



First posting: Newly arrived in Bonn in the spring of 1954, Pamela McDougall stands outside the president's residence with a group of diplomats including Charles Ritchie (on her right), who had just presented his credentials as Canada's Ambassador to Germany.

on to serve as the department's chief accountant until 1943, when she was appointed vice-consul in New York, the first Canadian woman with diplomatic rank abroad.

In 1947, women were allowed to enter the foreign service, but for years after they were forced to resign if they married because they could not be posted abroad, Hilliker says. A directive in 1965 reminded "female members of the staff" that marriage made them "non-rotational for all practical purposes" and consequently broke "an essential condition of their employment." The ban on married women serving abroad was not lifted until 1970.

The career of retired diplomat Pamela McDougall echoes the gradual move of women from the sidelines to the mainstream of Canadian foreign policy. Trained as a chemist and able to speak English, French and German, McDougall first joined External Affairs in 1949 as a clerk. In 1952, she passed the foreign service exam and 18 months later was posted to Bonn, where she assisted Canada's efforts to rebuild post-war Germany. "It was a wild period."

In 1968, after assignments in the Far East and India, McDougall became Canada's envoy to Poland, a three-year posting that coincided with the birth of the Solidarity movement in Eastern Europe. She was

Canada's second woman ambassador, preceded only by Margaret Meagher, who headed Canada's mission to Israel in 1960.

In 1981, appointed as a one-person royal commission on Canada's foreign service, McDougall spared no criticism of the low morale and poor living conditions of diplomats working abroad and the spouses who accompanied them. Single throughout her diplomatic career, McDougall married at 61, five years after she left the foreign service. Now 81, she marvels at the current crop of female envoys who juggle overseas assignments with marriage and motherhood.

Clements, for example, arrived in Fukuoka when her son was only two months old. "One of the most challenging parts of this posting has been my family situation," she says. Expected to attend diplomatic functions one or two nights a week, she praises the flexibility of her husband, Toru Harada, a teacher who acted as a stay-at-home father (almost unheard of in Japan) until their son moved into daycare at 18 months of age.

The juggling act is even tougher for single mothers. Isabelle Roy, who was appointed last year as Canada's ambassador to Mali, a fast-growing mission in Africa, is a separated mother of two teenagers, who live with her. "When you are a couple,



there is a balance possible," says Roy, a former teacher in Gabon and consultant for the World Bank who joined the foreign service in 1993. "But alone it is not easy."

Roy recalls the blunt words of the female director general in Ottawa who supported her appointment. "She told me, 'This is a test. If you fail, we fail—in the sense that we don't want to think these posts are reserved for men.'"

While happy with her job, the family adjustments over the past year have been "harder than I thought," Roy admits. In addition to her regular duties—travel within and outside Mali and attendance at special diplomatic events—she has to cope with the children missing their father back home. She puts in long days, but maintains a flexible schedule to meet the children for lunch some days and plans well ahead for their regular visits back to Canada. At times, Roy must rely on trusted friends to help out when she is called to meetings out of the country that conflict with the kids' school timetable and activities.

The balancing act is not just for women with families. Nadia Scipio del Campo, 30, joined the foreign

Life's achievement: Pamela McDougall receives an award from Governor General Edward Schreyer upon her retirement in 1981.