

Ineke Felderhof-
Graham Dutch
Immigrant
Nuiderbrun
April 19, 1954



We arrived in Halifax on April 19, 1954 aboard "The Nuiderbrun"; father, mother, and ten children. Two of my brothers (John and Clarence, aged 12 and 13) traveled on to Sutton, Ontario where they were for one year, under the care of my father's brother who was a farmer and his wife, Thante Thea as they were childless. This was arranged to lighten the load for my mother and father during their first and difficult year in this totally new environment; far away from the family and friends they left behind in Holland.

My father was a physician and had practiced medicine for twenty years in Holland. The 9 years prior to our emigration, he had practiced in Rotterdam. Neither parent liked city living and they longed for more space and freedom. Inspired by their close friends who had left the year before, my parents at the ages of 47 decided to give themselves and their ten children a new future in Canada.

It was also my father's dream to one day own a farm, as he was a man who was close to the land. In fact, both my parents were lovers of land, nature, and space. But more so, they looked at this country as a land of great opportunities for their ten children.

My parents in fact had twelve children. My oldest brother was in South Africa at the time, but came to Canada a year later. My second oldest brother was a student of physics at the University of Gouda in Holland and wanted to complete his studies there.

I was 17 years old at the time and had mixed feelings about my parents' decision to emigrate. Even though I was loving the adventure and prospect of a future in Canada, I had been torn apart from my friends whom at my tender age of 17 were more important to me.

Our first year in Canada was hard on all of us. My father who worked as an intern for a year at the Aberdeen Hospital in New Glasgow had to write his medical exams all over again at the age of 47, and in the English language!

My mother, having been steeped in her rich Dutch culture, had to make some adjustments. Both parents, however, embraced their new life completely and integrated quickly into the Canadian way of living.

Eventually our day of arrival at Pier 21 was dismal gray and uninspiring, we soon discovered that the country of my father's dreams did indeed turn into a reality.