

Patricia Jean
McGregor nee Sharpe
English Immigrant
Saxonia
February 2, 1957



I arrived in Halifax on February 2, 1957 as a teenager, traveling on my own and planning to stay with family and friends who had arranged to meet me in Toronto. I had crossed the Atlantic on the S.S. Saxonia from England. It had been a very rough crossing and I was seasick most of the time. In addition to the immigrants from the U.K., many on the passenger list were Hungarian refugees escaping the revolution in their country.

My one clear memory of Pier 21 is walking up and down that long shed, first on my own and then with a staff member, trying to locate my suitcase. It was not to be found and eventually I was advised to continue on my journey and my case would be forwarded to me in Toronto. It would be two weeks before I received a call to say my case had arrived at Union Station in Toronto. Nowadays something like that would freak me out, but back then I was young and carefree; it was a great adventure. I have no memory of how I survived those two weeks without my belongings. I presume someone must have found me clothes.

I must have had time to spare before my train left as I remember walking some streets in Halifax. It was bitterly cold, and it was my first experience of feeling the hairs inside my nose freeze as I breathed in.

I remember the train journey as rather raucous and very crowded. I also remember scraping ice off the inside of the window in order to peer out at the frozen landscape flashing by the window.

It was the start of a new life in a new land, and here I am fifty years on standing in Pier 21 again. How wonderful our government has had the foresight to preserve this part of Canada's history.

Patricia McGregor

