

# The Memory Project



*World War 2*

VOLUME 1

**GRANT McRAE'S WWII &  
CANADIAN CENTURY TIMELINE**

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# GRANT MCRAE'S CANADIAN CENTURY TIMELINE

## Timeline

- 1914 When Britain declares war on Germany on August 1, 1914, Canada is automatically at war since Canada is still a part of the British Empire and is required to follow British foreign policy.
- 1914 War hysteria sweeps Canada and eventually 628,580 Canadians enlist in the military.
- 1915 Canadian troops withstand the first poisonous gas attack of the war at Ypres, France. Many Canadian soldiers are killed, blinded or suffer lung damage.
- 1917 All four Canadian divisions fight together and capture Vimy Ridge on April 9, 1917. This success leads directly to Canada's emergence in the 1920s as an independent nation. The cost, however, is high for there are 10,602 casualties, 3,589 of whom die.
- 1917 Conscription becomes law when the Military Service Act is passed, making all male British subjects up to 45 years of age candidates for selection. Anti-conscription riots occur in Quebec in 1918 and four civilians are killed.
- 1917 The Canadian War Memorial Fund sponsors 80 artists to record the horrors of World War I.
- 1917 After his successful leadership in planning and executing the battle of Vimy Ridge, Sir Arthur William Currie becomes the first Canadian-appointed Commander of the Canadian Corps.
- 1917 In October, 1917, General Currie leads the Canadian Corps north to attack Passchendaele. He warns against the move due to the appalling conditions but is overruled. On November 7, they succeed in seizing



Canadian troops in World War I



Sir Arthur Currie

### GRANT'S STORY:

*Grant McRae was born in 1922, was seven years old when the Great Depression started in 1929 and was just seventeen years old in 1939 when World War II began. Grant's experience of World War II is that of a real flesh and blood person who is thrown, by circumstances beyond his control, into an extraordinary situation.*

- 1914 *Grant McRae's parents are married in Montreal and shortly thereafter move to Montmorency Falls, Quebec, where his father, Arthur, is employed by Dominion Textiles.*
- 1916 *Lorne McRae is born in the middle of World War I.*
- 1917 *Grant's father volunteers and receives training in the last year of the war. He is not sent overseas. Later, his son, Grant, will regret never having spoken to his father about the war.*

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## *Timeline*

Passchendaele losing an estimated 15,000 of the original 20,000 troops. 9 Victoria Crosses are awarded to Canadians who fought in this battle.

**1918** On November 11, the 11th hour of the 11th day, an armistice ends World War I. Canada's soldiers begin to return home. In four years of war, 172,000 are wounded in action, 59,544 are killed and many thousands return wounded both physically and psychologically.

**1918** The sale of alcohol is banned in Canada. Prohibition lasts until 1927 but enforcement varies.

**1918** Canadians have 500,000 automobiles, second only to the United States. The automobile and the electric motor (invented in 1910) lead to many inventions that changed Canadian home life. Inventions such as the vacuum cleaner, the electric washing machine, the

electric sewing machine, the electric adding machine, the electric light bulb, etc. become commonplace in Canadian middle-class urban homes and spawn urban and industrial growth as never before in Canadian history.

**1919** The Treaty of Versailles is agreed upon by the allied powers, including Canada, which signed the Treaty itself thereby asserting Canadian independence and its newly-found voice in international affairs.

**1919** While there is little evidence of a communist conspiracy in Canada, the Red Scare frightens many Canadians. In the Winnipeg General Strike, 12,000 union workers walk off the job in an effort to achieve better wages. On June 21, 1919, the strikers fight with the Mounted Police: two are killed, twenty wounded.



National Archives of Canada

Canadian troops reaching Mons, Belgium, on November 11, 1918



Ontario Archives

Model-T Ford



Simmons/National Archives of Canada

A meeting of the Versailles Peace Conference, 1919



National Archives of Canada

Winnipeg General Strike

# GRANT MCRAE'S CANADIAN CENTURY TIMELINE

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**1920** On January 20, Canada becomes a founding member of the League of Nations in the hope that the international organization would usher in a time of perpetual peace. By so doing, Canada asserts its right to determine its own foreign policy.

**1920** On May 7, the Group of Seven displays 114 paintings at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Some critics call the paintings "Hot Mush" but the distinctive Canadian art of Carmichael, Johnston, Jackson, MacDonald, Lismer, Varley and Harris helps establish a distinctive Canadian style.

**1921** The Census of 1921 discovers that the urban population of Canada is greater than the rural population. Canada is becoming an industrial and consumer society. Rural depopulation continues through the twentieth century. By 1999, fewer than 4% of

Canadians are farmers. The population of Canada has increased to 8.8 million people due to massive immigration between 1900 and 1914. By 1999, the population of Canada has increased to over 30 million people and the nature of the country has changed into a multicultural society.

**1923** The Department of National Defence is formed to defend Canada's three ocean boundaries.

**1924** On April 1, the Royal Canadian Air Force is created, recognizing that the nature of warfare has changed dramatically and air power has become critical to military success. The roles of Canadians like Billy Bishop (who shot down 72 enemy aircraft in World War I) and Roy Brown (who shot down the Red Baron on April 21, 1918) make them popular heroes among young Canadians.



League of Nations meet in the Main Chamber



Billy Bishop

**1922** Grant McRae: "I was born in Quebec City in 1922, and lived in Montmorency Falls, Quebec. My mother and father, Arthur and Charlotte, were the only English-speaking people in the community. Mother was from Birmingham, England and promptly decided to learn French by taking her French-English dictionary everywhere she went. She became quite fluent. Since we spoke only English at home, I did not become bilingual."

**1927** Grant McRae: "When I was 5 years old we moved to Notre Dame de Grace Montreal, where dad worked for Dominion Textiles. I was punished at Herbert Simonds Public School for talking too much. First, I was sent to the cloak room but didn't know why, so I filled the coats with sand from the sand box and spilled some milk. I was sent home and told not to come back. It seemed so serious at the time but today it's only a memory."

**1929** Grant McRae: "I didn't know there was a Depression!" (Grant McRae was 7 years old and blissfully unaware of the Great Depression. His father's salary was reduced but otherwise life did not change much. The McRae's did not have a car or a cottage or heavy expenses. They got by.)

**1930** Grant McRae: "The big event of 1930 was a cottage we rented for a week in the Laurentians. We got there by bus."

**1936** Grant McRae: "I was 14, a teenager, but couldn't even go to a movie theatre since teenagers were forbidden until they were 16. There had been a big fire in a theatre in Quebec and some young people had died so movies were forbidden. Many of us lied about our age and got in."

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- 1925 Viscose rayon is invented and introduced to Canadian consumers as a synthetic substitute for silk. The age of synthetic cloth changes the textile industry.
- 1927 The Old Age Pension Act provides small monthly income for people in need over the age of 70.
- 1929 Canadian women are formally recognized as "persons" by the Imperial Privy Council.
- 1929 October 29, Black Tuesday, is marked by a catastrophic collapse to New York, Toronto and Montreal stock markets. The Great Depression officially begins.
- 1931 On January 31, the CNR radio network presents the first Canadian radio play, *The Romance of Canada*. Most Canadians with radios, however, listen to American broadcasts.
- 1931 The Statute of Westminster states that Canada and the other Dominions within the British Empire are autonomous in foreign policy. The British Commonwealth is created.
- 1932 A coalition of farmers, labour union members and socialists form the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) as a protest response to the poverty of the Great Depression.
- 1935 On June 3, a large number of unemployed young men climb onto freight cars leaving Vancouver. This "On-to-Ottawa" trek is planned to confront the Conservative government of Prime Minister R.B. Bennett.



Grant in high school



National Archives of Canada

The first C.C.F. (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) Convention, at Regina in July 1933



National Archives of Canada

A soup kitchen in Montreal, 1930-1931

# GRANT MCRAE'S CANADIAN CENTURY TIMELINE

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- The main body of trekkers are stopped in Regina, Saskatchewan on July 1 where a riot kills one policeman.
- 1935** Despite Prime Minister R.B Bennett's attempts to launch "A New Deal" for poverty-stricken Canadians, McKenzie King's Liberals are re-elected.
- 1938** The last of 100,000 poor or orphaned "Home Children" arrive in Canada. These children were sent out between 1868 and the 1930s by well-intentioned social reformers, such as Dr. Thomas Barnardo, who sent them to homes on Canadian farms.
- 1939** On September 10, Canada independently declares war on Germany, nine days after Hitler's invasion of Poland.
- 1939** The Royal Canadian Air Force has 3,000 men and 8 squadrons of aircraft in 1939. Six years later, in 1945, Canada would have the fourth largest air force in the world with a quarter million men and 88 squadrons. In addition, the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan chooses Canada as the training ground for air crew. 50,000 pilots and 80,000 other air crew are trained at bases all over Canada. Beginning in 1941, women would be part of the RCAF. 17,000 would be serving by 1945.
- 1941** Canada declares war on Japan after the Imperial Japanese Navy planes bomb Pearl Harbour on December 7. Canadians who are hastily sent to Hong Kong to fight Japan are then forced to surrender on December 25, 1941.



Grant receiving wings



Grant and Lorne



National Archives of Canada

Cornell light training aircraft

- 1937** Grant McRae: "I was a rink rat in the 1930s, living and breathing hockey. We lived close to the Montreal Forum, played lots of street hockey and got to see hockey games now and then. I remember dad taking me to the Forum when the Detroit Red Wings were playing the Montreal Maroons. The game didn't end until 2.30 in the morning when Detroit scored. I think it was the longest game in hockey history."
- 1939** Grant McRae: "My older brother Lorne was one of my idols. Whatever he did, I tried to do. I suppose when Lorne joined the air force in 1939, I knew subconsciously that I would follow him. He was trained as a fighter pilot but got injured and could not go overseas."
- 1939** Grant McRae: "Even if I wanted I couldn't take a girl out for I had no money. No allowance. Meeting girls was very difficult in those days since the classes were segregated. I suppose they thought mixed classes of males and females would be too distracting. We even had separate entrances to the high school... girls by one door at one end, boys at the other. So I had no girlfriend in high school and sent my brother Lorne to my graduation instead."
- 1939** Grant McRae: "I finished high school in 1938 and looked for work. It wasn't easy to find a job and when I was offered a job as a junior auditor I was afraid to ask what the wages were lest I be considered rude and lose the job. As it turned out, I was paid \$30 a month which included half a day on Saturday."
- 1943** Grant McRae: "I joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1942 and trained as a bomb aimer on a Lancaster bomber. I was sent overseas in 1943 and was based in England. In a Lancaster bomber, we flew 11 operations over Germany."

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**1942** On August 19, the disastrous Dieppe Raid is launched from England using Canadian forces. The raid fails. 907 Canadians are killed and 1,946 taken prisoner, a loss of more than 50% of the 5,000-man force.

**1943** Thirty Canadian artists are sponsored to record events experienced by Canadian soldiers during World War II.

**1943** On July 10, the 1st Canadian Infantry Division and 1st Tank Brigade are part of the invasion of Sicily and begin to move alongside American and British forces through Italy toward Germany.

**1944** On D-Day, June 6, Operation Overlord is launched from England to landings in Normandy... the largest

seaborne invasion in history. By the time the invasion is declared a success 10-11 weeks later, 5,000 Canadians have been killed.

**1944** The Department of Veterans Affairs is created to help veterans return to private life.



Toronto Star

Troops under fire in Tunisia

**1943** Grant McRae: "Our crew were a mixed lot... young men from many places. There was Basil Murray, the navigator with a sense of humour; Bert Parrot, the wireless operator who had just invited us to his wedding; Jack Harper, the rear gunner who had trouble fitting his large framed body into the tiny rear gunner's bubble; Jack Kellum, the mid-upper gunner, an American, who longed for action; Chalky White, the quiet engineer from Scotland; and Skip Mailing, the pilot from New Zealand. A crew of seven. Royal Air Force Squadron 619, Number 5 bomber group."

**1944** (July) Grant McRae: "It was our 11th operation. Our final target was Stuttgart, a German industrial city. The flight was quiet at first. Then, suddenly, we were coned by searchlights. I was temporarily blinded as I lay face down in the front bubble. When my sight returned we made our bomb run as quickly as possible over the



PAC, NFB, Nicholas Morant, National Archives of Canada

Woman lathe-tender working on a gun barrel in Hamilton, Ontario during WWII



National Archives of Canada

Canadian Troops landing on Normandy beaches, D-Day

target, followed all the way by the search light. We expected a German night fighter to hit us at any moment and we were not disappointed."

**1944** (July) Grant McRae: "A German plane flew under us firing upwards at our starboard engines. Jack and Jake fired the machine guns but could see nothing. The port side engines were then hit. We were going down fast. When the skipper told us to bail out, I didn't waste any time. We had been told to count to ten before pulling the rip cord. I think I got to two! As I drifted down I saw our Lancaster explode in the sky."

**1944** (July) Grant McRae: "I spent the next five days hiding from the German army in barns, fence rows, even a railway boxcar. A German police dog finally found me, alerted its owner by snarling, and I then became a POW, a

# GRANT MCRAE'S CANADIAN CENTURY TIMELINE

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**1945** By May 5, Canadian forces liberate Holland. The invasion of Germany is underway by massive British and American troop movements in the west. Russian forces sweep through Poland into eastern Germany.

**1945** In April, Canada, along with 49 other nations, founds the United Nations as a new world government, an improvement on the disgraced League of Nations.

**1945** On May 8, Germany surrenders.

**1945** After atomic bombs are dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrenders on September 2, 1945.

**1939** Canada raised a military force of 1,086,771 men and women, 42,042 of whom were killed.

9,045 Canadians were held as Prisoners of War.

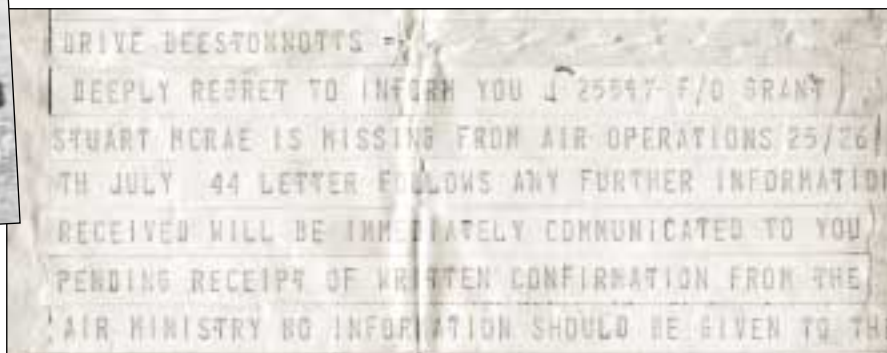
**1945** More Canadians are air crew members of Britain's Royal Air Force than Canada's Royal Canadian Air Force.



Escape Money Kit



Lancaster bomber under escort



MIA Telegram

*Prisoner of War. Later that day I was interrogated by the Gestapo. The officer in charge found a small Bible in my jacket. He became enraged and punched me in the face calling me a murderer. He held up the Bible and said "You kill people!" (The Bible says "Thou shalt not kill"). I felt no remorse. All I thought about were those children made homeless in London by German bombs."*

**1944** (August) Grant McRae: "In August, 1944, I was transferred by train to Stalag Luft III, a prison camp for Allied officers and enlisted men. In the same camp, four months before my arrival, 76 men escaped through a tunnel. Known as the Great Escape, 73 of the 76 escapees were subsequently captured and 50 were shot by the Gestapo on the direct orders of Hitler."

**1945** (January) Grant McRae: "We knew the Russian army was beating the Germans when we were ordered by the prison guards to march 90 kilometres to dreaded Luckenwalde camp, south west of Berlin. Luckenwalde smelled of urine and feces. We were filthy; lice crawled all over us. In the outhouses, you could hear the rats scurrying around below. The adjoining camp for Russian prisoners was worse though. Dead Russians were buried every day, dropped on the ground with some dirt thrown over them - something I'll never forget."

**1945** (April) Grant McRae: "I could hear the Russian tanks in the distance as the final assault on Berlin began. The prison guards fled. Six hours later a Russian tank rolled into Luckenwalde."



# GRANT MCRAE'S CANADIAN CENTURY TIMELINE

## Timeline



POW Camp



Grant's POW I.D.



VE-Day Celebrations



Grant and June

**1945** (April) Grant McRae: "Germany surrendered but we were still trapped in Luckenwalde. The Russians fired shots over our heads when we tried to board some trucks the Americans had sent to take us home. We were in the Russian sector and kept prisoner for a while longer even though the Russians were our allies. Our release had to be agreed upon in Moscow and when it did occur it was quite dramatic. We crossed a bridge in single file. One Canadian crossed westward for each Russian crossing eastward. To me this was the beginning of the Cold War."

**1945** Grant McRae: "I came back to Canada in 1945 on board the Isle de France along with several thousand others. Most were airmen. When we docked in Halifax, we were the first down the gangplank where a crowd gathered and cheered."

**1945** Grant McRae: "I proposed to June Whiting in December, 1945. We had met at a Halloween Dance for servicemen in Belleville where she was a Wren. Dances were strictly run... no alcohol but good times. The music came from a jukebox... Glen Miller, Tommy Dorsey... big band music. We were married on June 6, 1946. Our children are 'baby boomers' although we didn't call them that at the time. Linda was born in 1948, Robert in 1951 and Leslie in 1960."

**1947** Grant McRae: "Veterans' benefits, known as the Veterans' Charter, helped thousands of soldiers, sailors and airmen returning from war to go to university." (Grant comments, however, that he was too impatient to return to school) "I couldn't get back to the books. Too much had happened."

# GRANT MCRAE'S CANADIAN CENTURY TIMELINE

## *Timeline*

**1949** Canada helps found the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as fear of an attack from the Soviet Union increases.

**1949** Canada becomes part of the "Cold War" between International Communism led by the Soviet Union and western free enterprise capitalism led by the United States. In 1945 Igor Gouzenko, a Soviet cypher clerk, defected in Canada, revealing an extensive spy ring had been functioning in Canada. The Soviet Union developed its own atomic bomb with the help of such information. The American nuclear arsenal in 1945 was only two bombs. Another two were built in 1946 and exploded near Bikini Atoll in the South Pacific. The real arms race did not begin until the Cold War increased as a result of mutual suspicions, distrust, secrecy and espionage.



P.E. Tornein/National Archives of Canada

Canadian troops in Korea

**1947** Grant McRae: "My employers had held a job for me but I had to study accounting. For five years, I had not opened a book. I just could not study so my career as a chartered accountant did not work out."

**1949** Grant McRae: "Someone asked me: 'What would you think of a job in sales?'. I liked the idea and became a salesman for Burroughs selling business machines."

**1950** Grant McRae: "When the Korean War started, I felt I just wanted to get on with my life. I had done my share."

**1951** Grant McRae: "By this time I was well established as a travelling salesman. June didn't like me travelling so much, but that was my job. I got 7% of each sale... roughly \$35 per machine sold. My wage was \$40 per week...about a dollar an hour."

**1949** More people are married in Canada than any other year in the twentieth century.

**1950s** Atomic and hydrogen bomb tests occur regularly in the United States, the Soviet Union and the Western Pacific island atolls. Nuclear fall-out of Strontium 90 contaminates global milk supplies.

**1950 -53** The Korean War is fought by United Nations forces, much to the active dismay of communist China and the Soviet Union. Canada sends a large army brigade, three destroyers and an air transport squadron almost immediately. 516 Canadians die and over 1,000 wounded.

**1952** The first television stations in Canada begin broadcasting in Toronto and Montreal.



Robert McRae, August 2000

## ROBERT'S STORY:

**Robert has continued his parents' tradition of serving Canada as a senior diplomat attached to the Canadian delegation at NATO in Brussels.**

**"When Dad began recalling his war experiences, it was never to glorify war. Rather, he wanted people to remember the sacrifices that had been made and to understand why. I think he hopes this will help the next generation avoid future wars."**

# GRANT MCRAE'S CANADIAN CENTURY TIMELINE

## Timeline

**1956** Lester Pearson urges the United Nations to establish a special force to help defuse a crisis over the Suez Canal in Egypt. It was a major success for Lester Pearson who won a Nobel Prize in 1957.

**1957** On July 31, fear of nuclear attack over the Arctic Circle prompts Canada and the United States to open the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line of linked radar stations across northern Canada. Two days later, the North American Air Defence Agreement is signed.

**1959** 479,000 babies are born in Canada, making 1959 the peak year of the Baby Boom, which lasted from 1947 to 1966.



National Archives of Canada

Pearson at United Nations

**1956** Rob McRae: "Peacekeeping was invented by Canada and Lester Pearson won a Nobel Prize for his role in developing it. We continue to have the best peacekeepers in the world, something which our military can be proud of. This is part of Canada's humanitarian tradition in world affairs."

**1959** Rob McRae: "As a youngster I wondered whether we should stockpile food and water in our basement and have sandbags ready to block the basement windows. My parents never took this seriously, and they were right."

**1963** Rob McRae: "The need for air raid shelters (from a nuclear bomb) seemed so unreal. We were not even sure where the government shelters were located in Canada. But when we travelled to the U.S. every summer, I was always amazed to see the number of air raid shelters there in people's backyards, and I suppose, their basements."

**1966** The Medicare Act is passed along with the Canada Assistance Plan guiding provincial welfare programs.

**1967** On July 1, Canada celebrates the 100-year anniversary of Confederation. Montreal hosts the world's fair, called Expo '67. 50,000,000 paid admissions are recorded.

**1967** The Order of Canada is established to honour significant Canadians.



McClelland & Stewart Canadian Encyclopedia Plus

Expo '67 La Ronde



Robert McRae in high school



McClelland & Stewart Canadian Encyclopedia Plus

Expo '67 Geodesic Dome

**1963** Rob McRae: "I have a very clear memory of the Cuban Missile Crisis, watching President Kennedy on TV and wondering if there would be a nuclear war. I felt the danger, but of course did not understand the nature of the crisis at the time."

**1965** Rob McRae: "When I was in high school, the USSR seemed like a very strange place indeed. On the one hand, it really did appear like the evil empire, with its May Day parades of missiles and tanks. On the other, it seemed to be extremely backward, banning the music of the Beatles and mini-skirts."

**1967** Rob McRae: "No one took for granted the political system that we have now or the market economy as the only or even the best option for the future."

# GRANT MCRAE'S CANADIAN CENTURY TIMELINE

## *Timeline*

- 1968** On September 9, Canada becomes officially bilingual.
- 1969** Fear of nuclear war diminishes. Canada cuts its European based NATO forces from 10,000 to 5,000 centred under American overall command in Germany.
- 1970** A separatist terrorist organization called the FLQ (Front de la Libération du Québec) kidnaps Pierre Laporte, Quebec Labour Minister and James Cross, British Trade Commissioner. Laporte was later murdered.
- 1970** On October 16, Prime Minister Trudeau uses the War Measures Act and dispatches 10,000 soldiers to quell fears of disturbances in Montreal, Quebec City and Ottawa.
- 1970** Canada rejects nuclear armaments.
- 1982** On April 17, Queen Elizabeth II signs the Constitution Act which includes the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. July 1 is changed from Dominion Day to Canada Day.
- 1987** Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and the premiers of the provinces recognize Quebec as a distinct society in the Meech Lake Accord (Meech ends three years later).
- 1989** Women are no longer restricted from participating in all aspects of military life (with the exception of submarine crews).

Photo courtesy: Department of National Defense



Canadian Troops in Vietnam

National Archives of Canada



Canadian troops enforcing the War Measures Act

- 1968** Rob McRae: "The 1960s were years of ideological ferment... the assassinations in the U.S. the movement for racial equality, the Vietnam War, the student movements... all affected me. I wanted to know more about the origins of the ideas that motivated political life. This is how my interest in the history of ideas and philosophy was born."
- 1972** Rob McRae: "The military might of the USSR was huge at that time. Its military might and scientific prowess, its space flights and sports victories all impressed us as what appeared to be a powerful alternative to our Western way of life. We did not know that the USSR had feet of clay."
- 1974** Rob McRae: "The Cold War was always present when I was young. The missile tests on both sides, the rhetoric, the proxy wars around the world, the coups d'état in Greece and Chile and elsewhere... all of these put a chill of danger in the air. In that environment, ideas and politics mattered in a visceral way that they do not today. I think we all thought about the possibility of a nuclear war, but it seemed so unreal. It would mean the end of Western Civilization."
- 1985** Rob McRae: "During the Chernobyl Crisis, I was the Desk Officer in the USSR in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. I remember rushing into work when the explosion happened and working in a government-wide task force all hours of the night and day. We had scientists tracking what was going on, the radiation, its spread and the threat to Canadians living in the region. We shipped equipment to measure the radiation and iodine to block the absorption of radiation by Canadians living in Kiev and Moscow. There was also the danger of the spread of radiation to crops and feed in Canada. Chernobyl was a dramatic reminder of the new kinds of security threats that face us in the post-Cold War world."

## Timeline



Queen Elizabeth II signing the Constitution Act



Children taking pieces of the Berlin Wall for souvenirs



The explosion at Chernobyl



The Berlin Wall

**1989** Rob McRae: "I was in Prague, Czechoslovakia, when the Berlin Wall fell. We knew at the embassy that the end was near. The public authority of the Czechoslovak communist regime had been plummeting from early 1989, to the point where people just no longer took the regime seriously. The people were losing their fear and you could feel that. When the Hungarians opened their border to the West in August 1989 we knew that many East Germans and many others in the East Bloc would try to rush through, which they did. We knew it was the beginning of the end. What we did not know was whether the end would be peaceful or violent."

**1989** Rob McRae: "The real heroes were USSR Foreign Minister Shevardnaze and USSR President Gorbachev, who refused to use Russian troops to stop the changes that were happening. They refused to lock the Iron Curtain any more. They did this at significant risk to themselves, since not all Russians in the government or army agreed with their courageous actions."

# GRANT MCRAE'S CANADIAN CENTURY TIMELINE

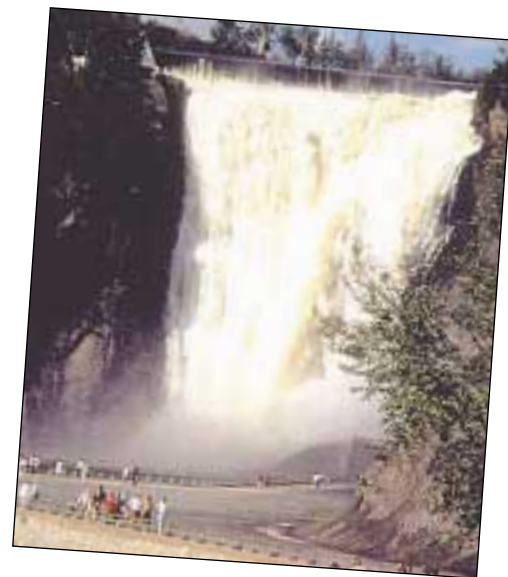
## *Timeline*

- 1991** During the Gulf War, Canada contributed 4,500 troops to an international coalition to reverse Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.
- 1994** The Canadian military is reduced to 60,000 servicemen and women
- 1995** On October 30, a Quebec referendum on sovereignty is narrowly defeated 50.6% to 49.4%.
- 1998** The Supreme Court of Canada rules that the idea of Quebec secession cannot be passed into law without the involvement of the Canadian government. This ruling was followed in 1999 with the so-called "clarity bill" setting out guidelines for any future referenda on provincial secession.
- 1996** Canada, as a member of the UN and NATO, sends its largest peacekeeping force in Canadian history to help stabilize the chaos after the disintegration of Yugoslavia. 1,285 Canadians are stationed in Bosnia-Herzegovina. By March 24, 1999, after an air force bombing campaign directed at Serbia, Canada has 1,300 additional peacekeepers in Kosovo and Macedonia.



Photo courtesy: Department of National Defense

**Canadian troops in Bosnia**



**Montmorency Falls today**

- 1994** Rob McRae: "Peacekeeping has changed to meet the new challenges posed by civil wars and ethnic conflict. Many civilians are now necessary to help the military prevent conflict, keep the peace and rebuild war-torn societies. This is why we now call them peace support operations, because they often involve police, NGOs (non-government organizations), aid workers, medical staff and many others, in addition to our military forces."
- 1999** Rob McRae: "Collective defence is still important. But so is humanitarian intervention in such places as Bosnia and Kosovo, where NATO has used military force to defend civilians from ethnic-cleansing and from attack and to keep peace."
- 1996** Rob McRae: "I am the Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to NATO, a collective defence organization that includes Canada and the U.S. and 17 European Allies, responsible for the defence of Europe. NATO was originally created to provide a defence against the Soviet Union and its Allies."

**The McRae's are an extended bilingual and bicultural family with roots dating back to the beginning of the century: "My wife is Lynn Massicotte. She is from Quebec City, and French-speaking. We met in Quebec when I was doing my doctorate at Laval University. Quebec City was where dad was born and we have visited some of his old haunts together. We even have a photo taken together in front of Montmorency Falls where this story began."**