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Light and shadow on the Hill 3
by Doug Fothering

Imperial goes to school 8
by Patricia Clarke

Those chilly, warm arenas 12
by Dick Brown

Farms at the Falls 17
by Gordon Donaldson

A little extra every Wednesday 22
by Monique Provencher

Tomorrow's happy retirement is
today's sound economy 27
by Dian Cohen

In closing 30

History on the Hill
Light and shadow on the Hill

by Doug Fothering (photos by Ron Cole)

In the middle 1980s, when she was still fairly new to the job, Eleanor Milne, the federal government's official stone carver and all-purpose resident artist, thought she was coming down with a rare and curious ailment. She had been working for weeks supervising the restoration of the painted linen ceiling in the House of Commons. This job, lasting eight months in all, meant standing for hours on end, high above the chamber floor, with her back tilted and arms raised over her head. In time, she felt herself taking on the peculiar muscle disorder known colloquially as “Michelangelo stomach.” The complaint is so named, of course, because it was first noted in the man who spent four years assuming similar positions while painting the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel. It’s a passing soreness and relatively unimportant except, in Milne’s case, as a metaphor. It shows how she fits in the scheme of things.

For the last decade in Canada the major controversies in the arts have not been ethical in nature; they’ve concerned government funding. Artists and art lovers in all the disciplines have been demanding more money from Ottawa and the provinces, while worrying about government control and the democratically possible approach of their becomingvese government workers. But while all this has been going on, there sat Eleanor Milne, an internationally recognized artist, who actually is a federal employee under direct government control. Her unofficial title is that of Dominion stone carver, which four others (all men) have held since Confederation. But because the government has no payroll category for artists, she is listed officially as a research scientist with the department of public works. Neither of these designations, however, really gives a good indication of what she does or of her actual relationship with the state, which has its basis in an age before arts councils and artist solidarity.

In the method she carries on the Renaissance tradition by being an artistic jack-of-all-trades in the service of the state. This was common practice in Europe as early as the 16th century, reaching its peak in the Renaissance of the 14th and 15th centuries. The best example of course, is Leonardo da Vinci. He served whatever master he had at the moment (the ruler of Florence, say, or of Milan or the French king) not only by painting portraits but by taking on the roles of sculptor, architect, designer, musician, and military engineer, doing whatever artistic chores needed doing along with some more proper ones. Milne, 63, is very much the modern-day Canadian equivalent.

Since she began the job in 1982 (after competing with 21 other artists), she’s performed an astounding variety of tasks. Some of them are long-term decorative projects. The man she replaced, William Osterloth, had inherited from his predecessor, Charles Soucy, a lot of blank stones on the ceilings and walls of the Centre Block, a layer of the Parliament Buildings. He proceeded to cover them with highly stylized carvings. But as vast is the project that Osterloth left many stones unfinished. Milne got about at once to complement his work with a huge frieze depicting nothing less than the history of Canada. This was completed in 1975. While the work was going on she also designed, outlined, and built 12 stained-glass windows for the Commons and performed a score of other tasks, from helping with the designs for the Centennial coin to advising the National Capital Commission on architectural matters.

More recently, she’s been just as busy and just as many levels. As a public–works employee she’s all over TV, radio, and newspapers nationwide. She was asked, for instance, to design the Speaker’s chair for the territorial council of the North-west Territories. She did it. This opened a request from the Yukon for a clerk’s table for its own legislative body. All this was happening while Milne continued to carve in the Commons, working with the eight on scaffolding 24 metres above the floor. Having done the panoramic historical scenes, she is now working on another one, illustrating the 13 panels of the

Eleanor Milne carves our history in every nook and cranny.
British North America Act. This task was begun in 1974 and won't be completed for several years. It's a peculiar job for any artist to have, but it's one to which Milne, with her eclectic background in the arts, is well suited.

Milne is a slender, straight-backed woman with shortish gray hair and facial features in such high relief that they could have been produced by the chisels she uses in her work. She was born in Saint John, N.B., where her father was a naval architect (he designed the icebreakers still in service in the North). She studied in Montreal at the Museum School of Modern Art and at McGill University. At the latter she waged a battle to be able to study anatomy with the medical students rather than in the tamer classes held for artists. "Today artists don't study this way at all," she says. "But we all took anatomy then. That's one of the reasons I'm good at design." She later pursued her studies in Britain and then in the United States under Ivan Mestrovic, the sculptor and authority on Gothic art. She returned to Montreal and École des Beaux-Arts and then finally to Ottawa, where she has ancestral roots. Her family first settled there in 1860, and she lives in the Glebe district, in a house built by her grandfather in 1913. It's a dark, stately old Ottawa home, filled with tools and the tailings of her craft. Particularly evident are sketches and other materials relating to her (and the government's) biggest on-going artistic project, the decoration of the Centre Block.

Most of the stone work is far more recent than the casual tourist would imagine, just as the buildings themselves are not really the Victorian monuments they appear to be. After the fire of 1916 destroyed the original Parliament Buildings (only the cupola's library was left standing), the emphasis was naturally on rebuilding as quickly as possible. Embellishment was put off, at least for a time. The new structures were formally opened in 1920, but the carvings that are so much a part of the feel weren't begun until 1924. And even then, progress was painfully slow. The nature of the work saw to this, of course, as well as the scope of the surfaces to be covered. Other factors were the fine detail and the incredible number of nooks and crannies, which often became the location of some curious figures and ornaments in stone and other materials.

For instance, the present Commonwealth Room, where heads of Commonwealth countries are greeted, was formerly the Commons smoking room, and a palace of high-relief cigars encircles the ceiling. In a similar spirit the heads of various Canadian journalists (Joseph Howe, Charles Bishop, Gaston O'Leary) line a now-sealed-off entrance to the Railway Committee Room. "Hundreds of pieces of this kind remain to be done in the Commons and elsewhere," says Bob Hill of public works. These occupied much of the time of Milne's immediate predecessors and are part of her job, too, in addition to the giant friezes. But that's not to say she tries to replicate what the others have done. Quite the contrary. She may...
be a federal-government artist but
there's no official government style,
explicit or implicit. Milne's work stands
out as such.

Take the lobby, which is officially
called Confederation Hall; she says,
"There are obsolete forms used there.
Charles Soucy was working in the
Gothic style. As for William
Osterhoffs, he was sometimes not
really carving at all so much as
engraving; he painted in the shadows.
Me, I'm working in a primitive Roman-
esque style to tell stories from history.
The three of us are very easily distin-
guishable from one another. There
are three styles and none of them is
contemporary. I'm relating what I do to
the building itself, not to the sculptors
who came before me." There are,
however, topics of conversation that all
the past Dominion stone carvers, were
they resurrected for a meeting, would
no doubt find they had in common.
There are, for instance, certain skills
involved in satisfying a government
bureaucracy not preoccupied with the
fine arts.

For work in the House there's a
committee I must deal with," Milne
says. "It comprises various public-
works officials, the Speaker, the clerk
of the House, all of whom must
approve decisions. MPs are not on
the committee on the grounds that in
general they aren't on the scene long
enough. Now there are certain areas
where they have a say in what I can do.
For instance, I can't depict any political
figure dead less than 50 years.
I'd like to include Louis Riel in the
carvings, but I don't know yet. The
design for that panel won't be ready for
another year and a half. In any case,
the point is that I've been very lucky
with the committee. They don't really
interfere with the artistic side of
things.

That is, there is no artistic censor-
ship. But Milne is able to cite incidents
when artistic taste have simply dif-
ered. "When I was in charge of
redesigning the Commons ceiling in
1965," she says, "I fought very hard
against a plan for putting up eight
dandeliers: great wrought iron ones. I
lost." The potential for differences
of this sort is present on all such commit-
tees, such as the one concerned in part
with pieces of sculpture for various
government buildings. If there's one
thing the bureaucracy understands,
thought, it's the function of the expert
consultant. Milne is usually able to
educate the others a bit in art apprecia-
tion while swaying them to her view.
"What you would do to enhance a
gothic building is naturally quite differ-
ent from what you would do with a
contemporary building. If they want an
abstract piece, fine, we give them
abstract. But we make sure they
understand why it's a good abstract,
the way it reveals the essence of the
thing, the grayness of the tree, and so
on." Surely this basic difficulty, that of
explaining the unexplainable to the
people in power, was not foreign to the
Renaissance artists. Neither was the
custom of working with apprentices
and helpers.

Milne does much of the design work
herself. This usually involves going
through a series of detailed sketches
until she gets the effects she wants. On
at least one occasion, however, she
bypassed this process and began by
sketching a carving on one of the
limestone walls. Normally this is the
second step, after which she uses
pneumatic tools to rough out the
figures. Her high scaffold is encased in
canvas to keep rocks chips and fine dust
from permeating the halls below, which
echo in the night with the staccato of
her jackhammer. Later she finishes
the figures by hand, with a hammer and
chisel, whereupon her assistants com-
plete the background. "Back carving"
the foliage and branches to create the
light-and-shadow effect is the staff con-
cept of Quebec's folklore in

carving and another assistant, original-
ly from South Africa, who like Milne is
trained as a sculptor. To these are
added various outside specialists as
required. "At the moment," Milne says,
"I'm looking for five Inuit and Indian
artists to work either in Ottawa or
at home on sculptures for the Commons
lobby — nine pieces for the House.
When not in location in the Parliament
Buildings, Milne's unit operates from the
department of public works shops on
Somerset St., crammed in with piping-
lettes, mechanics, masons, and plumbers.

Here's, at present, that she's
working tirelessly on two important
projects that are the counterparts of
two already completed after years of
labor. Her first truly major job as the
government's artist-in-residence was
the history-of-Canada series for the
Commons. This consists of 16 panels,
each depicting scenes from the Viking
discovery of North America to the
arrival of the United Empire Loyalists.

The entire frieze is 192 metres long
and seven metres high. It was begun in
1964 and completed in 1972, by which
time Milne was midway through the
second big project: the Commons
stained-glass windows. The designs for
these 12 windows incorporate the flow-
ers and elements from the coats of
arms of each of the provinces and both
territories. These were installed in 1972.

The two projects now underway are
similar in scale and function. Her BNA
sculptures, which she began in 1974,
will consist of 12 panels, each repre-
senting some aspect of the Constitu-
tion. Freedom of speech is to be the
subject of one, for instance. Another
will concern the vote. At present she's
executing one representing the role of
the governor general. "This will show
the governor general reading the
Speech from the Throne. Also, he'll be
seen presenting the Governor-
General's Award for literature to a
woman and, later, giving the Order of
Canada to a man." Like the others, this
part of the series is being completed at
the studio and will be transferred to the
Commons later. When done, it will be
the fifth panel finished in as many years.

Concurrently with all this she's also
designing stained-glass windows for the
Senate. These will consist of 62
separate translucent panels, which
present their own special difficulties.
I have to be rather formal in the design
of these," she says. "I feel that if the
windows are too bright the colors spill
into one another."
Denise Martin teaches physical education at a school in Salmonier, Nfld. A scholarship from Imperial Oil helped her get the university education she needed to get the job. Denise is one of seven children of Jim Martin, an office salesman in Imperial's marketing department in St. John's. Two others, Colleen and Shawn, also have won Imperial university scholarships. "Under no circumstances," Jim Martin says, "would I have been able to send them to university otherwise. We have Imperial to thank."

Doctoral student Robert Bedard of Saint-Jean, P.Q., is using an Imperial fellowship to study algebraic topology—a new form of geometry—at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "This summer I was able to work on a research project in that field with the department of national defence," he said. Bedard, a graduate of the University of Montreal, plans to continue in research and teach after graduation.

Across the continent, Gary Gleb of Lethbridge, Alta., a graduate of the University of British Columbia, is studying the logical properties of the English language for a doctorate in philosophy at the University of California in Los Angeles. A graduate fellowship from Imperial made it possible for him to study at any recognized university in the world. "I wouldn't have been able to go on without Imperial's help," he says.

At Queen's University in Kingston, Ont., an Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, initially funded by Imperial as well as by federal and provincial governments and other private donors, explores the relationships among the three levels of government. Private funding, says Queen's vice-principal for development and information, James Courtright, gives the work of such an institute far more credibility than if it were funded solely by government.

Denise Martin's scholarship, Gary Gleb's fellowship, the institute at Queen's and other Imperial programs of support for higher education, a program that is probably unique in Canada both in its breadth and its extent. Last year more than a thousand university undergraduates, 18 graduate students, 29 university research projects, and 25 of Canada's 46 major universities were the recipients of Imperial grants. The total cost of that support was about $1.5 million.

"We all recognize that education is important in the development of human resources," says Muriel Kovitz, chancellor emeritus of the University of Calgary, a member of Imperial's board of directors, and chairman of the company's contributions committee. "A company that develops Canada's natural resources also has a responsibility to develop its human resources." And a company whose employees have had a high degree of professional and technical training has a special responsibility, Imperial believes, to support the educational system that trains them. The way Imperial carries out this responsibility "sets the pace" for other corporations, according to James Courtright of Queen's. "Imperial is a leader in intelligent support of higher education," he says. Lee MacLaren, director of the department of private funding at the University of Toronto, echoes Courtright's assessment. "Imperial is one of the corporations that is most responsive to the needs of education," she says.

Intelligent support of higher education doesn't mean rubber-stamping every request that comes in. Not even Imperial's $1.5 million could support all the worthwhile causes. Choosing among them, so that every dollar will have maximum impact, is the job of Dick LeSuer, manager of the contributions division and secretary of the contributions committee that comprises four members of the board of directors.

"Any one corporation can have only a limited impact on the social and cultural needs of a country," he points out. At the University of Toronto, for example, all private gifts, including those from corporations, foundations, and alumni, make up only four percent of the budget; the rest comes from government and student fees. "The key," LeSuer insists, "is to use..."
our money where it will have the greatest effect on the greatest number of people over the greatest geographic area.

In assessing the impact of any development work, it is important to meet the guidelines. The relationship to the energy industry obviously is one. However, our money has in the past been used for such things as the University of Toronto’s music school or to fund a women’s study program. The reason the company feels a special obligation to the institutions that train its employees is that they are like Queen’s, which with three percent of the nation’s university student support goes to universities. We are not sure what university-educated recruits, will get a larger share of support. So will Albertan universities, which with nine percent of the total post-secondary students contribute 18 percent of Imperial’s requirements.

However, financial need in another criterion. And so Maritime universities get a larger share from Imperial than might be expected from either their proportion of the student population or their location. However, there are fewer industries locally for them to draw on.

Another important goal of the education program is stimulating the best use of the education dollar by avoiding duplication. A university that has more students in an area in which a nearby university has been specializing for years is unlikely to be supported.

On the other hand, when Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ont., selected and started to study geology, Imperial was interested. There seems to be a shortage of scientists in the industry, and so the university was given a special grant, explained, "The University of Toronto was backing out of the field. Laurentian is doing a good job. The daughters of people in mining would be able to study there. It wasn’t a duplication.”

Such a gift has an obvious benefit to an oil company’s future. But Dick LeSuer sees the wider purpose of the program — whether it means training geologists or training singers, support for the immigrant, or supporting the United Way — as a practical benefit. "The objective is to enhance the social fabric of Canada as a society in which to live, work, and do business,” he says. "We are also concerned about our image. We’re interdependent. We can’t be independent."

em only a limited number, LeSuer says, "Imperial awards go to as many as 25 universities.

Indirectly the program benefits Canadian universities by increasing their ability to provide their own bursary funds for others. But the main beneficiaries are the students, who are often not only the best place for a specific field — combinatorial mathematics and Gary Greaves at the University of Alberta; and a full-time position at UCL, studying under Alonso Church, who he describes as "one of the most extraordinary computer scientists," and Gileb to use his understanding of the logical properties of language to teach others at a Canadian university.

The second part of the overall goal is to "enable Canadian universities to maintain and improve their position in progress with the help of a special fund set up by Imperial." A part of the Canadian industry is still a specialty, and with Donald Dougan, the author of the article in the book on mathematics, "The book is..." and which won the P.S. Ross and Partners Award for the most outstanding article of the year. "We are now working with Donald Dougan to bolster the industry in the fields of geology, engineering, environmental and climate change. These are core areas that we support," explained. "Imperial seeks breakthroughs in such areas as developing light-weight, energy-efficient buildings, and low-cost solar cells that have the potential to make efficient use of the sun’s power. We want to support research in a variety of social and economic areas. At the University of British Columbia, for example, the program is being supported in a national energy system model to analyze alternative sources of energy and gas policies for Canada.

In recent years Imperial has been participating in a shuttle education program for the next five years, a total of $599 000.

Both parts of Imperial’s goal in education is to encourage students to make a career in the company and to push forward the frontiers of knowledge — come together in Imperial’s support of educational institutions.

That support is primarily for universities, but not entirely. Imperial supports the professional and secondary education that have a national impact. For example, it gave a generous grant in its initial years to the Canada Studies Foundation, which was attempting to develop nationwide courses in Canadian history, geography, and culture, so that stidents in each province could seek solutions to problems in these areas from various perspectives. It was a good example. LeSuer says, of seed money that paved the way for the success of the project. He believes the foundation is now funded by governments.

through its contributions to education

Imperial seeks to aid both the company and the country.

More Imperial support goes to the Canadian Scholarship Trust Education, which prepares teaching aids on Canada’s economy that can be integrated into history, geography, or social studies classes. "To survive in the world,” LeSuer says, "and to be an intelligent consumer, you need to understand how economic forces operate and how they affect our well-being."

And through The Canadian Education Association, the company has supported such a study, in which high schools across Canada evaluate achievement. With Imperial’s help, the study was put together, for the first time, people research in education, so they could compare their work and coordinate their studies.

Imperial contributes directly at the university level between $500 000 and $1 000 000. It funds new buildings or upgrades old ones to meet new demands; more effective or economic systems, like computerizing a library; developing specialized or interdisciplinary courses; or improving student facilities.

Canada’s universities get most of their support from student fees and government grants. The University of Toronto calls that "hard money," it pays the salaries, the heat and light. Corporate gifts, "are 'soft money.' They make the difference, she points out, "between the two years that the college was left funding," explained. "There are the officers," she pointed out, "to give us the elbow room to do things. It lets us do the things we do best.

The effect of such funds has an impact on the campus, or its amount. "Any innovative ideas are awkwardly hard to get out of the normal budget," explained. "If something appeals to an imaginative corporate donor, we can get it for a quality and regular funding later."

The share of its educational contributions. With preferential treatment, construction has gone down since the university expansion of the early 1960s, explained. "We still support campus capital projects. Now, however, it gives relatively more access to new programs to meet new needs.

At the University of Toronto, for example, an interdisciplinary program in natural resource management is "to be in the research and training," explained. "You need to know about geography, biology, economics, ecology, social science, and so on." Drawing on her experience as chancellor of the University of Calgary, Marjorie Kovitz sees the "extra money" companies can get from private funding can help the university's "and, therefore, develop human resources.

Such an objective on the part of a national corporation, Kovitz believes, is not a fluke. It is an integral part of doing business. "The whole purpose of business," she points out, "is to serve the needs of society." That starts with the corporation, she says. "But it does not end with those services. Γ
Those chilly, warm arenas
The heart and soul of all our towns

by Dick Brown

You talk about arenas and Canadians think they know. Yes, of course: a big, corrugated-steel building near the edge of town, with a front made of cinder blocks, a half-ton parked by the entrance, and with guys chewing on wood cigar stubs walking around, winter and summer, wearing jackets that say something like, "Senior B Provincial Champions, 1973," and... Hold on a moment. What we have here is a very, very limited view of both the arena and the things that go on inside it. It may be the biggest, ugliest, coldest building in town (both in temperature and aesthetics), but it's also the most exciting. When you talk about arenas you're talking about the heart and soul of just about every community in this country, from the Centennial Arena in Delisle, Sask., to the Forum in Montreal. When Guy Lafleur scores a goal in the Forum, you can hear the roar of the crowd if you're standing seven blocks away. That's heart! And the sheet of hockey ice is only the tip of the iceberg. Arenas mean so much more: political rallies and flower shows, protest meetings and roller skating, bingo and ball hockey, oyster parties and tennis matches, circuses and lacrosse games, dances and tug-of-war wrestling, exhibitions of cars and hardware and sail boats and home furnishings, rock concerts and country music, the Ice Capades, the National Ballet, and the Canadian Opera Company. On and on. The arena is Canada. It's part of our history; when they wanted to sell Victory Bonds during World War II, they held pep rallies in arenas.

 Arenas are where many Canadians got their first taste of sin. Out behind them or behind them, between periods or during intermissions. A fugitive push on the safety bar at the exit door and you were in the company of some recklessly older youth, talking about some of the local girls and, who knows, maybe even taking a daring pull on someone else's cigarette.

 "The mothers in town used to look upon the arena as an evil place," says Robert Stewart, recalling his youth in Scheffler. "At the north shore of Lake Superior. Stewart is now a writer, living in Montreal, and he remembers that the Scheffler Arena was a haven for kids playing hockey from school. "Somebody had torn away a piece of steel, down near the ground, and you could get into the arena and hide. You could also sneek into games though, when you reached a certain size, you couldn't get through the hole any more."

 Canadian writers know the importance of arenas, not just because arenas were part of our lives as kids, but because as former newspaper reporters we've been in hundreds of arenas, covering the day-to-day life of this country. Did anybody ever stop to consider where Canada would be without the arena? They ought to put up a little shrine on Parliament Hill, with a corrugated roof and... Robert Stewart recalls that his first newspaper job involved sending a report of a Scheffler Diesels hockey game (Diesels because Schreiber is a railway centre) to the Fort William Times-Journal. "Later," he adds, "when I was with the Ottawa Journal, I covered all sorts of election rallies and nomination meetings in arenas up and down the Ottawa Valley. And I covered a performance of the National Ballet at the arena in Pembroke."

 Arenas are a great outlet for Canadian feeling, good and bad. "I remember covering John Diefenbaker when he made a speech in the arena in Prince Albert," says Paul Gresco, another Canadian writer who lives in Calgary, "and you could feel the aniance. Sometimes, of course, especially in sports, a community will express its dislike (occasionally it sounds like hatred) of some other town or city. Montreal and Toronto are forever exchanging boos through the Forum and Maple Leaf Gardens.

 Once in a while feelings come close to getting out of hand. Don MacAsa, tells of a classic battle in Cape Breton. N.S. MacAsa is now information director of the Cape Breton Development Corporation, but he used to do the play-by-play hockey on CJUB Radio in Sydney. There were three teams in the league within about 64-kilometre radius: the North Sydney Victorias, the Glace Bay Miners, and the Sydney Millionaires. In the late forties and into the fifties, rivalry and support were frequent. the broadcast on Saturday nights rated well ahead of the broadcast of NHL games, and at the arena you had to buy season tickets. Some fans armed themselves with eggs and vegetables. "There were a lot of vegetables," says MacAsa, "and sometimes a goon got a bucket of slosh on the head." One year they came close to a war.

 There was dispute over the eligibility of a goon during the playoffs between Sydney and Glace Bay, and tensions went up and up. "They hit a peak," says MacAsa, "when trucks from Sydney were prevented from taking wholesale goods into Glace Bay. They were stopped by Glace Bay fans, right on the highway. It lasted for a couple of days."

 In towns and smaller cities, arenas are a link with the outside world, a brush with culture, whether it happens to be the National Ballet or Georges Gourde, the wrestler. "I remember seeing Yvon Robert and Larry Moquin wrestling as a team at the Cornwall Arena," says Jim Quig, a Quebec writer whose articles appear in a number of Canadian magazines. "I sunk in one time to see Yvon Robert. It cost about 25 cents. I had the money in my pocket and I didn't want to do it, but I had to go along with the others. I had to be tough enough so they played the game. It was pretty pressure." The Cornwall Arena, Quig adds, "is where I discovered Woody Herman and Louis Armstrong, where I saw the circus. A matter of fact we had our wedding reception in an arena, at Castelton, southeast of Ottawa. I play the piano, and I've played with groups in all sorts of arenas. The audiences are terrible. I did a story not too long ago on René Simard, and he was performing in the arena at Sainte-Marie-Beaure; the noise was terrible. In Quebec, arenas are usually called centres sportifs. For some reason there seem to be a lot of Haitian beer parties in them these days. Oompah bands, leather pants, the works. "You know what I really like about arenas? I like to watch the game on the ice machine make that last run, the one that finishes off the fresh surface. There's something almost erotic about it."

 Looking back on my own experience as a reporter, I feel the feeling that every second story involved an arena, even when nothing was going on there. You'd arrive in towns looking for somebody and you always seemed
to get the same answer: "Have you tried over at the arena?"

Most of the arena stories I remember did not involve hockey or even sports. I recall listening to Lesley Pearson and Elvis Presley, both in the Auditorium in Ottawa (no, not in the same evening). I remember crowding into Presley's dressing room along with 40 or other people after the performance. Elvis had his shirt off, and later we all talked about how much he was sweating.

The arena story I remember best occurred one Saturday morning in February, 1959, when I happened to be on the rewrite desk of the old Toronto Telegram. A call came in that the roof had collapsed at the arena in Listowel, not far from Kitchener, Ont. As is always the case, first reports were vague but somebody said a hockey team of Listowel kids was supposed to have been playing a team from nearby Goderich when the roof came down. It turned out that roughly 70 people, including seven boys on the Listowel team plus the arena manager, Fortunately the Goderich team had been late.

I went to Listowel a few weeks ago, and the current arena manager, a pleasant fellow named Doug Coupland, showed me a plaque with the names of the victims on it, kept among dozens of trophies and shields and pictures, including a couple of old photos of Fred W. 'Cyclone' Taylor, described in a caption (correctly, for all anyone knows for sure) as "the greatest hockey player in the world." Taylor turned the sod for the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto and he was its first member.

Like the great majority of arenas, Listowel's is a community effort, and it gets its money from a variety of sources. To give you an example, the new big clock cost $6,000, and it was split three ways, among the Rotary Club, a Wintario grant (Wintario is a provincial lottery), and Coca-Cola.

Nearly all arenas lose money. "Let's say you have between 1,000 and 2,000 seats in your arena, and it's a matter of it being able to sell them all for $10 or $12. "Some owners would most likely lose money, "but we'll do it anyway."

It's not just the building costs that eat up the operating budget. "The arena is a business, and it's not like that," says Taylor. "We've got to pay for electricity, for roof and rink maintenance, for parking." And there are other expenses. "We pay for ice making, for ice upkeep, for lights, for the rink itself."

Of course, the rink itself is the biggest expense. "It cost us about $700,000 to build the arena," says Taylor. "We got a grant from the Province of $500,000, and we paid $500,000 out of our own pocket." And the arena is open year-round. "We have to keep it running 12 months a year," says Taylor. "It's a big investment, but it's worth it in the end."

The arena is the centre of the community. "We have a lot of activities here," says Taylor. "We have concerts, we have dances, we have all sorts of events." And the arena is a hub of the community. "We have a lot of volunteers here," says Taylor. "We have a lot of people who come to help out, and we have a lot of people who come to watch."
Farini at the Falls

... they laughed, but not for long

by Gordon Donaldson
illustrations by Huntley Brown

One summer Saturday in 1860, 22-year-old Willie Hunt took his fiancée to Niagara Falls to see the Great Blondin perform his terrifying feats on a tightrope stretched across the river gorge. Forty thousand spectators gaped and shuddered as the small figure in silkenizing tight peacoat and somersaulted 60 metres above the violent waters. At 36, Jean François Gravelet, nicknamed "Blondin," was at the peak of his fame. Since his first Niagara performance in 1859 he had become a bigger attraction than the falls. News of his stunts ranked with the threat of civil war in the United States. Crowds came by coaches, train, and steamboat to watch and wonder if he'd fall. Even the Prince of Wales, heir to the British throne, was coming.

Hunt watched, unimpressed. "I could do that," he told his fiancée and a couple of her friends. They laughed, but not for long. That night he quit his job at her father's store — at which she broke off the engagement — and prepared to challenge Blondin. William Hunt, the former farm boy from Port Hope, Ont., became Signor Guillaume Antonio Farini, the name he would use for the rest of his 91 years. And he not only matched some of Blondin's feats; he went on to a weird...
In his late teens he saw a tightrope walker in a traveling circus and found an easier way to make money when having hefty local lads smash stones on his chest. Funambulism, as it was called (Latin for 'walking a rope'), seems to have come naturally to him. His first public walk was across Port Hope's Ganara Bridge on a rope borrowed from a shoemaker. He made it to publicize the 1899 village fair and, claims he got $70. His Puritan mother was outraged, and his father called him a mountebank. Soon afterwards he crossed the land of mountebanks, the American mid-West, and spent about a year sailing the Mississippi River on a barge. He returned several thousand dollars richer, walked a tightrope across the main street of Bowmanville — from the town hall dome to the roof of Milne's Liquor Store — then decided to move to Lockport, N.Y., with a storeowner's daughter.

There might have been remained, but for his trip to Niagara to see Blondin.

For his second season at Niagara, Blondin had moved his rope for a steamboat trip on the Whirlpool Rapids. Farini took over Blondin's original route, about three-quarters of a mile below the Horsehoe Falls. He bought 10, 500-foot coils of manila rope to form the main cable, 500 feet of rope on the anchor pole and the principal guy ropes, and found an old sailor to splice them. Hotel keepers along the way and stream agreed to pay him a share of their profits. A tightrope contest — the shortest walk across the river — was a surefire attraction, whether the challenger made it or not.

"On the first day, which will be the biggest, I shall make all the money I can," Farini wrote. "Expected to arrive here a few days hence. I shall have my dance with other medical gentlemen," he wrote, "whom I know to be unable to earn a living by the exercise of their profession."

So he used his medical knowledge and power to work full-time working on the farm to give "physical culture lectures" in village halls.

A row of windows describes one of these: "He threw 120 pounds over his head with one hand, threw a 60 pound weight 25 feet, then threw a 40 pound weight 15 feet. He supported himself, then had his head on one hand and his arm's length a 60 pound weight on each little finger. He supported himself, then had his head on the table in his bare hand and his arm's length a 60 pound weight on each little finger. He supported himself, then had his head on his bare hand on his own, allowed a stone weighing 500 pounds to be placed on his chest and broken with his bare hand. He dried off, broiled and baked with his bare hand and ate, and other extraordinary feats."

you're going, or you'll fall! Another screamed at a false step which I made on purpose. A third groaned, to which I replied with a laugh and tripping off. As I passed the middle, stood on my head. I tied the pole to the rope, stood erect without it, raised a few feet with my arms folded, jumped off and, as I passed the cable drew our hands, and caught it."

The Toronto Globe's funambulism reporter was critical: "He reached the Canadian shore 40 minutes earlier, starting from the American side, appearing to have had a good deal of assistance. When we arrived, he was well received by the spectators. On his return trip he descended by rope to the bank of the Mississippi River, dressed as a Mist, but not head foremost as had been announced. He then ascended the cable after completing some feats on the perpendicular rope and reached the American shore in safety. He is not quoted as active on the rope. J.J. Blondin, but he will no doubt improve by practice."

The nearest advertiser was exclaiming: "Blondin has met a rival worthy of him. Farini has already outdone Blondin. He descended his rope to the Maid of the Mist steamboat, then crawled up again. Blondin only lowered his rope to the steamboat, and hauled up a stow. (Blondin also hauled up a bottle of wine, which he drank on the market he had cooked on a stove in mid-river.)"

Farini won that first round on points. In a few days, "In a few days," he wrote, "I lost by a trifle 500 pounds, and a bad sum for about an hour's work."

Blondin struck back. He walked alongside, he walked on one metre stilts; he walked at night by the light of exploding fireworks. He was deadly serious about his art. Farini was a paid artist and the newspaper was exclaiming: "J-M Blondin trick except still walking. He shouted him in a sack, he staggered in his role of "Mickey Free, the Irish pedestal": he wore a clown suit as a paragon of horsemen. He might not say there was a request, but his firesworks went off prematurely in a burst of flame along the river, singing his costard out of the ground, leaving him to make his way home in the dark. As 'Riddly O'Flaherty, the Irish motorcyclist,' he carried a large machine — wooden tub with two metre levers attached, and shot lighted handshaped with water hauled up in buckets from the river. He left them out to dry overnight on the rope, and, his party challenged: 'If anyone doubts their being washed, they can go out and examine them.'"

Blondin had carried his manager, Harry Colcord, on his back. This was his most sensational stunt, because the crowds knew how the unfortunate Harry must have felt, a mere mortal clinging helplessly to the superman or being dumped on the rope to wait while the superman rested. Farini announced that he, too, would take a man across, and picked the plump young Prince of Wales.

He wrote to the prince's aide, the Duke of Newcastle, "It is important that the Prince of Wales enter the United States should produce a sensation worthy of the country and of himself... I propose to take the heir apparent to the British throne across the falls in a whebarrow on a tightrope, free of expense... If any accident should append by which his highness or any member of his party should be precipitated into the gulf below (of which I assure you there is little or no danger) the money taken from the spectators will be refunded."

Blondin promptly offered to carry the prince on his back. Albert Edward wisely declined both offers and lived to become King Edward VII. But he did invite Blondin carry his assistant, Roman Mouton, across (for Colcord, once was enough), and cried when the show was over, "Thank God. Never try it again!"

Upstream, Farini carried Rowland Mullan, a tailor's son from Port Hope, who seems to have appeared from nowhere, volunteered for the trip, and vanished immediately afterward. The Niagara Falls Gazette called the performance "one of the most fearful we have ever witnessed. The difficult and hazardous task of climbing on Farini's back must be witnessed to be understood and appreciated. At times the rope swayed so badly that Farini was compelled to stop and stand or sit down until it became steady.

The performance eclipsed anything ever done at Niagara Falls. We trust no body had he been satisfied with his hard and well-earned laurels and never undertake to repeat such a daring and truly frightful performance."

But Blondin won that round, for he and Mouton had a row in mid-river—25 feet, then threw each other in French, terrifying everyone. At one point Blondin threatened to leave Mouton to grief and dived off the edge of the falls. Farini next appeared during the summer's contest between Blondin and Farini ended with the heroes about even.
Civil War, demonstrating before Abraham Lincoln a method of getting troops over a的文字。He walked on water with small pontoons on his feet, balancing himself with his pole and a rope. When he had finished, Lincoln cried, "Fear not young men. Should you fall in, these long legs of mine will save you." And they did.

But he brooded over the one fact of Blondin's that he couldn't match—still walking. At the end of 1863, he reappeared at Niagara to try a stunt as dangerous as any high-wire act. He walked on water with small pontoons, just as he had done at the Falls. But he was still one-legged, and he achieved the walk with amazing grace.

There is no record in the Ontario Archives of who the first Mrs. Farini was, or where she came from, although some newspaper stories say she was killed falling from his back on a nighttime ride from a Havana bullring in 1862. But there was an adopted son, El Nino Farini, who appears, aged six, in the London music halls in 1866. Farini was now a true acrobat, holding El Nino by the nape of his neck while the boy played a drum solo in unison. The Flying Farinis played the famous Crystal Palace in 1869. Farini walked a rope between the balustrade of the central transept with El Nino on his back. He now described himself as a "pantographacrostatist"—a word he invented.

El Nino vanished after that, but the following year Mrs. Lulu, the "beautiful girl aerialist and circus catapulast" makes her debut in Paris. Lulu was shot out of a rubber sling-shot, landing on a trapeze 12 metres above the stage. Farini worked the sling-shot.

Lulu was a sensation at the Cremorne Gardens in London. "Lulu's hat, shoes, and gloves were polished outside. Masquer and stage-door Johnsons lined up to meet her, but she always avoided them. The Catapult act was highly dangerous for, as Lulu's biographer explained, the elasticity of the rubber soared with the temperature, so Farini couldn't be sure how far she'll go. He solved that by building a spring operated catapult, patented in 1875, which made a bang and gave off a puff of smoke, just like a real one. Later he patented one that did work by gunpowder, where a large grain of the powder could be controlled to throw the artist any given distance without damage. Lulu became the first person to be fired from a cannon.

She continued her act until 1878, when it was included in a tour of America with Farini, now 18. According to a contemporary account, this caused "much embarrassment to royalty, peers, commoners, and plebeians." Pictures of the young Farini in later life show a street-aristocrat Linton, with sideburns and steel-rimmed glasses. But Farini always called him Lulu.

In the 1890s Farini the pantomime, titter-stationist becomes Farini the showman, managing attractions at Cremorne Gardens, the Westminster Royal Aquarium, and the Crystal Palace. "In the annexe all day—Signor Farini's live whale! Don't miss seeing the whale come out of the water and feed from the band," cries a Royal Aquarium poster of 1883. He became part owner of a horse show—"Horse education. The only experience of its kind in the world!"—and introduced roller-skating, the Americanfad, to Manchester. His big success of this period was "Krao, the missing link," a female covered with black hair, who he displayed as proof of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. According to a contemporary booklet, Farini sent the Danish explorer Karl Bock to look for humans with tails, and he found Krao in Laos. She had vestiges of a tail, a double set of front teeth, and double-jointed fingers. An artist's conception of her father shows a hairless monkey with a classic Greek profile.

Meanwhile the showman was working on his inventions. He patented a tip-up theatre seat (with a hole underneath to hold a top hat), an improved tine magazine, a multiple expansion stream engine, an apparatus for measuring the flow of liquid through a pipe, a refrigerating machine, and a method of welding railroad tracks to provide a smoother ride. (Welded rails would be introduced in Canada nearly a century later.)

Among the exhibits he brought to London was a party of dwarf "earthmen" from the Kalahari Desert in Bechuanaeland (now Botswana). Their interpreter, an African called Kert, told them tall tales about the desert—its flora, fauna, and climate, and Farni decided to go, with Kert as his guide. In 1891 he sailed to America to pick up the Farini family. Now a photographer in Connecticut, then headed to Cape Town. But the Farinis are not the only ones involved in this tale: the Farinis' reports of the journey were supposed to pass passengers from sea sickness. Knapp and Farini planned to build giant roller liners that would cross the Atlantic at 96 kilometres an hour. But the Farinicoasted over, and the box was well built. It sank at its mooring at the foot of Sherborne St., and nobody bothered to fish it out.

By 1910 the Farinis were back in Germany, living in Dresden. The signor wrote to Ottawa, proposing that he built all of this, saying he was an expert. He was a female figure of Canada feeding the globe with grain, used as the centrepiece of the Farini's exhibit at the 1912 San Francisco Fair. An official replied, saying this was a good idea, but Canada wasn't exhibiting at the fair. When the Great War broke out, the Farinis were trapped in Germany. They were detained but not interned, and Farini filled 25 notebooks with his account of the war as seen from Dresden. In 1919 they returned to Canada and settled in Port Hope.

A.F. Farini died there in 1929, and Anna followed him two years later. He left 30 of his paintings to the Royal Ontario Museum, but these appear to have disappeared, for the museum never received them, although it does have a large collection of old Roman and Greek coins that he presented as part of his lifetime. The silver punch bowl presented to him by Edward VII and Queen Alexandra was not among the remaining Farini possessions sold off in 1945. Anna's rosewood Beethoven grand piano and a cup, unwashed from the day Frere List drank from it, were sold to collectors.

Of the scrapings remaining in the Ontario Archives is a Masonic upon the Robert Burns Lapse, London, his water-stained patents, maps of the Kalahari, unprinted poems, Lulu's portrait photographs, and grains of long-dead flower seed—no single item conveys the essence of either Farini or Willie Hunt. He lived too long or had too many lives. But he earned his self-bestowed title: "Farini the Great."
Every Wednesday morning a gentle nudge of anticipation is felt through the village of Saint-Jean. The townspeople of this bustling community, tucked back from the shore of the St. Lawrence, are awaiting the arrival of something very special—their weekly newspaper. A few hours after it’s off the press, you can see Le Canada Français being passed around in barber shops, in offices, and among neighbors. “Not everyone buys his own copy,” explains publisher Robert Paradis. “Four or five families often share a single issue. But everyone reads it. If we’re a bit behind schedule people phone and complain. They just won’t allow us to be late.”

However, while Paradis is pleased with the excitement generated by his journal, it is not unique. From Schefferville in northern Quebec to Huntingdon in the south, people in Quebec’s villages and towns gather at the news boxes once a week for a ritualistic pulse-taking of their communities.

Serge Côté, who at 32 publishes three community newspapers in the Saguenay Chicoutimi area, insists the weeklies are popular because they don’t attempt to imitate the kind of news coverage found in the cities. “People who live in an urban daily want their news in a hurry,” he says. “They want banner headlines that can be read on the Mترو. Weeklies go further. They deal in depth with events that touch the lives of people in their region. They become a social and cultural notebook of a population, a sort of family album that is scanned with interest and curiosity.”

Weeklies have, in short, become an intimate part of the community. Local merchants depend on them to sell their wares. Mayors use them to announce new municipal regulations; the sporting, social, and cultural clubs use them to make known their activities. Weeklies tell people where they can purchase cut-rate chickens and the time of parish bingos. They carry the photos of the local hockey champions and tell of the new board of directors of the Kiwanis clubs. And by concentrating on neighborhood issues the little papers have become big business.

The weekly newspaper, according with pride the pulse of the community.
Like weekly papers throughout Canada, Quebec weeklies are unique in their province and in their communities. National circulation for such papers has risen in the past few years to more than 6.5 million, outstripping their daily counterparts by 1.5 million. In many small communities, the gap between the daily and weekly readership is even more striking. In the town of Saint-Hyacinthe, for instance, Le Courrier outshines La Presse — the most distinguished daily in the province — by a ratio of 10 to one. Surveys commissioned by the community papers show that 90 percent of Quebecers only read their publication. This was not the case 10 years ago when a lack of local advertising, dwindling circulations, and unprintable printing methods, all contributed to the slow strangulation of the community paper market. Most publishers went out of business, breaking even. Only the foolhardy or the fanatical stayed in business.

Yet by the early 1960s, Quebec weeklies were beginning to stir in the industry, and by the middle of the 1970s the weekly newspaper had fully revived. Pierre Bonnaire, who edits Le Courrier, smiles at the suggestion that community newspapers in Quebec were saved by a technological revolution. "It’s true, he says, that the majority of the province’s 180 weeklies have sold their antiquated type-casting machines and purchased modestly priced computer systems. But to credit a new printing process with salvaging local papers is to confuse the issue. "Our success, he says, "is due to another kind of revolution — a tranquil revolution." And he explains that during the 1960s, when the people of Quebec were reviewing their goals and priorities, the weekly newspapers were undergoing a reexamination of conscience. "Our approach to political reporting probably best illustrates the kind of editorial run in which most of the major weeklies found themselves. Each was wedded to a particular political party — Liberal, Conservative, Union Nationale, whatever. But gradually during that decade we became increasingly aware of the importance of balanced reporting, that good ideas are found in almost any political persuasion."

With more objective reporting, Bonnaire contends, the weeklies became an agent of change in their communities, and their credibility increased. Local and national advertisers began to use them more, and publishers were encouraged to update their printing facilities and pay salaries that attracted some of the better young journalists in the province. "The industry was transformed when editors stopped letting their papers be used as organs for different interest groups," Bonnaire says. "Since World War II, we had, perhaps, become too narrow-minded; we needed to rediscover our roots, to return to source."

Flipping through the pages of any of the established weeklies it’s not difficult to appreciate what those roots are: a love of the land, a rugged individualism blended with a sense of the poetic, Le Etoile du Lac, L’Echo du Nord, L’Or Blanc, the names of the journals speak of a vision Quebecers have of their land. Even the briefest glance through a sampling of back issues shows how deeply the environment has affected the development of this folk history. It’s not, to be sure, the kind of history that is gathered into leather-bound volumes and taught in the universities. But many editors contend that in the pages of their papers lies a truer picture of Quebec and her people than in any other source. It’s a history older than the nation.

However, the roots of the Quebec weekly weren’t planted by the early colonists. Having left their homes in Normandy and Brittany, the settlers could scarcely afford to load their ships with heavy printing presses. In order to carve a home out of a harsh and capricious climate, room was needed for ploughs and axes, muskets and trade goods, even food. It wasn’t until a year or two after the Bourbon flag was hauled down from the citadel of Quebec that a printing press was introduced into the province, and with it the first weekly. On June 21, 1769, La Gazette de Quebec, "The Quebec Gazette," a fully bilingual paper where even the ads were run in French and English, was published from a shop on Rue St. Louis. In it the editors outlined a policy that has been a watchword for weeklies ever since: "The party prejudice or private scandal will never find a place in this paper." And despite Le Courrier’s efforts, a weeklies were frequently critical of the colonial administration. The paper survives as part of the Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph, which disputes the claim of The Hartford Courant in the United States of being North America’s oldest newspaper. Not all weeklies have enjoyed such longevity. Through the years many of them have had only an ephemeral existence at best. But barely did one publication disappear before another took its place from its ashes to take up the standard. Some of the members of this large family, however, have sustained a remarkably long life: Le Courrier de Saint-Hyacinthe, for example, was founded in 1855, and still remains one of the highest-rated contemporary weeklies; Le Canada Francais has just celebrated its 118th anniversary.

"And anyone who takes the time to go through some of the old issues of Le Courrier is in for an exciting read," says editor Pierre Bonnaire. "Like many towns in Quebec, Saint-Hyacinthe has had an extremely colorful past." The reader will discover, for instance, that 50 years ago the town was known as the "Hollywood of Quebec." Articles tell how the old marine barracks were occupied in 1918 by the Quebec productions Corporation, which gathered together artists, directors, technicians, and producers from all parts of the province. The town also had its own drama centre and theatre, art, and music societies. The times, however, were not ready for an indigenous film-making industry, and the town’s star faded. Stil, for a time it was very exciting.

Going back even farther the reader will find an account of how, after the assassination of Lincoln, one of John Wilkes Booth’s accomplices was hidden in a local rectory, unknown to the parish priest. "The priest’s servant, M. Dutillie," the paper says, "went to meet the fugitive and brought him across the river in a small boat, despite the November ice already on the fast waters. He spent the winter in the parish house, seen by the parishioners only at Sunday Mass."

About the same time the paper was full of hints on ways to prepare for an expected cholera epidemic and, in equally large headlines, reports on the evils of alcohol. "In all the country," the paper preached, "there is a vast movement in favor of the prohibition of alcoholic beverages. The abuse of alcohol clearly transgresses the rules of good hygiene as well as those of morality, and we believe that when a terrible plague is imminent we should obliterate everything that could make it worse."

Marc Fortin, publisher of Le Echo du Nord, believes there’s an object lesson that can be learned from those old articles. "Whether you agree or not with the editorial stance of the papers, their success was due largely to their ability to mirror their communities. It’s just as true today. And journalists
who work for a weekly have an opportunity to make a valid and personal contribution to society. It's one of the appeals of the profession," says Forin, whose father and grandfather owned weekly newspapers and whose paternal grandmother was a women's page editor.

However, the growth in size and prestige of weekly newspapers in Quebec has not been without problems, and while the standards for many have improved appreciably there are critics who charge that too many of them are more interested in advertising than in editorial content. A recent report prepared by the Quebec government reveals that in some community papers only 26 percent of their space is devoted to news and opinions.

Some such papers have prompted journalists like Jacques Elliot, a former lecturer with the department of communications at the Universite de Quebec in Montreal, to argue as he did in a recent interview that many of the province's weeklies "are no more inferior products or catalogs of announcements, the only editing they do is to retranscribe press communiques."

Yet, says Robert Paradis of Le Canada Francophone, "(it's) a medium (he estimates about 100) that do serious work; and in his opinion there is evidence of renewed search for quality, due to the new techniques of printing and presentation, but also because of improved editorial standards."

Quebec weeklies can be divided into three categories. The first group, the journals distributed free of charge, comprises weeklies that are circulated to all homes in all communities, such as Montreal and Quebec. The second category, comprising weeklies that are sold — for 25 to 60 cents — through subscriptions or on newsstands in Quebec City, Montreal and other major cities is that of the national weeklies, such as Echo Vedettes, Nouvelles Illustrées, Physique et Le Journee, Le Tele Radesome, Le Grand Journal illustré, Le Journal des Vedettes, Le Nouveau Samuda. They are circulated throughout the province, and each week reach more than 5 million readers.

About 10 years ago a group of weeklies merged into four large associations that represent all national advertising. They are called the Hebdo A-I, the Journaux Select du Quebec, the Hebdo Select de Quebec, and the Canadian and Quebec Private Press Associations.

The Hebdo A-I covers 26 regional journals with a combined circulation of 510,000, all of which are members of the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC), an international organization that checks the sales or circulation of printed matter. The principal duties of the ABC is to give an advertising company or agency the assurance that the message paid for will indeed be printed in a weekly paper with the number of readers promised when the space was purchased. It consequently establishes the advertising rates charged by the publications. The members of Hebdo A-I must also meet other conditions of admission determined by the group, with the object of maintaining high journalistic standards. A member journal must have a minimum printing of 3,500 copies, enter 50 percent of the homes in the town where it principally circulates, and must serve an economic region outside of the main distribution radius of a daily.

The Hebdo A-I maintains that a paper that is sold is a sure asset for the advertiser, since the editorial content must be maintained at a high level to hold readers. Furthermore, the group feels that its members have nothing in common with neighborhood weeklies, which circulate in large urban centers.

A second group, the Journaux Select du Quebec, comprises 39 regional weeklies, for the most part distributed free of charge. The association was created in 1976, with the objective of improving contacts and communication between members and large advertising agencies of the province. The publishers are equally concerned with improving the technical aspects of their work in such areas as distribution, production of special information handouts, and layout.

For the Journaux Select du Quebec, the question of whether a paper is sold or distributed free is of minor importance to the economic development of their region. He maintains that "the weekly press represents one of the most powerful ramparts of freedom, because it is a great repository of information and ensures a diversity which is essential."

It is sometimes a little argument that those are the ideals of a free press, but in the day-to-day workings of Quebec weeklies, it is a more practical one, especially on Wednesdays in Sainte-Jean when Le Canada Francophone announces the general circulation of advertising the specialties of local merchants. Their printings vary, even from week to week, according to the volume of items advertised. The total circulation of these papers is estimated at some 250,000 copies, which are distributed door to door, throughout the city.

The Hebdo du Canada represents the common interest of the francophone weeklies in Canada, and encourages communication among them. The 73 papers of this group distribute more than 750,000 copies, including some outside the province of Quebec. In 1972 the publishers of some 10 of these papers laid the foundation of a national professional association. It has a code of ethics to which all members adhere.

The association has also participated in setting up the Press Council of Quebec in 1971. The object of the body is to oversee the quality of news by performing the role of public ombudsman. Its board of directors, made up of six journalists and six representatives of the general public, receives complaints, studies them, and if they are justified makes appropriate recommendations to the parties concerned. The council possesses no powers of coercion but, because it is respected, has considerable influence. It is generally estimated that the advertising revenue of a weekly sold throughout Canada is about $5 million, that of the regional weekly (which is not sold) $1.8 million, and that of the regional weekly (which is sold) $1 million. According to Laurant, Quebec's deputy minister of communications, the weekly publications industry is very dynamic, which represents an important contribution to the economy of the province. He says it creates 500 jobs and has an annual turnover of $30 million.

In the René Lévesque case in August, 1978, the last congress of the Hebdo du Canada that the weeklies consist of publicists of people in such areas as distribution, production of special information handouts, and layout. — and marketers — is that of the national weeklies, such as Echo Vedettes, Nouvelles Illustrées, Physique et Le Journee, Le Tele Radesome, Le Grand Journal illustré, Le Journal des Vedettes, Le Nouveau Samuda. They are circulated throughout the province, and each week reach more than 5 million readers.

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retirement. For other reasons most Canadian employers and employees have agreed that additional pension plans be set up for the benefit of the employees. These are the private pension plans. Almost 80 percent of full-time male workers are covered by private pension plans. W.J. Young, a senior vice-president of Imperial Oil, says that "as citizens we have the right to CAG. As workers we have the right to CIP. Those two together make up about 60 percent of the industrial wage. It is the company's policy to ensure that the Imperial pension will provide a total retirement income of between 60 and 70 percent of an employee's final earnings. Anything more than that is up to us as individuals."

The goal is laudable. But some problems stand in the way of achieving it. To understand what these are, we have to know what the pension money is doing while it is sitting to be paid out as retirement income.

The government collects taxes each year from employed people and their employers and uses this money to pay the benefits to those who have retired. The CPP/CPIP is only 10 years old, so very few people have retired. Those who have had relatively small pensions. The total contribution from employers and employees is now somewhat more than is required to pay current pension benefits. The $14 billion generated by the CPP has been used for provincial financing at a low, regulated interest rate with no realistic on the use of the borrowed funds.

The economic implications of this arrangement are disturbing: as more people retire on bigger pensions, the funds will run out. Failing that, higher contributions will be required to fund the heavier retirement load. Future generations of workers will have to pay these additional contributions. Working people today who assume that the 3.6 percent of eligible pay that goes into the CPP is being invested in productive assets and accumulated for their benefit are overly optimistic. It is being used to pay pensions for those who are now 65 years and older.

It is not even clear that the provinces are using simple funds for capital accumulation or for day-to-day expenses. Terrence Staple, president of the Pension Investment Association of Canada, says the present arrangement among contributions is to disappointing personal savings incentives, partly because of the coverage of government programs and partly because the trend toward early retirement among people has a sharp working life within which to save. Private pension plans have other problems. Generally, private pension plans manage invest the surplus funds in the capital market. That is, they buy stocks and bonds, and mortgages in an attempt to profit the value of tomorrow's pay. In stable economic times a diversified investment portfolio makes good sense. But current economic conditions have grown to keep many pension plans in a very similar manner. The amount of money lost may be as much as $10 billion. However, it is not only the loss of fund assets that creates real problems for future payers. Inflation has a very bad effect on pensions. It affects both the groups that pay into the plans and the people who are the beneficiaries of the pension. Employers faced with the problem of pension funding are often tripped by its opposite effects on the assets and liabilities of the plan. Inflation forces down bond and other asset values, but drives up pay levels and pension liabilities.

Since 1973, wage and salary growth rates (on which pension benefits are based) have been growing faster than the average salary rate. This is also true of international comparisons. Workers who have been paid $1,000 per week in 1970 would be paid $2,000 per week in 1980, which is a 100 percent increase. However, the increase in wages has been much lower than the increase in the cost of living. This is because the cost of living has increased faster than wages.

The conclusion is that the private pension plans are not doing a good job of investing the money that is put into them. This is a serious problem for the future retirees who will be relying on these plans to provide their retirement income. The government needs to take action to ensure that the funds are invested properly and that the retirees receive fair returns on their investments.

The government should consider implementing a system where the pension money is invested in a diversified portfolio that includes both stocks and bonds. This would help to protect the retirees from the risk of inflation and provide a steady stream of income for their retirement. Additionally, the government should consider offering incentives to employers to provide higher contributions to the pension plans. This would help to ensure that the plans are adequately funded and that the retirees receive fair returns on their investments.
in Closing

Every spring, when the first rain of the season falls upon the streets around our office, the sidewalks begin to blossom with umbrellas of every color and design. A few years ago umbrellas seemed to be always black or brown, but lately they've become as bright as the butterfly's wing and almost as varied.

The fellow in the next office to mine—a man of the world if there ever was one—came in recently and announced that he had just completed one of the most sensual experiences of his life, a stroll in the rain with a new umbrella. His description of the experience sensual struck me as a sure sign that umbrellas were time for him—daring trend setter that he is—but hardly right for me, a man quite content to keep his place and watch the beautiful people go by. However, a few weeks later my mother looked up from her knitting and surprised me with an offhand comment to the effect that she had thought about giving me an umbrella. In fact, she almost did last Christmas. Obviously, when you are 45 years old and your mother interrupts her knitting to declare that she is thinking of giving you an umbrella, it is time to rethink your view that the umbrella is a bit radical. Nevertheless, as I told my mother, kindly but candidly, I had no intention of plunging recklessly into a new life-style without knowing what I was getting into. I ever there was a time for a cautious approach, this was it. For several weeks, therefore, I phoned researchers, bothread libraries, observed users, and finally held a meeting with a man who, I was told, knows as much about umbrellas as anyone in Canada.

First some notes, more or less in order, on the history of the umbrella:

1. The umbrella is said to have appeared first in Egypt more than 3,000 years ago, where it was part of the regalia carried over the king, not to shield him from the sun so much as to symbolize the vault of heaven from where his power came.

2. The ancient Romans began to use umbrellas around the third century B.C., but they did not regard them as symbols of nobility, merely items of fashion. Some women had their umbrellas dyed the color of their favorite teams at the chariot races.

3. However, by the Middle Ages—from about A.D. 1000 to A.D. 1500—the umbrella was back again as a symbol of sanctity, so that popes, when they ventured abroad, were accompanied by men in armor holding umbrellas above the papal heads, signifying their spirituality and sheltering them from the sun, the rain, and the wind.

4. By 1620 the umbrella was popular in France, though only with women. As a learned lexicographer of the day, Pierre Cesar Richet, noted: "Only ladies carry such umbrellas and that only in spring, summer, and autumn."

5. The umbrella weathered a stormy reception in Britain where, one rainy day in 1750, Sir Jonas Hanway (the founder of a famous London hospital, St. Mary Magdalen's) raised an umbrella over his head and was pelting with stones. True to his convictions Sir Jonas kept his umbrella up, rain or shine, for 20 years, and is credited with persuading his countrymen of the value of the umbrella in the rainy climate of their land.

6. Apparently the first umbrellas on this continent appeared in 1738 in Philadelphia; by 1792 they were advertised in Boston, for ladies only, and were made with mahogany frames and ivory handles.

In this century, England has become the land of the umbrella. The rainy weather may have had a lot to do with this, but I've always felt that, for reasons having little to do with climate, the umbrella went with the British character almost as much as a washcoat and a gold chain. So I was not surprised to find that a man who ought to know, Robert Louis Stevenson, had this same impression and wrote that "the carriage of an umbrella came to indicate flegatness, judicious regard for bodily welfare, and scorn for more outward adornment and, in one word, all those homely and solid virtues implied in the term RESPECTABILITY." In Canada the umbrella has always had a modest popularity, and it has only been in the past few years that it has begun to find a place in the wardrobes of men. There are, according to those who know, a number of interesting reasons for this new acceptance, and to find them out I locked up a man named Jack Sibulchak, who may well know more about umbrellas in Canada than any person alive, since he owns a company that has made hundreds of thousands of them. He is president of Atlas Umbrella Manufacturing Limited, and his office is on the second floor of one of those old factory buildings near Queen St. West, in Toronto. Sibulchak is in his sixties, a man with bright eyes and thick gray hair at the side. He has the bearing of a man who might have been at one time a colonel in the militia, but when he speaks he has about him a gentle and patient air.

One morning not long ago I met him in a room in his factory, one set aside for the display of umbrellas. It is a room reminding me of a magician's den, its walls take up floor to ceiling with the rodent tepees of a hundred umbrellas. In the centre of the floor, like a magician at the centre of his stage, Sibulchak held forth gracefully reaching for umbrellas, unfurling them one after the other, and speaking of them with assurance and aplomb.

"My father was in umbrellas all his life," he said, pointing to a fading photograph showing the boy and the older man standing in front of an umbrella shop of long ago. "The father, who was born in Poland in 1868, went to England as a young man and took up wood turning so he could make doves that were used as shafts in the early umbrellas. Just after the turn of the century—about 1905 according to his son—he went to New York and then, after visiting Canada on business, he moved to Toronto in 1918. Ever since, the family has been making umbrellas, and now can turn out more than a thousand a day.

"Yes, of course," he said, "there is more interest in umbrellas these days. Why? Well for one thing because of new ways of getting about in towns and cities. Years ago you could take your car right downtown and park in front of any store you wanted. Not anymore. You go to a parking lot and you walk. You go by public transportation and you walk. You go out for lunch and you walk. Therefore, in the rain you need umbrella protection. And your clothes need it. After all they're more expensive. Keeping them clean and pressed is more expensive."

Not that everybody carries an umbrella or ever will. In Canada, Jack Sibulchak noted, "we have a large number of people in fishing, farming, and forestry. Did you ever see a man taking down a tree while carrying an umbrella? But umbrellas are certainly popular in large cities. Ottawa is quite an umbrella city. So are Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal. For years, of course, men were hesitant about umbrellas, feeling they might be just for women. That's only because men are such creatures of habit. Look at our clothes. For years they were dark and thick. But look at the change. Do you know that now there's a new umbrella catching on with men? It's tartan.

The more I thought of umbrellas, the more nature they seemed, red as shields against the rain or symbols of style, but as the wind is to the artist on a small hill, they are as essential to our vision of ourselves as the eyes. This spring, if you happen to be in Toronto and you see, beneath their umbrellas, a spirited girl and a man who seems to be enjoying her company, do not think much of it. It will just be a father and daughter out strolling in the rain.