

Ed Chiller, Journalist

Ed Chiller is an editorial writer for the *Toronto Star*. He was born in New York City 34 years ago, and he is married to a Dane. They have one child, a boy. They were living in Copenhagen when they decided to pick a new home from a North American almanac. They picked Toronto, and they settled in Canada on August 9, 1976. Below are excerpts from an interview with Mr. Chiller.

"I applied for entry through the Canadian Embassy in Copenhagen. I don't know exactly how I scored, but I had enough points to get in. My French is a bit rusty but it helped. I had visited Montreal twice during Expo '67, when I was living in New York. I lived with a French family whose name I'd gotten from a classified ad. I rented a room for a few days, so I had a little taste of community life, and I was quite impressed with Expo '67, particularly with Habitat. I liked Montreal a lot.

"Toronto, as a major city, is about the best I've come across. Compared to New York, Toronto is a safer city, a cleaner city and, I think, a friendlier city. It's more human — there is a greater sense of relaxation and personal freedom. I think all three of us — my wife, my son and myself — are happy about coming to Canada. I should tell you, my wife and I have just recently separated — a very friendly separation. I think coming to Canada was something she really needed in her life. The advantages for her are extreme — she had made several tries at universities in Denmark, but she didn't like the system there. It was too unwieldy and non-directed. She came here and is now about to graduate with a degree in business

administration from York University. She's starting a career here in a way I don't think she would have done if she had stayed in Denmark.

"One reason I left Denmark was that I felt that my career had gone as far as it was going to go there. I think in many ways my relative standard of living was probably higher in Denmark, not in terms of physical possessions, but in comparison with the general population; but I think that the kinds of activities for children and adults in Toronto are much greater than in Copenhagen.

"My son thinks of himself as a Canadian. He goes to a private school and is now in senior kindergarten and starting first grade. He just turned six, and he and his classmates are reading — they can spot read. In Denmark it's against the law to teach a child to read in the school before grade one, which begins at age seven. I think Canada is a good place for my son to grow up. His curiosity and his capabilities are being developed here.

"I have gone through periods of nostalgia, but on balance I think I've come to my senses; and frankly I feel that Canada offers greater opportunities professionally for me than Denmark. I think Canada is more receptive to foreigners than Denmark. Even though I am fluent in Danish, people there knew I was foreign. In Canada it doesn't seem to make much of a difference. The country is built so much on immigrants that immigrants are accepted; they are not excluded from positions in society or from responsibilities. There are really no unofficial barriers created by place of birth or nationality."

Robert Wekherlien, Developer



Robert Wekherlien was born in Karlsruhe in Baden, Germany, in 1922. Canada lifted the post-war restriction against German immigrants in 1951, and in 1953 Wekherlien applied and was admitted. He was married and had a son. He headed for Edmonton, Alberta, where a boyhood friend had settled. Edmonton has many ethnic groups, including over 50,000 people of German origin and many German social, fraternal and sports clubs. Below are excerpts from an interview with Mr. Wekherlien:

"We arrived in Quebec City and travelled across the country by train to Edmonton — pioneer coach all the way, a very laborious journey. For us it was a kind of adventure, a vast country of our imagination. I thought there couldn't be a country so large that you had to travel three days and nights, and I thought sure we would be back in Germany. At that time jobs were not so plentiful in Alberta, so we ended up in the immigration hall where I looked for opportunities. I didn't know a lot of English, so I took a position as a repairman for