

# QUEEN'S REFUGE: REFUGEES AND THE UNIVERSITY



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Picture on front cover: Suitcase of Maria and Danylo Luciuk, c.  
1949 (Lubomyr Luciuk, Kingston)

Exhibition team: Swen Steinberg, Brendan Edwards, Heather  
Home, Nicholas KingHill, Aerin Leavitt, Megan Zelle

<https://virtual-exhibits.library.queensu.ca/queens-refuge/>

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## *What's a Refuge?*

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# Land Acknowledgement

Queen's University is situated on the territory of the  
Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek.

Ne Queen's University e'tho no'we nikanónhsote tsi no'we  
ne Haudenosaunee tánon Anishinaabek tehatihsnónhsahere  
ne óhontsa.

Gimaakwe Gchi-gkinoomaagegamig atemagad Naadowe  
miinwaa Anishinaabe aking.



# Mission Statement

This exhibition examines stories of forced migration in the history of Queen's University and within the Queen's community. It reflects the diverse trajectories of those who sought refuge. Some found sanctuary at Queen's and Kingston became their new home. Others found safety at the University for only a short time, migrating elsewhere when the opportunity was available. In addition to examples of shelter, relief, and solidarity, the exhibition presents instances of reluctance, prejudice, antisemitism, and racism.

**Queen's Refuge: Refugees and the University** tells its story through the lens of individual biographies: one person, associated with one refugee-related phenomenon, is further represented by one object. These are stories that go beyond campus and have always been closely linked to the broader Kingston community. It is a story that is still highly relevant today.

Following the opening question "What's in a suitcase?", the exhibition presents perspectives from and on refugees by focusing on four aspects of the refugee experience: Directions, Transit, Relief, and Arrival. The exhibition closes with the question, "What's a refuge?", which we encourage visitors to reflect upon.

This exhibition was prepared by Queen's University undergraduate students, an archivist, a librarian, and a historian, and has been in preparation since 2019. It represents the interests of these individuals while at the same time reflecting notable silences in collections, the archival record, research, representations, and even common knowledge.

This exhibition was curated by Swen Steinberg, Brendan Edwards, Heather Home, Megan Zelle, Nicholas KingHill and Aerin Leavitt. The exhibition team would like to thank everyone who made this possible, especially those who shared their stories, or shared a family member's story.

You can access the texts to this exhibit online at [virtual-exhibits.library.queensu.ca/queens-refuge/](https://virtual-exhibits.library.queensu.ca/queens-refuge/) or by using the QR code on the front cover.





***What's in a Suitcase?***



# 1

## Directions

Object: Suitcase of Maria and Danylo Luciuk, c. 1949, Private collection, Professor Lubomyr Luciuk, Kingston

Picture: Maria and Danylo Luciuk, c. 1949, Private collection, Professor Lubomyr Luciuk, Kingston

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Forced migration is not simply about a point of departure or the place of arrival. Most refugees suffer traumatic and repeated dislocations, challenges that degrade their social, economic, and political status, and even their physical and mental health. And, no matter how much the refugee might hope or try to make decisions about their destination, the choices available are often very limited. Advice and resettlement assistance must typically be accepted from others, be they individuals, religious communities, state agencies, or international organizations.

This luggage belonged to Maria and Danylo Luciuk, Ukrainian Displaced Persons (DPs) aided by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and, later, the International Refugee Organization (IRO). After years of privation and uncertainty, they left war-torn Europe in 1949 and found asylum in Kingston. Here they rebuilt their lives as Canadians. Their children both attended Queen's University and later helped other refugees, never forgetting what their parents endured and what this battered suitcase – all that Maria and Danylo had when they came to this city – represents.



# 2

## Transit

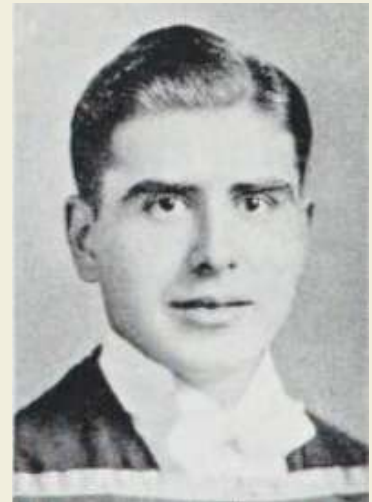
Object: Certificate of Registration for Alfred Bader, issued in April 1940 in England, Alfred Bader fonds, box 1, folder 5, Queen's University Archives

Picture: Alfred Bader in *Tricolor '45* (Kingston: Alma Mater Society 1956), p. 60, Queen's University Archives

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Refugees in the past and present are often forced into a transit situation: disconnected from social or family networks from one day to the next, deprived of citizenship or even their status as a human being, without valid papers documenting basic information like birthplace or education. However, this transit situation could offer new opportunities and choices – if the receiving society, institutions, or organizations made such choices possible for refugees. This British certificate from 1940 represents such a refugee, Alfred Bader, it is a document giving him legal status.

Bader was sent to Britain with a Kindertransport from Vienna in 1938. But this document was not the end of his transit situation: in 1940 Bader was deported to and interned in Canada, before eventually successfully beginning studies at Queen's where he was active in student organizations. But he left Kingston to go to the US when he had the opportunity. He nonetheless remained strongly connected to Kingston, becoming a successful businessman, art collector, and generous donor to Queen's University. Like many other refugees, Queen's University was a transit point for the refugee Bader.



# 3

## Relief

Object: Door knob, ca. 1950, Private collection, Swen Steinberg

Picture: Ban Righ Hall on Queen's campus, late 1930s, Queen's University Archives

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What is, or is not, in a refugees' suitcase? A lack of proper clothing for new environments, for example; no food or money, and probably not the keys to a room that could give shelter after months or even years of insecurity. Part of the story of refugees in need are the people on the other side: the people who recognize that help is necessary, the people who organize and provide help – but also the people who rejected, refused, or ignored the plight of the refugee.

Krystyna Zbierańska was among those who received help from individuals at Queen's University: in Fall 1939, she fled the Soviet occupation of Poland to France and later to Britain after the German invasion in May 1940. With the assistance of the Refugee Committee of the Alumni Association, she arrived in Kingston in January 1941 where she was provided a room and privacy in Ban Righ Hall, represented by this door knob.



If you want to learn more about Krystyna Zbierańska, please visit the "Internment – and Alternative Routes from Nazi Persecution" satellite exhibition in the PumpHouse Steam Museum in Kingston that accompanies the Refuge Canada travelling exhibition from the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21.

# 4

## Arrival

Object: Eileen Keppel-Jones, *Water Babies: Fourteen Seaside Pieces for Children* (Alfred Lengnick & Co., London, ca. 1955), box 43, folder 21, Keppel-Jones papers, Queen's University Archives

Picture: Eileen Keppel-Jones in her passport from 1953, Keppel-Jones papers, box 43, folder 17, Queen's University Archives

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Departure somehow also means arrival. This simple scheme normally does not apply to refugees, and not to many other migrants in general. On the other hand, such arrivals happened: in departments at the University and in friendships, in religious communities and organizations, within the Kingston community itself and in everyday life.

Eileen Keppel-Jones was part of this everyday life in Kingston: as a music teacher for viola and piano and as a composer, she occasionally played organ in a local church. But unlike many other refugees, she arrived in 1953 as a privileged white person from another settler-colonial setting: born in South Africa as a British citizen, she fled a changing and violent political situation with her husband, Arthur, and three children.

Arthur Keppel-Jones was already teaching at Queen's in 1953; an advocate of racial harmony, he later became a professor. The *Water Babies* musical score documents the mobility of ideas often related to arrival: Eileen Keppel-Jones wrote the songs in Johannesburg, South Africa, and later published them in London, England. This booklet was sold through The Frederick Harris Music Co. in Oakville, reaching an audience in Ontario.



# 5

## What's a Refuge?

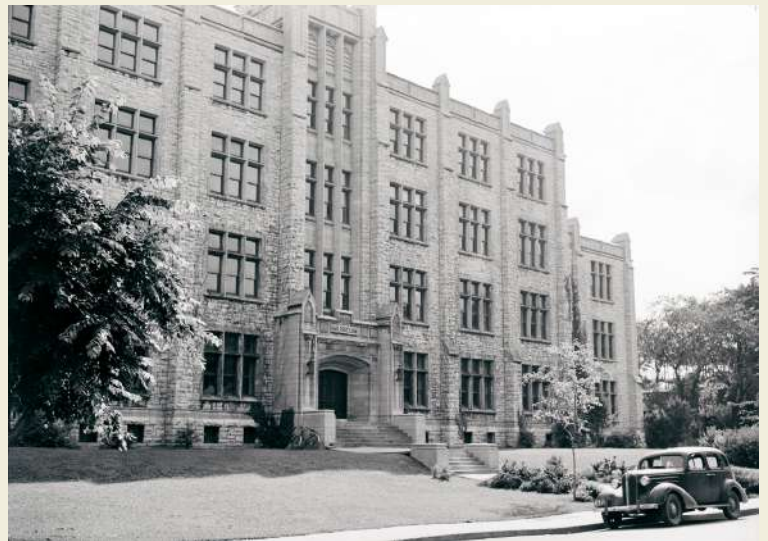
Object: Ann Crump, "From Drama to Engineering: Greek Refugee at Queen's," *Queen's Journal*, November 3, 1953, p. 1 and 5, Queen's University Archives, facsimile

Picture: Miller Hall, 1948, George E.O. Lilley, V25.5, Box 4, envelope 199, Queen's University Archives

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Refugees and receiving societies often answer this question differently. Depending on the circumstances of flight, legal status, public opinion, or the necessity of staying alive, notions of what's a refuge differ from retrospective reflections, for example, in the autobiographies of refugees. The Greek refugee Petros Antonopoulos is no exception: born in 1934 in modern-day Macedonia, he was imprisoned by the German army and managed to escape to Egypt with his family in 1941. After 1945, their journey continued via Italy, France, and Turkey.

In 1952, former refugee Antonopoulos entered Canada to study in Montreal. In 1953 he arrived at Queen's to study mining engineering at Miller Hall. This *Queen's Journal* article not only described his story, it also gave him a voice in mentioning that he was at first "very disappointed" by the "welcome" given to him in Canada. But his arrival in Kingston made a difference: "I was here only five days, and already there were ten people I could say hello to!" Sources like this are rare; refugees often remain silent and unheard in receiving societies.



And like in many other cases, we do not know much about the further career of Petros Antonopoulos. On the other hand, the *Queen's Journal* article raises questions about what he was not saying about the situation of arrival. You can explore the full document – like all other sources – on the website of this exhibition.





# ***Directions***

Terms like departure or destination reduce complexity, especially for refugees – orientation and reorientation were more common, even for those helping refugees and organizing relief.



# 6

# Geographies

Object: Union Street sign, c. 1940, Queen's University Archives

Picture: Queen's University from the air, 1919, Library and Archives Canada, Wiki Commons public domain

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Union Street, one of the main streets on campus outside the Douglas Library was presumably named in commemoration of the Union Act of 1840 that united Lower and Upper Canada into one Province of Canada after rebellions for democratic reform in the late 1830s. Shortly after, in 1841, Queen's University was founded. This is where our story starts: with the artificial settler-colonial geographies which our campus represents in the present day, and with the forced migration of Indigenous peoples who lived in these territories long before settlers, Loyalists, and other newcomers arrived.

Therefore, the aerial photograph from 1919 is misleading: you can see Union Street and an empty space where Douglas Library and the Queen's Refuge exhibition is located now. But this place was not 'terra nullius'. Our exhibition is located on the traditional and of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek peoples, and we are grateful to be guests on these lands with a long history - a history that is directly linked to refugees and forced migration in very different contexts.



# 7 Michael Willis (1798–1879)

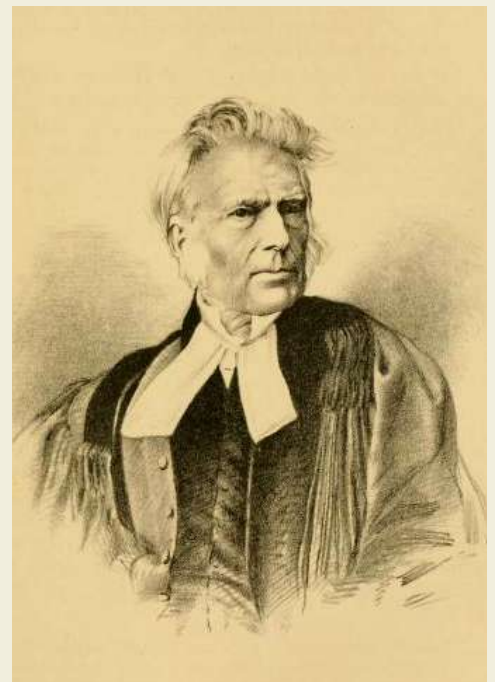
Object: *First Annual Report, Presented to the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada, by its Executive Committee* (Toronto: Brown's Printing Establishment, 1852), Queen's University Library, W.D. Jordan Rare Books and Special Collections

Picture: Michael Willis, in: David Scott, *Annals and Statistics of the Original Secession Church: Till its Disruption and Union with the Free church of Scotland in 1852* (Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, 1886), p. 72-73

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Michael Willis was born in Greenock, Scotland and studied at the University of Glasgow where he also received his ordination in 1821. Later, Willis became a representative of the Free Church of Scotland and was sent to Canada in 1845, he taught at Knox College in Toronto until his retirement in 1870. Willis became the first President of the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada in 1851, after publishing against slavery while in Scotland. He was especially interested in the work of the Elgin Settlement (Buxton, Ontario) as part of the Underground Railroad, aiding people of colour who had escaped slavery. 1863, Willis received one of the first honorary doctorates of law granted by Queen's University.

In this *Report* on the first annual meeting of the society, chaired by Michael Willis in March 1852, opened with an unanimously passed motion that characterized slavery as the cause “of numerous evils, Political, Social, Commercial and Religious, we rejoice in any favorable symptoms that promise its abolition and utter extinction.” Cooperation with the “Ladies’ Association for the Relief of Destitute Colored Fugitives” was also mentioned, pointing to the variety of peoples and the nature of relief referred to within this publication: the report did not recommend the migration “of free persons of color” from Canada to Trinidad, for example, because of the ongoing “modified system of Slavery” there. The report described the situation in communities like the Elgin Settlement and Queen’s Bush in Ontario. The entire group of formerly enslaved Black refugees at the time in Canada West was estimated at 30,000, most of them from the U.S.



While the work of the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada provided relief, accommodation, and education for refugees, it remained a settler-colonial project on Indigenous lands. This *Report* also pointed to the “importance” of “healthful exercise in the different settlements—a moral and religious element to elevate, to restrain and to Christianize.” Such ambivalence is also evident in the honorary degree Willis received from Queen’s in 1863 – the second recipient that same year was John A. Macdonald.

# 8 Samuel O. Eshoo (died 1956)

Object: Monaural stethoscope, c. 1890, From the Collection of the Museum of Health Care at Kingston, 997002008 a-b

Picture: Samuel O. Eshoo pictured in his 1902 graduating class composite, folder V28 CI-Med-1902-1, no. 32, Faculty of Medicine, Queen's University Archives

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Dr. Samuel O. Eshoo was born in Persia to Christian Persians of the Assyrian race, his father was a Presbyterian Minister. As Imperial Germany's actions began affecting his community, Eshoo fled to Canada, more specifically, fleeing to Queen's University. Growing up, Eshoo dreamt of becoming a medical missionary, and in coming to Queen's, he hoped to be able to do that for his own country. Eshoo graduated from Queen's in 1902 with an MD and CM, as well as the Principal's Award bestowed by votes of the graduating class. The *Queen's Journal* notes that this was an obscure moment, as "rare indeed is it for a foreigner, especially when he belongs to a nation so alien, at least to Canadians, as is Persia, to win the esteem and good-will of his associated to such a marked degree that they award him a prize in preference to men of their own race." Eshoo demonstrated an immense passion and drive to help others.



Upon graduation, Eshoo returned to Persia, becoming a transient of information between refugees in Persia and Queen's University. In 1904, the *Queen's Journal* published an article entitled "Famine Threatened Queen's Missionary," reciting Eshoo's summary of the refugee situation in Persia, as well as creating a system for the Queen's community to donate to refugees in Persia.

While working as a missionary, all British subjects were instructed to leave, but Eshoo noted that "it seemed as risky to attempt the escape as to remain." In attempting to flee to Canada, Eshoo became acquainted with a Persian Prince, who disguised Eshoo and his children and hid them for six months, asking only that Eshoo be their family's physician in return. Eshoo eventually made it to Tabriz, but as Bolshevik uprisings instigated, Eshoo was aided again by the Prince in fleeing back to Canada. Eshoo returned to Canada in 1920 and started a career with the Women's Missionary Society of the United Church as a physician, where he worked until his retirement in 1942. Passing away in 1956, Eshoo's passion for helping others combined with his medical degree from Queen's guided him in a multitude of directions throughout his life.

# 9 Ernest Cockburn Kyte (1876–1971)

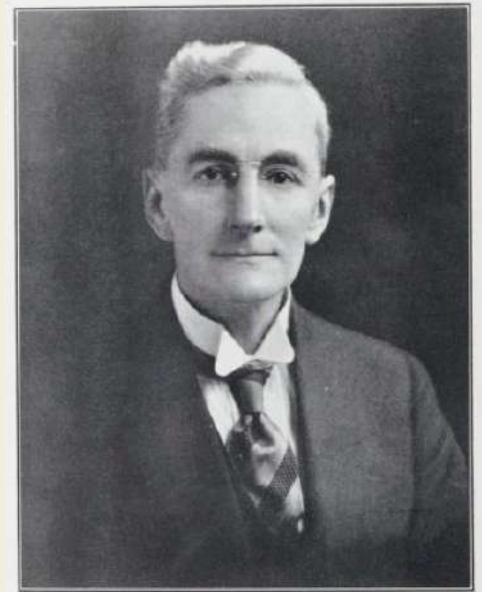
Object: The School of Musketry Cap Badge, 1902-1919, private collection, Swen Steinberg

Picture: Ernest Cockburn Kyte as librarian in the *Tricolor Yearbook 1929* (Kingston, 1929), p. 10, Queen's University Archives

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Born in Cardiff, Wales, Ernest Cockburn Kyte began working as a librarian at 18. Upon moving to Canada in 1927 he held the position of Chief Librarian of Queen's University for 20 years; he was also a co-founder of the Bibliographical Society of Canada. In the First World War and from 1914 to 1919, Kyte served in the British Army as a musketry officer in a divisional wing battalion of the infantry in France.

His papers at the Queen's University Archives contain numerous short stories, including the unpublished manuscript, "No Refuge For Refugees". He wrote this short story after the outbreak of the Second World War and depicted refugees in France fleeing the German attack in 1940. While this story was fictional, Kyte was confronted with such refugee groups when he was a soldier in France: about 8% of the Belgian population fled their country after the German attack and until November 1918, some 320,000 of them relocated to France. Kyte remembered them in the new situation of another war and another people in need. The "No Refuge For Refugees" short story mirrors his geographical and experiential knowledge from World War I, also his sensibility for the humane perspective of refugees as individuals.



The refugees during the First World War refer to Kyte's later domain and to Queen's University where relief efforts for Belgian refugees had been organized in the Fall of 1914 by the Belgian Relief Committee and other groups. In November 1915, for example, the Theological Alumni Association organized a concert with Belgian artists at Grant Hall for "Belgian sufferers." Later in the war, money was collected by the Queen's War Relief Fund and distributed to relief organizations supporting refugees from the Armenian genocide or Serbia, and also to people from Belgium.



# 10 Artur Zylinski Arthur (1927-1990)

Object: Schweppes Ginger Beer, ca. 1950, private collection, Swen Steinberg

Picture: Queen's ID of Artur Zylinski Arthur, 1970, Artur Zylinsky Papers, box 1, folder 27, Queen's University Archives

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Artur Zylinski Arthur was born in Lithuania, a country occupied by the Soviet Union in June 1940 when he was 13 years old. He was imprisoned after the German occupation in Summer 1941 and brought to France as a forced labourer. Assisted by the French Resistance, he escaped to Britain and joined the Polish Armed Forces in the West. In 2020, his daughter-in-law published the novel, *Against My Will: Lithuania to Freedom*, telling this story of an odyssey through Europe and beyond.

After the war, Arthur studied commerce, economics, and business administration in Scotland, earning a BSc in 1950. Until 1957, he worked as an accountant for the soda company Schweppes – before starting a very successful university career in psychology. After further studies he earned his PhD at the Institute of Psychiatry of the University of London in 1963. Until 1965, he worked at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand, where he introduced a training program in clinical psychology. In the same year, he became director of the graduate program in clinical psychology at Queen's University and professor of psychology in January 1966. He died in May 1990, shortly after his retirement.



Arthurs' biography reminds us in particular that the connection between forced migration and the University does not lead to a straight and foreseeable path or direction. His research was dedicated to psychological techniques of decision-making and the impact of stress. In October 1989, a few months before his death, he was quoted in the *Queen's Journal* about student stress. To a certain extent, one of his answers also referred to the relationship between his own experiences as a refugee and his research, stating that in "the past relationships and survival were more important. But since World War II, people have the opportunity to succeed and it makes them work harder. Today's lifestyle is much more stressful."

# 11 Eileen Keppel-Jones (1910-1981)

Object: Notebook with packing list from 1953, Keppel-Jones papers, box 43, folder 2, Queen's University Archives

Picture: Eileen Keppel-Jones, c. 1970, Keppel-Jones papers, box 35, folder 10, Queen's University Archives

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Eileen Bate was born in East London, South Africa, as a British citizen and married to the historian Arthur Keppel-Jones, they had twins and a daughter. The family lived in Johannesburg, South Africa, where Eileen worked as a music teacher and wrote music.

When the political situation changed, the couple decided to leave. While not entirely free in this decision, both were in a privileged situation with specific directions: In April 1953, Arthur reached out to four Canadian professors that he knew, and later received an appointment letter from Queen's in July. In the meantime the family prepared their departure. This notebook with packing lists represents the opportunity of preparation; the Keppel-Jones were able to bring several trunks and other luggage. Partially, not only the parents filled these lists but also the kids.



By the end of July, the family sailed from Cape Town, South Africa, leaving family and friends behind. They arrived in Canada on August 15, 1953, and lived at 27 Park Street. Following their arrival, Arthur Keppel-Jones did not want “to live the life of an exile ... longing only to return at the earliest possible way. ... Together with Eileen, he became a citizen very early on.” We can find this description in Arthur's retirement speech at Queen's in 1982 – one year after his wife died. Her work has been remembered with four annual piano scholarships for “several piano students” in Kingston “in memory of Mrs. Keppel-Jones who inspired many young pianists.”



# ***Transit***

For some refugees, Queen's University was not a point of arrival – when they had the choice or opportunity to move on, they decided to leave. Others were forced to come back to Kingston and left when it was possible.



# 12 Annie E. Gordon (1867–1959)

Object: Doll “Grecian Woman of Corfu,” probably before 1931, The Agnes Etherington Art Centre, M78-042  
Picture: Faculty of the International Collegiate Institute in Smyrna, c. 1925, Levantine Heritage Foundation

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Annie (also Anne) E. Gordon was born in Williamsburg, Ontario, and worked as a teacher before starting her studies at Queen’s University. She graduated in 1897 in Arts and continued school teaching. In 1901, she joined the American Congregational Board of Foreign Missions and the Central Girls College in Marash (Kahramanmaraş) in the Ottoman Empire where she taught mathematics.

After the outbreak of the First World War, Gordons’ missionary work turned into a global odyssey: she was detained by Ottoman forces, deported in a prisoner exchange shortly before the armistice, and arrived via Port Said in Egypt and Marseille in late 1918 in the US. In November 1921, she returned to the International Collegiate Institute in Izmir (İzmir, Smyrna). This school was headed by Alexander McLachlan: a missionary with an 1884 Queen’s BA and 1911 Doctor of Divinity, who had been the managing editor of the *Queen’s Journal* for two years. Gordon was part of a strong missionary network related to the university and Kingston.



In September 1922, Annie Gordon fled to Athens after the Greco-Turkish War, organizing refugee relief work following the violence against ethnic minorities and the population exchange in the Treaty of Lausanne (1923). McLachlan documented this experience later in Kingston as *A Potpourri of Sidelights and Shadows from Turkey* (1937) which is preserved in the collections of W.D. Jordan Rare Books and Special Collections. Annie Gordon remained in Athens until September 1924, occupied with “refugee work in Greece.” She briefly returned to Smyrna in May 1925 and taught at the Junior College in Athens until 1931; after retirement, she lived in Ottawa. In April 1950, Gordon donated this and other dolls that she likely brought to Canada to the Agnes Etherington Art Centre.

Gordon was both a refugee and a witness of forced migration following the Armenian genocide in 1915 and other violence against minoritized peoples in that region. At the same time, her work was recognized in the *Queen’s Journal* and the *Alumnae News* at the university throughout the 1920s and 30s, underlining the Christian implication of her teaching and relief work. Similar to the Belgium refugees after 1914, people at Queen’s advocated for persecuted minorities before the First World War. But according to Canadian immigration laws, this advocacy was exclusive and only focused on specific refugee groups fitting familiar cultural and racial patterns.

# 13 Ze'ev Lev (1922–2004)

Object: Willie Low, "On the Need for Jewish Culture," *Hillel Scroll* 2,1, October 1943, Queen's University Library, W.D. Jordan Rare Books and Special Collections

Picture: Ze'ev Lev Receiving the Israel Prize. c 1962, Yehuda Aizenshtark, public domain image, [www.archives.gov.il](http://www.archives.gov.il)

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As William Low, Lev was born to a Chasidic Jewish family from Vienna, Austria, in 1922. At 12 years old, his family moved to Berlin, Germany. By 1938, Lev was able to leave Germany in order to study at the Gateshead Yeshiva in England. Unfortunately, the rest of Lev's family was unable to leave and were lost to the horrors of the Second World War.

From England, without a home to return to – Lev was offered a scholarship from Queen's University and travelled to Canada in 1942 to continue his academic career away from Europe. At Queen's, Lev dedicated himself to his studies, faith, and community – emphatically engaging with different members and events from the Beth Israel Congregation and Queen's student groups including Hillel House. An example of this was in a literary feud that arose between Lev and a Queen's professor concerning Arab-Jewish relations during his time as an editor of the Hillel House newspaper from 1943 to 1945.



In a piece written in 1943, Lev discusses anti-semitism at the time and what more can be done both societally as well as through action of the Jewish youth to actively train and educate the world to overcome anti-semitism, thereby achieving a "more enlightened citizen body." Queen's University offered a point of transition for Lev, as following his undergrad in 1946. He immigrated to Israel in 1950 after obtaining his MA and a doctorate in philosophy from Columbia University. This migration to Israel was taken by a large number of Jews globally. A shared experience representative of the rebirth of Jewish identity and homeland, he took the name Ze'ev Lev. In Israel, Lev sought out to establish the creation of an educational institute that blended technology and engineering with religious teachings. He founded The Jerusalem College of Technology in 1969 providing a space that continues religious and educational nourishment for Jewish peoples.

# 14 Alfred Bader (1924–2018)

Object: Photo album by Alfred Bader, c. 1944, Alfred Bader papers, Queen's University Archives

Picture: Detail of Alfred Bader in a Queen's Hillel Foundation Executive Committee group picture, 1944, Queen's University Archives

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Alfred Bader's story begins in Vienna, Austria, in 1924. Born to a Jewish family, the Baders continued living together until increased restrictions and threats of violence due to the rise of Hitler's Nazi Party to power, and the annexation of Austria forced Bader to Britain via the Kindertransport in 1938.

Unfortunately, at the age of 16, Bader was interned in England with Austrian or German persons at or above his age, including prisoners of war. Such internment led to deportations across different continents, to camps in the Isle of Man, Australia, and Canada. While in an internment camp in Quebec, Bader was sponsored and permitted to apply to Canadian universities on the basis of his excellent academics. Despite his outstanding academics, the University of Toronto and McGill University both denied Bader's application, perhaps in part due to the unofficial "quotas" of the 1930s and early 40s on newly accepted Jewish students coming into Canadian universities. However, Queen's University and the Registrar at the time, Jean Royce, accepted Bader and welcomed him back into the world of academia and exit the continuously transitory and insecure landscape of internment.



At Queen's, Bader wasted no time propelling himself into academics, student university groups, religious communities, and social spaces. He excelled in classes and won academic awards alongside other refugees, was deeply ingrained and passionate about the Jewish student body and community of Queen's, successfully becoming the President of Hillel House in his 4th year in 1944-1945, and remained connected strongly to student life and culture at social-housing spaces like Collins House, the first cooperative housing project at Queen's. As artifacts like this album of shared student life illustrate, Bader began rebuilding his life at Queen's after spending years unknowing, trapped in transitory internment and insecurity.

# 15 Thomas Z. Fahidy (born 1934)

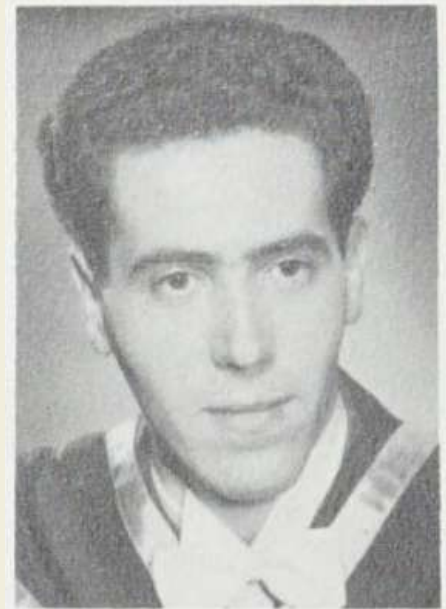
Object: Imre Bernolak, *Modern English-Hungarian and Hungarian-English Dictionary* (Imre Bernolak: Ottawa, 1957), Joseph S. Stauffer Library, Queen's University Library

Picture: Thomas Fahidy in the *Tricolor '61* (Kingston: Alma Mater Society 1961), p. 66, Queen's University Archives

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During the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, over 3,200 university and college students – 11.2% of the total refugee population – left Hungary permanently to continue their studies abroad and to seek safety and opportunities. Students left due to the Soviet-imposed policies which targeted educated citizens in particular, leaving them with little freedom in employment and voting rights if they opposed the government. Many went to Vienna, where they were supported by fundraising efforts by both Queen's students and the World University Service of Canada. 400 students boarded government-sponsored flights, with 100 more arriving independently.

The students initially resided in an Immigration Centre near McGill University. The centre provided transition education classes, language courses, academic orientation, and an introduction to Canadian culture. There were attempts to make the work program as equal opportunity as possible, as students were required to find work in Canada as part of their transition. Initially, Queen's University was only going to take in four students, but after fundraising support and a bursary created by the Atkinson Foundation, the university brought in twelve students. Their scholarships depended on if they did good work, as Canada was looking for skilled workers in refugee students; this is reflected in how the “most successful students” were in Engineering due to the support they got.



The student featured in this exhibition, Thomas Fahidy, was a student in Chemistry until 1961 and at the top of his class, therefore he had scholarship opportunities. This success was based on how well students like Fahidy did in the English courses run by Queen's during the summer – as represented by this travel sized Hungarian-English dictionary from 1956 – and the ability to balance school with work. Financial hardship was also a factor influencing the students' success. These factors, alongside the stress of displacement and transition, likely explain why two of the twelve students dropped out of their studies at Queen's, pointing to the importance of adequate support in determining refugee student success. This was also true for Fahidy, who after his PhD in 1965 became a professor in Chemical Engineering at the University of Waterloo, Ontario.



# ***Relief***

The response to refugees varied at Queen's at different times – silence, ignorance, and even hatred are therefore also a part of this story. However, some examples from the University's history show activism, creativity, and the meaning of personal experience.





# 16 André Charles Biéler (1896–1989)

Object: André Biéler's Palette, undated, The Agnes Etherington Art Centre

Picture: André Biéler speaks at the first conference of Canadian artists in Kingston, June 1941, André Biéler paper, 2050-3-63-3, Queen's University Archives

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While not a refugee himself, André Charles Biéler had a significant impact on refugee relief efforts in Kingston, as well as at Queen's University. Born in Lausanne, Switzerland, his family moved to Montreal when he was 12. After serving in World War One, he studied art in Paris, New York, and Switzerland, and lived in Quebec from 1927 on. In 1936, Biéler became artist-in-residence at Queen's University and taught as a Professor of Art until his retirement in 1964, at which time he also received an Honorary Degree of Laws from the University. From 1957 to 1963, Biéler was the founding director of the Agnes Etherington Art Centre and the first President of the Federation of Canadian Artists, founded in 1941.

In October of 1940 the Ottawa Branch of the Canadian National Refugee Committee organized an exhibition with an auction to raise money for relief work. A variety of artists donated their artworks, with Biéler contributing an oil painting, "The Sunny Market", and a pencil drawing, "Étude du nu." While this exhibition was important for Canadian art in general, it also points to the variety and creativity of relief efforts that the Queen's community was involved in at this time – ranging from fellowships and accommodation to the "quilts for refugee children" that the Levana Society collected in 1941. The exhibition and auction in 1940 also points to the networks beyond the University and Kingston that Biéler was part of.



Alongside religious and other organizations, the Canadian National Committee on Refugees played an important role in relief efforts. From 1938 to 1948, the committee was chaired by Cairine Wilson who received an Honorary Degree of Laws from Queen's in 1943. In October 1941, she was in contact with the Dean of Medicine, Frederick Etherington – husband of Agnes Etherington – and advocated for more "refugee medical men" and "foreign physicians." But Etherington could only report a "hopeless minority" in favour at a vote of the Medical Council of Canada. Local or individual openness toward refugee relief efforts which André Charles Biéler represented, at the same time as general disapproval inspired by prejudice or immigration law, illustrate a simultaneity apparent in other periods and refugee contexts too.

# 17 Edith A. Ferguson (1903–1993)

Object: Edith A. Ferguson, *Newcomers and New Learning* (Toronto: International Institute of Metropolitan Toronto, 1966), Joseph S. Stauffer Library, Queen's University Library

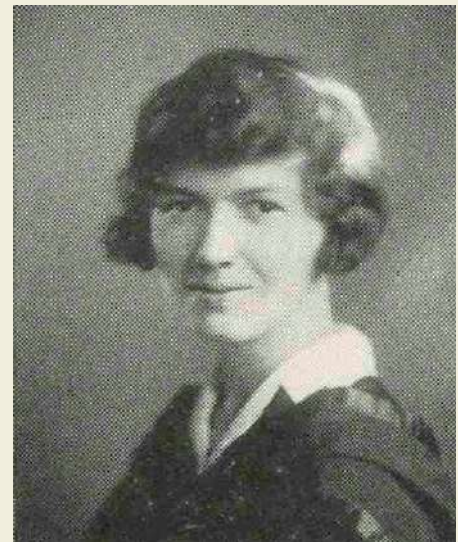
Picture: Edith A. Ferguson in the *Tricolor '30* (Kingston: Alma Mater Society 1930), p. 41, Queen's University Archives

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Edith A. Ferguson was born in 1903 within Glengarry County, Ontario. She always had an interest in other cultures despite or perhaps because of her rural upbringing. She completed her BA at Queen's in 1931. While she additionally later obtained an MA from Columbia University, this was not until 1949. It is this space in between her two degrees that detail her commitment to refugee support, education, and relief that inspired and gripped her for decades to come.

With the conclusion of the Second World War, Ferguson joined the United Nations Refugee and Relief Administration and travelled to Germany where she worked as a Welfare Officer helping to support refugees and other displaced individuals. These experiences strengthened her interest in refugee and immigrant integration into Canadian society, the field in which she wrote and studied for forty years.

Ferguson conducted several studies on the challenges immigrants faced regarding integration, had her publications used as textbooks in the field, and served on federal task forces studying services to immigrants. From 1951 to 1976 she worked for the Ontario Citizenship Bureau, organizing and conducting intercultural seminars. She was honoured by the Province of Ontario in 1975 along with twenty-four other women for "outstanding contributions they have made over the years to their community or country," and was inducted into The Order of Canada in 1976 "in recognition for her work in the area of immigration."



Though Ferguson achieved much and was recognized countless by various entities, she represents something else for our showcase, the silence of women from historical record. Though different texts and electronic sources exist that detail her works, the amount of photos that were located of her in our research was close to nil. This is not entirely unexpected though as this uncanny silence is a pattern that plays out in the majority across historical landscapes and in different forms: pictures, words, familial objects – we can both count ourselves lucky and also reflect somberly on Ferguson's embodiment of existence now mainly in texts.

# 18 Hanns Skoutajan (1929–2015)

Object: Honorary degree file 1986, Secretariat file, 1001.12-63-38, Queen's University Archives  
Picture: Hanns Skoutajan in the *Tricolor '56* (Kingston: Alma Mater Society 1956), p. 45, Queen's University Archives

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Hanns Skoutajan was a refugee who came to Canada in April 1939 when he was ten years old from Nazi occupied Aussig (Usti nad Labem), Czechoslovakia. He and his parents had been deprived of their home the previous October with the signing of the Munich Agreement that ceded Sudetenland to Germany to pacify Nazi Germany. His family were known to be socialists and anti-fascists, and managed to flee in time to avoid being arrested. They first went to Britain, but the government did not allow them to stay, so they went to Canada instead. The Skoutajans arrived as “resettlers” in Batawa near Kingston, a village founded by Czech refugee entrepreneur Thomas J. Bata who brought his shoe production and some of his workers to Canada.

Skoutajan attended Queen's University, completing BA and BD degrees in 1954-6. In the fall of 1957 he was assigned by the United Church of Canada to assist in welcoming and helping immigrants at Pier 21. He helped locate lost baggage, looked after babies, helped with interpretation, and reassured worried immigrants. One of the refugee groups Skoutajan helped during this time were Hungarian refugees from the 1956 Revolution, including the students that came to Queen's like Thomas Fahidy. He was also involved in organizing relief in the 1980s when refugees from Southeast Asia arrived in Canada. The honorary Doctor of Divinity degree Skoutajan received from Queen's University in 1986 explicitly mentioned these relief activities. Skoutajan held pastorates at several churches including Cooke's United Church in Kingston where he continued to work as a social activist and organized community fundraisers for refugee efforts; he was a member of the Council of Canadians, an organization that organizes strategic campaigns to improve social programs in Canada.



Skoutajan wrote a biography called *Uprooted and Transplanted*, outlining his refugee journey. One of his beliefs was that “endings bring new beginnings” and as such, his support of refugees did not stop upon his death. Skoutajan requested that memorial donations be made to the United Church of Canada's Emergency Response for Syrian Refugees to keep supporting refugees after his passing.



# 19 Mostapha Zahir (born 1964)

Object: Hemoclip automatic applier for wound closure, c. 1975-1985, From the Collection of the Museum of Health Care at Kingston, 997034615

Picture: Mostapha Zahir (r) with one of the Afghan patients he brought to Kingston for medical treatment in 1987, *Queen's University Alumni Review* 76,1 (2002), p. 9, Queen's University Archives

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Mostapha Zahir was born in Kabul in 1964 as the grandson of former Afghan King, Mohammad Zahir Shah. Zahir Shah was exiled from Afghanistan in 1973 in a palace coup, so Zahir had to leave with him at nine years old. The forced move led to much turmoil in both Afghanistan and Zahir's life. Zahir later remarked that Afghanistan "has always been poor but was then stable and moving toward democracy when [Zahir Shah] ended the absolute monarchy in 1964", which would have made Afghanistan a modern democratic state by introducing free elections, women's rights and universal suffrage. However, this progress came to a halt with the coup. Zahir moved to many different cities (Rome, Vienna, London) before continuing his education at Queen's University in 1987. He received a Bachelor of Arts Honours from the Department of Political Science in 1993.

In Kingston, Zahir became active as co-founder of the Afghan Medical Relief Organization (AMRO) in the late 1980s; as of 2002, the organization had sent medical supplies and other relief to Afghanistan to a value of \$250,000. AMRO also brought 15 wounded, mainly young Afghans to Kingston for medical treatment of wounds from the Soviet-Afghan war. In a 2003 newspaper article, Zahir mentioned that AMRO was "only permitted by the government to bring them in, treat them, and send them back." Such relief work was only possible with the help of people from Kingston and beyond campus.



Through the experience of being a refugee and observing a lack of progress in his country, Zahir has been a strong advocate for change and sustainability. His success comes from the fact that most people in Afghanistan want to rebuild the country as it was devastated via the Afghanistan war. Before returning to Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban in the early 2000s, Mustafa served as his grandfather's diplomatic assistant (1991-2000). In 2000, he became the former King's chief of staff until he was chosen to be the ambassador to Italy in 2002. He served in that role until becoming the Director General of Afghanistan's National Environmental Protection Agency in 2005. NEPA serves as Afghanistan's environmental policy-making and regulatory institution to regulate, monitor and enforce environmental laws. As of the current Taliban takeover of the capital city Kabul, it is unknown whether there will be a federal ministry for the environment; as a result of this uncertainty, many climate officials are in hiding. Zahir's fate is unknown as of the finalization of this text, but he may have unfortunately become a refugee again.

# *Arrival*

Not unlike other migrants, refugees are confronted with new environments – affected by factors such as weather conditions, but also social and economic constraints. Individuals and the community play a significant role in helping refugees to adapt.



# 20 Gleb Paul Krotkov (1901–1968)

Object: Radioactive material container, Charles E. Frosst & Co., c. 1960, From the Collection of the Museum of Health Care at Kingston, 998006006 a-b

Picture: Gleb Paul Krotkov with a tobacco plant in his laboratory at Queen's, *Queen's Journal*, January 10, 1958, p. 5, Queen's University Archives

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Gleb Paul Krotkov was born in Moscow and lived with his family in Southern Russia after the revolution. He fought in the White Russian Navy and fled in 1920 via Tunis and Marseille to Prague, Czechoslovakia. After his studies and a Bachelor of Science degree, Krotkov immigrated to Canada and worked for two years on a farm. He continued his studies and earned a PhD in 1934 at the University of Toronto, after which he was immediately hired by the Department of Biology at Queen's as a lecturer and specialist in plant physiology.

At Queen's, in 1948, Krotkov established the first radio-isotope laboratory for biological work in Canada, which utilized isotopes to study intermediary metabolism in plants. Krotkov became the R. Samuel McLaughlin Research Professor of Biology in 1954, was a member of the Royal Society of Canada and awarded the Flavelle Medal in 1964.

As early as January 1933, Krotkov gave a talk to the Levana Society about his experience and "the friendliness of the Canadians towards the foreigners." However, Kingston and the University provided him not only with a job opportunity. Krotkov's childhood friend, Valia, fled the revolution as well, and followed him to Canada where they were eventually married. Valia Krotkov taught mathematics and astronomy at Queen's and helped start the Department of Russian. Her obituary in the *Alumni Review* from May 1998 mentioned that both of them "were always thankful to this Canadian city and university which so warmly helped them to build a new life."



# 21 Joseph Abramsky (1857-1927)

Object: Physiology research results by Donald Jennings, c. 1960, From the Collection of the Museum of Health Care at Kingston, 004.035

Picture: Portrait of Joseph Abramsky, c. 1900, Ontario Jewish Archives, 3320

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Joseph Abramsky's story is one of endearing hard work, success, and community. Born in what is now Belarus in 1857, Abramsky worked as a travelling-salesman within what was known as "The Pale of Settlement" in the Russian Empire. From 1791 to 1917, this area was deemed the only land Jewish residency was permitted within the Empire's borders, and served as the grounds for numerous pogroms committed against Jewish peoples. In 1890, Abramsky was able to leave from what is now Eastern Poland and travelled to Kingston, where he had familial connections.

In 1891, he opened the Joseph Abramsky Department Store in downtown Kingston at 277 Princess Street which lasted as a staple of the community until 1977. Abramsky reciprocated the relief he originally received from family and in turn provided an avenue for the migration of four of his siblings from Eastern Europe. Abramsky not only made a personal impact in the Kingston community, but also had a generational effect through his son, Harry Abramsky (along with his spouse, Ethel), and their continued support of the local community and Queen's University through generous donations and financial support. Specifically, Harry and Ethel donated \$200,000 over five years during the 1950s to Queen's for the construction of a specialized facility for physiology research like that by Donald Jennings presented here.



Despite this generous donation, the University did not name the building "Abramsky Hall" or install a plaque outside its doors until 1974, following campaigning by Nate Kaufman and Dr. H. Garfield Kelly (Queen's MD, 1940). This reflects the reality of Kingston, Queen's, and Canada in a larger context in relation to immigrants and refugees: namely, that relationships are complex; that many newcomers are still subject to fear, frustration, discrimination, and racism, while simultaneously offering and attempting to inspire positive change, safety, acceptance, and inclusion.



# 22 Hans Eichner (1921-2009)

Object: Hans Eichner, *Four German Writers: Seven Radio Lectures Broadcast on CBC University of the Air* (Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1964), Queen's University Library, W.D. Jordan Rare Books and Special Collections

Picture: Hans Eichner (back row, right) with the German Club at Queen's in the *Tricolor '57* (Kingston: Alma Mater Society 1957), p. 199, Queen's University Archives

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Hans Eichner was the son of a Jewish family from Vienna, Austria. After the Kristallnacht pogrom in fall 1938, he fled with the help of the Jewish Aid Committee to Belgium and later to England. Interned as an 'enemy alien' in 1940, Eichner was sent to Australia and started studying in an internment camp. After the war he was a student of German studies at the University of London, England, where he earned his PhD. Shortly after, in 1950, he started as a German lecturer at Queen's University where he immediately fell in love with the landscape. Eichner left Kingston in 1967 and became the chair of the German Studies Department at the University of Toronto.

The book, *Four German Writers* (1964), illustrates the ambivalence of his arrival: persecuted by German-speaking Nazis, he built his career on this language that was his own. He became a well-known specialist and translator of the philosopher Friedrich Schlegel and a scholar of Thomas Mann. The latter was the focus of Eichner's PhD thesis and is one of the four German writers introduced in his radio lectures in winter 1963/64. But Mann also had a similar fate to Eichner; the democrat and novelist fled Nazi Germany in 1933. The same is true for Communist dramatist Bertolt Brecht, also introduced in this volume by Eichner.



This intersection of language and culture remained the focus of the Germanist, not only in his research and teaching at Queen's. In 1957, for example, Eichner read poetry by Rainer Maria Rilke at the German Club on campus, another author introduced in this book. Shortly before his death, Eichner's semi-autobiographical novel, *Kahn & Engelmann*, was published in 2000 first in German, addressing his family history, Jewish identity, and the Holocaust. This book shows, in particular, the fragility of a term like "arrival" – and how long the process of arriving can take for refugees.

Object: Stop clock timer from the Dr. George Mayer anticoagulants / blood clotting study, c. 1960, From the Collection of the Museum of Health Care at Kingston, 011.008

Picture: View of the front of Richardson Laboratory, 1972, Queen's Picture Collection, Series S4, folder V28-B-RichL-3, Queen's University Archives

Born in 1921 in Maglód, Hungary, Kiss was a student at Péter Pázmány University in Budapest in 1949. When the Hungarian Revolution began in 1956, Kiss was forced to leave Budapest due to the suppression of the coup directed at university-educated citizens. His transition to Canada was difficult, as Kiss details how he “wept for ‘Mother Europe’” until he could not cry anymore as his boat sailed past Newfoundland. Kingston for him was meant to be a temporary stop, so he initially kept his head down and followed his own code of behavior for new immigrants: “Silently listen to the noise outside; The racket and the chatting in strange tongues; But be prepared and vigilant inside,” he wrote in his poem “Uzenet az emigrans magyaroknak” (“Message to the Hungarian emigrants”) in 1966.

However he grew to love the city and chose to remain. He worked as a laboratory technologist at the Department of Biology at Queen's University from 1958 until 1972. In 1960, he published a paper with Queen's professor George A. Mayer on “Blood Viscosity and in Vitro Anticoagulants” in the *American Journal of Physiology*. This stop clock from the collection of the Museum of Health Care in Kingston was part of these experiments that were probably conducted in Richardson Laboratory. The connection between the two was a result of origin, Mayer held a medical degree from Budapest, Hungary, and was active in the Citizens Committee for Hungarian Refugees in Kingston in 1956.



In his free time, Kiss published works of poetry about his found city of Kingston, such as *A sziget nincs többé, Kingstoni temetés* (*The Island Is No More, Kingston Funeral*, 1972), *Átutazóban a városomon: versek* (*In Transit Through my City*, 1970) and also of Hungary, *Emlékezzetek Magyarországra!* (*Remember Hungary!*, 1966). Writing under the pen-name, Aladár Visegrádi, he received the Árpád Prize in 1970, and became a member of the Árpád Academy in 1971. Kiss was one of the founders and early secretary of the Canadian Association of Hungarian Writers, an organization that helped connect Hungarian refugee writers to the cultures of both their home and adopted country. He died in Kingston at 51 years old in 1972.

# 24 Irene Bessette (1924-2012)

Object: Madame Irene (Bakowska) Bessette, Queen's Law 50th Anniversary Plaque, Queen's University Library, William R. Lederman Law Library

Picture: Irena Bakowksa, in: Irena Bakowska, *Not All Was Lost: A Young Woman's Memoir 1939-1946* (Kingston: Karijan Publishing, 1998)

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Born in Warsaw, Poland, in 1924 as Irena Borman, she assumed the name of Irena Bakowska during the Second World War in order to hide her Jewish identity. Irena lived through the bombing of Warsaw, the persecution and murder of Warsaw Jews before their imprisonment in the Ghetto, shared the misery of Polish Christians enslaved to work for the Germans, and witnessed their confusion and hardship when liberated in France. In her own words, “against this historic panorama, I grew from adolescence into womanhood.”

Irena hid her Jewish identity throughout the war, even from her first husband, Józef, a Polish Christian and the father of her child, Richard. Surviving the war, Irena returned to Poland in 1946, but realizing that Jews were no longer welcome there, divorced, and eventually migrated to France, leaving her son in the care of her parents. Heartbroken, she left Warsaw for the last time; the first time was upon her imprisonment in the Ghetto, the second was upon her deportation for slave labour on a German farm in Lorraine, but it was this final loss in liberated Poland that she considered the most painful and unwarranted. Rebuilding her life in France, Irena eventually reunited with her family in the United States. Looking back on her early life in a 1998 memoir, *Not All Was Lost*, Irena observed that the ethnic and religious intolerance and political unrest that forces people to leave their country “may inflict as much pain as the onslaught of war or enemy occupation.”



Reclaiming her Jewish identity, Irena was educated in France as a lawyer at Bordeaux. She migrated to the United States in 1955, where she continued her studies in law and as a librarian. She was admitted to the New York Bar in 1966, practiced in Casablanca, was admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1970, and the Law Society of Upper Canada in 1985. Irena came to Queen's as Law Librarian and Associate Professor of Law in the spring of 1968. Identifying then as Irene Borys, she was Head Law Librarian, taught courses in Quebec civil law, and was the first woman to join the Faculty of Law. At Queen's she met and married French Studies Professor, Gérard Bessette, whom she described as the first person with whom she felt “complete” and “normal” since the Holocaust. Irene had a prestigious career at Queen's, where she participated in Jewish life on campus and spoke and published about her experience of the Holocaust; she retired in 1989. Upon the 50th anniversary of the Queen's University Faculty of Law in 2007, Irene Bessette's contributions were commemorated with this plaque, normally on display in the Lederman Law Library.



# 25 Agnes M. Herzberg (born 1940)

Object: Pattern block sudoku, 4 double-sided game boards, 36 pattern blocks, instruction sheet, Education Library at Queen's University, QA135.6.P388 2008

Picture: Agnes M. Herzberg in the *Tricolor '61* (Kingston: Alma Mater Society 1961), p. 23, Queen's University Archives

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Agnes Herzberg's story begins prior to her birth. Her parents, Luise and Gerhard Herzberg were Jewish German nationals and fled Nazi persecution. They travelled in 1935 to Canada with the financial support of the Carnegie Foundation and Gerhard took up a guest professorship position at the University of Saskatchewan. In 1936 they had their first child, Paul Herzberg, and continued their academic careers.

Academics would be a major foundation for all of the Herzberg family, with Gerhard winning the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1971, Luise's astrophysics work gaining sizeable recognition in the 1960s, and Paul who dedicated his life to education as a member of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics and authored a memoir about his mother, highlighting her accomplishments as an astrophysicist and the challenges she faced as the wife of a world-famous scientist.

Agnes Herzberg was born in Saskatoon in 1940, as a child of refugees in the second generation. She left Saskatchewan and attended Queen's University for her undergraduate degree in 1961 before returning to Western Canada for her MA. Over the next few decades she made numerous contributions to the fields of statistics and mathematics, in particular regarding their contributions to the design of clinical trials in medicine. One example of her work is a co-authored paper examining the properties of the Sudoku puzzle, including its potential for data compression. Finally, since 1996, Dr. Herzberg has organized the annual Conference on Statistics, Science and Public Policy.



The group selects topics ranging from science, public policy, education, risks, ethics, health, globalization, and democracy for discussion among a selected group of scientists, policy makers, journalists, heads of regulatory agencies, and other influential participants. She also took responsibility for editing and publishing the conference proceedings to inform public policy and in turn potentially improve the lives of individuals who are in a similar position as her parents.

# Alaa Khalaf (born 2002)

Object: Loran Scholarship certificate, 2020, facsimile

Picture: Alaa Khalaf, personal photograph, 2021

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Born in Syria in 2002, Alaa rose above many obstacles to find a new home in Toronto, and at Queen's University. She writes that "I have only known the vibrant and beautiful city of Damascus up until the noise of the famous street markets started diminishing, and up until Syrians started dying."

Alaa describes how life became blurry as her family left their house in Syria, and faced four years of displacement before arriving in Toronto in 2017. She challenged herself to learn English in three months, and dedicated herself to helping newcomers in her high school. In Grade 12, she was one of thirty-six students from across Canada to be awarded a 2020 Loran Scholarship – an award that goes beyond just grades, recognizing merit, potential, character, and courage. Loran took notice of Alaa's desire to get involved and give back to the communities that welcomed her and her family. Alaa expresses that "being able to attend University is a dream for many but attending Queen's University as a Loran Scholar is a privilege. Having a safe home and a supportive family is a privilege. Being a refugee taught me not to take anything for granted and to recognize the many privileges that we have that are a dream for others." Enrolled in the Bachelor of Nursing program, Alaa describes that while her initial move to Kingston was difficult, after finally settling in Toronto, the small city energy of Kingston reminds her of her hometown in Syria.





# What's a Refuge?

This question concludes the exhibition, pointing to the agency of refugees and who is allowed or able to speak. But this question also addresses us as visitors – and our role in recent forced migration processes around the globe. How would you answer this question? On the following pages, you can leave a personal reflection for other visitors.

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*“The friendliness of the Canadians towards the foreigners in their country is one of the first things noticed by an immigrant.”*

**Gleb Krotkov, 1933**

*“I beg of you not to ask anything of a political nature.”*

**Gerhard Schmidt, 1935**

*“I am looking forward to meeting you and I know I shall be very happy at Queen’s University. I have heard so much about the cordiality of your people and the beauty of your country.”*

**Krystyna Zbierańska, 1940**

*“Harmonious living together of people of different faiths is based solely on mutual understanding.”*

**Alfred Bader, 1944**

*“I was here only five days, and already there were ten people I could say hello to!”*

**Petros Antonopoulos, 1953**

*“Of course there are many anecdotes connected with Queen’s and with local Jewish residents. Suffice it to say that Alfred Bader and I received every prize and scholarship that was available at Queen’s. This raised some eyebrows at Queen’s since both of us (so called ‘refugees’) set new standards of excellence.”*

**William Low, 1985**

*“I was immensely excited about being married and being a prof - and full of anticipation - but viewed the relocation to Kingston and Queen’s with something like amusement.”*

**John Meisel, 2012**

*“A refuge for me means having a safe space where I can dream as big as I want, without fearing for my life. It means sharing my opinions and not being silenced when speaking up. Since seeking refuge in Canada, I have been able to practice my basic human rights that I have been deprived from.”*

**Alaa Khalaf, 2021**







# About Us



**Swen Steinberg**

Swen is a historian and lecturer in the Migration & Diaspora Studies program at Carleton University and affiliated with the German Historical Institute in Washington DC and Berkeley. He has taught courses on migration and minorities at Queen's. Swen's research is focused on the intersection of migration and knowledge, refugees, and unaccompanied minors.



**Brendan Edwards**

Brendan is the Curator at W.D. Jordan Rare Books and Special Collections, Queen's University Library.



**Heather Home**

Heather is the Public Services/Private Records Archivist at Queen's University Archives.

# About Us



## **Nicholas KingHill**

Nicholas was born and raised in Kingston, Ontario. He attended Queen's University and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree in History, with a focus in Cultural Studies and Critical Theory in 2020. He joined the exhibition team in his final year of study on an academic internship with Swen and continued to research and work on the showcase throughout the pandemic.



## **Aerin Leavitt**

From Vancouver, Aerin graduated from Queen's with a BAH '20 in History and Geography, and from BEd in '21. She is currently a graduate student in the Master of Information program at University of Toronto, with a Concentration in Archives/Records Management. In her internship at the UofT Archives, her research interests are accessibility within archives and digitalization.





## **Megan Zelle**

Megan is from Prince Edward County, Ontario, and is currently in her third year of her BA at Queen's University with a major in Global Development Studies, a minor in Political Science and a Certificate in Law. Megan joined the exhibition team after taking a course taught by Swen, which studied minorities and migration.

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