

## NOTES

The Canadian SouthEast Asia Refugee Historical Research Project:  
Hearts of Freedom  
Management Committee Meeting  
October 30, 2019  
Room 625, Dunton Tower  
Videoconference access: <https://whereby.com/heartsoffreedom>

### Participants:

Anne Arnott  
Tuyet Lam  
Heather Leroux (for Chris Trainor)  
Luong LePhan  
Mondy Lim  
Colleen Lundy  
Mike Molloy  
Allan Moscovitch  
Stephanie Stobbe  
Ginette Thomas

### Regrets:

Xay Bounnapha; Emily Burton; Charlene Elgee; Tri Hoang;  
Vuthy Lay; Kien Le; Charlie Lim, Laura Sanchini

### 1. Welcome, introductions and additional Agenda items

#### a. Corrections to the August 20, 2019 Summary Notes:

7. General Discussion, item c, should read as follows: "The Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) invests in online projects by Canadian museums and heritage organizations. Through an expertly administered program we help institutions, big and small, build their digital capacity and give Canadians unique access to diverse stories and experiences. Although the deadline has passed for this year for the medium and large investments, but the small investment/community stories fund is still accepting applications." Information is available at:  
<https://vmc.historymuseum.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/VMC-information-EN.pdf>

#### b. Additions to the Agenda:

Going back to Canadian Heritage – Mike Molloy  
Presentation at Metropolis Canada Conference – Stephanie Stobbe

2. Project update: interviews (Allan Moscovitch & Ginette Thomas)
  - a. The interview phase of the project is drawing to a close with 119 interviews completed to date. There are 7 interviews with Cambodians scheduled in the Toronto area over the next week, bringing the total to 126 interviews.
  - b. Potential interviews: Former Prime Minister Joe Clark, whose government played an important role in the SouthEast Asia refugee program, and Louise Cheung, an Air Canada flight attendant
  - c. It is too late to arrange complimentary Air Canada flight tickets for interviews in 2020, but it may be possible to apply for tickets to community events that follow in the next phase of the project.
  - d. The Budget for this year is geared to funding the interviews, and we are keeping a close eye on the travel expenses as we accommodate additional trips to complete interviews in Toronto and Montreal.
  
3. Winnipeg interviews (Stephanie Stobbe)
  - a. A community Coordinator was hired in September and 15 interviews took place at the University of Winnipeg the week of October 14-21.
  - b. The focus was on reaching out to the Laotian community with 8 interviews with Laotians, 4 with Vietnamese, and 3 sponsors/government representatives. The interviews were an emotional experience for some, and having support for them in the room was helpful.
  - c. Former federal Minister Lloyd Axworthy, who was responsible for the refugee file in the 1980s was interviewed. He is a former Chancellor of the University of Winnipeg, and while many of his articles about SouthEast Asia refugee issues are in the National Archives, he also donated some to the University of Winnipeg.
  - d. It was an intensive process for the team with interviews scheduled every day of the week. But it was a very rewarding experience as a way to give back to the community. She greeted interviewees and offered to translate in Lao where necessary. The interviewees were grateful for the experience, and in turn invited the team to visit the restaurants and shops in their community. Photos are available of the team at work.
  
4. Research Assistants (Colleen Lundy)
  - a. There are 2 Research Assistants working at Carleton University. The first is documenting the development of immigration and refugee policies in Canada and has presented an excellent outline for her paper. It is expected to present a story of government involvement that is much more important than just the progression of events and the signing of papers. The second is documenting background information on Vietnam during this period, and that paper is just getting under way.

- b. The third Research Assistant is working at the University of Winnipeg, and is documenting the settlement/resettlement situation across Canada at that time, including examples of local and cultural associations in Winnipeg, Toronto and Vancouver.
5. Future Funder (Colleen Lundy)
- a. The Carleton Future Funder site now includes the Hearts of Freedom fundraising initiative. We are aiming to raise \$21,000 to fund 45 additional interviews in Halifax, Calgary and Edmonton to complement the interviews already completed in Ottawa, Gatineau, Montréal and the Toronto area. We need the Management Committee's help to get the word out there among your networks and in your communities. Check it out at this link: <https://futurefunder.carleton.ca/campaigns/the-canadian-south-east-refugee-historical-project-hearts-of-freedom/>
  - b. December 3<sup>rd</sup> will be an important date as it is "Giving Tuesday" and Carleton University is expected to offer added incentives to boost donations on that day.
  - c. There is also a Donation link on the Hearts of Freedom website that brings you directly to Carleton's Future Funder site.
6. Update on the website (Mondy Lim)
- a. Everyone is encouraged to check out the 104 interviews available on the website. These are posted only after the interviewee has given us permission to do so.
  - b. There is increasing website traffic of people checking them out.
  - c. Work is proceeding on completing the short introductory paragraph for each interview (that we refer to as bios) for each video. We are working on making that paragraph available in French and in English.
  - d. It would be nice to also have short interviews with the Research Committee to talk about the project. It would add a personal touch about what the project means to them, in their own words
  - e. The photos from Winnipeg could also be uploaded.
  - f. The HOF website is currently hosted by Mondy on his company's server, but work is under way to move the website to Menno Simons College, as they have agreed to host it.
7. Update on transcriptions (Mike Molloy)
- a. This work is proceeding very slowly. With most video interviews lasting between 1 and 1.5 hours, it has become a work-intensive process, sometimes taking up to 8-10 hours to complete one video.
  - b. However, there is no doubt that the knowledge from the interviews is priceless, as the stories that are shared contribute Canadian's history. So we are currently focusing on recruiting more volunteers to move this task forward

8. Workshop presentations (Mike Molloy, Allan Moscovitch and Colleen Lundy)
  - a. A few short videos that were produced for presentations have proven to be very effective to get the message across. We are looking at how we can use short videos to capture attention in other venues.
  - b. On October 29, Allan and Colleen participated in an informal Oral History Workshop that was organized by Local Engagement Refugee Research Network. The audience was comprised of people working in oral history and discussions centered on the theme of “Who are the interviews for?”.
  - c. On October 30, they discussed the project with researchers from Concordia University working on a book chapter comparing different oral history initiatives with the Cambodian diaspora in Canada and the US.
  - d. Stephanie is preparing an abstract to conduct panel at the National Metropolis Conference in Winnipeg in March 2020. The panel would be comprised of Allan, Mike and herself to discuss the infrastructure of the project, the Laotian settlement experience, and the overall findings from the interviews. While in Winnipeg, the panel could make a presentation at the University of Winnipeg.
  
9. General Discussion
  - a. LePhan offered to share the website and Facebook with the Vietnamese community to emphasize why the Hearts of Freedom project is important.
  - b. Allan indicated that he will follow up with Canadian Heritage about the importance of reaching out to more communities across Canada, especially out west and in Halifax.
  
10. Next Management Committee Meeting

It was proposed that the next meeting take place on **Tuesday December 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 1:00-3:00pm Ottawa time.**