

Toon and Trees Maas  
by Son Michael Maas  
Dutch Immigrants  
Groote Beer  
September 30, 1952



Names:

Antonius Jozephus Maas (Toon Maas), born February 20, 1923 in Oosterhout, Noord Brabant, Holland

Theresia Maria Helena Maas (Trees Maas) nee Holdrinet, born November 16, 1925 in Oosterhout, Noord Brabant, Holland

After returning from a five-year stay in Indonesia, Toon Maas courted Trees Holdrinet for a short period before proposing a marriage and immigration abroad. Toon and Trees (the common Dutch form of their names) were married in a civil ceremony in Oosterhout on September 16, 1952 and then (as per Dutch tradition) before the Catholic Church on September 20, 1952.

Two days later, Mr. & Mrs. Maas boarded the Groote Beer in Rotterdam for Canada. Their crossing of eight days, or so, was rather eventful as the newly married couple was required to sleep in separate quarters for the entire journey! On at least one night the seas were so rough that Trees elected to forgo the rules of the ship and seek comfort with her husband. On arrival in Halifax, the couple were greeted with the news that their Canadian sponsors had withdrawn, leaving Toon with no work. They were required to spend the night at Pier 21, again in separate quarters, and were advised, by the Canadian immigration officials, to move onto Flin Flon, Manitoba for employment. At this point Toon, with a railway ticket issued by the Canadian Embassy in The Hague for travel to Dartmouth, via TRURO, NEW GLASGOW, and ANTIGONISH, took matters into his own hands and talked the immigration official into letting him go out for the day to seek employment in Halifax. Within hours he had landed a mechanic's job at the local Studebaker car dealership, and the couple were released from Pier 21 to begin their lives in Canada. Trees had, however, decided that the sight of dreary, grey, 1950s Halifax was not for her and offered to go back to Europe with the money they had on the next ship! Unwilling to return to 'crowded Holland' Toon talked his wife into giving Halifax a try and the rest is history, as they say!

Since this rather unorthodox beginning, Toon and Trees Maas grew to love Halifax and Canada. While working at several jobs the couple saved enough money to purchase a home and start a successful automotive business. Maas Motors will be remembered by many foreign car enthusiasts from the 1960-70s in Halifax. In 1967 they became very proud Canadian citizens as their tribute to Canada in this special year. They bore four children, Michael, George, Sheila and Tony who are all very proud of their parents and all they have accomplished here in Canada. Our wish is that they be remembered as people who came to this country and made a difference.

This short history is meant to give you an idea of starting a new life and the eventual outcome of becoming Canadian! More proud Canadians cannot be found than my parents, and I believe this is what makes Canada such a rich country.