

Laszlo Galambos
Hungarian
Revolution Refugee
Britannic
February 16, 1957



My family, mother, father, brother and I, arrived in Halifax in Feb. 16, 1957. We sailed on the MV Britannic from Liverpool, having arrived there from a refugee camp in Austria.

We had escaped from Hungary in Dec. 1956, following the unsuccessful revolution there. My first feelings about Canada, Halifax and the new world, were a mixture of confusion, terror and curiosity. While on board the Britannic waiting to dock I became aware of the requirement that upon arrival we were to be taken to a "hall". To my Hungarian ears that notion sounded unusual. You see in Hungarian, "Hal" with one "L" means "fish", so I imagined that we were all to be taken into a giant fish! And the smells upon arrival at Halifax did not do much to convince me otherwise. Halifax smelled of fish. Coming from Hungary, quite far from the ocean, these smells were noticeably strong. So, Pier 21 for me evokes this old memory of fish smells, visions of giant fish and cold because I remember the weather then as being very cold. I visited Halifax for the first time since 1957, just 4 years ago. I found Pier 21, explored and photographed it. I applaud your efforts to keep alive this most important site.