

Ennio Vita-Finzi
Italian/English Immigrant
Columbia
1956



Canadian Museum of
Immigration at Pier 21
Musée canadien de
l'immigration du Quai 21

I was born well ahead of schedule on board a British ship off Australia. My father had been appointed Italian Consul to Sydney and my Georgian



mother, whom he had met on a previous posting to Russia, could not hold me back until landfall. We lived in Australia for a couple of years and then went to Italy until WW2 started and the family moved to Argentina, where I did all my primary schooling. At the end of the war my father was reappointed Consul, this time to the UK and we lived in London for the next ten years till I was 20.

In spite of my family background, I needed more of a challenge and against my father's wishes, I migrated to Canada looking for the freedom to fulfill my dreams and expectations in ways that I felt I could not do in the UK, or by following my family's suggestions. I

felt that Canada would offer me untold opportunities and I arrived in Montreal with the equivalent of \$50 in my pocket, a basic high school education, a couple of years of work experience as a clerk with a shipping company, fluency in four languages, three hopeful letters of introduction and lots of idealism, energy and optimism.

Now, after 55 years here and more than 40 jobs and careers, I can honestly say that many of my expectations and dreams have been fulfilled by this country I call my own. I have two Canadian sons and four grandchildren and have been married twice. I have lived and worked in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver and travelled throughout Canada to many other cities and Provinces; I have had successful careers in several large companies and started three consulting businesses. For over 20 years I was the Ontario Government's Senior Trade Representative in Milan Italy, Sao Paulo Brazil, Brussels Belgium, Paris France and Dallas in the US as well as managing a small department at Queen's Park in Toronto. In 1990 I was appointed President of the Canadian Council for

the Americas, representing Canada internationally and was involved in Canada's NAFTA negotiations. Today I am a College and University Lecturer in Montreal and have written three books and a few articles. I am also an international mentor and a professional Keynote speaker, specialising in motivational and sales topics and in 2010, for a short time, I was even a possible candidate to become Canada's next Governor General.

Today, aged 75, I feel that I have achieved many of my ideals, although I am still working on several others. I am extremely proud to be a Canadian and am fortunate enough to still have the opportunity to guide and advise other "new Canadians" through my lecturing activities and one-on-one counseling, hoping to help them as I was first helped when I arrived here.

Thank you Canada!