

## COMMUNITY

# Left without a homeland, Moslem chooses Canada

The history making events of 20th century India involved people from the three major religions, the Hindus, Sikhs and Moslems. While attending a murder mystery weekend at the Inn of The Sea Resort at Yellow Point I discovered the manager of the inn is a Moslem. Although he is not from India I thought he would be an interesting subject.

Bashir El Kalafawi is a man without a country. His former homeland of Gaza is a very small strip of land bordering on Egypt. It is only 40 miles long and seven miles wide and since the Israelis have occupied his country, Bashir's family and other moslems are now classed as refugees in what they claim is their own land they are all displaced people and many of them like Bashir have emigrated to the west.

Born in 1941 and educated in Gaza, Bashir grew up with war. His father, who was a captain in the Egyptian army, was killed in 1952



**Indo Canadian**  
By Joan Mayo

in an uprising against King Farouk, trying to fight corruption. Bashir was only 10 years old at the time. His mother took him, his three sisters and one brother back to the family home in Gaza where his father's six brothers looked after them. Like most countries in the East and Middle East the family structure is very close.

He has survived three other

wars. A war in 1948, the Israeli invasion in 1956 and the war of 1967.

After high school Bashir was sent to Philadelphia where he studied architectural design and building construction. He returned to Gaza in 1964 where he worked with the Canadian contingent of the U.N. Peace Keeping Force. The Canadian contingent was from Sardis, B.C. and he still has many friends among them. It was because of these Canadian friends that he emigrated to Vancouver in 1968. His first job was as a waiter at the Devonshire Hotel in Vancouver.

In 1970 he moved to the U.S.A. He met and married his lovely American wife while studying hotel management in Florida, then worked as a restaurant manager for a U.S. chain of hotels. He returned to Canada in 1974 to take up the position of manager of Vancouver's Ritz Hotel.

While working at the Ritz he was offered the position of manager at

the Inn of The Sea. Not only famous as a beautiful seaside resort, the Inn of The Sea is well known for its monthly murder-mystery weekends. Bashir and his wife take active roles with the cast of actors making it impossible to determine who are the actors and who are guests or staff.

The procrastinators New Year's Eve Party is another well attended regular event at the end of February. Procrastinators are people who are always putting things off, hence the New Years Party in February. It is a dinner and dance with all the traditional New Year's Eve festivities.

Bashir prides himself in the many unique wedding ceremonies and receptions he has hosted, sometimes on the beach and other times by the pool or in the spacious reception and dining hall.

Bashir and his family, one son named after his father Ali and a daughter named after his mother Nadima, live at the resort and hope

they will never have to leave Vancouver Island. He is a member of the A.M. Club, a tourism association which promotes tourism from Ladysmith to Mill Bay. They recently conducted a series of travel shows about this area in Seattle/Tacoma. He is on the board

of directors of the Tourism Association of Van. Island, is a member of the Rotary Club and a past president of the Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce.

Bashir is now a Canadian citizen and his two children hold dual U.S. and Canadian citizenships.