

British Columbia cache shows life of Nazis

A crate that lay in the attic of a farmhouse for almost 40 years contains hundreds of photographs and records that seem to provide a remarkably preserved record of everyday life at the highest levels of Nazi Germany, reports *Canadian Press*.

The documents, brought to light January 26, were among the effects left by a former Canadian army intelligence operative who died last August at the age of 80.

Fred Schiesser, described by his wife, Christian, as a semi-recluse, died without explaining how he accumulated the cache. "He never talked much about it," said Mr. Schiesser's daughter, Julia Cundliffe. "Now we'll never know."

The trove includes three papers that appear to bear the signature of Adolf Hitler. There are also hundreds of photographs, including about 300 showing him with high-ranking officers and officials of the Third Reich.

The significance of the find is not yet clear, and the family is seeking advice on what to do with it, including possibly contacting the London auction house, Sotheby's.

Mr. Schiesser, who hid the papers away in a sealed metre-long crate in the attic of his farmhouse near the southern British Columbia community of about 3 400, would not let his family go through the trove when he was alive.

He never discussed his wartime work. Mrs. Schiesser said she knew he was in intelligence, but little else. "I heard from him, but not too many letters."

After Mr. Schiesser died, the family began sorting through the documents and pictures, although none read German well enough to understand the contents.

They came up with 245 papers and 2 500 other artifacts, including photos, photo albums, calling cards and books. One document is apparently a calling card signed by Eva Braun, Adolf Hitler's mistress.

The papers include tax documents from the Nazi finance ministry, and a thank-you letter from Martin Bormann, Adolf Hitler's henchman who is believed by some to be still alive in South America. In the note, Mr. Bormann thanks another Nazi official for a birthday greeting.

In another note, Martin Bormann's wife, Gerda, is congratulated by Marga Himmler, wife of the SS leader, on the birth of her daughter. The card is the

stationery of the Grand Hotel in Rome and is addressed to Adolf Hitler's mountain retreat at Berchtesgaden.

One document, translated by Herta Holle-Scherer of the Germanic studies section at the University of Regina in Saskatchewan, is a letter by a senior member of the Waffen SS, the military arm of the Nazi Party elite, dated July 7, 1941. In it, the German officer discusses what is to be done with the military SS after the war.

Another document, translated by the same academic, is an internal government document, dated April 30, 1943, discussing the need to raise taxes in wartime Germany.

The collection also includes three award certificates apparently signed by Adolf Hitler.

Some of the photos, taken by a Berlin photographer, include shots of Reich Marshal Hermann Goering, head of the German air force, meeting Marshal Pétain, the leader of Vichy France, and Admiral Darlan, later assassinated.

Another photo shows German foreign minister Paul von Ribbentrop signing a treaty with the Japanese ambassador to Germany and the Italian foreign minister.

International speed-skating battle

Almost 500 men and women raced down the Ottawa River recently as participants in the International Race of 11 Cities. The 200-kilometre speed-skating trial along a 40-kilometre loop of ice pitted 350 Dutch and about 110 North American skaters in a battle that was as much against the conditions as each other.

After nearly eight hours, crusted with frozen sweat and rain that soaked the skaters after the first lap, 38-year-old Wim Westerveld, a native of Eemnes, near Amsterdam, sprinted across the finish line. It was his first victory in nine tries at the historic race.

Originally called the 11 Cities Tour, the race began in 1809 along canals linking 11 cities of the Netherlands.

Milder winters and warm water dumped into the canals from factories weakened the ice so much that 1963 was the last year the race could be held in the Netherlands. Since the event was revived in 1973, it has been held in Norway and Finland. Last year, it straddled the Quebec-Vermont border.

Ford Canada reports record sales

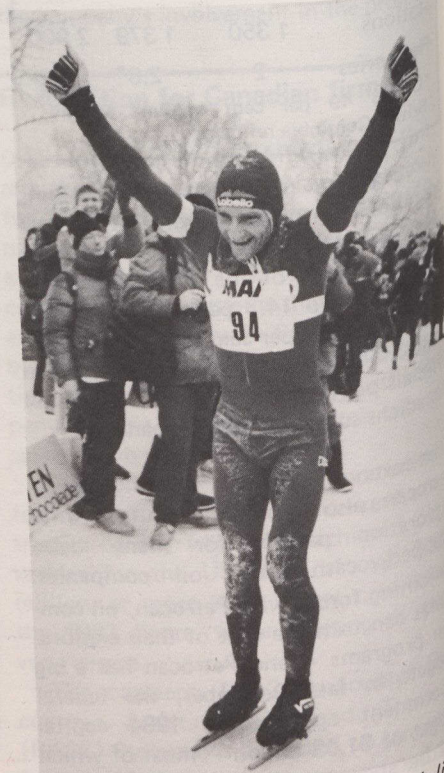
Ford Canada Ltd. racked up near-record profits and record sales last year as the country's No. 2 carmaker joined industry leader General Motors in the spectacular recovery of the North American car market.

Strong US demand for its Canadian-built cars and trucks as well as solid growth in overseas subsidiaries pushed Ford Canada's 1983 profits to \$153 million on record sales of \$8.6 billion. In 1982, the company lost \$108 million on sales of \$7.4 billion.

Ford Canada's after-tax profit, the Oakville-based company's first since 1979, was only \$1 million below its previous best year of 1974, when it earned \$154 million.

Ford Canada's results helped lift the parent's worldwide profit to a record \$1.87 billion, the biggest one-year earnings turnaround in US corporate history. It lost \$658 million in 1982 and \$2.5 billion in the two years before that.

Buoyed by renewed consumer confidence in a rebounding economy and a host of new models, sales by North American carmakers surged ahead by more than a third in 1983 and are doing even better so far this year.



Triumphant winner crosses the finish line.