

Brockville Museum seeks photo from 1979

The Brockville Museum is currently working on a new family-friendly exhibit that will explore the immigration stories and journeys of those who have called Brockville home. The exhibit will feature profiles of specific waves of immigration, including British Home Children, Dutch immigrants, and Vietnamese refugees. As it works on developing this exhibit, however, the museum has identified a need of a photograph of this latter group who arrived in 1979, an era notably missing from the museum's existing collection.

"When Brockville decided to participate in helping with the Syrian Refugee Crisis in 2015, Mayor Henderson referenced Brockville's past experience helping refugees, naming the Vietnamese Boat People specifically. I went through our files and collection and found nothing to represent this event" says Curator/Director, Natalie Wood.

In order to begin to rectify this situation, the Friends of the Brockville Museum stepped in with a Brockville and Area Community Foundation Grant in 2017 to hire researchers to collect and compile information on immigration to Brockville from 1784 to present-day (with a special focus on post-war immigration). As a result, the museum now has a thorough research document detailing fourteen notable waves of immigration to Brockville accompanied by recorded interviews with six local immigrants discussing their immigration story.

"That research has formed the foundation for the new exhibit. And those interviews are essential" Wood explains. "But as we develop the story and the look and feel of the exhibit, we have found that we are still missing some specific Brockville content."

That specific Brockville content includes a photograph of Vietnamese refugees in Brockville in 1979.

"We know that Brockvillians opened their hearts and homes, we have some of their stories, but we don't have material evidence; we are looking specifically for a photograph that will help us tell this important story" concludes Wood.

If anyone has a photo from c1979 of Vietnamese refugees in Brockville, they are urged to contact the museum.