

[Narrative of Mohinder Singh Gidda]

Saw Mill Worker Stories

Mohinder Singh Gidda Narrative

Interview Date: November 30th, 2014

Mohinder Singh Gidda was born on June 13th, 1946, in village Pathawa, District Jalandhar (now in District Nawanshahr) Punjab, India. He lived in village Sugon, Punjab before he immigrated to Canada where he studied until grade ten. After finishing his grade ten in 1965, Mohinder Singh then did his industrial training at a Technical School in Phagwara, called the Industrial Training Institute, or ITI College for his industrial training. During his time in College, Mohinder Singh attained his trades of Radios and TV's after two years Industrial Training and one year apprenticeship in the Village Pathi in District Hoshiarpur, India. During this time of schooling, Mohinder Singh also did not work until 1969 when upon he opened his own shop in Nawanshahr, called the "International Radio and TV." In his shop, Mohinder Singh would repair old radios and sell new radios as well. He did this shop work for one year until February 1970 after which he immigrated to Canada.

Mr. Gidda came to Canada as a visitor on March 3rd, 1970 after landing at the Vancouver Airport. At that time, his cousin Tarlok Singh Gidda was already living in Canada. It was Tarlok Singh Gidda who originally filed the papers to sponsor Mohinder Singh; however, it was later discovered that Tarlok Singh could not sponsor him because he was his cousin and not the real brother. During this time, before 1968 there used to be blood relation category of sponsorship. Later on, when Pierre Trudeau became the Prime Minister of Canada, he changed immigration rules with respect to sponsoring blood relatives. As such, after a few months, Mr. Mohinder Gidda applied for his landed immigrant status because of his training in Radio and TV work. At that time the Permanent Resident Status was called Landed Immigrant Status (there was different terminology in the 1970's). Mohinder Singh was actually short a couple of points to be accepted as a Landed Immigrant, but he appealed his case. While his appeal result was pending, Mohinder Singh married someone who had lived in England for 10-11 years and had then subsequently immigrated to Canada. In 1972, The Canadian Immigration Minister Bryce Mackasey gave the landed status to anyone coming to Canada, whether through education or any other category. Through this then, Mohinder Singh received his landed status.

During his arrival in Canada, Mohinder Singh's Radio shop was still running and taken care of by his father and brother. His father was a brick layer and his brother was a student during the time. Soon after Mohinder Singh married in 1972, he and his wife purchased a home. He wanted to continue in his Radio and TV trade, but due to his family responsibilities among other things, he could not pursue it in Canada, and there was no support for him to continue his studies in Canada.

Mr. Gidda's first job in Canada was at the Snowcrest Cannery where he worked for one month in Abbotsford. Here, he used to work eight hours a day in this cannery and twelve

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