there watching

the passengers exit the plane when my eye caught sight of a nice looking blond coming down the stairs. I would be lying if I said I didn't suspect it could be the new girl and the next moment, she came toward us. My heart was pounding and I couldn't believe how beautiful she was. She walked up to me and introduced herself to both of us and after picking up her bags we proceeded back to town to book her into the hotel.



As we were driving into town, I was figuring out a way to impress her so as I could begin a relationship with her. I wanted to do this before she reported to work at the Embassy where she would be hounded by all those wolves at the Embassy; the likes of our old departed friend Henry Fluet, Marcel Seguin, Ron Wensel and Gaston (Sam) Samson who also were single at that particular time. There were also all the other single guys in administration at the Embassy, so, I knew that Georgie had to make all the right moves.

At the hotel, we booked her in and helped her up to her room with her bags. By this time it was almost 4 PM. I asked her if she had eaten anything and if she was hungry? Much to my delight, she said she could eat something so I offered to take her out for something to eat. I suggested she take her time, freshen up and I would return to pick her up in my car. WHAT A SETUP! That was exactly what I had been hoping for all along. (I must add here that I was also being sympathetic to her as I had gone through some culture shock and I didn't wish her to go through the same experience!)

There was a nice Italian restaurant I knew and patronized on a regular basis because of its nice atmosphere and wonderful food, which I thought was an ideal place to start practicing my romanticizing. This restaurant was approximately 4 stories high and had a multitude of different levels and small private rooms, ideal for the situation. Of course, as a gentleman should, I explained the menu and the wines to her, and we had a terrific meal. Before taking her back to the hotel, we went on a mini tour of the main sites in Paris, including the Embassy where she was about to work.

While eating, I told her about the communicator she was replacing. There was a party planned for that person in a few days and I suggested I could pick her up and bring her to the party where I could introduce her to the people at the Embassy. She was very impressed and I guess she must have been somewhat interested because she did not hesitate to say “yes” and “thank you very much”. I must say that the job was well done because from that day on we courted and all the wolves around the Embassy got the message that we were interested in each other.

One big problem occurred two years down the road when my posting was over and I was getting ready to return home. We were pretty serious at that stage and had, in our conversations, touched on the subject of marriage. The problem was, as you all know, the fact that returning to Canada meant that we might not see each other for a long time and perhaps never again unless I was reassigned close to Paris which would allow me to visit.

I returned home and began my duties in the Ottawa comcentre always thinking of my girlfriend in Paris and how I could possibly arrange something so that we could be together and get married. I decided to go and speak to our boss Stan Daly. I sat down with him and told him I had somewhat of a problem. He asked “What’s the problem”? I answered that I wanted to get married. He smiled and in a typical Stan Daly reply said “Getting married is not a problem”. He knew about our relationship because of his many courier trips to Paris and in fact, he knew my girlfriend Madeleine. He then asked me what I had in mind. I explained by asking if he could bring Madeleine back to Ottawa so as we could be together. He replied that Treasury board wouldn’t like that at all because of Madeleine’s short stay (1 ½ years) but that there might be other possibilities. He asked me to give him some time to think about it and he would get back to me. I must admit that I didn’t have too much faith in what would or could be done. I assumed I would get a typical run around although I had to put my trust in Stan because he was that kind of a man and one could trust his word.

Two weeks later having just gone to bed after working on the midnight shift, I received a phone call from the office. The lady where I boarded woke me up to answer a call from Stan Daly. He apologized for waking me up but was quick to add that I would not be disappointed with the call. Could I come and see him sometime during the day regarding a proposition he had for me. I could not wait any longer so I got dressed and rushed to his office.

**\*\*\* End of Part I \*\*\* Oh no!**

***Ball caps - “Foreign Service Communications”  
By John Roy and Merv McBride***

After searching for suppliers, choosing designs, colours and examining costs for caps and postage, John and Merv started up their own “Caps R Us” production run. With a smile, it was explained that the burgandy and gold cap colours represented the burgandy CM’s were fond of and the gold lettering signified the gold CM’s didn’t get! John and Merv went to great lengths to keep costs down, (even with embroidery vice silk screening) and came up with a title that both CM’s & EL’s would be happy with. After the manufacturer discontinued the original design, they had to switch to grey. Who said CM’s aren’t resourceful!!



Foreign Service Communications Ball caps

*Two letters of interest* 1. Letter to the editor of "The Communicator"

Dear David,

If you agree, the following item might be included in an early issue of the Former Foreign Service Communicators newsletter:

*The Citizens of Ottawa*  
*September 11, 1980*  
*to*  
*Kenneth D. Taylor, O.C.*  
*Laverna Dollimore, O.M.*  
*Roger Lucy, C.M.*  
*Mary O'Flaherty, C.M.*  
*John V. Sheardown, C.M.*  
*Master Corporal G. E. Brian, M.M.M. C.D.*  
*Sergeant J. G. Edward, M.M.M. C.D.*  
*Sergeant J. R. N. E. Gauthier, M.M.M. C.D.*  
*In recognition of their heroic performance at the Canadian*  
*Embassy in Iran.*  
*November 8, 1979*  
*January 28, 1980*

Such is the English language inscription on a plaque on the grounds of the old city hall on Sussex Drive. With time these names have faded into obscurity so it seems appropriate that we recall them, highlighting Mary O'Flaherty as the on-site communicator at the Canadian Embassy in Teheran. Mary was stationed in Teheran when the Iranians overran the American Embassy and took hostage many of the Americans working there. Fortunately some Americans found shelter in the Canadian Embassy. Mary played a key role in that tense episode, maintaining a vital communications link with Ottawa and, through Ottawa, to Washington. Without those communications links the eventual rescue of the Americans sheltered at the Canadian Embassy could never have materialized.

Though their names are not listed on the plaque, it also seems appropriate that we should remember all the communicators who processed dispatches to and from Teheran and our Diplomatic Couriers who played a significant role. Their careful initiatives and observations contributed to the gathering and transmission of information critical to the execution of the escape plan. We pay tribute to this large pool of talent working behind the scenes who protected the secret until the rescue operation was completed. Our congratulations to all those involved.

The incident earned international acclaim for Canadians but how unfortunate that the commemorative plaque is located on the lawns of the old Ottawa City Hall. This fact seems to lend credence to the thought that a person is without honour in his own home environment while accolades pour in from outsiders. Would it not be appropriate to relocate this plaque to a prominent site on the walls of the lobby of the Lester B. Pearson Building? Surely such a gentle gesture is long overdue.

Signed by: Thurlow E. Arbuckle, Former Director of Telecommunications (Retired)

P.S. Full marks go to Miss E. Ryan for her contribution to the revival of this story.  
cc Mr. Peter Harder

**2. Letter to Mr. Peter Harder, USS for Foreign Affairs**

Dear Sir,

Subject: Commemorative Plaque

Reference: Attached letter addressed to the Editor of the Newsletter of the Association of Former Foreign Service Communicators for publication therein.

I believe the Department should address a long-standing anomaly concerning the brilliant episode masterminded by External Affairs and executed with major contributions from the Telecommunications Division. I refer to the Canadian role played in the protection and rescue of a number of Americans sheltering in the Canadian Embassy in Teheran, when the Iranians captured the American Embassy in Teheran, along with many of its staff.

The incident earned international acclaim for Canada. Such deeds not only define the Foreign Affairs Department but also are a source of great pride for all Canadians.

The City of Ottawa erected a plaque on the lawn of the old Ottawa City Hall on Sussex Drive commemorating the event, thus honouring the principal participants. Even though this city initiative was much appreciated, surely the Department should now claim credit for the expertise and bravery of its employees and show visible signs of its appreciation.

My suggestion is that the Department consider moving the plaque to a prominent place on the walls of the lobby of the Lester B. Pearson building where many more people could admire it and be inspired by the heroic deeds of past employees.

For your consideration. Signed by Thurlow E. Arbuckle Former Director of Telecommunications (Retired)

cc – Mr. David Smith, Editor, Foreign Service Communicators newsletter.

*Editors note: Mr Harders office was contacted on December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2005 and Mr Arbuckle has received word that the agreement (with the City who owns the plaque and PWGSC who will be the custodian of the plaque after transfer) will be reviewed and signed sometime early in 2006. Mr. Arbuckle deserves our thanks for a great initiative.*

\* \* \*

**Final Comps “In memoriam”**

***Members and friends of the CM/EL community to whom we have said goodbye in 2005***

George Bellamy	June 26, 2004 – (only recently discovered by Jacques Bergeron)
Serge Pelletier,	January 1, 2005
Paul Glynn,	February 26, 2005
Gordon Nash,	April 23, 2005
Ted Warren,	May 1, 2005
Norm Schroeder,	July 19, 2005
Russ Scott,	December 22, 2005