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HARD-WATER SAILING

BY JEAN FRANCIS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HORST EHricht

An old tombstone in Belleville, Ont., stands as a reminder of the great days of iceboating on the Bay of Quinte, when large wooden craft skidded on the glassy surface faster than trains puffed along the tracks nearby. It records the death of an iceboater killed on the bay in the 1960s.

Richard Bird discovered the stone as a teenager in the 1960s and became fascinated by the almost forgotten sport. There were no iceboats on the bay then, only the memories of old-timers and some iron runners from dismantled craft, lying in junk piles.

He bought the runners for a few dollars and built iceboats around them, following the old design: a boat with jib and mainsail, steered by a tiller at the stern. Thus he led the revival of an old Canadian sport and means of transportation.

Until the 1920s it was the fastest means of transportation known to man. The grand old ice yachts, up to 25 metres long and carrying 93 square metres of canvas, were comparable in speed to today's needle-nosed, fiber-glass racers. The official iceboat speed record, 230 kilometres per hour, was set by an old-fashioned stern-utterer in 1938, but the unofficial record is claimed by a giant yacht which covered 1,979 kilometres in 25 seconds in 1908, reaching about 277 kilometres per hour.

Alan Howard, now curator of the Marine Museum of Upper Canada, grew up on the Toronto Islands and sketched and studied every form of craft that sailed past. Iceboats were as much a part of the winter scene as the leisurely sailboats were of the summer. "About 100 men used to work at the Island filtration plant, and they'd walk over from the city to work or pay 10 cents for a ride on an iceboat. I've seen more than 20 of them on one boat, standing on the runners and clinging to the rigging."

Howard's father had a charge account with the Durmans of Hanlan's
Point, who ferried passengers between the islands and the mainland by iceboat. He remembers brisk, clear nights when the trip of one and a half kilometres across Toronto harbor took less than 60 seconds. The Durmans ran five iceboats in the 1920s. Most of them took six passengers or eight crammed in, but one carried 34 on weekend joyrides around the harbor.

Bill Durman, 64, remembers riding on them. “A hundred and sixty kilometres an hour was nothing,” he says. “We could cross the harbor in a minute with no problem.” Passengers, bundled up in the buffalo robes provided by the Durmans, sat on cushions half a metre above the glittering ice and were jerked forward with rocket-like acceleration into blasting winds and fierce showers of ice particles.

Iceboating is believed to have begun on the frozen canals of Holland when boatmen put metal strips under conventional hulls to carry cargoes in winter. It came to Canada early in the 19th century. Early prints of Kingston and York (now Toronto) show the gentry gliding along in horse-drawn sleighs or skating in their winter finery, while medium-sized iceboats with single-lateen sails skim by.

The “stick-boat” design, developed in the 1870s, led to the majestic ice yachts of the late Victorian period. The boatlike hull disappeared almost entirely, leaving a stick with trays on either side to carry the passengers and a long plank set at right angles to the harbor to unload, preceded by icebreaking hogs. Durman’s ferries and the big, creaky pleasure icecraft rotted quietly away.

Small-boat racing began in the 1930s with the development of craft steered by a skate at the front. The first Skeeter-class boat, four metres long with a 2.7-metre runner plank and a single, seven-square-metre sail, appeared in Wisconsin in 1933. Skeeters are now built up to nine metres long with seven-metre masts and six-metre planks, but the seven-square-metre sail limit remains.

Ten years later Gordon Reid of Toronto improved the breed by mounting the front steering runner on a wooden springboard. This reduced
vibration on rough ice and helped keep the runners down on the surface. Skaters took iceboating out of the millionaire class, but they remained pricey. In 1937, the New York Times sponsored a contest for a cheap, Depression boat that the average man could build. The winner was the DN, now the largest class in the world in numbers of boats sailing and with the smallest cost of boat. The DN has a 3.7-metre hull, usually made from Sitka spruce, with open cockpit, five-metre keel, and can do 90 to 110 kilometres an hour in a moderate wind. Ready-made DNs sell for about $1,500 but can be built from kits for less. There are approximately 4,000 registered in North America and 2,000 in Europe.

This is the only class raced in international competition. (In fact, plans are under way to hold the Gold Cup World DN Championship in Ontario this February — provided ice conditions are right.) Europeans take the runners off in summer, replace them with wheels, and race them on skates or on ice. The rarity breed of iceboat, and the one truest to the original Dutch boats, is the Great South Bay Scooter — found only on that bay west of Bellport, Long Island. They are boats that sail, not hover. Three of the famous champions used by Life Saving Service (now the U.S. Coast Guard) in the 1930s are sailing there in the treacherous Ice with patches of open water. Scooters are broad-beamed with a low freeboard and their jibsails on a boom. As in soft-water sailing, the crew leans back over the side to balance the boat. It turns and bucks rather than gliding smoothly on ice, and it founders in water, but for Long Islanders there's nothing quite like it.

“Hard-water sailing” is picking up again in Canada after a long period of decline caused by “bad” winters — too much snow or too many sudden changes in temperature causing the ice to melt and refreeze into bumpy surfaces — and the boom in snowmobiles, which have tended to take over the ice. Last winter was the best in a quarter-century for iceboating on the Bay of Quinte. A small but growing band of enthusiasts enjoyed hard, black-glare ice, good winds and moderate temperatures.

One sunny Saturday last January Richard Bird surveyed the scene from the shoreline at Belleville and found it good. Seven iceboats were parked there, headed into the wind with the parking brakes on their front skates dug into the ice. Two old style stern steerers which he had built during his experimental period rested farther along the shore. A group of young cross-country skiers made their way across the ice while two snowmobiles buzzed in the background. A dogled with a full, vaporing team slid past 180 metres out. There was a little more than two centimetres of snow on the surface, enough to give iceboat runners a comfortable grip. Boating would be good, although no speed records would be set.

Bird, now 41 and a high school science teacher, fitted the side runners of his fiberglass Renegade boat to a new runner plank he had built and pushed off into the breeze.

By converting to front-steering boats he has transformed himself from the skipper of a hull to the pilot of a streamlined fuselage which he steers by foot pedals. The mast is jointed to the fuselage, unlike the rigid mast of soft-water boats, so that it can lean over while the boat keeps all three runners on the ice. But iceboats do heel over or “hide” in rough weather. One side runner off the ice, either for the fun of it or when caught by a sudden change of wind direction. Dick Bird did that several winters ago. His runner plank broke, and he spent a week in hospital. The plank of his Renegade is five metres long so, as he points out wryly, you fall two and a half metres onto the ice.

Iceboating, the fastest of winter sports, is as safe as any other. It was only coincidence that two of the first three pilots to go out that Saturday had bad falls. Harold Salden, a retired Belleville pharmacist, still rides the stern steersman as a passenger. He has a scar on his chin that dates back to the 1920s. "I was out on a big iceboat with Chummy Gorow when we decided to cross a pressure ridge to get to smoother ice. The smoother ice turned out to be open water. The boat went in at nearly 100 kilometres an hour and stopped dead. I went straight in my chin hit the rigging, and I was thrown into the water. I swam to the boat. Chummy wasn’t in the water so I thought he was a goner. When I looked up there he was, hanging from the sail. He wasn’t crazy.

"The big old boats could take passengers and initiate youngsters into the joys of hard-water sailing. Most modern boats are single-seaters, so the novice has to solo. That can be scary, for iceboating has no fatality. It has been compared to driving a truck 150 kilometres an hour down a steep, wet hill with no brakes and lots of broken windshield flying in your face. Iceboaters wear cleated boots to give traction on the ice when going off ski clothes and snowmobile suits to fight the cold and crash helmets.

Frostbite competes with windburn to savage their faces, but many pilots refuse to wear masks because they want to feel the wind on their cheeks to judge its strength and direction.

Experience in soft-water sailing may help an iceboater or it may cause him confusion, for some of the rules are different. Because of its minimal drag on the surface, an iceboat can go up to an estimated five times the speed of the wind. Unlike a soft-water boat, it can stop in a wind and tack in the breeze. It never swings off sail except to spill wind and slow down, and it avoids sailing directly before the wind. It tacks and jibes with equal ease. It sails best close-hauled slightly across wind when the sail works like an airplane wing, or on a vacuum on the curved side dragging the boat forward. Iceboating offers one of the relaxation enjoyed by the soft-water sailor, bantering home under a following breeze with one eye on the sail and the other on the refreshments. It is constant chill, tension and lightning decision — a wild ride.

Hardened iceboaters, helmeted and sun-visored, faces bloomed by flying ice shards and sea winds, hunt themselves heroically against the elements.

A century ago demure Victorian ladies in layered petticoats and skating habits rode iceboats as a matter of course, the way we ride buses.

Are we more adventurous today? Or could we be slowing down?

The energy
eighties

More to business than getting on with the job

BY GORDON DONALDSON

SKEWES BY LEONG O'YOUNG

Peter Stauff

The Review, Number 1, 1981

O ne is a slug. A pressure change, through change, can become highly volatile. The oil industry itself, because its size, can at any time, may appear to flow gently along from one annual report to another, but beneath the surface, cracks, bubbles and constantly probes for new channels. In the past two decades the industry has changed so much that it almost seems to be flowing uphill. So great are the changes within and without the industry that it almost seems to be on the way to becoming an artificial arm of government and a tool of diplomacy, as well as a protector of nature and a guardian of the people. Those who observe commerce sense a new kind of less person emerging, part executive, part diplomat. The people, of course, may not all appreciate this, for old images stick like bitumen, but there is a growing awareness that we can't take oil supplies for granted. And to get them and develop them calls for oil companies that are not only big enough but flexible and efficient enough to chart their way in a world where markets change overnight and oil is no longer as fluid as Esso Extra. So the Imperial Oil of tomorrow, already taking shape in the wake of the recent reverse — with OPEC, consumerism, environmentalism and changing restraints — is different from the Imperial Oil of those fondly remembered country stores and Hockey Night in Canada. In some ways that tomorrow is already here. Let's look at what has brought it upon us...

In retrospect, the early 1960s were palmy days for both company and customers. OPEC first appeared and was gulped by huge, fin-lined automobiles. Gas stations blossomed in the new suburbia.

The consumer almost felt a duty to consume. And consume he did. On a clear day you could see forever, although there and here the smog got in the way. There were murmurs of concern, especially after Rachel Carson published her now historic Silent Spring in 1962. But for the most part the word "environment" was still buried deep in the dictionary. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting...
countries (OPEC) had been formed two years earlier, but few paid it much heed. If the oil industry had potential problems, which seemed unlikely, they didn’t interest the average Canadian. His picture of an oil company was a vague blur of a service station attendant scouring his already clean windshield, leathery wildcatters in Stetsons drilling distant holes and hard-eyed cigar-chomping in palatial boardrooms. The federal and provincial governments regulated the industry but seldom interfered. There was no serious attempt to control its destiny. It was business as usual.

The changes since then, some sudden, some gradual, were vividly underscored by three dramatic events:

- In 1967 the British Petroleum tanker Torrey Canyon was wrecked on the south coast of England, causing the world’s first major oil spill and drawing alarmed attention to the environmental danger inherent in oil operations.
- In the early seventies OPEC suddenly began to flex its muscles and cut back supplies of Arab oil. Television showed Americans lining up at gas stations. This brought home the fact that oil was now a seller’s market and an uncertain one at that. Supplies had to be conserved and new resources developed.
- In the late seventies, as the first multimillion-dollar tar-sands operation began squeezing oil out of the Alberta tar sands, the governments of Canada and Alberta locked horns over the price. Prime Minister Joe Clark’s Conservative government fell, and the party lost an election, partly over the price of oil. Oil was now a vital political issue. The industry was in the limelight, portrayed as either a blessing or a blight upon Canada.

These three punctuation marks in two decades of change are used merely for emphasis. The changes in environmental concern, marketing strategy, consumer attitudes and political involvement would probably have taken place without them. Some were foreseen even in the early sixties, and Imperial was already planning to catch the winds of change, a change reflected in the work of five key men with many years of service with the company.

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Brian Staut, vice-president and coordinator of natural resources, remembers a meeting of the early sixties when Imperial executives sat back and took a look at Canada’s North as a potential source of oil and gas. Before that, the company had concentrated on Alberta. There was no worry over world supplies — in fact it was thought necessary to import oil to eastern Canada than to ship it from the West — but the company had to look ahead. Exploration was a kind of duty and to men like Staut, now 30 years in the business, a great source of excitement.

Drilling could be frustrating: wildcatters say one strike in 10 or 20 holes is lucky; one in 50 is considered good — but it was straightforward. You found a site, made geological tests, then drilled a hole. You never knew just what, if anything, was there until you drilled that hole.

Exploration in the Arctic brought a whole new set of frustrations. There might be oil in the high Arctic, but you couldn’t get it out by ship. Imperial made the first significant oil discovery at Atkinson Point in the western Arctic in 1970. Two years later the company struck gas in the Mackenzie Delta and dreamed of a pipeline to carry it to the southern markets. But pipelines are a thorny political subject in Canada. The Mackenzie Valley route was turned down by a Yukon-Alaska line and government approval, but so far no pipeline has been built.

“The prospects of northern gas in the seventies and eighties began to seem more and more remote,” says Staut. “So we moved back to Alberta and Saskatchewan. The price of gas had gone up, so there was an incentive to explore for smaller deposits — and we found them.”

Meanwhile, seabed drilling began on the Grand Banks off Newfoundland in the mid-sixties, in association with other companies. The project produced 35 dry holes and was abandoned. Now another group has struck undersize oil about 160 kilometres away, drawing attention back to the area.

Of course, there were always the tar sands, Canada’s energy acid hole. Everyone knew there was oil, but it is many times more expensive to extract than conventional crudes. Imperial’s multimillion-dollar tar-sands projects are potentially the biggest in the company’s history. “But,” says Staut, “their future is dependent on a good investment climate.”

Last year Imperial produced an exhaustive report for the National Energy Board assessing Canada’s future supply and demand for oil and gas to the year 2000. “The good news,” Staut summarizes, “is that we as a country have the potential to get to self-sufficiency. The unfortunate news is that, because of the disputes between governments over prices and revenue sharing and taxes, a lot of the things we have to do to reach this goal may be delayed. Some projects may even be abandoned if the investors don’t feel that they will yield a fair return.”

The rugged wildcat in the Stetson now has more on his mind than whether there’s oil down that hole. He wonders whether the politics and economics of oil make it worthwhile to drill.

Harvey Clare wears a handsome black silk tie with little white harp seals on it, but he is not a radical defender of baby harps. He is Imperial’s environmental protection coordinator, and his bailiwick extends far beyond seals. The tie was a gift to members of the Petroleum Association for the Preservation of the Canadian Environment (PACAE) which he founded in 1971 with representatives of the other leading oil companies.

Environmental protection means more things to more people every day. Ten years ago, when Clare’s job was created, it meant mainly the fight against pollution. Oil spills were, and still are, his main worry. Just a few months after he moved into his new office the Esso-chartered tanker Arrow broke in two in Chedabucto Bay off Nova Scotia, spilling 50,000 barrels of bunker fuel oil.

Though Imperial did not own the Arrow and therefore had no legal responsibility for the spill, the company’s employees were soon on the scene, helping to organize emergency operations. Unfortunately, the Royal Commission inquiring into the spill reported, the lesson of the Torrey Canyon three years before had not been learned; neither the Canadian government nor the owners of the tanker had a contingency plan for such a disaster. Imperial had put its year-old plan into action immediately, but despite a barrage of ingenious and at times bizarre clean-up methods, the shores of the bay were soon covered in sticky, black oil.

That spill was cleaned up — not without considerable distress to local fishermen and all lovers of Nova Scotia — and the lobsters have returned to Chedabucto. But obviously more sophisticated planning and technology were needed. Imperial and the other PACAE companies have invested millions in spill prevention and clean-up equipment such as “stick-lickers.” Oil cooperatives on the West Coast and in the Great Lakes have clean-up prevention ships ready to tackle spills. They rehearse in lakes and rivers by simulating oil spills with biodegradable sunflower oil, colored red for easy spotting.

In his 10 years as company environmentalist, Harvey Clare has become responsible for almost everything in Imperial’s orbit that moves and grows or, like the land, simply sits there. There are now 60 employees working full-time on environmental protection. “Not ‘control,’” Clare insists. “It sounds like you’re playing God.” Imperial was making studies of the effects of its operations upon people, land, air, water, fish and wildlife long before governments started insisting on them.

Now that they do, however, life is more complicated. “Impact assessment” studies for new projects are now required by the federal government and several provinces. These cover not just the effects of building and operating a plant but the long-term effects of the wastes the plant will produce years after it has served its purpose and been closed down. Alberta demands that land damaged by mining be restored to its original contours as far as possible.

Before starting a project nowadays a company has to study the effect of what it wants to do upon every local animal, fish or flower. It gets its
In Los Angeles, the feeling is that the future is still uncertain. The city continues to grow, but at a slower pace than before. The population is still increasing, but the rate of growth has slowed down. The city is still struggling to find its footing in the global economy. The challenges are many, from affordable housing to education. The city continues to work towards a better future, but the road ahead is long and arduous. And so, the city continues to move forward, hoping for a brighter tomorrow. The city of Los Angeles, a city that is always changing, always evolving. And so, the future of Los Angeles is uncertain, but the city continues to fight for a better tomorrow. And so, the city continues to grow, always looking for a better future.
The woods in winter

Early in March newspapers across Canada will begin celebrating the joys of spring with pictures of first flowers, first brave swimmers, secretaries sunning themselves on park benches at noon, eager sailors painting their boats, eager golfers whacking their way around courses that are still soggy. And the newspapers' readers will soak it all up happily, because absolutely everybody loves spring. Which is fine, except...

The truth is that spring is really a terrible hog of everyone's attention. It comes at the end of our long, mean winters and just before our sweet, warm summers, so it always gets the starring role. Poor old autumn, on the

BY SIDNEY DONOVAN

ILLUSTRATION BY TINA HOLDCROFT
are among them — and go rooting around among the piles of tailings and the dark brown earth and the stumps of the trees that used to take men deep beneath the surface. Greenwood himself goes into the "caves" during the summer, walking about on a floor of grass and dirt.

"The changes," he says, "become quite noticeable about the beginning of September, and one thing that stands out is the increase in the noise. It gets extremely noisy because the hawks are courting and nesting, and the robins, pants, animals and birds are ready for winter. It's a demonstration of natural processes and the forecast of, her mistakes — that is truly fascinating. As an example, we offer a look at a particular piece of country, about 26 square kilometres, that sits in the joint of Ontario Highway 101 and the Trans-Canada Highway. We don't meet a few kilometres east of Wawa, Ont., not far from the shore of Lake Superior, but the country is beautiful.

But we've selected it not necessarily for its beauty and not because it's an "average" slice of Canadian habitat, obvious, there is no such average — but because we wanted to examine a bit of country that someone tapped into and worked.

In the research for this article, we came across a friend of a friend who receives a business proposition for the management of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources in Wawa. His name is Richard Greenwood, and he's the type of person who can feel the that he knows every stone and every branch in the area and that every branch is tapped. He's the type of person who can feel the he could feel them catch the wind.

Richard Greenwood savors autumn in the forest, watching for the changes day by day, in fact almost moment by moment. This particular piece of land which he enjoys especially the area that sits in the joint of those two highways — is a bit of rolling terrain, a mixture of sandy soil, terrain, plant life, birds and animals. It gets a fair number of visitors who work the forest, and Richard, which is really more of a trail, to soak up the beauty of the area and to examine the different plants and gold mines — Jubilee, Parkhill and Darwin.

Some of them, of course, such as the ravens and chickadees, will stay here year-round. You won't see the deer, which have nothing to do with the forest, but you may see them in their natural habitat. You may see hawks soaring overhead and stopping to rest on branches. You may see owls sitting in trees at night. You may see squirrels running along the ground or up in the trees. You may see rabbits hopping through the underbrush. You may see rabbits sitting in the grass. You may see rabbits jumping out of the brush. You may see rabbits running away from predators.

In the spring, the cherry trees bloom, and the leaves begin to turn green. The flowers, the grass, and the trees all begin to come alive. The sun shines down on the forest, and the air is filled with the scent of new growth. The birds sing, and the animals move around. The forest is alive and vibrant.

As spring turns to summer, the forest comes alive with the sounds of nature. The birds chirp, and the trees rustle in the wind. The flowers bloom, and the scent of summer fills the air. The forest is a place of wonder and beauty, and it is a place where you can truly feel alive and connected to the natural world.

In the fall, the colors of the forest change. The leaves turn from green to yellow, orange, and red. The sky becomes brighter, and the sun shines down on the forest with a warmth that is both comforting and invigorating.

As winter approaches, the forest becomes quiet and still. The snow covers the ground, and the forest is once again covered in white. The animals hibernate, and the forest is quiet and peaceful. The forest is a place of rest and rejuvenation, and it is a place where you can truly feel at peace with the world.

The forest is a place of wonder and beauty, and it is a place where you can truly feel alive and connected to the natural world. It is a place where you can truly feel at peace with the world.
Sir John Beazley, the British poet laureate, once said that England's true cathedrals are its railway stations. What he meant was that those great cavernous depots, like Paddington Station in London, seem to epitomize the might and grandeur of 19th century Britain and to tell much that needs saying about the country's character. It's probably much the same in Canada, except that here the true cathedrals aren't terminals but banks — especially all the old affairs with vaulted ceilings and Corinthian columns which so befuddled the character in Lean's famous story "My Financial Career."

Because of a branch banking system unique in the world, Canada has (or certainly seems to have) banks on every major street corner. These neighborhood banks are thus one of the stock images that all Canadians, rural and urban, English- and French-speaking, hold in common. Partly for this reason, and partly because they reflect the spirit of a Canada long gone, bank buildings constitute a precious architectural resource. At least they are beginning to be recognized as such by various people, including architects, historians, preservationists and, most recently, even bank directors themselves.

"Bank buildings have been too often demolished instead of restored," says Jim Knight, the associate director of the Heritage Canada Foundation. "We'd like to change that." To this end, his group is currently raising funds for courses designed to make bankers and other business professionals aware of renovation possibilities that are both creative and economic. Knight and others like him want buildings saved not simply because they're old (although that's certainly part of the rationale). The idea, rather, is that such structures are so much a part of the total Canadian experience. The chartered banks, in fact, are among the nation's few truly national institutions, though like the others they've manifested themselves a little differently from place to place.

In small towns in the Maritimes, for instance, one still finds banks in tiny frame buildings which fit in perfectly and inconspicuously with the rest of the community. On the Prairies, by contrast, the local branch (circa 1905 or so) is likely to be pointed out as the oldest structure in town. And then, of course, there are those big city banks dating from late Victorian or Edwardian times, the kind that usually set the tone for financial institutions in the smaller centres. These in a way are the most typical. Perhaps not numerically (though there are probably hundreds of them around) but in the imagination of the public. For it is the public that is most mindful of the image that Canadian banks were once so eager to put forward.

"I've always thought that Canadian banks strongly suggest Greek temples or some sort of church at least," says Marshall McLuhan, thinking of this stereotype. "A friend of mine says he always tips his hat when he passes by a certain bank. That sort of sanctimonious approach to money seems peculiar to Canadians. I've never encountered it in the United States. But then the Americans became very disillusioned with their banks during the Jacksonian revolution in the 1830s, whereas Canadians skipped that experience in their history." McLuhan has an excellent point. It's one that backs up the claim, made by many people wishing to save more such buildings fromrazing, that Canadian bank architecture is somehow indigenous. The United States, with its insinuative entrepreneurial tradition, has always been full of small private banks put together on little capital and subject to failure at various periods through history. As a result, American bank architecture tends to be more ornamental, more dauntling, as if to overcompensate for an unstable past. The Canadian style is much different — more down-to-earth without being downscaled: in a word, Calvinist. William Dendy, an architectural historian, writes in his book Lost Toronto that Canadian banks in the last century were either in the French Renaissance or the Modern Classic style "to express their progressiveness and their conservatism simultaneously: taste and security, to inspire the confidence of customers." At least that was the idea at the time. In retrospect, some people have come to look upon the
trend as an attempt by Central Canada to improve its taste on other regions.

Social historians sometimes use the term “100-percent corner” to mean the main intersection of a small town, the intersection where everything goes on. “Every place, absolutely every place, has its 100-percent corner,” says Heritage Canada’s executive director, Jacques Dalhuis. “At this corner you’ll see two, sometimes three or even four banks. They used to reflect the community.” He’s speaking of the days when banks were smaller than they are today, when they refused to let their employees marry until they had saved enough money and when branch managers lived upstairs over the shop. (The Bank of Commerce still has 80 such apartments for branch staff.) Harold Kalman, a conservation consultant in Ottawa who’s writing a book about Canadian main streets, agrees: “Banks were part of the local society then, but now they don’t reflect that society. They reflect Toronto’s or Montreal’s ideas of what a small town should look like. Still, some banks are making more of an effort to respond to the local flavor.” They’re also making an effort at conservation.

“Many times buildings, usually bank-owned, are 60 or 80 years old, especially in the small towns,” says Raymond Arsenault of the Royal Bank of Canada in Montreal. “So the question comes up many times a year.” From a practical standpoint, however, it’s not always a question with simple answers. For one thing, demographics are changing. In the past seven or eight years, for instance, the Royal has opened 60 percent of its new branches (now over 1,500 in all) not in urban areas but in suburbs. This indicates a relative decline in the advisability, from a business standpoint, of keeping many old downtown banks open. For another, banks tend to be one-purpose structures, designed as banks and usable as nothing else without very extensive interior renovation. “Decisions are difficult,” says Arsenault, “because the banks are dealing with local emotions, which can run very high.” Yet increasingly across the country, the banks (and sometimes other groups as well) are working out ingenious solutions.

In Victoria, for instance, a Royal branch on Government Street was declared a historic site (one of a few downtown Royal buildings so designated nationwide). Later, when the street was turned into a mall and customers dwindled, the bank resigned itself to the situation and opened a new main branch at Fort and Douglas streets where patrons could drive in and park.

In Stratford, Ont., however, Canada Trust built a new branch in the centre of town, transforming an old Woolworth’s store into a bank that carefully copied the architectural flavor and general proportions of the many other older buildings on the street. In Calgary the Royal found its Eighth and Centre branch (another one classified as a historic monument) too structurally sound though inefficient. The result? It completely gutted the building and remade the interior while keeping the outside walls intact. ‘That is perhaps what planted the idea in the mind of the Bank of Nova Scotia.

Scotiabank, it seems, was in a similar situation with its 1915 classic revival building at College and Bathurst streets in Toronto. Several years ago it gutted the inside without disturbing (indeed, while restoring and cleaning) the shell. This job, which received one award from Canadian Architect Yearbook and another from the Toronto Historical Board, was carried out by the firm of Salker Partnership, Architects, a company whose offices occupy yet another salvaged bank at King and George streets. Still more recently, the Nova Scotia did a similar job on one of its old branches in Charlottetown.

“Even when the banks do have to demolish a building,” says Arsenault, “they can sometimes find a way to preserve some of its historic features. At the Royal, for example, we’ve even restored some of the original stonework and brickwork on newer places. Of course, it’s more difficult to do this in the urban areas where the buildings are larger.” Yet the urban areas are where the question most often arises in the first place. Winnipeg is probably the best example.

Within blocks of one another near Portugal and Main are two historic banks which have been the subject of protracted and sometimes heated debate. On Main sits what had once been the principal Winnipeg branch of the old Bank of Commerce (before its merger with the Imperial in 1961). Because of changes in demography and in the fortunes of the famous downtown intersection, the bank closed the building 10 years ago.
"We tried hard to sell it," says Ex McCrimmon, the manager of public relations in Toronto. "We tried hard even to lease it. It wasn't big enough for our own operations, but no one else was interested." Yet for whatever mixture of motives, the bank couldn't quite bring itself to demolish the place. Not at least until 1979, by which time it had been declared a monument and had engendered broad public interest. It still sits vacant, a piece of our history but no longer, nor for the foreseeable future, a piece of the present as well.

Around the corner on Portage there's a similar story: The one-time main city branch of the Bank of Nova Scotia is the subject of controversy. The bank wants to tear it down, claiming it's obsolete and inefficient, but many others want it saved. The bank replies by questioning its architectural singularity, pointing out that even though built in 1910 it was almost totally re-done as late as 1931. Whereupon the preservationists counter that it's not the architectural significance of the building that's important but its place in the city's history and the lives of the people. The debate shows every sign of being a long one, which is not unusual in such circumstances. What perhaps is unusual is the clarity with which this latest demolition fight reveals some basic issues and questions. Perhaps the thorniest question is this: "Just because a building is old is it automatically architecturally valuable?" (To which one might add: "Is a new building poor simply because it's new"?)

Throughout their history, the Canadian banks have retained many of the busiest and most respected architectural offices of the day. Looking at the period before World War I, in fact, it almost seems as though one couldn't be an architect without designing banks, as though that were part of one's apprenticeship. This is scarcely true today, although well-known architects are still sometimes involved in bank commissions. In 1920 the Royal even took the unusual step of actually taking an architect on as a permanent member of the staff. Its name was S.G. Davenport, and he designed many of the bank's West Indian branches which are still so much a feature of the islands.

The other side of the coin is that many banks are distinguished only as types, not as the work of famous indi-

The Spencer Clark Collection: memorable sculpture by forgotten craftsmen.
A GOOD FIT

Imperial and its people

BY PATRICIA CLARKE
ILLUSTRATIONS BY HUNTLEY BROWN

...the carrot of the paycheck... was all the motivation a company needed to supply.

...demands for self-expression and self-fulfillment are now being voiced in industry.

In a 20th floor office of the Imperial Oil headquarters in Toronto, where the view spreads out over the trees and the carpets are deep and the paintings originals, there is an attractive pine cupboard.

Bill Moher, the frank and pleasant man who as head of management development is charged with overseeing one of the company's most precious resources — the people who will some day occupy those offices — opens the cabinet and removes six plain binders. In those binders are detailed career plans for 500 key men and women among Imperial's more than 16,000 Canadian employees. Among them are the names of half a dozen, from age 30 up, who may someday be president.

The names of the cream of Imperial people have not risen to the top by accident but as a deliberate result of management policies. In an industry devoted to the development of natural resources, Imperial is committed to developing human resources. In an industry noted for long lead times to bring a resource into production, it plans long lead times for its people.

All 16,000 of them. For the process of creating "Imperial people," of selecting, training, challenging and motivating them, extends all through the company. It can turn a stenographer into a marketing analyst, a mail messenger into a computer supervisor, a beginning engineer into a president.

"This company always had and still has a career approach to employees," says Dave Gracey, a manager in the employee relations department. "Our underlying hope is that when you join Imperial, you stay." This basic commitment to develop Imperial people — implies several things. It implies carefully selecting able people, discovering their potential and developing it in a series of progressively more responsible jobs. And it implies an environment that can draw the best from each person, to meet both his or her own needs for challenge and satisfaction and the company's need for performance. "In a very basic sense, business objectives and human objectives are the same at Imperial," says Michael Godkwitsch, the company's industrial psychologist.

"To achieve goals for the company means achieving goals for its people." At Imperial every department manager seeks to help his people achieve these goals. Naturally, one department that is especially concerned with furthering job fulfillment is Imperial's employee relations department, whose manager is Bob Wilson. Twenty years ago it would have been called the personnel department, but the word personnel now, Wilson notes, "is almost outdated."

Personnel connotes the traditional functions of hiring and firing. As Godkwitsch sums it up: "In my mind it suggests simply that you must see that people are paid on time and get their annual vacations." That approach today is so old-fashioned as to be comparable to prospecting for oil with a garden shovel. In many companies (including Imperial's subsidiary Esso Resources) the name is the human resources department, and the traditional functions of overseeing salaries and holidays, though essential, are but a small part of the job. "Looking on people as a resource may sound harsh," Godkwitsch says. "but it does permit the application of sound management to those resources, which is to the individual's advantage." It also forces you to face the fact that, like oil, skilled people are a precious resource.

Managing that resource — attracting and keeping the people you want and providing the conditions they need to give the best possible performance — is, according to The Harvard Business Review, "a major challenge for management in the 1980s."

A generation ago, the carrot of the paycheck — and the stick of the pink slip — were all the motivation a company needed to supply. When God told Adam that by the sweat of his brow he would eat his bread, he didn't say anything about job satisfaction or personal growth. The notion that one can expect more from work than money began several decades ago, but was spurred on by the 1960s demands for self-expression and self-fulfillment, demands which are now being voiced in industry.

Employees at all levels now feel entitled to some intrinsic satisfaction from work, according to a study by Opinion Research Corporation in The Harvard Business Review. The study of 175,000 workers in 159 companies indicated that today's work force "values and expects to get" from jobs such extras as respect, recognition, challenge and opportunity for advancement.

When executives at Imperial talk about how they are meeting this challenge for the 1980s, the management of human resources,
Money by itself won’t keep people. There has to be a challenge and opportunity for advancement. Thus, the vast majority of positions at Imperial are filled from within. An employee who sees that happening, Moher says, is bound to feel better about his or her future. "They know that if they have the ability, a commitment to increase their knowledge and skills and a realistic target developed by the company and themselves, there’s nothing in their way right to the top."

It seems to work. Turner is low. Although high among junior clerical staff and professionals in their first few years, overall it averages 1.8 percent. The average retiring employee, at 61, has about 30 years of service. "It seems that once people settle in, they decide to spend the rest of their careers here," Dave Gracey says. In his own case, he is the only one he knows of in his university class who has retired with the company he started with 23 years ago. "A high turnover is not consistent with the atmosphere we try to develop," says Bob Wilson.

A company committed to developing from within has to have some way of identifying early in the game who has the potential to go where. Imperial draws upon an appraisal system — a method in which individual performance is noted — which helps all employees, from electricians, engineers, stenographers — identify their strong and weak points and plan with their supervisor their progress in the company. It is also the system that provides the back-up teams for Imperial’s 250 top jobs.

The appraisal reports build over the years a picture of a person’s performance and potential. They should identify weaknesses and suggest to employees how to overcome them, but equally important, they should identify strengths and explain how to build on them. "Almost everybody is good at something," Gracey says.

Those realistic targets that Bill Moher talked about earlier are developed during the yearly appraisals. For instance, Bob Wilson might plan with someone in employee relations that she might be sent out to one of the regional offices, then back to Toronto for technical background (such as in employee compensation), then back to a region as an employee relations manager, then into head office in a higher position.

Every year Wilson, as well as all other department managers, will identify the people in his department who are high performers with high potential and review how he plans to staff his key positions over the next five years. Developing his employees is part of a supervisor’s stewardship and one of the qualities on which he is graded by his superiors. "It’s no threat to a supervisor," Moher says, "to identify an individual who is going to go further than he and can be put on a faster track. He gains points for recognizing talent."

Building on strengths may require extra training. The company sent Dave Gracey, for instance, to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for several weeks to study management information systems. His secretary took a company-sought course on how to organize manuals. Most management and professionals people take at least one of the various internal management courses, one- to three-week live-in programs that gather people from across the country. One, for juniors, deals with topics such as job planning and objective setting. Another, for senior management, looks in depth at the issues facing the company, including the political and the economic.

Imperial also pays 75 percent of the cost for a course the employee takes on his own time, if it is work-related and approved by a supervisor. It is a program that has generated a number of success stories.

Ray Shay of Dartmouth is one. He started with Imperial in 1965 as an accounting clerk. Eighteen years later he was still an accounting clerk. At that point, he set a goal to start down together to look at his future. They agreed he should take the four-year Canadian Institute of Management course through St. Mary’s University.

After a year or two in the course, Shay was promoted to financial supervisor. Then he was transferred to the Don Mills, Ont., administrative centre for training in the comptroller’s office, at the same time continuing his course through the University of Toronto. Then it was back to Dartmouth, where he was promoted to business services supervisor two years later. "There’s no question," he says, "that without the courses I would still be an accounting clerk."

Ronnie Keen has been doing stenographic and clerical work for Imperial in Calgary and Edmonton for four years when she decided to get more education. She has taken "practically a whole business administration diploma" through the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology on the educational refund plan. Now she is senior business analyst in consumer marketing for the West, travels between her offices in Edmonton and Vancouver and has clerical help of her own in both. "I can see so many different places to go from here," she says.

Not only do people have to discover and develop their potential, but the company’s structures have to make it easy, not hard, for people to work together. That is a special skill called organizational development, and it is one in which Wilson believes Imperial has "moved sooner and gone further" than many, perhaps most, corporations. His department has more than a dozen organizational development consultants on staff. They analyze with a department manages what his objectives are, identify barriers that are keeping employees from contributing their best and devise ways to improve the group’s performance. "The number one result," Wilson says, "ought to be a more efficient organization — less costly, more productive."

When you have a valuable resource, such as a highly-trained group of people, you want to keep it in top running order. And Imperial has been in the forefront in providing both physical and mental health services for its people.

The company opened a medical department in 1947, when occupational medicine in most places meant a part-time doctor. From one doctor the department has grown to 16 consultants. Imperial has its own industrial hygienist and eight physicians in a network of health care services.
centres across the country. The department deals with immediate problems, especially in the industrial plants but also in the offices. For example, not long ago at head office an employee was diagnosed as having a heart attack at his desk and bundled off in an ambulance. But the department also fulfills a wider function, including the monitoring of workplaces by the industrial hygiene division and a program of periodic health examinations, every three years for younger staff, yearly after age 46. The examinations are not compulsory, though management may encourage an employee if it suspects a health problem is affecting job performance.

Dr. Henry Shewchuk, Imperial’s medical director, says most employees welcome a chance to sit down with a doctor or nurse who has the time for a quiet and thorough discussion of their health. If a problem needs treatment, employees are encouraged to see their personal doctors.

Mental health problems affect performance, too, and so in July of last year Imperial added a clinical psychologist to the medical department to serve the 2,700 Toronto-region employees. As far as Dr. Samuel Klarreich knows, it’s the only Canadian company to have done so. And he says employees are telling him, “It’s one of the best things the company has ever done.”

“There’s no question,” he says, “that if your psychological well-being deteriorates, everything around you suffers — there’s a decline in performance, increased absenteeism, lower morale, decreasing ability to communicate. And there’s no question these problems improve at the end of counseling. In hospital work and private practice, almost everyone I helped commented that they were functioning better at work.”

Imperial has had an industrial psychologist on staff for decades. The most recent is Dr. Godkewitsch, who has been at the head office for three years. His concern is with professional growth and career development, and he advises on how to increase both productivity and job satisfaction. His impression, he says, is that Imperial keeps pace with other large companies in striving for both.

The new growth area in industry life-style programs, according to Ontario’s culture and recreation minister, Reuben Geertz, is physical fitness programs. Such programs in the United States have been found to reduce absenteeism by 18 to 24 percent. At Imperial headquarters in Toronto many people take part in the Impco fitness program at neighboring Imperial Life. It’s paid for, in the main, by Imperial. Employees who work out in approved programs also get a refund for most of the fees. And the company encourages initiatives such as the program at the comptroller’s offices in suburban Toronto, where employees take a 10-minute exercise break each afternoon.

The oil business is a long-term business. So is developing people. You start with a promising prospect. You use your best techniques to develop that prospect. You expect to reap the benefits over years to come. The outcome is that distinctive group known as Imperial people — hardworking, high-performing men and women who have repeatedly demonstrated to their seniors, their peers and themselves that they can do the job. They are straightforward people who can, in Bill Moher’s phrase, “strike a contract.” There will be “no surprises” in dealing with them.

Bob Wilson believes after 32 years that what is special about Imperial is the chance it provides for people with a variety of ambitions to fulfill them, each in his own way. For some, that means doing much the same kind of work over the years but learning to do it better and better and being rewarded accordingly. But for others it means courses, programs, challenges, all aimed at giving them a chance to go all the way to the top — where the carpets are deep and the view is large. Either way, Imperial believes they should enjoy their work and be fulfilled by it. For their own sake. And for Imperial’s.

The oil business is a long-term business. So is developing people.

It happens every Sunday

BY DICK BROWN

Wk had a roast of beef cooking in the oven a couple of Sundays ago, and it was almost more than anyone could stand. In the kitchen you could hear the juices sizzling as they ran down into the hot pan, and the smell of it reached right through the whole house, all the way up to my

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office on the third floor, where I was working on a story. Our kids were foot- ing around outside, and every so often one of them would report back home, and we'd all say, "What's going on out there?" because somebody came in to smell the roast and check the clock. Sunday dinner is one of the best meals of the week. By the time everybody in our family has to partake of it every week, it is the middle of the week and we're not even hungry, but because it's such a pleasurable family event, Sunday dinner is special. In the rush of the weekday, it's a respite from the on- slaught of fast foods, it saves us from eating at home and in other homes around the country — as the last true family meal.

In fact, because it's the only family meal for so many people, Sunday dinner is Gurthancing. There's a tradition of doing things together (likely due to the fact that it's fun to do things together), but life is so hectic. Base baseball practices in summer. Hockey in winter. School projects. The PTA. Dad is out of town. We forgot to invite him to someahed's pie in the oven, and there's still some ham . . . you can look for a million excuses. But on Sunday there is time. Women who work all week have a chance to cook something special. It's not as much of a duty as they want it to be. There is no reason to make a dessert. Maybe the very same wonderful trifle that grandmother used to serve, with a bit of rum in it instead of sherry. Sunday dinner is a celebration of family traditions and for establishing new ones. When our children are grown and have families, we'll certainly return one day to pick up their mom's recipe for corned beef, and the turkey, and the potatoes. We'll let the kids at Sunday dinners, they'll certainly want to present it with that special mustard sauce their mom makes. We'll condition the recipe from a magazine, only a few years ago, so it's still a good tradition to have. And in the kitchen, it will hang on through generations.

A great food tradition that's part of most Sunday dinners is a big, big salad. Meat, pork, ham, lamb, chicken — they're all good. And, as a kind of bonus, they help to stretch the rest of the dinner ahead, a roast ought to come out of the refrigerator an hour or two before it goes into the oven, so it's on display first, an indication of the importance of the occasion. Our kids gradually wander in to see what's for dinner and sometimes to watch them mother the roast steady, spotting a leg of lamb or pork with a lode of garlic, slipping them into little ketchup tricks, dressing up the potatoes and dotting the small squares with cloves. When all is ready and the oven is the door of the roast goes in, and in on the few minutes the first Mrs. W thighs begin to sharpen the edges of appetites. Through the week, the family usually have their meals in the kitchen — not dinners but lesser efforts, either soup suppers, lunch or snacks. The dimly lit room is where kids do their homework so they can lay out projects on colored paper that show, for instance, how a tree winds up as a roll of newpaper. But on Sunday families pull out all the stops, and the crowd goes down the dinner table and out and the good china plates and the serving dishes — plates, vegetable dishes, gravy boat, everything. Homemade relishes and pickles come out, too, and most of them are made with large jars of pickles are rich and run- ning with juices, falling away evenly from the roast.

We have a rule that the diners must begin eating the moment their plates are passed. Aside from this minor break with good manners, Sunday dinner is a time for experiments. We, too, received them as wedding gifts. The neat little salt and peppers, also silver, are presented we our parents. We serve it as a little basic etiquette. Not that we encourage stiffness, but our children know our way of the world. Sunday will draw fire from at least one parent, so the gravy and horseradish will be left with a certain care.

Soon there are oodles and aab and, eventually, a table as white as snow. In the town, in the words, is a mix of memories, a weekly review of some of our family's history.

Dinner is at 5 o'clock. A highly unscientific survey shows that an hour or two before the household members are to begin their evening's meals — everybody's dinners — is absolutely essential — always — because it's cooked in the presence of the person who serves it. These are not occasions for experimentation. If Mom falls in love with how good it is, she might consider it as a tradition that it will hang on through generations.
In Closing

Late the other afternoon, while it was still light out, I was walking up Spadina Avenue in Toronto, near the bottom, where in the middle of winter the old buildings seem to shed their drab, ordinary air to take on an aura of almost deliberate desolation, as if they were striving to be seen just one more time before they vanish forever. For almost an hour the snow had been falling upon them, settling on the silfs of the windows and the ledges over the doors in those tiny drifts that are the first sculpture of the wind.

There seemed no reason to believe the snow would let up, and looking ahead, as I made my way up the street, the whole scene was becoming a mist of white and gray and falling dark. I was just within sight of the intersection where Dundas meets Spadina — just where the old Victory Burlesque Theatre used to be, where the great Libby Jones BA used to perform for students of the dance and more serious journalists — when I caught sight of them, crossing at the light: a man in his middle forties and a woman somewhat younger, about 35, in whom all of life's burdens seemed suspended in favor of whatever it was that they were sharing. His arm was around her; they were enthralled.

They stood for a time, waiting for the light, not looking at each other but talking back and forth in the way people do when they are sure of each other, so sure and so much at ease that they need not turn to look at the other before speaking. He was of medium height, just under six feet, with a long coat, which was dark blue with a wide fur collar and which hung open, despite the snow. His hair was thick and black — as black and shiny as a soldier's boot — and his mouth, which was set beneath gentle features, seemed to have spent much of its life amid laughter.

She was slender and pretty. Her hair was a red that was almost copper, here and there touched with gray that she did not hide but carried proudly, so that it became, for her, a statement of confidence and charm. Her eyes were very dark, so dark that they seemed the only thing you noticed in a face that was, when you studied it, striking in its ordinariness. She was wearing a suede coat, light maroon and rather short, with a narrow belt that she left untied and swinging at her sides. In her left hand she carried a briefcase, its zipper undone so that a sheaf of papers — her doctoral thesis? her novel in manuscript? her divorce papers? — were exposed to the softly descending snow.

I noticed these people — drawn to them as we stood near each other — not because of anything unique in either one but because of the impression they created together, walking so closely, oblivious of the snow and waiting daylight, as if they were not on Spadina Avenue at all but perhaps walking down the aisle of a cathedral after their wedding, gazed upon by all their friends and well-wishers, but so taken with the moment and with each other that they did not notice.

We met at the bus stop. This one is not far from Shoppy's (a delicatessen I have always liked, which until recent years used to have its walls, among the many pictures of celebrities, a photo of the great Libby Jones BA). Only the three of us stood waiting, though it seemed, in view of their closeness, that we were not three but two, myself and another who was a union of two spirits. They kept on talking away, clearly but in those brief, clipped sentences people use when they have much to share and only a fleeting time to share it.

"The plane is at eight," she said.

"You'll have to leave downtown at six-thirty then," he said, "six-thirty."

"He'll meet me at the airport," she said quickly, "He's very attentive. He really is. I'm married to a very fine man."

"I'm sure," he told her.

They stood for a moment and no one said anything. Then she spoke, "I wonder," she was asking him, "how I would describe that lunch we had — I mean what happened?"

He looked away for a moment, smiling almost to himself, and then told her that since she was a writer and he was not, that she, not he, should describe it.

"It was about connectedness," she said, "all about connectedness."

He smiled broadly, the kind of smile a man makes when he is both bewildered and enthralled. "Connectedness," he said, "connectedness. That's a new one ....""Well look," she began, "I intuit that. I mean I heard your true self. It spoke to me and made all connections. It elevated everything ...."

He kept on smiling. Then he began to nod as well. As I saw him there — a boardroom lawyer, an accountant or perhaps an engineer — he seemed the sort of person who, all his life, had dismissed such ways of speaking and thinking as suspect, but who now found them fascinating because he found her fascinating.

"Well," he said, "I guess I haven't been in touch with those things. I guess I'm out of it. You know though, you know how I feel ...."

"I do," she said, "I do. I intuit that some alchemy is taking place in your life. All that you have been is being poured into the colander. The disparate elements." He did not answer. The snow, which had been coming down for an hour, muffled the horns and the traffic so that even the voices of the two people, who stood so close to me and were so close to each other, seemed to sink in soft and silencing dark.

My bus came earlier than theirs. I got on, and when I took my seat there was a moment when I saw her for the last time in the pool of light that fell beside the bus stop. She seemed, for all her grace, to have come to some point in which suddenly she was questioning whatever it was that had begun to happen between them.

As for the man, I could not see him. But I believe that if I could have looked into his face one more time, I would have seen the first, faint rising of disappointment — not the disappointment that comes of being let down, but the disappointment that comes of the child that is in us all, who finds that his dream has been only that. My bus was almost empty that night, and it seemed to take me longer than usual to get home.