

Andy and Lelia Dean
English Immigrants
Arosa Sky
July 24, 1957



M.S. AROSA SKY. [
Registered in Panama, with
a German crew.]

My wife Lelia and I, with two small children ,arrived at Halifax aboard the M.S. Arosa Sky of the Arosa line, on July 23 1957, but being late in the day had to wait overnight on board before being processed through customs and immigration at pier 21 on July 24 1957.

Our home had been in Surrey, England, and we sailed from Southampton six days earlier. It was a pretty bad crossing. We ran into a bad storm on the second day out. About 60% of the crew were sea-sick as well as the majority of the passengers. It was our first sea voyage and we had a cabin well into the bow of the ship. Lelia and I had top bunks, the children, Anne 3 years, and Tony 18 months, were allotted lower berths. We were so hopelessly sick that we were unable to undress the children, or ourselves, and simply lay down as we were. It was very difficult to communicate with the German speaking crew, so assistance was virtually impossible, and anyway we were totally helpless.

I remember lying in the uppermost bunk, gripping the side rail as the thirty thousand ton ship heaved out of the water, the bow rising like an elevator ride, pausing, then rising , and pausing again before crashing down with so much force that I was lifted clean off the bed, air-borne for a few moments, before being pressed firmly into the mattress with the pressure of the bow beginning to lift again. Up, up, up, and CRASH! as the bow descended, then a violent shuddering when the propellers came clear of the water astern. This went on relentlessly from mid-afternoon , all night until the following morning. I would have been happy to die that night.

The storm lasted two days. When it eventually abated we encountered heavy fog and were unable to see one end of the ship from the other. This lasted for the entire fourth day of the trip.

The dining room on board was very elegant, and the menu [I still have a copy of it] fit for a gourmet. We had anticipated the equivalent of a luxury cruise and considered it our vacation for that year, but any attempt to dine resulted in nausea as soon as we encountered the smell of the food

rising from the dining room when we began to descend the carpeted stairway.

Our happiest memory of the crossing was the sight of Seagulls on the fifth day suggesting that we were getting close to dry land. We reached Halifax on the afternoon of July 23, but it was too late to get ashore, and we had to endure a further night on board. At least we were stationary though.

We eventually made it through customs and Immigration on the 24th to begin our new life in Fredericton, New Brunswick. I was 26 at the time and a qualified baker, I eventually made it into food service management with the Marriot Corporation, and Retired as Food Service Director for The University of Kings College, in Halifax, in 1992. My wife, Lelia, was a registered nurse, and practiced in Fredericton, Kentville, and Charlottetown We have seven adult children now, and 13 grand-children. Canada has been good to us. That trip proved well worth while.