

75 YEARS OF FREEDOM

The Netherlands - Canada Connection



The connection between the Netherlands and Canada is undeniable and strong.

Three main factors contribute to this relationship:

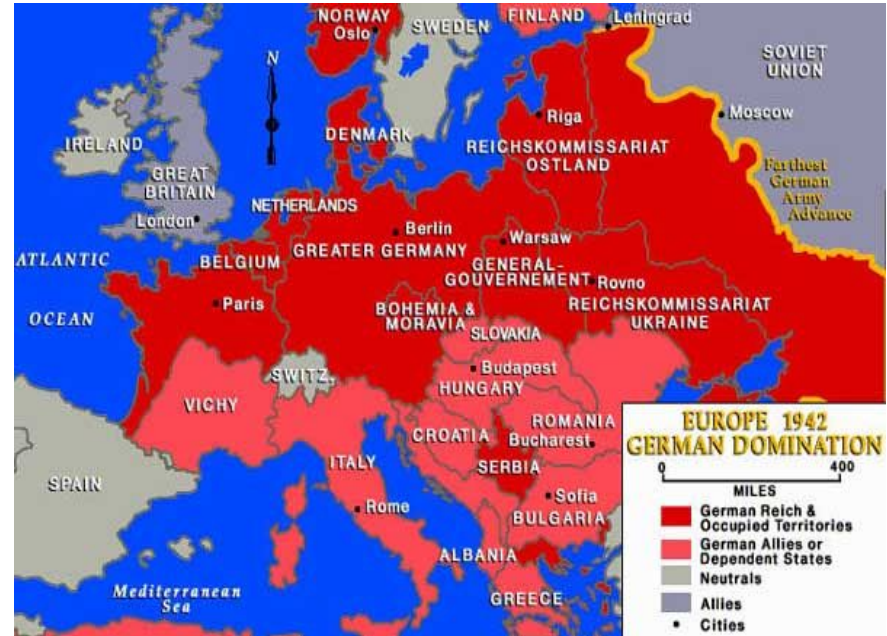
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1- The Liberation

During the Second World War, The Netherlands suffered greatly under Nazi occupation.

- Conditions were harsh
- People were living in fear
- Food was scarce - Many people had to Resort to eating tulip bulbs to survive



Canadian troops played a large part in the Liberation of The Netherlands in the winter and spring of 1945. They brought food and supplies. For many Dutch citizens, the Canadian troops became a symbol of freedom.



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2- Immigration

Between 1940 and 1959 almost 150,000 Dutch immigrants came to Canada. Among them were nearly 1900 war brides and 428 children.

Many of these new Canadians established lives as farmers in Ontario and the Prairies.

Today there are about 1 million Canadians of Dutch descent.

([Pier 21 statistics](#))



3- Safety

When The Netherlands was occupied by the Nazis, it was decided that it was unsafe for members of the Royal Family to remain at home. Queen Wilhelmina, Crown Princess Juliana, along with her husband and two daughters sought safety in England.



When England became too dangerous, Princess Juliana and her daughters moved to Canada.

While they were in Canada, Princess Juliana gave birth to Princess Margriet.

When the time came, the government of Canada declared an area of the hospital “extraterritorial” (outside of Canadian territory), so that the baby would not automatically have Canadian citizenship.

Princess Margriet was born in January 1943 at Ottawa’s Civic Hospital.

[**CBC video: Netherlands' Princess Margriet born in Ottawa**](#)

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A Gift of Friendship

Soon after the war, Princess Juliana presented Canada with a gift of 100,000 tulip bulbs. 20,000 bulbs a year have been gifted since then, and the first official Canadian Tulip Festival was held in 1953. The Tulip Festival has been held in Ottawa every year since.

