PERENNIAL
PLEASURES

Little-known outside Montreal, the city's botanical garden is rated by experts as one of the top two in the world.

BY TED PERGUSON

A few weeks from now the Montreal Botanical Garden will be awash with colour as spring brings life to plants winter has laid to rest. Flowers will be in bloom and trees will blossom. Visitors will amble along its winding paths, basking in the beauty and tranquility this haven offers amid the hub of Canada's second largest city. The story of the Montreal Botanical Garden is one of dreams and success.

In the garden's boardroom, numbers and graphs on a large wall chart illustrate that success. The figures disclose that the 61-year-old institution is, to describe it in horticultural terms, blooming. "Look at this," says Pierre Bourque, the garden's director. "We used to raise only eight percent of our annual operating budget ourselves. Now we generate 65 percent, and, by golly, we're going to make it 75 percent before the 1990s are over."

What Bourque doesn't mention is the unchartable fact that his own far-sighted planning and quietly persistent lobbying and promotion are largely responsible for the garden's improved financial picture. Since he became director in 1980, the municipal institution has developed into the world's second most important botanical garden, a short step behind England's Kew Gardens. Last year, roughly 1.5 million people passed through its turnstiles, enticed mostly by two new attractions that Bourque guided to fruition, the spiritually moving Chinese garden and the insect museum.

When asked, the somewhat modest director admits...
his bold strategy and hard work have probably contributed greatly to the garden's success, but, he adds, so has the public's heightened interest in ecology. "Our society used to have a lumberjack mentality. Nature wasn't revered; it was plundered and spoiled. Lately we've come to understand that it deserves our respect and appreciation." Bourque believes that the garden is spiritually uplifting and serves to unify people. "Nature releases people and brings them together in a way that few other things can. We're like an exotic foreign country, an island of calm and beauty."

Providing calm and beauty has, of course, been the raison d'être of all Canadian public gardens since the first one was established in Kingston, Ont., in 1861. No two gardens are alike. At Butchart Gardens in Victoria, for example, one can stroll through a sunken lagoon, yellow, while Edmonton's Muttart Conservatory displays plants in four naturally-inspired glass structures. At the Montreal Botanical Garden, gravel paths and narrow roads wind through a 73-hectare site, where one can walk past beds of flowering begonias, roses and paeonies, inhale the sweet scent of exquisitely coloured orchids in a glass-roofed conservatory or study the fascinating leaf patterns of tropical dracaenae in a humid greenhouse. Like most of its counterparts, the garden has its treasured natives: a 350-year-old miniature Japanese juniper that's worth about $50,000 and a number of orchids that could fetch up to $5,000 each.

What sets the garden apart from many others is its tradition-breaking philosophy. At a 25-nation botanical exhibition in 1980, Bourque learned that some directors were abandoning the 19th-century concept that a botanical garden's primary goal was to amass as many varieties of a species as possible. Instead, they were adopting the view that a garden should concentrate more on relating plants to global social and cultural systems. The conference, Bourque says, "opened my mind to a marvellous idea. I went home wanting to place the garden in the forefront of the new movement."

Bourque's dream began to take form during the late 1980s. When the Hong Kong bankster Wu Ye-Tsun donated a $1-million Chinese collection in 1984, the dwarf trees were added to the indoor Chinese garden that had been started eight years earlier, but they weren't simply exhibited with name tags. Plaques were mounted, describing such things as how the orange jasmin tree is utilized for medicinal purposes and how the Fujian shrub is used to produce a fragrant tea. One plaque tells visitors that penjing, the art of cutting Chinese trees into eye-pleasing designs, is 2,000 years old. Another tablet is inscribed with a Ming-era poem: "I sit alone among the dark bamboo, Strum the lute and unloose my voice/Groove so deep no one knows, The moon comes to shine upon me."

The Japanese garden was opened in 1988. It features cherry and crab-apple trees planted in a pond with a granite border, and a pavilion where kimono-clad hostesses perform an ancient Japanese tea ceremony. Covering two and a half hectares, the garden contains plaques telling visitors that the rocks symbolize longevity, the water renewal and the lanterns knowledge. Appealing as they are, neither the bonsai collection nor the Japanese garden rivaled the world for three years. In 1999, the 55-year-old entomological museum uses entertaining multimedia techniques to educate its visitors. The building itself is the shape of a giant bug. Inside, there are 350,000 different specimens, from Colombian butterflies that appear to have numbers naturally imprinted on their wings to black widow spiders. School children swarm the exhibition space. They emerge with a sense ofeful discovery that is the preserve of very young children. They want waterfalls, rockery and buildings with floral and half-moon windows. In this soul-stirring vista one feels a part of an Oriental painting, a graceful, calming scene committed to silk centuries earlier.

The creation of the Japanese Garden, like that of the insectarium, involved a considerable amount of behind-the-scenes lobbying and a number of public promotional campaigns to raise the necessary funds. Montreal and its sister city, Shanghai, contributed $500,000 each, and the federal and provincial governments agreed to make contributions. Further funding was raised through a public drive purchased by a Chinese community leader, Raymond Wong, and Paul Dufort, chairman of Montreal-based Power Corp of Canada. The Chinese government helped keep the costs down by providing 350 people to work on the garden's construction for a total of $300 per month each, a low wage by Canadian standards but twice what they would normally have earned in their homeland. The workers arrived well prepared, having brought their own tools and equipment, including rice sacks and wheelbarrows. The buildings were prefabricated in Shanghai and shipped to Montreal, along with 50 tons of precisely cut rocks distinguished by their unusual shapes and capture.

The Montreal landscape architect supervising the installation, Wendy Graham, says one of the most difficult tasks is finding the correct shade of yellow stone needed for a miniature mountain. The garden's designer, Le Wei Zong, a landscape architect from Shanghai, had decided to use Canadian stones. "We looked everywhere, in every quarry possible," Graham told the Montreal Gazette reporter two years ago. "The Chinese kept saying, 'No, it isn't right.' We were really getting desperate." Then, while attending a reception on Ste Helene, near Montreal, some Chinese delegates noticed the island's geological formations and, to Graham's immense relief, decided that some rock was the perfect colour.

The Tianamen Square massacre in June 1989 resulted in
The story of a garden

In 1954 at the start of the 50th year of its existence, the Macdonald garden and park system was the pride of the city. A garden was a treasure that had been created through the efforts of many people, and it was a symbol of what could be achieved by working together. The garden was not just a place of beauty, but a place of learning and growth. It was a place where people could come together to enjoy nature and to learn about the world around them.

The garden was created through the hard work and dedication of the community. It was a place where people could come together to share their ideas and to work towards a common goal. It was a place where people could come together to celebrate the beauty of nature and to enjoy the company of others.

The garden was a place where people could come together to learn about the world around them. It was a place where people could come together to share their knowledge and to learn about the history of the area. It was a place where people could come together to celebrate the beauty of nature and to enjoy the company of others.

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ADJUSTING TO A CHANGING REALITY

Imperial's chairman discusses the changes that are taking place in Canada's oil and gas industry as it responds to the challenges of the lingering recession and of growing global competition

BY ARDEN HAYNES

Readers scarcely need reminding that these are difficult and anxious times for all Canadians. The recession, which many hoped would have been laid to rest in 1991, still lingers, and recovery is proving to be stubbornly slow. Many jobs have been lost throughout the industrial and service sectors, some of them perhaps for ever. Nor is the state of the economy the only national problem confronting us; the fate of our nation itself hangs in the balance, and its survival remains a matter of the deepest concern for Canadians in all regions of this great country.

Given that Canada faces problems of such magnitude, few people are likely to spend much time worrying about the current depressed state of the country's oil and gas industry. Nor should they: many other industries face even more serious problems and, like any business, we have to take the bad times with the good.

Yet there are a couple of reasons why it's important for Canadians to understand some basic facts about our business. First, Canada's oil industry forms an important part of the country's natural-resource sector and is likely to do so for some time. It provides jobs for many, many thousands of Canadians, and it is an important earner of foreign currency. And most people would agree, I think, that when it comes to something as critical to this country's economic wellbeing as energy, it is important for us to maintain a healthy domestic industry, if only to shelter us from possible future interruptions of offshore supplies.

Second, some important lessons can be learned in the area of what Canada needs to do to become globally competitive from what has already happened in the oil and gas industry. Our business has essentially been operating on a global free-trade basis for a number of years, and it has learned—and continues to learn—some hard lessons about what is required to succeed in the international marketplace. Many Canadian enterprises have already come to grips with these problems, and many more are destined to do so as Canada makes the difficult transition from a domestic economy to being a full-fledged international trader.

The basic facts of this country's oil industry can be briefly stated and easily grasped. Western Canada's reserves of easily produced, light crude oil—which has supported much of Alberta's economy for the last 40 years—are rapidly declining. Our search for replacement supplies has been concentrated on the so-called frontier areas: chiefly in the shallow waters of the Atlantic off Newfoundland and in the Arctic.
Some promising discoveries have been made in the Atlantic, and limited production should begin within the next few years, bringing a timely boost to Newfoundland's economy. So far, the Arctic has proved a disappointment: over the past two decades, Imperial, for example, has spent hundreds of millions of dollars exploring in the Arctic, and although it has made a major natural gas discovery, it has not made a major oil discovery.

Canada does possess a huge potential supply of crude oil in the oil sands of western Canada and has become the acknowledged world leader in developing the technology to produce this “heavy” oil. Three plants have been in commercial production for a number of years: the Syncrude and Sunöro operations near Fort McMurray, Alta., and Imperial's plant at Cold Lake in northeastern Alberta. If prices and costs were no object, Canada's production from the oil sands could rival that of many Middle East countries.

But prices and costs are a critical factor. Crude oil has become a globally traded commodity, and Canada finds itself in competition with every other oil-producing country in the world. And when there is a global oversupply of crude oil, as has been the case for some time, this fact is reflected in the price. To take a far-hypothetical example, there is not likely to be much demand for Canadian-produced oil at $23 a barrel when oil from the North Sea or the Middle East can be bought for $19 a barrel. Most of Canada's remaining reserves of oil — in the frontiers, the oil sands and elsewhere — are expensive to develop and produce and require relatively high international prices before they become economic.

There is also an oversupply of natural gas in North America. Canada is fortunate in possessing large reserves of this premium fuel. But a continuing surplus of natural gas in the United States has resulted in sagging price competition, and Canadian exports of the fuel have suffered accordingly.

There is also an oversupply of the various energy products that are manufactured from crude oil — gasoline, diesel fuel, etc. As a result of such factors as more-efficient automobile engines, energy conservation measures (which do benefit the overall economy and help achieve a cleaner environment) and, recently, the recession, there has been a dramatic drop in demand for petroleum products over the past decade. Since 1988, consumption of petroleum products in Canada has fallen by nearly a quarter. The inevitable result of this is that an excess of refinery capacity has developed in Canada, leading to over-increasing competition among refiners, including Imperial, to maintain their share of market. In addition, petroleum products have in themselves become global commodities as foreign refiners, both in the United States and overseas, have sought additional markets for their surplus supplies. Imports of gasoline from the United States, for example, have, at times, reached substantial levels in eastern Canada.

As is always the case when too much supply chases too little demand, the beneficiary of all of this competition has been the consumer. When one excludes the substantial tax components from the pump price of gasoline, the motorist has been getting a bargain as a result of oversupply — which is the way markets should work. Earnings from the refining and selling of gasoline by the major oil companies in Canada have been rather dismal or nonexistent for a number of years. Personally, I can still summon a wry smile when I hear complaints about the oil companies "ripping off" the motorist. I would happily settle for a little profit.

In brief, Canada's oil industry today finds itself operating within a highly competitive global free-trade environment. And, while some of us may occasionally yearn warily for the days of protected markets and stable prices, it is an environment that, in good times, has many attractive business opportunities to offer. To take one example: when prices for natural gas improve, as they are likely to do when United States reserves diminish, Canadian gas exporters stand to benefit substantially from increased demand in that country. And every time we manage to cut the cost of producing crude oil from the oil sands — and Imperial and others are working hard on research ways and means to achieve this — we increase the competitiveness of this major resource.

But, given the current level of global competition, which is in a new reality to many industries, means that Canadian companies, regardless of the industry or business they are in, must be at least as productive and cost-efficient as any competitor anywhere in the world.

We at Imperial have been trying very hard to do that. While we have always prided ourselves on being efficient, for the past two years and more our company has been on a stringent diet. We have examined every aspect of our operations and work procedures, looking for ways to cut costs and become more productive. Many nonessential activities have been eliminated, and we have disposed of a number of properties and investments that did not form part of our core business.

As a result, our company has become leaner and more efficient than at any other time in its 112-year history. During 1991 Imperial's staff was reduced by about 23 percent — amounting to more than 2,800 employees. Even though virtually all of these employees left voluntarily, taking advantage of enhanced severance and other incentive programs, I am always aware of the inevitable disruptions such changes bring to people's lives as well as the increased responsibilities that fall on the company's remaining employees.

However, despite our best efforts, 1991 proved to be a very disappointing year for Imperial. Internally we accomplished much, but these efficiency achievements could not offset the effects of unfavorable external market conditions. In fact, overall, we had the most disappointing year in memory, if not in our entire history.

Nor has 1992 brought any indications of an early turnaround for the petroleum industry in Canada. The oversupply situation continues, and prices remain depressed, offering little hope of any near-term improvement for the revenue side of the business. On the other hand, we can expect costs to increase, not least from additional environmental-protection measures, which are likely to be required. In 1991 alone, Imperial spent about $70 million on facilities and equipment to improve the environment, a figure that I expect to see increase in the future.

The slow business outlook for our industry led our company, earlier this year, to again review our plans. Recently, I announced further organizational and operational changes aimed at reducing our costs and making us more competitive. A number of these will lead to the further curtailment of our activities in some of our operations and, regrettable but inevita-

Overall, however, I know Imperial will emerge the stronger for the changes that are being forced upon us not only by market forces in Canada but by changing international circumstances. When conditions improve, as they surely will, we will be well positioned to benefit from the many opportunities for growth that are bound to present themselves.

The lessons that our company has been learning over the past couple of years are similar to those that have been learned by many other Canadian companies, large and small. The survival of any enterprise, like any living organism, depends on its ability to adapt to changes in the environment, whether it be the economic or social environment. Corporate dinosaurs do not enjoy a long life expectancy.

Business in Canada has seen many changes recently. It has learned that, in the new environment of global competitiveness, there are no places to hide. Our economic survival depends on recognizing this fact and on our ability, as a country, to compete on an international scale. If we cannot, we face a bleak future indeed. But if we can — and I, for one, am confident we will — we can con-

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temporary, which is the new reality, means that Canadian companies must be at least as productive and cost-efficient as any competitor anywhere in the world.

I would like to end on a brief personal note. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the publication of the Imperial Oil Review. I want to thank the many reviewers who have written to me for their comments and for expressing their appreciation of our publication. We, in turn, appreciate your interest and support.
GOING HOME
A writer discovers the home of his father's father
BY MARTIN O'MALLEY

A thunderstorm woke me in my hotel room in Ottawa. I had been dreaming; the storm must have started the dream. In the dream my father was telling me about the night his father died.

It was last May, when I was working for the Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future. Most of the winter I had been training with Keith Spicer, listening to Canadians tell their stories. We covered Canada from coast to coast. We were coming to an end of the adventure, preparing the final report, working 12-hour days. After the storm woke me I couldn't get back to sleep, so I got out of bed, walked to the window and watched the rain splash the empty streets below.

The first time my father told me about the night his father died I was 15 years old. It was a cold winter night, he said, and his father was sick with pneumonia. He was sitting by the bed when his father asked him to open the window because he wanted fresh air. My father couldn't, so he broke a small pane at the bottom and for doing this his father thanked him. Later that night his father died.

I never think of him as my grandfather, only as my father's father. I never knew him. I've never even seen a picture of him. He grew up in the Quebec countryside, in a place called Martindale, an Irish farming community. I couldn't imagine him on a farm. He had raised me in Winnipeg, before that he had lived in Regina, and long before that he had started as a newspaperman in Ottawa. To me he had always been a city man. What intrigued me almost as much was my father's growing up in Quebec. There never was anything about him remotely Quebecois, although, perhaps significantly, when he retired he enrolled in a French-immersion course. His accent was immaculate, worse even than John Diefenbaker's, but he gave it a good try.

During the work of the Citizens' Forum I often thought it would be interesting to hold a group discussion in Martindale, bringing together English, French and Irish to talk about Canada's future. That's what we were doing toward the end of the exercise, bringing different groups together from across the country, mixing and matching. Sometimes we did this with the latest communications technology, staging what we called "electronic town-hall meetings." They were not as successful as the real exchanges: group discussions on trains between Toronto and Montreal, reciprocal visits among people from small towns in the Canadian West and the Quebec countryside. It was amazing how the large problems, and the politics and posturing, faded into insignificance when people sat across from one another and spoke honestly.

A group discussion in Martindale might have allowed the Irish connection to bestride the two solitudes, perhaps provide perspective and some humouring insight—the Irish are good at that. But it was too late; we were writing the report. Still, I needed a little perspective of my own and a reprieve from the 12-hour days, all that indoor work. The next morning I rented a car and drove into the Quebec countryside—heading home.

Martindale is about an hour's drive north of Hull, Que., on the highway to Maniwaki. I veered off to a secondary highway, one that runs along the Gatineau River. What I remember of that drive were the logs floating down the river, the rolling hills, the lilacs and the crackling sound of a May breeze through poplar leaves. And Eddie Mc

Crank was late in the afternoon, as it was preparing to drive back to Ottowa. I was in the Martindale Pioneer Cemetery, standing before a handsome marble monument adorned with shamrocks, fleurs-de-lis and a large Celtic cross. For a long time I had been jotting down names from the monument—Mary O'Koye, Bridget Deegan, Martin Mulvihill, Louisa Machabee—marvelling at the felicity of the names, wondering who their owners might have been.

The sun was near the horizon, casting long shadows in the cemetery, when I heard the shuffling sound of someone walking up behind me. I turned around, and a small man in his late 80's introduced himself as Eddie Mc

Crank. "Can I be of help to you?" he asked. His voice sounded raspy, mechanical. He had been operated on for cancer of the larynx and couldn't speak through his mouth, only through a hole in his throat. He lived in the white bungalow across the road from the cemetery. He had been watching me from his window.

I told him who I was, and the name meant something to him, but vaguely. He knew of an O'Malley who had lived up the road a long time ago, on a farm across from the church, where the new cemetery is. He thought the man might actually have donated the land for the church, which is called St. Martin's. Not many O'Malleys though. He was much more interested in my grandmother's name, which was Kealey.

"Oh, a Kealey. So you're a Kealey? There've been lots of Kealeys here.

There had, indeed, been all manner of Kealeys, judging from the names on the monuments in the Pioneer Cemetery and the new cemetery—built soon after the turn of the century and the one beside it. I knew that part of the fruit was Kealey. Earlier in the day I had found the family plot in the new cemetery. At the top of the hill was a limestone marker about four metres high, bleached and smoothied with age, with amber lichen stuck to the base like fossilized poppies.

In Loving Memory of Martin O'Malley

It gives you a chill to see your name on a tombstone. My father's father had died on March 3, 1917, aged 57.

An inscription reads: "Rest beloved one, I must leave you. I must breast the coming tide. Just a few more weary days will lay me by your side." Below the inscription was the name Elizabeth Kealey, who managed to breast the tide of weary days for another 18 years.

Standing in the grass at the top of the hill by the tombstone I could see for miles. In Martindale there is no downtown, no general store, no service station, no coffee shop. My father used to say it was like a piece of Ireland, though he had never been to Ireland. I tried to see things he might have seen: the sweep of the land; the hills; the church, for sure, with the two-storey rectory beside it, which would have been right across the road from his house; to the south, two houses in a glen. An artist was sketching the glen in charcoal, standing at a tripod set up behind her station wagon in the church parking lot. To the north, just beyond the church, the two-lane highway becomes a gravel road, which services several working farms spaced widely.

I saw it the Martindale Pioneer Cemetery, standing before a handsome marble monument adorned with shamrocks, fleurs-de-lis and a large Celtic cross.

We were coming to the end of the adventure, preparing the final report, working 12-hour days. After the storm woke me I couldn't get back to sleep, so I got out of bed, walked to the window and watched the rain splash the empty streets below.
apart. One of the bars has a faded green shamrock above the door.

There was another house and barn beside the new cemetery across the road from the church. That house, white walls, red roof, and huge front porch, was my father's father's house. The O'Malleys moved to Ottawa when my father was in elementary school, but they kept the house as a retreat for weekends and vacations. It had been spoken up, but it was still looked like a house from the late 19th century. There was a skylight window on the second floor, above the front porch. Something about the window brought back the dream I'd had during the thunderstorm. That three small children, their faces lit up by the orange glow of glass along each side of the main window. My father said he had broken a small pane of glass to let in some fresh air.

In a field across the road from my grandfather's house lay the twisted remains of an old threshing. Was it a piece of equipment my father once rode on? Maybe my father and my father's father, together, on a brisk afternoon. A black cow lay on the grass beside the wreck of the threshing, its eyes turned toward the road, staring at me.

Eddie McInerney was more interested in my work for the Citizens' Forum; he'd heard of it from the business card I'd given him.

"Do you think they'll really listen to what we have to say?"

I told him about the group discussions and how we had reached nearly 40,000 Canadians.

"But can this group really tell the government what's going on out here?"

I said he could and probably would. Eddie McInerney looked skeptical.

And then, as happened often at the group discussions, he described how much better it is when people are left alone to get along, without politics pushing them one way or another. For many years, he said, our door had been a French-speaking blacksmith, and they had been best friends, which never surprised him because they hadn't known any other way.

I returned on another day late in October. It was sunny and brisk. The smell of lilacs was long gone, and the poplars had shed their chantering leaves.

Heading up to Martin, I stopped by the side of the road at a diner for a soggy carton of poule, the Quebec concoction of French fries, gravy, and melted cheese. The name I had imagined burned was The Low Down at Hall and Black Niles. It was an English weekly, purporting to be "the only newspaper serving only the Gatineau Hills since 1973."

I knew a little more, having written to some of the Kealys. Nobody seemed to know much about the a few Scottish, English, and American settlers. The permanent population has declined markedly, although many people from Ottawa and Hull maintain dwellings in Low Township as a vacation and weekend escape.

The Martin Cree Cemetery honors the Irish immigrants who came over during the great famine in the 1840s. The project was spearheaded by a much-loved French-speaking priest named Father Pierre Martel, who now works in Colombia. On the center stone of the marble monument is an inscription in Gaelic, with translations in French and English: "May the light of heaven shine on the souls of the Celts who left Ireland in the years of the great famine to find eternal rest in this soil. They will be remembered as long as love and music last."

The Irish and the French in Quebec have a peculiar, shared history that should be an inspiration in a place like Canada. In the 19th century, the Irish were forced to come to Quebec from Ireland than from Britain, Scotland, Wales, and the United States combined.

The Irish worked in Quebec as loggers and subsistence farmers, the best they could do on the thin, rocky soil around Martinville. Irish immigrants tended to be natural allies with the French, however, both predominantly Catholic, close to the earth and often sharing a mutual sympathy toward Britain. The Irish frequently intermarried with the French, absorbing their language, and over the years certain rigorously Irish names (like Mc) would merge to form a distinctly French name. Thus we have Thérèse Sylvain (from Timothy O'Sullivan), Té Chicorée Aubry (from Germaine O'Bennett), Alain (O'Leary), Mathias (O'Nély), Orson (O'Ryan), Delaisis (Duffy), and so on.

In March of 1999, I was in Martinville on a weekend with my fiancée, an American Falstaff, to attend an event at the Martinville Literary Society.

The Irish of Martinville and the surrounding area tended not to socialize with each other and blend in as happened elsewhere in Quebec, probably because they arrived later, mainly to the mid-1830s.

Between my visit in May and my visit in October I talked with Lieutenant Druette, a book I had joined at Memorial University.

She grew up in Martinville, a 10-minute drive from Martinville. She had once talked to my mother after changing a family tree of the Kealys of Venosta, who happened to be the subject of Drouette's master's thesis ("Skill and Status: Traditional Expectations Within a Rural Canadian Family"). Drouette said she had heard from Kealys still living in Venosta that my grandfather and grandmother were known widely in the community as "Uncle Martin" and "Aunt Lizzie." Uncle Martin apparently was "good-natured and kind." Aunt Lizzie could be a bit demanding, which is exactly how she looked in her picture. One whose remembered how Aunt Lizzie used to cook Uncle Martin to massage her back and fix her corn on how the world, if ever, refused.

The Kealys of Venosta were often seen by horse-drawn buggy or sleigh to church at Martinville and always dropped by for a visit with Uncle Martin and Aunt Lizzie. In winter they would go sledding down the hills by the church, then tramp up to the house, where Uncle Martin cooked potato pancakes in a large iron frying pan, using only potatoes, flour and butter. Memories trickled back in. In Winnipeg my father used to cook a batch of potato pancakes on Sunday mornings, but only once or twice a winter. He used a large iron frying pan. He kept in an unrivaled back porch, and I still have it in a compartment out our door.

As I was preparing to leave Martinville, I found an old photo of some paper that some Laurier Drouette had given me. At the top of the list was Linda McLaughlin of Venosta. I remembered what Drouette had said to me when I talked to her by phone at her home in St. John's: "You really should look up Aunt Linda," she said. "She's 91 but on her good days she's still sharp as a tack."

Venosta is only a 10-minute drive from Martinville. I found Aunt Linda in her trailer home, steps from the general store. She remembered my father's name and some of my antics, but she couldn't remember my father, whose name was Fred. She tried, sitting at the kitchen table, but she couldn't.

We were walking for nearly an hour when Aunt Linda said, "Martin, O'Malley made coffee." I had never heard that before.

"Coffee."
"Yes, he made them at the farm. He bought some more, too. And he sold them." As I started to get up to leave, I marveled at Aunt Linda how we used to believe that Martinville was named after my grandfather. She looked across the table at me and, as if lecturing a slow pupil, said: "It was named after Martin O'Malley.

"But, the church is St. Martin's..."

"He was there before the church. He gave the land for the church."

I was talking for nearly an hour when Aunt Linda said.

Martin O'Malley made coffee." I had never heard that before.

"So the church..."

"The church is named after your grandfather. Martinville is named after your grandfather."

Hanging back to Ottawa, I stopped for coffee at a restaurant along the highway. I took Laurier Drouette's thesis from my case and browsed through it as I sipped my coffee. I hadn't noticed before but it's a running reference to the pioneering development of Low Township she writes: "A smaller homestead developed along the river road to the north, the route followed by parties of homesteaders heading to the lumber camps. This general area became known as the Martinville, and the hamlet was called Martinville after the man who donated land for the first church in the township, the site of which was used for the erection of a permanent church, St. Martin's, in 1892."

Of course, St. Martin's... Martinville... Martin O'Malley, my father's father... the farmer who used to make coffee."

"It was the church..."
When the Toronto Globe and Mail gently tweaked the Imperial Oil Review last October about a grammatical lapse — it had used “forbidding” instead of “formidable” — the latter’s editors were not unduly troubled. After all, everyone makes mistakes, but, as the Globe contributor Robertson Cochrane made clear in his weekly column on English usage, the finding of such an error in the Review “as rare as a brown on Murray Westgate’s physiognomy.” (Westgate, in case you’ve just landed from the planet Krypton, plays the eternally cheery Esso dealer on Hockey Night in Canada television commercials.) Moreover, Cochrane added, Review readers are always treated to “a half-dozen engaging, informative, literate and highly readable stories about the cultural, social or business life of this country.”

That’s certainly the intent. But why on earth does an “oil” magazine was eloquent on African violets, bird-watching, birch-bark baskets and the Boss Brass! Or cats, chewing gum, cowboy art and Junior Achievement? Maple sugar, the Order of Canada, seed catalogues, youth orchestras and zoos! Or, would you believe, turkeys?

The Review has dealt with those subjects and hundreds more in its 75 years because it is anything but the conventional company house organ. In each of its 604 issues since 1917, it has, of course, reported on and interpreted the petroleum industry and Imperial’s place in it. But its 60,000 readers (including the 10,000 who read Le Reveu, the French-language version) have come to expect, in even greater measure, an interesting mix of pure Canadiana.

The Review, by mandate, is a window on Canada. It endeavours to reveal and celebrate this country’s many wonders and faces through the work of some of its finest writers and artists. At a time when magazines with a broad vision of Canada are rapidly dwindling, the Review is, many believe, as important to the country as it must be to Imperial.

Why, readers wonder, does an oil-company magazine have such a mandate? The reasons are not totally altruistic — Imperial knows that its business success depends upon its acceptance among various Canadian publics. The Review — a literary goodwill ambassador — speaks to many of those publics: educators, members of governments, business leaders, cultural organizations and all shareholders and employees who wish to receive it. “As a good corporate citizen, Imperial makes every effort to support the communities in which it operates,” says the magazine’s current editor, Wynne Thomas. “One of its goals is to let people know about the company’s efforts. Imperial is operated by a group of Canadians who are not only committed to running a successful business but who want to contribute to the betterment of Canada. That may sound like rhetoric, but I believe it. If I didn’t, I’d find it very difficult as a journalist to be associated with this magazine.”

The Review’s content reflects the company’s interest in and support of a range of institutions and worthy causes. The magazine also offers Canadian writers an outlet for personal essays and pieces on somewhat arcane topics, which otherwise might not find their way into print. The humourist John Largo’s 1954 spoof of the turkey, “the mot- mor of the barnyard,” is one such piece. “In comparison,” he wrote, “a goose is an intellectual giant and a hen is a keen thinker. . . .” Between laughs, readers learned a great deal about turkeys. Solid information in palatable form has always been one of the Review’s goals.

What the Review’s staff finds encouraging is the wide
leadership that the magazine attracts. In a 1991 survey conducted by the Harbour House Press in Port Credit, Ont., the Review was "identified as one of the most popular magazines in Canadian libraries.

Such acclaim was surely beyond the wildest dreams of Victor Ross, an ex-newspaperman and an Imperial vice-president, when he founded the Review, strictly for employees, in 1917. For the first 20 years it dwelled mostly on oil stories—often from Imperial's then-subsidiary International Petroleum Company, Limited in South America; there was precious little production in Canada.

The Review of those times liked to dish up little homilies: "Without an aim, life is mere existence." A 1921 essay sternly advised, "Your work is your best friend... Be strong, therefore, and do it." Employees were urged to conserve food by saving breadcrumbs, not to waste soap by leaving it in the water and toxeed the mind with wholesome mental food instead of trash or morbid literature that easily decomposes and poisons your whole life.

It was like getting a letter from your mother.

Yet, already, there were flashes of Canadiana: stories on Banff, the KCMF and St. Pierre and Miquelon; a salute to 60 years of Confederation; a 1924 series of special issues on our provinces and regions. From the beginning the Review mirrored Canada's moods and events. Its first issue carried a dispatch from an Imperial man at the front in the First World War. In 1930, to mark Imperial's 50th anniversary, the magazine asked Stephen Leacock to write "In Praise of Petroleum." Naturally, the famed humorist couldn't take the topic entirely seriously: between the age of iron and the great oil age, he wrote, came the booze age, "brought about by the invention of wine and the finding of the wheat plant and the discovery of Scotland."

Lean issues during the austere 1930s begged employees to donate whatever they could for the relief of the unemployed. A four-colour cover in 1939 hailed the newly crowned King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. That autumn the Review assured those employees going into the armed forces that Imperial would protect their employment status and pay them any difference between their company salaries and the military stipend. For six years, soldiers, sailors and airmen marched through the pages, showing how petroleum helped fight the Second World War.

Then there was 1947, a momentous year for the Canadian oil industry. In April, two months after Leduc No. 1 came in, the Review—with caution born of Imperial's previous 133 dry holes—said the discovery seemed to be the company's "most important" since a Turner Valley strike more than 20 years before. A couple of issues later the editors grew bolder: "Leduc Looks Good." From then on it was one jubilant story after another as the chain reaction of great discoveries raced through the West.

The Review was still officially published for only "shareholders and employees." The early 1940s editor, W.C. Chilton, increased the quota of general-interest subjects (although they always had a petroleum connection), as did his successors, George Lawrence and Jack Birt, both ex-serviceemen and one-time Toronto Star reporters. The change to an external circulation came in the early 1950s under Roy Cotter, a former London Free Press reporter. Almost from the day he arrived as a staff writer, Cotter—a British commander during the war—began scanning management's beaches with pricky memes. There was, he said, a public out there wondering what big oil was all about; an external magazine of quality and integrity would reflect well on Imperial; the Review, "a valuable tool," should be used to better advantage.

Cotter got his way. The October 1954 issue abandoned the "employees and shareholders" label, and members of the public received their first copy of the Review, which sported an abstract cover and inside artwork on a refinery by "a promising young Canadian," Harold Town. Later, Town became one of Canada's best-known artists.

"We supported Harold and many others early in their careers, when it was not yet fashionable for industry to do so," says Gerry Moses, the magazine's art director and Cotter's ally in the new approach. From then on Review covers were treated to the newest and/or best in Canadian art, including the work of Eric Aldwinckle, Graham Cougheen, Louis de Niverville, Theo Dimson, James Hill, Robert Mapple and Michael Snow.

For many readers it was a first exposure to "modern" art, and the response was varied: one reader wrote, "four art-work is perfectly horrible," while an enterprising New Yorker saved all the covers for book jackets. Under a succession of art directors, the visuals were often innovative—although the occasional noble experiment didn't quite work. The December 1961 cover doubled as a Christmas mobile, which readers could punch out and assemble: three sheep, two angels and a crib, to be suspended from a stand. It was a charming concept. The only problem, as some readers pointed out, was that one required a PhD in mechanical engineering to put it together.

For the first issue of 1967, celebrating 20 years of "big oil," John Orr, the art director, patiently deburred oil from his car's dipstick onto a stark white background until he'd created the perfect oil drip. And a perfect cover, the editor thought. The issue was on press when the department manager saw it and turned pale. To him it looked like a human fetus. The staff hastily substituted a-safe, albeit time-worn, photo of a wilderness oil rig. O

verall, a high proportion of readers rate the illustrations, as one recently put it, "a delight to the eye." Under Bill Williamson, art director for 13 years, during the sixties and seventies, the magazine settled into what the current art director, James Ireland, calls a quiet elegance. The Review has been fortunate over the last 40 years, says Ireland, in being able to attract the services of some of the country's best photographers: Peter Christopher, Peter Croydon, Walter Curnin, Horst Ehrlich, Harry Rowed and Basa Zavor, to name a few.

Review editors endeavored to ensure that the content kept pace with the improving look. Nearly all of them came with backgrounds in professional journalism; Kenneth Bagnell, Robert Collins, James Knight and Wynne Thomas, for example, all came with extensive newspaper and magazine experience. Gradually company management uncoupled its knuckles, acknowledging that every subject did not need a specific oil angle; that the Review could carry stories on almost anything, within the bounds of good taste.

The magazine began addressing provocative (for a company publication) themes: school-bus safety, flaws in the educational system, the crisis in Canadian agriculture. This seemed bold, even risky, but the articles were invariably praised for their constructive, thoughtful approach.

"It was a good time to be alive," reflects Cotter. "Imperial became not just 'that bloody oil company' but a

In the 1950s the Review first became available to the general public, and while most articles were related to the oil industry, the scope of the magazine's content widened.

In the 1960s the Review's contributors included such people as June Callwood, W.O. Mitchell and Harold Town; more and more, Canada—its people, places and issues—became its focus.
company pioneering a form of communication and using the best people in the field to do so." "Review contributors over the years became a kind of Who's Who in Canadian journalism: Jack Berton, Harry Boyle, Harry Bruce, June Callwood, Peter Desbarats, Thelma Dickman, Kildare Dobbs, Arnold Edinborough, Douglas Fairthing, Robert Fulford, Hugh Ganjeer, Paul Grescoe, Sidney Katz, David MacDonald, W.O. Mitchell, Mavor Moore, Peter C. Newman, Franklin Russell and Scott Young.

"I just couldn't wait to get to the Review in the morning, and I hated to go home at night," remembers James Knight. "I got to do all the things I wanted to do and nobody seemed to object." His biggest comeuppance in nine years, he says, was over "stink," which was how he proposed to describe the smell at Imperial's refinery in Sarnia, Ont. A company director deemed it vulgar, so Knight found a less odious word.

More and more, an enlightened management stood back and gave the Review its head. Kenneth Bagnell had been editor less than a year in 1974 when he received a friendly phone call from Jack Armstrong, then Imperial's chairman. "I hope no one ever leans on you about what should or should not go into the Review," Armstrong said. "We want to leave the editor as much freedom as we can." Bagnell still marvels that no one ever "tried to manipulate me or the Review." Today, as managing editor Sarah Lawley puts it, "The Review is allowed to live its own life."

W hile in many ways the Review is traditional and perhaps somewhat suspended, it is fair to say that at times it has been at the leading edge of social change. There was a glimpse even in the employee magazine of 1923: a whole issue devoted to women and women's issues—astonishing at a time when most men and magazines (including, alas, the Review) habitually referred to all women as "girls."

In the last two decades the magazine has published numerous articles on issues of social and national concern: corporate ethics, conservation, the burgeoning of Canadian literature, native affairs, fitness, aging, disabled Canadians, drinking on the job, illiteracy, mental health, flex time in the office and endangered species.

La Revue, launched in 1955, was one of the first French-language magazines published in English corporate Canada. In 1960, long before bilingualism was a national issue, novelist Hugh MacLennan wrote, "French is a must for Canadians" in the English magazine. Stories on pollution (hitherto unheard of by most Canadians) began appearing in the mid-1950's. Canada's North had barely emerged in the national consciousness when the Review in 1960 gave it a special issue, which included some of the earliest reproductions of Inuit sealskin and stone-block art.

And when socialism captured Canadien's fancy in the eighties, the Review was ready with a master in that genre, the late Robert Thomas Allen, whose gentle, lyrical essays on everything from rainy days to the pleasures of Saturday mornings touched the hearts of readers, bringing tears to many eyes. Allen's writing, a reader from Saint-Léonard, Que., says reverently, "made me enjoy learning the English language, made me wonder at life's precious values, made me believe in human beings." Is there still room in this eclectic mix for coverage of the oil business? Of course. As the industry moved into the North, into the oil sands and onto Arctic islands and eastern offshore drilling rigs, the Review moved beside it with photos and words. Every issue has one or two stories on the industry or Imperial. And since 1977 the problem of how to tell the oil story entertainingly has stretched the magazine's editors' ingenuity. In April 1966 they concocted a board game, "Dripping Rig," coxing readers through such hazards as "dry hole" and "broken drill bit" to reach "pay zone you win!" A June 1963 treatise on gasoline prices was rendered in verse in the manner of Lewis Carroll. And in 1964 the Review commissioned the poets Earle Birney and W.R. Chadwick and the artist Doug Johnson to translate the mundane process of oil refining into magic and high drama, through poetry and oils.

All of this inventiveness, occasional madness and grace under pressure has paid off handsomely. The Review has won countless awards throughout North America. It has provided a forum for fledgling writers and artists who went on to gain national reputations. Schools across Canada consistently use it as a teaching aid. And Review articles have become resource materials for the mentally ill, the illiterate and English-language teachers abroad.

In an extension of its reach, the magazine has for the past 11 years sponsored an annual, three-part lecture series at Canadian universities. Since the series was inaugurated, many distinguished Canadians from science, business and the arts—including scholar Northrop Frye, novelist Mordecai Richler, jurist Rosalie Abella and Nobel prize-winning chemist John Polanyi—have addressed the students and faculty members of what are often smaller campuses that, because of limited resources, might have no other opportunity to hear such speakers.

The Review competes with every other print medium not for newstand sales (it is free) but for reading time. Therefore, the crucial question is, do people read it? Studies show that an overwhelming percentage of those who receive it read "all" or "most" of any given issue. But perhaps the best proof is in the mailbag. Few things delight editors more than hearing from readers. Letters to the Review come from chief executive officers, members of Parliament, doctors, the clerk of the Privy Council, barristers, cloistered nuns and the Library of Congress.

Review readers are an appreciative lot. Even in 1957 the magazine was getting 600 letters a year. The 1960 special on the Canadian North drew 600 responses itself; a 1967 issue on Canada's Centennial brought a torrent of 3,000. And the flow continues today—unabated, enthusiastic, often touching.

From Queen's University: "It is so nice to read a magazine that does not depress you with the turmoil of the world and in general gives a warm, happy feeling instead. A Montrealer enthuses, "The best writing I have seen and savoured in a long time." A man from Mississauga, Ont., says, "It is NOT a magazine, it is a most wonderful institution."

And this poignant testimonial from a British Columbian who, as night janitor in a bank in 1963, discovered her first Review in a garbage bin, "I had a very limited education," her recent thank-you letter explained in scrawling longhand, "but I learned to read and write.

Fascinated by an article on "The Scientist and Society," she asked to be put on the mailing list. "Your magazine has given me a lot of information," she wrote in her letter. "Sorry it took me nearly 30 years to write this." A life enriched: what better gift could any magazine or "institution" ask for on its 75th birthday?
Deeply embedded in the civic folklore of modern Toronto is a story that illustrates not only the theories of Jane Jacobs but the practical, vigorous and imaginative ways she can put them into service. Like many stories of Toronto politics, this one concerns a threatened chunk of the city's architectural past, a row of houses on a downtown street that was splendid through much of the last century and squashed through much of this one. In 1971 a property developer acquired the right to demolish the worn old houses and replace them with apartment buildings. People at city hall were trying to get that decision reversed, but they were afraid that the houses would be torn down while they were working their way through the legal system. So they planned a protest demonstration.

Early on the cold, dark morning of April 5, 1973, about 80 demonstrators were assembled at the site. Among them were a number of elderly, including John Sewell, later mayor of the city, and William Kilbourn, an author and currently a history and humanities professor — and one internationally known writer on cities, Jane Jacobs, who was then 56 years old and had moved to Toronto from New York nearly five years before. Once they had gathered, the protesters were unsure of what to do. At about that time, as Jacobs recalls, she overheard a lawyer in the group remark thoughtfully that, by law, demolition could proceed only if the site were properly protected with hoardings. That was all Jacobs needed. She turned to Kilbourn. "They can't do this if the hoardings are down," she announced in a loud, American twang. "Here, give me a hand." Kilbourn and Jacobs went to work. Others joined them, and in no time the hoardings lay on the ground. By the time the wrecking crew arrived most of the hoardings were down. The demolition was stopped. The houses were saved. In time the city bought them from the developer, restored them, filled in the spaces around them with more housing and created a low-rent development that can house more people than would have lived in the apartment buildings. That little strip of history (on Sherbourne Street, just north of Dundas Street) will stand, well into the 21st century, as a double landmark: physical evidence of both Toronto society in the 1870s and of the intense save-Toronto politics of the 1970s.

But why was it important? Why were this famous American writer and her admirers concerned enough about saving old houses to commit a minor act of civil disobedience? The answer is at the core of Jacobs's thinking: she believes, with an intense and almost mystic passion, in cities as living organisms. She loves cities and has spent her adult life writing about them. She loves everything that makes them rich and diverse, including architectural history, and resents any force that turns them bland and predictable. In this case she saw that a piece of her city — she had already adopted Toronto as her own — was being ripped away, and she hastened to save it.

The Morning They Ripped Down the Hoardings was one of many stories that were lovingly retold and suitably embellished when Jacobs's admirers held a day in her honour last September. They had noticed that her first and most famous book, The Death and Life of Great American Cities, published in 1961, was about to be 30 years old, and they held what amounted to a birthday party for it. There was a luncheon at the University of Toronto school of architecture (in rooms decorated with photographs that illustrated quotations from the book), then a public symposium during the afternoon and, finally, a dinner in a downtown restaurant that went on far into the evening as architects, planners, politicians and journalists rose one after another to praise Jacobs and describe what she had meant to their lives. They spoke of staying up all night to finish reading The Death and Life, of their lives being changed by her insights, of how her book had transformed city planning.

The distinguished architect Eberhard Zeidler remembered the day he read it: "It was as if somebody had torn blindfolds from my eyes." Stephen Clarkson, a political scientist and co-author of one of the best-known Trudeau biographies, spoke eloquently of her personality: "She has a spirituality, a flame, from which everyone in her ambit benefits."

Through it all Jacobs smiled benignly, a tall, stooped woman with the look of an ancient hawk. As usual, she didn't dress up. She wore to her own party more or less what she wears to everybody else's parties and indeed wears whenever she goes out — a large corduroy tent and running shoes. And, also as usual, she exhibited no sense whatever of her own importance. In 1961 she started a one-woman revolution in thought that has since reached around the world, yet she insists that what she writes is only common sense. But it would be as wrong to call her modest as to accuse her of boastfulness. Sitting for 10 or so hours beneath a shower of undiluted praise, she seemed altogether at ease, as if she could look on her work honestly, objectively and without false modesty. She seems to be that rare and enviable creature, an integrated personality, her work, not her ego, absorbs her. She needs love (and receives a great deal of it from her husband, three grown children, grandchil-
dren and plenanny of friends), but she doesn't need to feel important. As the English used to say, she has no side.

Late in the afternoon session, as a panel of experts was about to handle a question from the audience, she sud-
denly spoke up from her place in the front row. "Can I answer that?" she asked. For the next 15 minutes she sat on the edge of the stage, microphone in hand, and answered questions. Typically, she dealt with the most complicated of them without some grand theory but by describing in intimate detail how her neighbours on Albany Avenue in the midtown Annex district of Toronto handled the intro-
duction of public housing on their street. Her approach was classic Jacobs, focused on the local and specific and charged with human meaning.

That's the way she writes, too. She rests her arguments...
In the 1950s, Archibald Maclean frequently published articles in newspapers and magazines, promoting new building developments. Jacobs went to see some of these and found that they weren't working. Planners had bulldozed large slum areas and replaced them with carefully organized col-
lected buildings of apartments and houses. On paper, these looked fine, but when Jacobs visited them she discov-
ered that the open spaces were empty of people. Planners had followed a rule they had learned in school: strictly segregate residences, retail stores and business. This was tidy but inhuman and uninteresting, and people appeared to like it less than they had liked the slums. An environ-
ment created out of good will, out of a concern, turned out to be boring, dangerous and ultimately unlivable. The new developments had literally been created to death. How could such a thing have happened?

Jacobs gave her answer in The Death and Life of Great American Cities. "This book," she began, "is an attempt to examine the mistakes urban planners have made in an effort to create a better city. It is primarily based on the observation that planners have become so engrossed in their own dreams that they have long since stopped looking at how people live. Neighborhoods and cities, she declared, can be created only out of the common experience of the people who use them. They cannot be planned by experts. Astonishingly, she challenged not simply the mistakes she saw around her but the very idea of a designed urban utopia, an idea to which generations of intellectuals had comfortably committed themselves. For the great movements in town planning theory she had a startling word—reactionary."

Despite the objections of planners but embraced by more, her book started an international debate. Eventually, her ideas be-
came part of conventional wisdom. Within a few years it was being used as a textbook and even put on task forces for both the U.S. president and the New York mayor. She declined, however, to pose as an academic ex-
pert. A new profession, focused on the development of cit-
ies, was being created, but she refused to accept the new terminology. "Please don't describe me as an urbanolo-
gist," she once said. "Urbanologist sounds phony—like phrenologist." She was simply an author, and in her field she was the only author.

Then, in the late 1940s, Canada acquired the Jacobs fam-
ily. The Vietnam war was raging, and the two sons of Bob and Jane were drafted. New York had become a more difficult city, and Toronto was an appealing place for an architect and an author to live. "Every time I have to go to New York on business," Jacobs told a magazine interviewer in 1970, "I could not decide how much I've escaped more than from an insomniac asylum.

Jane and Bob still live in the Annex-district house that they settled in 1960. True to the Jacobsian view, she loves her neighborhood for its diversity. She was de-
lighted with it almost from the day she arrived. "If you come from an American city, what amazed you was the mixture of people. Around her, in this period, she found Hungarians, blacks, Chinese and many other versions of humanity, including a good-size group of American immigrants. She continues to love her district and the city, and she is a publicist. For instance, she ran a world ripping run on the TTC (the municipal transit system)."

In Toronto, crime and hopelessness have increased in re-
cent years. Many of the book's richly written chapters have questioned whether it is still "the city that works," and public-opinion polls have indicated that people are less happy with Toronto than they were a few years ago. Jacobs will have to rework the Jacobsian Toronto portrait. She blames the deterioration of the city's self-image at least partly on the media. The problem, in her view, is the media's report on city problems. "They have to tell every
everything as if it were news reporting. They're all the frus-
trated war correspondents." As an ex-
American, she hates to hear American rhetoric in Toronto. "I hate this expression 'inner-city crime.' Where is this inner-city crime I was reading about the other day? It's out in North York." In To-
ronto, in fact, much of the poverty and diver-
city can be found in housing developments in the suburbs; housing developments, a Jacob-
sian lament, is the point of her Jacobs's lessons about diversity and city street life.

The present state of Toronto became the subject of her appearance with Peter Grzegorczik on CBC's "You're alley." The interview turned into a surprising little debate in which Grzegorczik (to Toronto for the largest part of his life) attacked the city and Jacobs, the im-
migrant, who simply quoted examples to prove her theories. They, too, miss the point. She doesn't choose examples, she begins with the examples; she studies reality and tries to figure out what it tells her finally. Nor does she produce the solutions to urban problems that some people expect from her, and this leads to criticism of her work. She mercilessly rips apart the plans that oth-
ers have made for the future, but she refuses to provide prescriptions of her own. People who want to build in the point of her work. A generalized solution to social prob-
lems would be absolutely un-Jacobian. "Pre-
scriptions," she says, "have to be local, em-
piric and based on real life," as lived at the time the problem is being addressed. Because her books are full of concrete incidents and anecdotes, people sometimes compliment her on the "practical" and "prescriptive" nature of her work. Both critics and admirers have attached the word "anarch-
ist" to her, because she believes in power being exercised by individuals or people in small groups rather than by big government and corporate authorities. She believes that these problems, if solvable at all, will be solved by the elabo-
rate schemes of experts but by the spontaneous inventions of the people. That's the way it has always happened, she explained, and there is no reason to believe that it will change.

On that birthday-party afternoon I finally decided that the only proper term for her is one that is both overused and misused: radical. In its original sense it means someone who goes to the root of the problem. It came into my mind when the possibility of a postal strike was mentioned and someone wondered aloud what should be done about Can-
ada Post office. I asked Jacobs what she would do. Jacobs said she had heard no privatization. Jacobs, surprising as always, went much further than that. "Close it," she said, "and see what replaces it." Now there's a radical!
SURROGATE SOVEREIGNS

Vital to Canada’s system of government, the office of governor general has been held by a colourful cast of characters during its 125-year history

BY SHONA MCKAY

Roland Michener was once asked how he viewed his term as governor general of Canada. The former Speaker of the House of Commons replied: “I found myself deprived of the most precious of our liberties, that of speech. Of course, I could talk. In fact, I had to talk, but I couldn’t say anything.”

Michener was not the only governor general to make depreciating comments regarding the position. Frederick Temple Blackwood, first Earl of Dufferin and Canada’s third governor general, called his role that of “a humble functionary” but did add that the governor general is nothing less than “a representative of all that is august, stable and sedate in the country, incapable of partnership, and lifted far above the atmosphere of faction, without adherents to reward or opponents to oust from office.”

These somewhat contradictory feelings exemplify the mixed views held not just by those in the position but by the Canadian people at large.

Since Queen Victoria appointed the Irish peer Charles Stanley Monkton to be the first regal representative in the newly created Dominion of Canada in 1867, it has been a fact that Canadians have admired, respected and sometimes even loved the various individuals who have occupied the office. It is also a matter of record that these individuals have, at the same time, been the subject of public scorn, contempt and, perhaps the greatest slight of all, indifference.

To understand the range of emotions the position evokes requires an understanding of the office itself. The governor general is, quite simply, the country’s senior representative of the head of state (the Crown), performing all official duties of the Crown in Canada. Those duties include opening and dissolving Parliament; signing all new pieces of federal legislation (without the signature of the governor general or the monarch no new federal law or act can be proclaimed); ensuring that the country always has a prime minister; serving as commander-in-chief of the country’s armed forces; bestowing various honours on Canadians of merit; and meeting on a regular basis with the prime minister to be briefed on the nation’s business. As well, the governor general, who usually holds the position for at least five years, performs the unwritten but understood task of promoting a sense of national unity (a particularly demanding task for the current governor general) and is called upon to write regularly to the monarch about Canada’s affairs (a reply is not expected). “About one third of my time was taken up tending to the daily activity of the government — receiving and signing bills and such,” says Edward Schreyer, who served as governor general from 1979 to 1984. “Another third was devoted to receiving visitors and dignitaries. The rest of the time I travelled to every conceivable part of Canada.”

What the position lacks is political clout. “It’s an office that has little to do with power,” says Schreyer, who now lectures on natural resources and public policy at Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria. “Rather, it’s an office whose function is to provide stable custody of the law and spirit of the Canadian constitution.” Jacques Monet, who teaches history at the University of Toronto and is author of The Canadian Crown, a history of the office of the royal representative, counts this political detachment as one of the role’s virtues. “I firmly believe,” says Monet, “that if you went out on the street and asked Canadians if they thought it was a good thing that as the head of our state we have someone who represents values and unity rather than a politician, 98 percent of the people would say yes.”

While there is an understanding that the governor general, like the monarch, does not exercise power, it would not be correct to say the position is without power. Consider the King-by-law affair, a power struggle between the prime minister and the governor general that began when Lord Byng (governor general from 1921 to 1926) dissolved Parliament in 1925 at the request of William Lyon Mackenzie King, the prime minister. Although the Conservatives, under Arthur Meighen, won the most seats in the ensuing election, King, with the support of members from the Progressive Party, maintained power. In the summer of 1926, however, King lost the support of the Progressive Party and once again asked Byng to dissolve Parliament. Byng refused, reasoning in part that the country could ill-afford a second general election, and since the Conservatives were the single largest party in the House, he asked Meighen to form a government. Meighen did — only to be brought down by a vote of no-confidence within hours of taking office. Then he, as King had, asked the governor general for a dissolution. This time Byng complied, and in the subsequent election King returned with a majority. While many outraged Canadians considered Byng was meddling where he had no place to, the fact is that by the powers vested in him as governor general he had the authority to act as he did — much to the chagrin of Macken-
Lord Grey, governor general from 1904 to 1911, would never have done such a thing. An individual who placed great importance on the smallest event and was once described as a "sufficiently superb windbag," he was unarguably one of the most effective individuals ever to have been appointed to the vice-regal position. Grey made a vocation of selling Canada to Canadians and dubbed Lake Ontario "that beautiful Mediterranean Sea" and lifted the harbour at Hamilton, Ont., to "the Bay of Naples." He even went so far as to describe the Yukon as that "bower of roses and tulips."

History records too that Lady Willingham, wife of Lord Willingham, a former British member of Parliament who was appointed governor general in 1926, possessed somewhat eccentric aesthetic sensibilities. A powerhouse of a woman who rose at dawn and worked all day—and expected those around her to do likewise—Lady Willingham had a decided penchant for purple. On one occasion it led her even to paint many of the rooms in Rideau House maroon but the exterior of the vice-regal couple's private railway car in the same colour.

Princess Louise, the fourth, and contemporaries say prettily, daughter of Queen Victoria and the wife of the Marquess of Lorne, the monarch's representative from 1878 to 1885, also left her mark on Rideau Hall. A gifted amateur artist, she decorated several doors with paintings of apple blossoms. One of these delicate pastel creations still adorns the residence. Alas, however, it was Louise's fate to be remembered less for her renderings than for her long absence. It's still a matter of speculation as to whether it was her relationship with her husband, the dullness of Ottawa society or an unfortunate encounter with Sir John A. MacDonald that caused the young royal to spend half the time abroad.

Among the 17 individuals who have assumed the role of governor general during the 20th century, there are some whose names stand out. Such a person is Lord Tweedsmuir, governor general from 1935 to 1940. A well-travelled intellectual who was serving as the London Times correspondent as British headquarters in France when the First World War broke out and who had little time for the sentimental musings of prime minister Mackenzie King, Tweedsmuir was the celebrated author John Buchan. His most famous work, The Thirty-Nine Steps, published in 1915, was eventually made into a movie by Alfred Hitchcock.

No less deserving of distinction are two individuals who served as acting heads of state in modern times. The first is Vincent Massey. Governor general from 1952 to 1959, he was the son of a leading industrialist and had served as Canada's high commissioner to London from 1915 to 1946. An able and much-respected diplomat, he is credited with giving birth to an idea that would later become the reality of the capital's National Library of Canada. Yet, in spite of his many accomplishments, there's no question that Massey will be best remembered as the first Canadian-born person to represent the Crown in Canada.

Similarly, however unjust it may be, history will doubtless remember Jeanne Sauvé less for her achievements as a former journalist and federal cabinet minister than for the fact that when she was sworn into office in 1984 she became the country's first female governor general.

But Canada's succession of governors general have given more to the country than a colourful history—they have made important contributions to Canadian culture and society.

In the realm of sports alone the vice-regal presence is pervasive. For example, the ex-diplomat Lord Grey donated the Grey Cup to be presented to the Canadian football champions, and Canada's sixth governor general, Lord Stanley, a former Conservative member of the British Parliament, donated the handsome Stanley Cup, which is presented to the National Hockey League champions. Gentleman hockey players have been honoured ever since Lady Byng, wife of Lord Byng, established the Lady Byng Trophy in 1925. And, as fans of one of our most enduring sports will know, it was Lord Minto, a self-described "gentleman jockey," and governor general of Canada from 1888 to 1904, who presented the Minto Cup to the senior amateur
A rewarding response

A former editor of this magazine, Kenneth Nugraf, remarked on one occasion that the Review was the "missing link" in the chain of events. That's a good piece of advice for any editor and one that we try to follow. We have been told to conduct a literate presentation of interesting information rather than blanketing the readers, and our vigilant managing editor, Sarah Lawler, makes sure that that curse of current journalism, the exclamation mark, is not used in our pages.

We have, however, allowed ourselves, if not a confront, a modest cheer of self-congratulation in this issue, which marks the Review's 75th year of publication. We've treated ourselves to an anniversary cover, and a well-known writer and former Review editor, Robert Collier, has dipped into our archives to provide what we think is a fascinating glimpse of the evolution of the magazine, to which a succession of distinguished Canadian writers, artists, and photographers have contributed over the past three quarters of a century. There are older magazines in Canada, but not many, and we would be poor journalists indeed if we did not allow ourselves a moment of justifiable pride in our longevity and in the collective achievement of our past and present contributors.

But to succeed a magazine needs readers as well as writers, and, here again, the Review has every reason to be proud — it enjoys tremendous loyalty and support from its audience. The results of the recent readership survey, which was conducted on Imperial's behalf, show that we continue to provide not only excellent reading, but also excellent reading material.

A publication's readership is its lifeblood, and it is vital that the Review continue to thrive. We have received the backing of a large number of schools and institutions, and we are grateful for their continued support. We are looking forward to many more years of providing excellent reading material.