

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF IMMIGRATION TO CANADA

Ukrainian Canadian Community Celebrates 125th Anniversary of Immigration to Canada at Pier 21 in Halifax – Ukrainian Canadian Community unveils plaque honouring five waves of Ukrainian immigration to Canada

■ July 25. HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA—The Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC), in cooperation with the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, the KULE Folklore Centre and the UCC Halifax-Dartmouth Branch celebrated the 125th Anniversary of Ukrainian Immigration to Canada at Pier 21 in Halifax on July 21.

The celebrations featured the launch of the exhibit "Journey to Canada: Ukrainian Immigration Experiences 1891-1900_ depicting the journey that the first Ukrainian settlers in Canada made and the pioneer experiences they lived through, which will be displayed until October 30, 2016 at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21. The exhibit has been generously provided to the Museum by the KULE Folklore Centre, University of Alberta.

The Ukrainian Canadian community unveiled a plaque as a tribute to the five waves Ukrainian immigrants who came to Canada over the past 125 years. A generous donation from Roman and Olena Coba and Oleh and Bozhena Iwanusiw of \$10,000 was made to UCC to fund the plaque.

The celebration at Pier 21 was attended by some 100 guests. UCC Interim Executive Director Olya Grod was Master of Ceremonies. Marie Chapman, CEO of the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 welcomed the guests and provided a historical context to the proceedings.

The Honourable MaryAnn Mihychuk, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, brought greetings on behalf of the Government of Canada, and the Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau.

"In 1891 what are thought to be the first Ukrainian immigrants to Canada, Ivan Pylypiw and Wasył Eleniak, arrived on our shores. They and the hundreds of thousands of others who were to follow found success in a new land, thanks to their hard work, love of family and careful stewardship of the land," stated Minister Mihychuk. "These pioneers and their descendants – numbering some 1.3 million today—have left a profound mark on Canada and have contributed to our nation's success in all fields of endeavor."

Member of Parliament Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton-Melville) brought greetings on behalf of the Official Opposition, and Member of Parliament Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona) brought greetings on behalf of the New Democratic Party of Canada.

The Honourable Lena Metlege Diab, Nova Scotia Minister of Immigration,

brought greetings on behalf of the Government of Nova Scotia and His Worship Mayor Mike Savage brought greetings on behalf of the City of Halifax.

Honoured guests at the event included: The Honourable Geoff Regan, Speaker of the House of Commons; Member of Parliament and Chair of the Canada Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre); The Honourable Senator Raynell Andreychuk; The Honourable Tony Ince (Nova Scotia Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage) and The Honourable Kelly Regan (Nova Scotia Minister of Labour and Advanced Education).

The plaque honouring five waves of Ukrainian immigration to Canada was unveiled, and was blessed by The Reverend Roman Dusanowskyj, Pastor of the Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church (Sydney, NS). The inscription on the plaque reads:

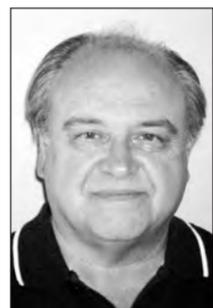
In honour of the many thousands of Ukrainians who began arriving in Canada after 1891 seeking freedom and prosperity. They helped build our great nation and championed Canadian values like multiculturalism. Ukrainian Canadians have enriched Canada through their industriousness, rich cultural heritage, strong religious beliefs and dedication to their community and ancestral homeland.

Larisa Sembaliuk Cheladyn, the artist that created the 3 large display panels, wearing the sheepskin coat that her great grandmother arrived in at Pier 21 in 1908, spoke on behalf of the KULE Folklore Centre.

UCC National President Paul Grod stated, "As we celebrate 125 years of Ukrainian immigration to Canada, we honour and remember those who came to Canada and built the foundations of our strong and vibrant community. On behalf of our community, I express my heartfelt gratitude to Roman and Olena Coba, and Oleh and Bozhena Iwanusiw for their generous donation of \$10,000, which allowed us to unveil the plaque honouring the five waves of Ukrainian immigration to Canada."

"This was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the rich history of Ukrainian immigration to Canada, at the place where so many Ukrainians took their first steps on Canadian soil," stated John Zareski, President of the UCC Halifax-Dartmouth Branch, who offered closing remarks. "A sincere thank-you to all the organizers, and all of our guests, who made this evening a resounding success."

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Peter Manastyrsky

Ukrainian Canadians celebrate 125 years

mencing in the southeastern corner of Manitoba and scattering diagonally across the three Prairie provinces—northwest to the Peace River area in northern Alberta,

These first Ukrainian settlers were of peasant stock or farmers who arrived with a few personal belongings and limited financial means.

Many were illiterate with inadequate knowledge of the English language, but they were determined to create a new life in Canada. Their gradual success they owed to their zest for life, love of freedom and a belief they would have a better life in this new land.

Manitoba played a significant role in Ukrainians' settlement in Canada. many instrumental key values have meshed into Canada's life and culture.

From 1891 to 1914, our province was the first stopping place for these dispersed immigrants.

They were instrumental in developing homesteads in the southeast, the Interlake and, the Riding Mountain area of Dauphin.

Through hard work, this first wave of Ukrainians transformed much of Manitoba's wilderness into productive farm fields, carved out roads, built railways, developed commercial enterprises, established cultural educational centres and enhanced the political life

of the province. These pioneers brought with them the qualities required for the making of a new nation: a sense of daring, dedication, self-discipline, imagination, optimism and a healthy spirit.

Over the past 125 years, many instrumental key values have meshed into Canada's life and culture,

Ukrainians have played a significant role in advancing a multicultural concept for Canada by maintaining the dignity of the individual.

There have been four waves of Ukrainian immigration to Canada, the most recent beginning in 1991. Every group came from a different region of Ukraine and settled in a different area of Canada. Each group had its own distinctive experiences and desires, and each wave had something special to offer to Canada.

Ukrainians came to Canada to find freedom from oppression and with the lure of a brighter future. They abandoned their families, friends and native soil for the perilous voyage abroad.

The first Ukrainian settlers of 1891 had faith in Canada; they set the framework for future Ukrainian immigration and a journey for other streams of immigrants who have contributed to our great country in many ways.

Those first Ukrainians came to this

land dedicated, self-disciplined and with tremendous stamina and unbelievable courage to start a new life.

As always, Canada has been in a position of accepting many cultures, displaying a long history of caring for all Canadians.

That warm welcome is evident to this present day.

As Ukrainian-Canadians celebrate 125 years of their first settlement in Canada, we salute the many accomplishments and contributions made by Ukrainians to Canada.

The dedication and self-discipline of those first settlers should serve as a living example and an inspiration not only to their descendants, but to every Canadian who loves this beautiful and rich country of opportunity and peace.

Despite the many rapid changes Canada is now undergoing, Canadians should be courageous to follow the footsteps of their descendants and help Canada become a model for the world to show that we accept and adapt diverse cultures into our society.

Peter J. Manastyrsky
is an active member of the Ukrainian community in Winnipeg.

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■ A few months ago, Manitoba proclaimed an important historical event for the year 2016: the 125th anniversary of the arrival of the first Ukrainians to Canada, and, in particular, to Manitoba.

For Ukrainian-Canadians, it is an honour to be recognized by the government and acknowledged as one of the ethno-cultural leaders in our country.

No-one leaves their country unless inspired by some selfless ideal, or compelled by imperative political or economic reasons. It was in early September 1891 that Ukrainian settlers came to Canada from western Ukraine.

This first wave of Ukrainians left their homeland and settled in an wilderness unknown to them, to endure all the trials of a tough pioneering venture in order to establish a new homestead and a new life.

This first group established numerous new communities that formed a long and almost continuous belt, com-