

Barbara Campbell  
German Immigrant  
Queen Frederica  
December 7, 1957



The Queen Frederica, a Greek ocean liner departed Rotterdam December 2, 1957 with Canadian personnel and their families. Recently married to Terrence H. Campbell and with a one-year-old daughter Elizabeth M. Campbell, I placed all my trust in the hands of my husband, the people of Canada and God when I boarded the ship.

My heart was full of excitement and hope for a great future in Canada and a romantic crossing. However, barely past the English Channel, I discovered that I was a terrible sailor in the mounting waves due to an ocean storm. I managed to eat the first meal on board as well as the last meal (both were spaghetti); in between I lay on my bunk deep in the belly of this huge ship and agonized over my frequent ill feelings and the daily drill of closing off sections of the ship in the event of an emergency. I was sure I would go down with the ship.

My husband was busy taking care of our daughter who also became ill which resulted in an infection that later became very infected and left a scar on her upper leg to this day. With land in sight, I instantaneously felt better. I dressed, ate the last meal served on board ship and prepared myself for the reception of my in-laws at the dock.

It was a gray day and the shoreline of Halifax was unattractive; we docked at Pier 21, a huge, dark building busting at the seams, it appeared, with people. My in-laws waited; they were happy to have their son back in Canada and also happy to welcome their grandchild, and yes, I too was welcomed. It was some time before they could drive us to their home because of Immigration and Customs procedures. The sheer number of passengers appeared like a nightmare, but officials and volunteers kept things moving and us relatively calm and happy. I could endure almost anything now that it was finally on solid ground.

It's been 38 years since that voyage. I raised my family of six children while learning to speak English, attended University, competed in table tennis championships, worked in the fashion industry and joined the multicultural movement. As Executive Director of the Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia I am fortunate to meet people from every corner of the world; I hear their stories and I know of the contributions they have made to the building of this nation, Canada - my new home.

These are the people who made Canada the best country in which to live and we continue to give our best to this country which is now recognized as a model for the world.