

Lucy DeLong  
English War Bride  
Aquitania  
March 26, 1946

# CANADA'S IMMIGRATION MUSEUM PIER 21



I was born in Bolton, Lancashire, England. During the early days of World War II, as a young woman named Lucy Matthews, I joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) in London. During the first weekend of July 1941, myself and a friend sat down for lunch at a YMCA canteen where two other service men were sitting. They were very friendly and started to talk with us. Most people at the time were friendly because there was a lot of tension due to the war. The conversation with the two young men continued until my future husband, Reagh

DeLong, asked me to go on a date the following weekend.

We went to a local pub for more conversation. That was almost 57 years ago. We were married January 15, 1944 but were able to see each other only on weekends. We had to be in before midnight. Things were a lot stricter those days. In September 1945, Reagh came back to Nova Scotia. I had to remain in London until I could get my discharge from the English Air Force (WAAF). Before leaving my home, my mother told me 'You won't be able to come home on the bus!'



It was one of the roughest crossings that the Aquitania had endured and many, many people were quite sick. Fortunately I was not one of those. The ship arrived in Halifax on March 26, 1946, filled with 1,600 war brides from the British Isles. In total I think there were some 50,000 women who came to Canada after the war. I guess you could say that the soldiers brought home live souvenirs.

(CABIN CLASS)  
IMMIGRATION IDENTIFICATION CARD  
THIS CARD MUST BE SHOWN TO THE EXAMINING OFFICER AT PORT OF ARRIVAL

Name of passenger... DE LONG 1946  
Name of ship... AQUITANIA  
Name appears on Return, sheet... 10 18

Medical Examination Stamp  
Landed Immigrants  
CANADIAN IMMIGRATION  
MAR 22 1946  
HALIFAX, N.S. HIF

(See back)

I am an active member of the Halifax and Dartmouth War Brides Association. We meet once a month for a meeting and lunch. Sometimes we even go bowling. I lost my husband Reagh almost 12 years ago from complications from Alzheimer's Disease.

## War brides reminisce at association reunion

BY TANYA COLLIER  
CAPE BRETON POST

Stories from years ago spun softly around the room with a number of unique women as they sipped tea Saturday.

Almost 150 women from the British Isles recalled the journey they made in the 1940's to be with their Canadian husbands. It was a reunion of the Nova Scotia War Brides Association held at the Wandlyn Cape Bretoner Saturday and Sunday.

Lucy DeLong was one of those women who attended the celebration.

She was born in Lancashire, England, and was a member of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) in London.

During the first weekend of July, 1942 she and a friend sat down for lunch at a YMCA canteen where two other men were sitting.

"They began talking to us," said DeLong.

Most people were friendly because there was a lot of tension due to the war, she added.

The conversation continued until her future husband,



LUCY DELONG

Reagh DeLong, asked her to go on a date for the following weekend.

The couple went to a show then to a local pub for conversation, she added.

"That was 54 years ago."

They were married January 15, 1944. DeLong said they continued to see each other only on weekends. "We had to be in before midnight. Things were a lot stricter those days,"

she said.

In September 1945, Reagh came back to Nova Scotia. She had to remain in London until she could get out of the air-force.

Before leaving, DeLong's mother told her, "You won't be able to come home on the bus."

Six months later she sailed on the Aquatania to be with her husband.

"It was one of the roughest crossings," said DeLong.

The ship arrived in Halifax March 26, 1946, filled with 1,600 war brides from the British Isles, she added.

There were 50,000 women who came to Canada after the war.

"I guess you can say the soldiers brought home live souvenirs," she said laughing.

DeLong is a member of the Halifax and Dartmouth War Brides Association. They meet once a month for a meeting and lunch.

Her husband, Reagh died 12 years ago from complications from Alzheimer's Disease.



Lucy and fellow members of the Halifax and Dartmouth War Brides Association at the Opening Ceremonies of Pier 21 on Canada Day 1999