



COUNTLESS JOURNEYS. ONE CANADA.



It has been 25 years since the Museum's opening day.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

On July 1, 1999, Pier 21 re-opened its doors to the public. It was a special day. The Royal Canadian Navy escorted a group of War Brides down the harbour on the HMCS Preserver, to disembark at Pier 21 more than 50 years after their original trans-Atlantic crossing. Broadcast live on CBC Newsworld and hosted by CBC personality and Pier 21 alumnus Hanna Gartner, the opening ceremony included representatives of each of the main groups who once passed through Pier 21; an immigrant, a refugee, a Veteran, a War Bride and a British Evacuee Child.

The CBC set design team in Halifax built a puzzle for the event in the shape of the Canadian flag. One by

one, each representative came to the stage and placed their missing piece in the puzzle. This stage prop, created to mark our opening, still graces our stage in the *Kenneth C. Rowe Hall* a quarter century later.

Several traditions began that day. **On every Canada Day since 1999** (except during the COVID-19 pandemic), **the Museum has opened to the public free of charge**, with special programming and celebrations on offer. Twenty-five years ago, a citizenship ceremony was a core part of the event, another continuing tradition. Becoming a Canadian citizen is a huge milestone in the immigration process.

Continued From Page 1

Including this ceremony in our Canada Day celebrations remains very important to us.

But much has changed as well.

The most significant change to the Museum occurred in 2011 when it was designated as Canada's national immigration museum. Our name changed and our purpose evolved. Now, in addition to telling the story of immigrants who'd arrived through this national historic site, we tell the larger story of immigration to this land, from first contact with Indigenous peoples to the very recent past.

The next 25 years will bring more change - to our Museum and our society. But celebrating the contributions of immigrants to Canada will always be at the heart of what we do.

-Jennifer Sutherland, VP, External Relations

MARIE'S MESSAGE

It is 25 years since the Museum opened its doors to the public- a real milestone. So, of course, it's highly fitting that the theme for this issue of *Passages* is **Opening Doors**.

Passages is a publication for current and future supporters of the Museum. We are able to keep our doors open because of people like you who believe in our mission. At the risk of overdoing the metaphor, you are the keys that unlock the richness of the Museum to the public.



One of the ways that this happened this year was *pARTicipate*, a series of winter weekend art programs and workshops held during what is usually the quietest time of year for us. That series was made possible by a generous donation from Fred and Elizabeth Fountain.

Donations help us create public and educational programs and exhibitions. In this issue, you'll hear about some of these initiatives. You'll find a story about a new exhibition that tells the story of Canada opening its doors to Kosovar refugees fleeing war at home in May of 1999. You'll read about artist-in-residence shalan joudry's work, which opened doors for her collaborating artists, translators, and audience to learn and appreciate more about the Mi'kmaq relationship to homeland. And you'll read about how a donation from Emera enabled us to open our doors to make the Museum accessible to kids and visitors of all ages during March Break.

Our doors are open because of you. I hope you enjoy this peek inside the Museum and the things we've been up to, and I look forward to your next visit.

Marie Chapman

Marie Chapman,

Chief Executive Officer



Left: A photo of Kosovar refugees published in the Chronicle Herald in May of 1999, by Tim Krochak. **Right:** Filmmaker Arta Rexhepi speaks at the opening of *Operation Parasol: Urgent need, swift action*, a special exhibition about the thousands of Kosovar refugees who came to Canada 25 years ago.

25 YEARS AFTER CANADA'S OPERATION PARASOL

Two smiling boys hold teddy bears and wave small Canadian flags - they've just landed at the Canadian Forces Base in Greenwood, Nova Scotia and have received welcome gifts. Behind them, Red Cross volunteers and military officials assist families with their arrival. It is May 6, 1999. Flights are arriving almost daily, loaded with refugees from Kosovo. It is a hopeful snapshot against the backdrop of a brutal civil war that forced hundreds of thousands to flee.

In May 2024, the Museum hosted the 25th anniversary event for the Kosovar community in Canada, with hundreds of Kosovar Canadians coming to Halifax to grieve, honour and celebrate. Two teddy bears even joined the commemorations (you can find them in our exhibit!). The event also marked the opening of **a new exhibit that commemorates the anniversary of Kosovar refugees' arrival in Canada** and shares the remarkable story of Canada's response to the humanitarian crisis.

By April 1999, nearly 800,000 Kosovars had fled their homes, facing violence and discrimination from Serbian authorities. Canada responded by initiating a plan for the temporary resettlement of 5,000 Kosovar refugees known as Operation Parasol. This was a

collaborative effort involving Canadian officials, military personnel, the Canadian Red Cross, and voluntary service organizations.

Refugees arrived at Canadian Forces Bases in Ontario and Nova Scotia where nearly 1,000 Red Cross volunteers provided support during their stay. The refugees had the option of eventually resettling with private sponsors, which opened the door for an additional 2,000 Kosovar refugees to come to Canada and join their families.

Beyond immediate aid, Canada's response had a lasting impact. While one-third of the Kosovars returned to their homeland after the conflict, most stayed in Canada and maintained close connections to family back home. The legacy of Operation Parasol demonstrates that effective collaboration can save lives, ultimately highlighting the importance of international support in addressing humanitarian challenges.

- Sara England, Assistant Curator



A CHANCE TO HONOUR THEIR CONTRIBUTION AND REMEMBER THEIR SACRIFICE.

Nearly 400,000 military personnel departed from Pier 21 during the Second World War to serve their country.

At Pier 21, on the very spot where they boarded ships bound for Europe, stands the *Wall of Service*.

It provides a way for families to **commemorate service men and women**, including those who served in the **Merchant Navy**. It **also recognizes the War Brides** who came to Canada during and after the war. 44,000 War Brides and their 22,000 children disembarked at Pier 21.

Limited time and space

Space is limited on the *Wall of Service*. The time to honour a loved one with a commemorative plaque is now. **The Museum plans to fill the remaining plaques before the end of 2025**, to coincide with the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

Your family member was a part of history. This is your opportunity to **memorialize their service to their country at Pier 21**, a site of national significance to Canadians.

Your donation of \$500 gives you:

- A commemorative plaque inscribed with the rank and name of the person you choose to recognize on the *Museum's Wall of Service* in the *Anne Risley Gateway*, Pier 21 Halifax.
- A replica commemorative plaque displayed on our *Virtual Wall of Service*.
- An opportunity to share their story on the virtual wall.
- A card, sent by the Museum to the honouree or another family member letting them know about your gift.

Contact Maria Almeida, *Donor Relations Manager*
malmeyda@pier21.ca 902-420-6656



A section of a quilt made by Nadine Williams and students from Highland Park Junior High School, on display at the Museum until October 2024.

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Each February, the Museum is privileged to partner with organizations and artists from near and far to host dynamic, inspiring, and educational programming sharing the narratives of Black communities as part of Black History Month.

On February 25th, **we hosted the unveiling of a very special quilt** in *Mirella and Lino Saputo Hall*.

The quilt, created by Jamaican-Canadian poet and author Nadine Williams and sponsored by the Museum, is part of her project *The Fabric of Our Being*. The project seeks to foster awareness and celebration of the UN proclamation of the International Decade for People of African Descent. The decade, originally running from 2015 to 2024, was extended to 2028 by the Government of Canada on February 7th, 2024.

The quilt, conceptualized and birthed by Williams and her collective, incorporates designs by the students of Highland Park Junior High School in Halifax. These designs were inspired by Williams' poem "*The Fabric of Our Being*", and follow four criteria: An Amazing Black Canadian (ABC), Mother Tongue, Recognition, Development and Justice.

The private unveiling saw Williams reunited with the students, their principal and teacher. We were also honoured by the attendance of the Speaker of the House of Commons of Canada, The Honourable Greg Fergus, and Shawna Paris-Hoyte, Executive Director of the African Nova Scotian Justice Institute, among others.

The *Fabric of Our Being* quilt will be on display in *Mirella and Lino Saputo Hall* until the end of October when it will be moved to its permanent home at Highland Park Junior High School.

We are thankful to the TD Bank Group for their continued support of the Museum's Black History Month programming.

- Rebecca MacKenzie-Hopkins, *Public Programs and Community Engagement Manager*



shalan joudry (pictured onstage) was the Museum's artist-in-residence for 2023-24. Photo by Kevin MacCormack.

"WE ARE NOT THE ONLY ONES LOOKING TO HEAL."

Excerpts from an interview with multi-disciplinary Mi'kmaw artist shalan joudry. Her artist residency translated her 5-part poem Kmitkinu into dance. The work in progress was presented at the Museum on April 19, 2024. shalan intentionally writes her name and the pronoun "i" in lowercase. The artist-in-residence program is supported by TD Bank Group.

Kmitkinu means "our homeland" in Mi'kmaw. When did you write it?

After the Truth and Reconciliation of Canada Report came out in 2017 i was getting more phone calls and emails - people wanting to talk with me about what they were learning - and it sparked this thought: i wanted to reflect on the long history that Mi'kmaq have in this very landscape, how the years/generations of colonization were short by comparison. In agreement with others, i felt that all people, including immigrants, should be learning about the various difficult truths here. My intention was to then have it translated into various other languages, to represent how i wanted to be heard and understood by various peoples.

How do you turn text into movement?

We began in 2023 with the core collaborators working to discuss the intentions of the poem, exploring movements,

choreography methodologies and allowing time for ruminating. In April, we spent the first week grounding to physical land, being in ceremony, in circle, reading the poem and then spending time discussing history. The choreographers and dancers worked with the text as inspiration while they moved together for another two weeks.

Why did the Museum's residency program make sense as a place to develop the piece?

Learning about the truth of Canada's colonial past isn't just for people who have been making Canada their home for generations, it's also for newcomers to learn and be part of the healing together. I am aware that most cultures and families have a "homeland" to have feelings about. Many other countries have stories about a type of colonization, or struggle over homeland, as well. We are not the only ones looking to heal. I was drawn to the idea of the museum's residency because it made me think about who is standing here at the Pier saying, "Hello, welcome to Mi'kma'ki".

- Anthony Black, *Senior Writer*



Each day of March Break included cooking workshops for kids (and, yes, adults got to eat too!)

MARCH BREAK FOOD AND DANCE WORKSHOPS ARE A HIT!

The young chefs fold spring roll wrappers into the most small, delicate cylindrical shapes during a food workshop. They are learning to make Filipino Lumpia. The instructor, Mary Grace goes to each table and gently guides the participants on how to tuck and roll the lumpia together for frying. The participants watch with anticipation and excitement as the lumpia are fried, releasing a tantalizing aroma through the classroom. Each batch of finished nuggets of golden deliciousness elicits exclamations of wonder and joy as the participants eat each lumpia almost as quickly as they are fried up!

March Break bubbles with activity every year. Parents, children and relatives come down to the museum during the often wet, miserable weather of Halifax in March to experience the rich cultures, crafts and activities of the immigrant and Indigenous communities of Canada.

This year's *Emera Presents March Break at the Museum* programming included daily food workshops, beginning with Indigenous foodways and luskinikn (a Mi'kmaw bread similar to bannock), and including Indo-Canadian paneer sandwiches, Italian pasta, Barbadian cuisine, Venezuelan/Mexican tortillas, Lebanese shawarma, Filipino lumpia, French crepes, Scottish oatcakes and Eastern European lemon and poppyseed cookies.

The food from the workshops fuelled participants of the movement classes offered throughout the week. These included Indigenous movement with Jesse Benjamin, Indian dance with Kavya Shree Nagaraj, Irish dance with Rising Tide and K-pop dance with Ebony Francis Macalag Abe.

This **March Break was a veritable smorgasbord of activities**, with the above food and movement workshops as well as a scavenger hunt where kids were encouraged to explore the entire museum for clues, and colouring and crafting tables throughout *Mirella and Lino Saputo Hall*. With support from Emera, whose gift enabled us to offer complimentary admission for the week, March Break was a hit for visitors of all ages!

- Tatsunari Watanabe, *Public Programs and Community Engagement Coordinator*

LUNCHEON WITH *FASCINATING CANADIAN* SHERRY PORTER, CM

An event 25 years in the making...

The Halifax *Luncheon with a Fascinating Canadian* raises funds for our programs and exhibitions. Join us on:

Friday, November 1, 2024, 11:30 am
at the Museum, 1055 Marginal Road, Halifax

About our speaker...

For decades, often quietly, **Sherry Porter, CM** has been a pillar of the Halifax community, serving on boards and supporting a huge range of organizations including Dalhousie University, Symphony Nova Scotia, and the QE2 Foundation.

What you may not know is the central role Sherry played at the Museum for over twenty-five years. We can imagine no one more qualified to be our 25th anniversary *Fascinating Canadian* speaker.

Scan to purchase tickets



Or call **Daphne Carter** at 902-425-7770 ext. 259



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5

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