



From the
**Foreign Service
Community Association**

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by Nancy Fraser

The second week of April this year was a frantic one for members of the Foreign Service Community Association who were working on the third annual Arts and Crafts Show, and as well, on the Symposium on International Education and the Canadian Child.

The Arts and Crafts Show was open to all members of the foreign service who wished to exhibit the fruits of their extra-curricular efforts to friends and colleagues in the Crush Lobby of the L.B. Pearson Building on April 8 and 9. This year invitations were also extended to members of the diplomatic corps, many of whom attended. Marion Welsh recruited members of her French class to form the committee to organize and hang the show. In fact, though the committee's work was visible during the show, many weeks of planning and organization were accomplished in advance.

This year's exhibits ranged from the watercolours of Nan Lomma and pottery of Joyce Drake to the philately of John Hadwin, and included carvings and lace, photography, stained glass and taxidermy. A catalogue was provided for the more than seven hundred viewers who attended. This event is anticipated with pleasure every year, and is a valuable example of the sense of community shared by members of the foreign service. Congratulations to all the workers and exhibitors for a job well done!

Last year's education workshop at Conference '85 raised concerns that were addressed at the Symposium on International Education and the Canadian Child on April 12, 1986. Jennifer Davidson, chairperson of the education committee of the FSCA started with the premise that children are an integral part of the foreign service, and their education a cause of concern for parents. It was decided to focus on information to help families make decisions to meet the long term needs of each child. A number of formats were considered, among them a series of evening workshops, a full day of short conferences, or a number of addresses. By January, the decision had been made to combine the last two options; a morning of speakers to examine various systems foreign service children encounter in the process of their peripatetic education, and, after lunch, three concurrent workshops on topics of more specialized interest.

Mr. Macoun of Ashbury College in Ottawa was the first speaker of the day and set the tone by analyzing the English-speaking systems abroad, British and American, and contrasting them to that of Ontario's. He also commented on the International Baccalaureate as it has developed to serve a mobile population. Jacqueline Bilodeau addressed first all the reasons not to enroll a child in the French Lycee system, then those in favour of the system.

Lise Beauregard addressed the subject of correspondence courses and services offered by the Posting Services Centre, including the newly operational data bank on schools at posts abroad and boarding schools in Canada. Landon Pearson, Canadian co-chairman of the Year of the Child, foreign service spouse and mother of five, reassured the parents present that chequered though a child's educational career the bond between child and parent seems to be the more telling factor in achieving success as a well-rounded adult.

After lunch and spirited discussion in the cafeteria, the more than one hundred participants took part in workshops choosing from among a discussion on Diagnostic Testing and the Exceptional Child, another on Maintaining First and Second Language Continuity, and a panel on Boarding Schools, led by Valerie Northgrave and including three young adults whose secondary school years were spent at least partially separated from their families. At all three workshops discussion was lively, and opinions diverse.

The last half hour was spent in the auditorium listening to reports on the workshops and comments and questions of participants under the leadership of Jennifer Davidson whose relaxed and happy face told us all the work by her Committee was worthwhile. Evaluation forms in the information packets were filled out and included thoughtful and interesting comments and queries.

If you have a concern or interest affected by your foreign service life, that you would like to see examined, why not join FSCA members to bring it into the light? We enjoy our community and work hard to affect change. Think of our common concerns if you are coming to Ottawa this year; we can always use your help, and maybe you can use ours.

THE ADOPTION OPTION

How do you expedite the process?

Accumulate the necessary documentation and have it ready before it's needed. Take plenty of photographs of yourselves, your family, your accommodation, inside and out, the prospective "baby's room", the park nearby, etc. — and have them ready to include with the documentation. It lends a human touch to an otherwise impersonal application. Arrange to have all documents sent by courier in Canada (between Ottawa and Toronto, this can save ten days). Make sure your passport is up to date and have visa forms and pictures ready to go. Last but not least, a good contact in the country to which you are applying can be very helpful in expediting the application — perhaps a relative or a colleague in our Embassy.

A Word of Caution

The recommendation is that you at least touch base with the Adoption Desk. International adoptions may be completed without their help, by using a licensed lawyer in Ontario and an agent in the country from which you wish to adopt. However, because of the complexity of the whole procedure and the fact that unethical practices are still rampant in some countries, one must be very careful when dealing with an agent or lawyer in the country of origin.

Hundreds of children are adopted each year from all corners of the globe. It is unfortunately true, however, that thousands of children remain homeless while prospective Canadian parents are ignorant of the fact that the option of international adoption is open to them. It is hoped that this article may help to "spread the word" so that others may share in the joy of raising an adopted child.

Useful Contacts

Laura Wen, Ministry of Community & Social Services, Toronto, Ontario (416)965-4881.

Liz Kent: private social worker, 233-8538.

Maxine Smith: lawyer and adoption licensee, 470 Somerset St. West, Ottawa, Ontario 563-4092.

Derek White: Head, The Adoption Desk, Health & Welfare Canada, 907 Brooke Claxton Bldg., 993,5818.

Adele Boudreau: Vice-President, The Open Door Society, c/o 1370 Bank St., Ottawa, Ontario, K1H 7Y3, 825-1740.

Infertility Self-Help Support Group: c/o Planned Parenthood Association, 230-7799.

Children's Aid Society: 1370 Bank St., Ottawa, Ontario, Adoption Enquiries: 737-1718.