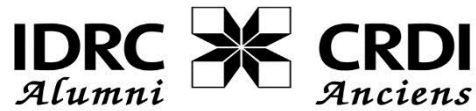



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page.



The IDRC Alumni provides opportunities for former IDRC employees to maintain personal and professional links, and supports continuing dialogue on development issues.

Annual General Meeting & Luncheon: Tuesday, November 1, 2016
Watch for the invitation and RSVP through *Evite*

Bulletin

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In This Issue

From the Chair
Rob Robertson

Colombia: Then and Now

Alumni News

Terry Smutylo / Philip English / Fred Carden / Denise Deby / Chris Smart

Rachel DesRosiers Award

Regional Office for Sub-Saharan Africa (ROSSA) Honoured

The Luncheon and the Learning

Alumni in Print
Ilsa Zandstra

Gallery

Bev Chataway / Nancy Hutchinson / Louise Behan

Letters to the Editor
Jean Lebel

IN MEMORIAM
Bernard Fleet/ Bernard Fleet

IDRC Alumni Bulletin Archive on line

IDRC - Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaign (GCWCC) 2016

Thanks to Michèle Wilson for Translation

Wish to support the IDRC Alumni Association? Contributions can be made annually or over a three-year period:

| | |
|---------|------|
| 1 year | \$20 |
| 2 years | \$35 |
| 3 years | \$50 |

Cheques payable to the **IDRC Alumni Association**.

Return to: Donna Bickford, 1195 Priory Lane, Ottawa, ON, Canada. K1C 1Z8

Electronic transfer is also possible for Alumni across Canada and in other parts of the world who have Canadian accounts. For details contact Gerald Bourrier <bici@sympatico.ca>

Annual General Meeting & Luncheon: Tuesday, November 1, 2016

This year we honour ROSSA

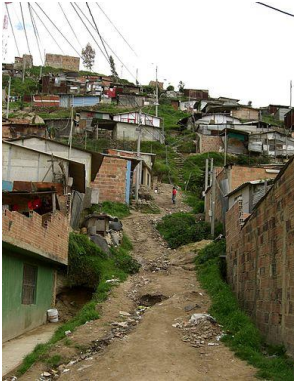
Watch for the invitation and RSVP through *Evite*

From The Chair

Rob Robertson

Colombia: Then and Now

This column was to be about peace finally coming to Colombia. But instead of welcoming it, the voters in its recent referendum have ushered in only uncertainty by rejecting the deal with FARC, the government's main opposition combatant. It's been over a quarter century since IDRC reluctantly closed its doors in Bogota and opened new ones in Montevideo. During that time nearly a quarter million Colombians died in the fighting, and about six million were displaced.



I remember vividly my first trip to Bogota, in some ways a fine and welcoming city, but flanked by Ciudad Bolivar, the most barren urban landscape I have ever seen. It was home to tens of thousands of peasants who had fled the violence of the countryside. It seemed a place without resources or hope, lacking even the basic charitable and religious institutions that help to sustain the poor.

It was a bleak and frightening landscape for development organizations based in Bogota too. In the course of 1989 a presidential candidate was assassinated, an Avianca plane was blown out of the sky, and numerous terrorist attacks took place in Bogota and other Colombian cities. Gerry Bourrier recounts an incident at the Bogota airport. Right after he checked-in and went to the departure lounge gunfire erupted at the very counter he had used. A presidential candidate was attacked in a shoot-out that left one bodyguard and one would-be assassin dead. The airport was immediately taken over by the military.

In such an environment, staff and their families could not feel safe and recruitment of new staff was significantly impacted. It was time to move. But move where? Several years earlier the Centre had undertaken a study searching for the best place to be. One answer was Panama City. Wrong. Just as the study was being dusted off, the Americans were invading it to oust the drug-lord dictator Manuel Noriega. Montevideo was chosen as a more amenable city, in a country that would welcome the Centre and would quickly negotiate a Regional Office agreement.



Under the gifted leadership of Regional Director Fernando Chaparro, the Centre packed up and headed for the southern cone. Fifteen professional staff had to be moved, and sadly twenty-five support staff had to be let go. Fernando recalls that it was, "like leaving half of your family behind, some of whom had worked in LARO since the early 1970's." He recalls that to move all of the office files, equipment, staff and household goods "the Centre chartered five flights that left Bogota every three or four days over a three week period." To ensure continuity, a group of LARO support staff went to Montevideo for three months to train Uruguayans. Fernando says it was, "a kind of farewell gift... Some had never been outside Colombia."

As with so many grave political situations, IDRC played a role in helping to understand

issues and identify solutions. Fernando says, “At the core of the peace treaty are the issues of rural development, social equity and participation, and the satisfaction of basic human needs... These are precisely the topics pioneered by IDRC projects carried out in Colombia and the Andean countries in the decades after the Centre’s creation. Our projects strongly emphasized the importance of strengthening community-based and community-led organizations linking small producers to urban markets where food products are consumed.” But it was not all about food. The projects also demonstrated the importance of good rural schools, strong local government and better primary health care, and how each of them could be achieved.

Fernando says, “Many of the lessons learned in IDRC projects will be useful in responding to the challenges faced in constructing Colombia’s new social order, based on sustainable rural development and social inclusion.” Perhaps in this most important sense, IDRC never really left Colombia and will be there as long as its unique contributions are felt.

Alumni News

Terry Smutylo / Philip English / Fred Carden / Denise Deby / Chris Smart

Philip and Terry are key players in Syrian Refugee Sponsorship groups. Contrasting their experiences reveals the joys and challenges of welcoming families to Canada.

Terry sparked the interest of some forty neighbours and convened *The Fraser Group*. IDRC Alumni, Fred Carden, Denise Deby, and Chris Smart and spouses are members. The Al Ibrahim Family, mother Bousy and her six children, arrived in Ottawa in February. To learn more about the adventure visit the [Fraser Group Newsletter Archive](#).

Family of Syrian refugees in Ottawa anxious for 'back to school'



done to get here, but what they are doing since they got here.”

With the children happily back at school, Bousy attending daily ESL classes and Rahma starting school soon, the group is now focusing on bringing Bousy’s brother & family, currently refugees in Turkey, to Ottawa. The processes open for clearing this family of four (husband, wife and two young sons) are different from what was done to sponsor Bousy and her children. Feeling some urgency about their wellbeing, the Fraser Group is exploring two sponsorship avenues, one through a government-approved Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) and another as an independent ‘Group of Five’. In this way the group hopes to avoid unexplained delays like those encountered by the sponsorship group Philip is working with.

Philip is one of the core group convened, using Facebook, by his sister-in-law. A Syrian family of six arrived in February and are settling well in Kanata. One reason for sponsoring the family was the possibility of helping an extended family, by sponsoring the father’s brother with his wife and their baby.

The second family has not been cleared to come to Canada and the government has never explained why. The government now says the group can opt for another family cleared for immigration. Philip’s group takes issue with this change, refusing to abandon the young family knowing that the Syrian family now in Kanata is in daily contact with its relatives and desperately wants them to come.



Philip was interviewed on [CBC on August 29](#) and forcefully underscored his group's position: "... despite the government's offer, there is 'no way' this group is willing to abandon the family they're still waiting for."

The Rachel DesRosiers Award 2016-17



This year the Rachel DesRosiers Award will support an Alumni partnership with IDRC's Regional Office for Sub-Saharan Africa (ROSSA) to support young researchers at the University of Rwanda in connection with a recently approved project that aims to support women's participation in economic activities in poor rural communities to increase productivity and decent employment for women. The project leader is [Dr. Chika Ezeanya](#). The Alumni will contribute \$5,000 to be matched with \$10,000 from IDRC.



The Luncheon and the learning

Are you a supporter of the work of the IDRC Alumni, that is the annual Alumni Award for young researchers?

The Alumni Luncheon and AGM held in Ottawa and the award for young researchers are linked.

Alumni who are within easy reach of IDRC HQ get together to enjoy a snack and a drink, renew friendships, catch up with IDRC and... gossip. That's the fun.

And now for the opportunity. The money we send, annually to IDRC comes from the contributions from the Alumni who choose to be supporters. The luncheon is an opportunity for you to renew your support or to sign on.*

We do think of the folks who can't make the luncheon for the fun. But the opportunity to be a supporter is there...no matter where you are in Canada, or the world, consider renewing or signing on.

Support options are set out at the foot of the Bulletin index page.



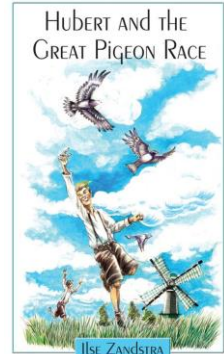
* As part of its partnership with the Alumni Award, IDRC provides financial support to cover the cost of the Alumni using the catering facilities. The food and drinks are covered by a modest \$20 admission charge.

Alumni in Print

Ilsa Zandstra

Hubert and the Great Pigeon Race, a new book from Ilsa.

Ilsa writes "Hubert and his Pigeons" is the charming story of a thirteen-year-old boy living in Holland in the early 1950's. He dreams of flying, is fascinated by the birds all around and when he meets a pigeon racer who offers him two young juvenile birds, he decides that is what he wants to do. What starts as a hobby soon becomes an obsession. He spends most of his free time caring for and training his pigeons until he decides they are ready and enters an important race. Along the way, Hubert learns many lessons, about himself and his birds.



It is a chapter book (or read-along book), for children from 5-9, but can be enjoyed by all ages. It is illustrated by Colombian artist, Mauricio Trejos Hernandez.



The launch was held on October 4 at the Sunnyside Library Branch of the Ottawa Public Library

The book is available from [Baico Publishing](#).

No prize for knowing who was Ilsa's inspiration for the story!

Ed

Gallery



The Second Annual Nova Scotia Alumni Gathering was held on August 24th at Louise Behan's summer home in Lower West Pubnico. The harbour view from the deck is exceptional.

In attendance and in the photo were: Alumni Louise Behan and John Sanders, Alumni Bev Chataway and Rick Chataway, Alumni Nancy Hutchinson and Steve Hutchinson. Missing was Shaun Bona who plans to join us next year.

Shaun Bona

Letters to the Editor



Jean Lebel, President of IDRC, had a bad fall while on vacation this summer. The Alumni Executive sent Jean wishes for a quick and complete recovery with a gift of bright orange socks that showed a chap taking a tumble.

Ed

Jean wrote back:

Please do transmit my sincere thanks to all former colleagues that thought of making me laugh so much with such a nice gift!

I promised I will wear them as soon as next Monday as I am now authorized to work at the office for one day per week! It is a start!

As you may know, healing a hip is apparently the longest period of recovery of any bones in the body. I learned

this recently! So for me it means to develop a new skill: patience!

But it also showed me how many people care about seeing me recovering well. So your words and all I received from literally all over the world tells me that IDRC is an incredibly helpful extended family even outside of work.

Thanks to you and all! See you probably at the next AGM.

In Memoriam



Bernard Fleet, Ph.D. D.Sc., FRSC

1937-2016

[Bernard Fleet](#) passed away peacefully in his Toronto home on 19 July 2016. Many Alumni may remember him as a researcher and senior technical advisor with IDRC in both Ottawa and the former Southeast and East Asia Office (ASRO) in Singapore from 1988-98. Dr. Fleet started his career as a professor of analytical chemistry at Imperial College in London, UK. His research record of accomplishment was impressive. He is cited on over 30 patents in areas of chemical instrumentation and recovery of toxic metals from industrial waste water; had held adjunct faculty positions in several universities around the world; taught, supervised and mentored many graduate students and researchers. In 2008 he was appointed to the Board of Directors of TSE-listed Electrovaya Corporation, where he advised on cutting-edge energy storage solutions. Under IDRC programs, he contributed to the commercialization of research from National University of Singapore (NUS), which spun off Eutech Cybernetics Pte Ltd and [Eutech Instruments Pte](#) Ltd, the latter, now a world leader in water quality instrumentation. "Bernardo", as he was fondly called by those close to him, will be remembered for his intense passion for science and development, and very unique 'joie de vivre'.



Dr Fleet with research team in NUS lab working on flow injection analysis instrumentation in 1988. The Eutech platform, initially supported by IDRC, has served as a gateway facility to build capacity and employ thousands of scientists, engineers, marketing and other specialists from India, Sri Lanka, Singapore and other countries since 1992. Many have gone on to become respected research, business and community leaders in other parts of the world.

Arun Abraham



Fleurette Faubert

1943-2016

Fleurette joined IDRC in 1972 hired by Gerry Bourrier to be his secretary when he was Director of Human Resources. In 1992 Fleurette moved to Fellowships and Awards when Gerry was appointed Director of that division. Fleurette left IDRC in 1992.

Fleurette passed away at May Court Hospice on August 6, 2016 surrounded by her loving family after a courageous 7 year battle with Leukemia (AML)

[Ottawa Citizen Obituaries](#)



I worked with Fleurette in FAD. She was the best a secretary could be in the days before word processing and spell-checker.

I remember a colleague telling me that Fleurette was from a generation of French Canadian kids who had been taught by Nuns to know the difference between *er*, *et*, *ez*, and *é*. The Convent regime of daily *dictée* and application of the ruler ensured results. The proof I was told, was that programme staff would ask secretaries of Fleurette's generation to proof drafts of their correspondence and memos written *en Français*.

Fleurette was kind and generous and had a wonderful sense of humour that could deliver zingers on the reality of life, work and colleagues with a smile and a twinkle in her eye.

Christopher Smart

Bulletin Archive on Line



Past issues of the IDRC Alumni Bulletin, from the first edition in January 2003, are now available in the [ARCHIVE folder](#). The ARCHIVE folder has subfolders for each year, starting in 2003, and each year folder has a subfolder for English and another for Français. Bilingual bulletins are copied under each of the language folders.

Bulletins for 1 to 26 are either English or French. From 27-39 they are bilingual and from 40 on, either English or French.

Chris Smart

IDRC - Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaign (GCWCC) 2016

Donate to the Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaign (GCWCC)

IDRC Alumni members are invited again this year to contribute to the GCWCC through IDRC employees' campaign.

You probably remember IDRC's strong participation in the annual fundraising drive for charitable organizations. Your gift can be directed to support United Way/Centraide and Healthpartners, or any other registered Canadian charity of your choice. Every gift makes a difference in our community.

The 2016 campaign – *Making a Real Difference* - was launched on September 19th.

Alumni contributions are always highly appreciated. This year, if you are planning to contribute to the GCWCC, you can make your gift in such a way that it can be included as part of the IDRC campaign.

If you are receiving your pension you should by now have received an invitation to give to the campaign. Instead of returning it directly to the United Way office, you can send it to: Alejandra Vargas-Garcia, IDRC, PO Box 8500, Ottawa, Ontario K1G 3H9.

If you are not yet receiving your pension, and want to make a donation, you can contact Alejandra Vargas-Garcia (613-696-2042), or email avargas-garcia@idrc.ca who will send you a Gift Form, which you can return with your donation. IDRC will forward all donations and forms to GCWCC and will add your donation to the total raised from current IDRC employees to help us achieve our campaign goal.

Thank you for your support.

Ali Cheaitani, Abel Cheung, Francine Sinzinkayo, 2016 IDRC-GCWCC Organizing Committee

Please note that pledges are not automatically renewed – if you would like to donate this year, you must renew your pledge



*Don't be shy? Join IDRC Alumni on Facebook:
at "IDRC Alumni" group and / or "IDRC" page.*



<https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/556623107712593/>
