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MAIL POSTE

The skating magic of Ottawa’s Rideau Canal
Capital Skating

From morning to night during the cold days of an Ottawa winter, skaters glide along the Rideau Canal, the only skateway of its kind in the world.

BY MARTIN O'MALLEY

The morning is clear and cold. Minus five, perfect for skating. Unless you're Flora MacDonald. She likes it colder—at least minus 10. "I like the ice when it's hard and clean," says the former Tory cabinet minister. "I've been out when it's minus 30. That's when speed-skaters come out. That's the ice we like."

The best time to skate on Ottawa's Rideau Canal is dawn, when the ice has been brushed and recently flooded. That's when MacDonald skates, and that's when I intended to. But not owning skates, I find my plans thwarted—the skate rental shop doesn't open until 10 a.m.

No matter, the wait gives me time to enjoy the scene before me: people of all ages gliding on the ice in the peaceful, bracing air; the Parliament Buildings rising in the background against the brightening sky.

During a good winter, when the temperature is consistently cold, MacDonald skates the canal every day, covering 15 kilometres in little more than an hour. She's been doing this since 1969, when the skateway opened. As a girl, she was a champion speed-skater and spent hours on the frozen rivers and lakes of Nova Scotia's Cape Breton Island, where she grew up. She is now 72.

MacDonald can see the canal from her home. When she was minister of external affairs nearly 20 years ago, she used to skate to work most winter days. I, on the other hand, am barely a skater at all, not having been on skates in 20 years. Yet here I am on my rented skates on the frozen Rideau Canal, making my way to Dow's Lake, six kilometres away. You go fast on skates, faster than I remember. In minutes, I have skated under the Mackenzie King Bridge and...
the Laurier Bridge, the Parliament Buildings receding behind me. People
pushing along on the packed snow at this time of year, the canal looks stark to
the earth. The skaters push, glide, push, glide.

Before long, I am halfway to Dow's Lake. There’s a row area ahead. Benches.
I glide over to a knoll.

"Hot chocolate, please."

The skateway is 7.8 kilometres long and wider than a city street, and it is brushed and flooded every night if it’s cold enough — at least minus 10. It costs $50,000 annually to maintain the skateway, which is the only one of its kind in the world. There are longer skating surfaces. Skaters in Holland, for exam-
ple, have been known to travel for days on their blades, going from city to city. But it’s a little
thing, possible only every five or 10 years, when the canals freeze. It’s not something that can be count-
ed on every winter, and there’s no official counting.

The Rideau Canal, on the other hand, always freezes. The longest skating season, 1971-72, lasted 90
days, from December 26 to March 25; the shortest season, the previous year, lasted only 39
days, from January 18 to February 16.

Work on the skateway begins in October, when Parks Canada drains the canal by opening sluice valves
at the Ottawa locks in the centre of Ottawa near the Château Laurier Hotel. Electrical and
plumbing work is done, and ramps, which allow maintenance vehicles to be driven onto and off the ice,
and shelters are installed. (In 1970, the skateway’s second year of operation, the shelters all sank
during an unexpected mild spell. They now stand on gravel piles.) After this work has been completed, the
sluice gates are opened and water is allowed to

The best time to skate on Ottawa’s Rideau Canal is dawn, when
the ice has been brushed and newly flooded
flow back into the canal to a depth of one metre. Access stairways for skaters are installed along its
length.

The Rideau Canal was the brainchild of Douglas Fullerton. He served as chair of the National
Capital Commission from 1969 to 1973. The skateway was one of his first undertakings in the position.
Newfoundlandian, Fullerton prided himself on being a man of the people. He also possessed a practical genius.

Fact is, you can’t skate on just any frozen surface.

William Wordsworth was a skater once and wrote:

All skid with zeal, we skated along the polished ice in games

Confidently…

Dakota on the Red River or all the way to Saskatchewan on the Assiniboine. No,
snow has to be cleared and the ice must be smooth, which generally requires
flooding its surface frequently. Fullerton’s genius prompted him to sug-
ggest that the Rideau Canal could be flooded with its own water. Drain it, he said, set up shelters, benches and
kiosks, let the water back in, build a thick layer of ice, drill holes along its side
and then use pumps to suck the water through the holes from beneath the ice, using it to flood the sur-
face. He encountered opposition from waterwaysmen who warned that skaters would fall through the ice and
engineers who warned that the ice would destroy the walls of the famous waterway. (In fact, no damage
resulting from the skateway has yet been reported.) But the project went ahead, and it has been a source of
joy and pride for Ottawa ever since.

The Rideau Canal itself was conceived in the wake of the War of 1812 to serve as a supply route
from Ottawa to Kingston and the Great Lakes in the event of war. It was not completed, however, until
1832, after six years of construction, largely by Irish immigrants and Fenian Canadians who worked in
brutal conditions under the supervision of Lieu-
tenant Colonel John By of the Royal Engineers. The canal was considered one of the greatest engineering
feats of the 19th century. For a time it was an essen-
tial route for commercial shipping; but the railway
soon proved more efficient, and then, in 1939, with
the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway, the canal
was rendered completely obsolete as a shipping route.
Today, its only purpose is fun: pleasure boats in sum-
time; skating in winter.

Beside the canal at Second Avenue is a black
granite plaque dedicated to Fullerton, who died in
December 1996, the day before the skateway opened
for the season. "My husband accomplished many things," his widow, Maude, says, "but not skaters
on the canal gave him his greatest pleasure. When
the skating ends, it always looks like the centre of
Ottawa has died."
The Loon's Necklace and Beyond

The Canadian film industry has come a long way in the last 100 years. And Imperial Oil has played a major role.

BY BARBARA WADE ROSE

The two men could not have been more different—one a bold creator of action-oriented films, the other a creator of intellectual film puzzles. Yet both were honoured with Oscar nominations at last spring's Academy Awards in Los Angeles. That film maker James Cameron and Atom Egoyan are Canadian is perhaps our country's clearest signal to date that there are many worthy ways Canadians can craft a film. As Egoyan, who was born in Cairo but raised in Canada, stated in a diary he wrote of his trip to the Oscars for Maclean's magazine, "There's no way around it. The Academy Awards are part of our collective mythology, and English Canadian feature film making has finally been given some long-overdue recognition."

And how. The Sweet Hereafter, Egoyan's grand-scale independent film about the effect a school bus tragedy has on the members of a small community in the B.C. interior, received two nominations. And Titanic, Cameron's grand-scale studio re-creation of the disastrous voyage of the "unsinkable" ocean liner that sank an iceberg on April 14, 1912, won 11 Oscars.

The distinct successes of Cameron and Egoyan are a signal of how far Canadian film has come since its inception at the end of the last century—a journey in which Imperial Oil has played a quiet, but very real, part.

It is believed that the first professional films having to do with Canada were made in the late 1890s, when the New York-based American Mutoscope and Biograph Company often referred to as the Biograph Company

noted by film makers everywhere. Recognized internationally, the NFB has collected 10 Academy Awards since its establishment. Making films has always been a costly and often financially unrewarding effort. (Back to God's Country was a rarity for its nude scene than for the fact that it made a profit). With the Canadian government's historic support of the film industry, the NFB's independent film makers in Canada had to seek financing from other sources. Invariably, they turned to Canadian corporations. Often these companies financed films that informed customers about their products or the fields in which they were involved. Money-Harris Company of Toronto, for example, celebrated its centenary in 1947 with a 45-minute film that showed landmarks around the world—the Eiffel Tower for one—being improbably pulled by tractors. Occasionally, however, corporations sponsored films that were cultural or educational works unrelated to their business. Imperial was a leading sponsor of such films. "The company has a long tradition of contributing to Canadian culture, and sponsoring films was part of that," says Barbara Hejduk, president of the Imperial Oil Charitable Foundation. "I doubt very much, however, that the Imperial people who made the sponsorship decisions back then realized quite the effect the company's support of the development of the Canadian film industry.

There is no doubt that these sponsored films—such as

Films like Back to God's Country (centre) and A Mile Below the Wheat (bottom) helped hone the skills of Canadian film makers, one of whom was sound man Tony Bettis (top).
well as business-related films financed by corporations - have played a tremendously important role in the development of film making in Canada, says Greg Easton, a film historian who lives in Herson, Ont. "Not only did these films help develop film makers, but they helped develop the audience."

Sponsored films were shown in church basements and classrooms in communities large and small across the country — indeed, across North America. "Company-sponsored films have to be watched," wrote in the Wall Street Journal on October 29, 1935. The American business newspaper reported that 20 million Americans a week were watching such films, some of which managed to show larger audiences than the major motion pictures of the day.

In 1948, a 10-minute short film about the native legend of how the loon got its necklace of white feathers was made in Ontario by the creative team of Budge and Judy Crawford, founders of Crawford Films Ltd. Budge had been making a film on contract for the NFB called Canadian Landscape the.

To make Newfoundland Scene, the 1952 Canadian Film of the Year and another Imperial-sponsored work, film maker Stanley Brede sailed on a Newfoundland whaling boat.

Group of Seven painter A.Y. Jackson. During shooting, Judy had gone with him to Jackson's studio and been fascinated by the West Coast native mask on the wall. "Wouldn't she be a famous mask with transmitted light?" Judy remarked to Budge, and he agreed. Judy got her idea to make from the National Museum of Canada and cast them in The Loon's Necklace, using them to tell the story of Kelo, a blind medicine man whose sight is restored by the loon and who, in thanks, places his magic necklace around the loon's neck, giving the bird its characteristic white "necklace."

It was not a sponsored work — initially, production of the film was financed entirely by Budge, who used his own or staff members to do black and white newsreels and wear the masks after hours. (One of them, after many hours of shooting, put down his costume, muttered, "Who cares how the loon got its necklace?" and walked off the set.) Judy took the finished film to the NFB. It was rejected. Ross McLean, the NFB's commissionaire in the time, said to her. "It's a nice little film, Judy, but I don't see how we can use it." Distributors in Canada and the United States didn't want to purchase the film either. Finally in 1952, after many rejections, Budge showed The Loon's Necklace to Gerry Moses of Imperial.

Moses, who worked in Imperial's public relations department, had a deep love of film making and went on to work as chief photographer of some of the company's best corporate films. He believed that sponsoring films gave Imperial "an opportunity to take part in and contribute to the intellectual life of its potential customers." He liked The Loon's Necklace and got permission from Imperial to buy the Canadian rights to the film, which the company then gave to the Canadian Education Association, a national nonprofit group dedicated to the promotion of improvement in education. Through the association, schools and libraries across the country were able to borrow the film.

The difficulty the Crawleys encountered trying to find a distributor for The Loon's Necklace is particularly telling given the film's artistic success. Upon its release in 1949, the film was given worldwide acclaim. It was judged one of the world's most outstanding noncommercial films at the second International Festival of Documentary Films in Edinburgh, Scotland. At the first Canadian Film Awards, in 1949, it was honoured as Film of the Year. The Loon's Necklace was "a landmark production for the Canadian film industry," said Maria Topalovic in her book, A Pictorial History of the Canadian Film Awards, adding that "the film retains its original charm and popularity to this day." Since its release nearly 50 years ago, The Loon's Necklace has been seen by some 30 million people.

In 1949, Budge Crawford and a tiny film crew travelled to Newfoundland to introduce Canadians to the island's intriguing people, who had recently voted 52 to 48 percent to join Confederation. Newfoundland Scene, an Imperial-sponsored film, was released in 1952 and that year was named Film of the Year at the Canadian Film Awards. (Footage from the film was used in director Irwin Allen's 1952 Academy Award-winning documentary, The Set Around Us.) That was also the year Canadian film maker Norman McLaren won an Academy Award for Neighbours. In 1954, The Saints, another Imperial-sponsored work, was named Film of the Year. To make the movie, film maker Chris Chapman spent a year at a cottage on Lake Simcoe, Ont., recording the changes in the woods and water around him. So it was that the winners of three of the first four Films of the Year awards presented (the award was not given in 1950 or 1951) were films sponsored by an oil company. For its part, Imperial's desire to contribute to Canadian culture was simply rewarded with the films' critical acclaim.

Meanwhile, Canadian feature film makers were working hard to develop their part of the industry. In English Canada, private film makers made a few moves into feature film making, but they experienced a great deal of difficulty raising funds and finding screen time in Canadian theatres. Sidney J. Furie produced, wrote and directed dramas such as A Hungry Age in the 1950s, but then left for England, complaining that he "wanted to start a Canadian film industry, but nobody cared." In 1965 Budge Crawford produced his first feature film, Amantia Penitens, starring a young Genevieve Bujold and directed by René Bonnière. But American distributors (which by the 1960s controlled the majority of Canadian screens) declined to allow it to be released in Canada.

In Quebec, film making faced better 20 indigenous films were shown in the province's theatres between 1944 and 1953, from rural dramas made by the private firm Quebec Productions Corporation and directed by Paul Gary to Quebec playwright Gratien Gélinas's film of his own popular stage play, Tit-Cat, which won Canadian Film of the Year honours in 1953. A kind of film making called "cinema direct," which used hand-held cameras and small crews, flourished in Quebec in the late 1950s and early 1960s and sowed the seeds for films such as A Tout Prendre, Pour la nie du monde and others that explored the Quebecois sense of self.

For English Canada, kindling for a film boom was provided by Expo 67 and the wealth of sponsored and government films. Canada's Centennial four was packed with such movies as the NFB's Labyrinth, a

Film maker Chris Chapman spent a year at a cottage on Lake Simcoe, Ont., filming The Seasons, which was named Film of the Year at the 1954 Canadian Film Awards.
multiscreen film presentation focusing on the seven ages of man and inspired by the literary critic Northrop Frye, and Vincent Vaintsikouma's Motion, which chronicled different kinds of movement from that of a clock pendulum to a parachute jump. There were so many sponsored films at Expo '67 - many of them Canadian-made - that you could watch films for the entire length of the fair and still not be able to see all of them. Expo had ignited the Canadian film industry. In the 1970s it would explode, thanks in part to greater government support through tax incentives and the Canadian Film Development Corporation, which was established in 1967 to provide film loans.

Sponsored films had, by this time, done their job, helping to develop Canadian audiences and film-makers and providing a means for the latter to use their talents in their own country. In the early 1960s, Monroe Scott, an Ontario native, was studying playwriting for his master's degree in dramatic arts at Cornell University in New York State, hoping to return to Canada to work in either theatre or film. One day The Loon's Necklace was screened to a very receptive student audience, and Scott saw something more important to him than the film's subject matter or indeed its Imperial sponsorship. The credits indicated that the film was made by Crawley Films, Ottawa, Canada: "A film company in Ottawa," Scott marveled.

He realized then that it might be possible for him to contribute his talents to his native land. Scott went on to a distinguished career, working for Crawley Films and for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation on such projects as The Tent, D'Arcy centenary series and filmed memoirs of former prime ministers John G. Diefenbaker and Lester B. Pearson. He remains a firm fan of sponsored films as an artistic medium. "They were a phenomenon, they played a major role in launching our film industry," said Scott from his home in Penelton Falls, Ont., this summer. "Imperial's films made a remarkable contribution. The company kept a very low profile - you wouldn't find a company push in the film at all. It was sheer Canadianism.

Imperial continued to sponsor purely cultural films such as Judy Crawley's The Legend of the Raven, in which soapstone carvings were used to illustrate an Inuit legend about a greedy raven who is banished from the society of all humans and bears. The film was named Best Arts and Experimental Film at the 1958 Canadian Film Awards.

Imperial also sponsored films that illustrated and expounded upon aspects of the oil industry. In 1949, for example, it produced A Mile Below the West, a highly acclaimed film in which Gerry Moses flexed his photographic talents to explain how Imperial's history-making discovery of oil at Leduc, Alta., affected the community and farms around it. And then came Underground East, which documented the building of the world's longest crude oil pipeline from the Alberta oilfields to Ontario, and Emotionally Yours, which employed the talents of the British cartoonist Ronald Searle to illustrate, tongue-in-cheek, the history of man's search for energy. Imperial also developed a lending library of films sponsored by both itself and other Canadian corporations. "An institution or club could just phone up and request a film," says Bill O'Farrell, who worked for Crawley Films for more than 40 years. "It was great."

By the 1970s, the sponsored film was largely a thing of the past. The area no longer showed such films prior to major features, and with the growing sophistication of television, people came less and less willing to gather in libraries or church halls for screenings of these films.

Imperial's last sponsored project was, in fact, a television series, The Newcomers, about immigrant life in early Canada. (The Newcomers was also published as a book.) Commissioned to mark Imperial's centenary in 1980, the series consists of seven hour-long episodes. People the likes of Timothy Findley and Alice Munro were commissioned to write the episodes, portraying the courage and determination of various groups of immigrants to Canada - the Scots, the French, the Irish, the Danes, the Ukrainians, the Italians - as well as its aboriginal peoples.

Stories are told of people such as John Symons, a Scottish fisherman who evaded prison in Scotland by coming to Canada, blistering his hands tilling farmland. Of an Italian store owner, Guido Vitelli, who watches his three sons return to Italy and wonders if he should follow. Of an Irishwoman, Mary Thompson, who escapes the potato famine and endures a dreadful journey to join her husband in Canada, only to find he has died and she must decide if she should marry a man she hardly knows. The filmed production was aired by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation beginning in November 1977, and was rebroadcast during Imperial's centenary in 1980.

The Newcomers was meant "to whisper a message in the national ear," wrote Donald Hammersmith in Wooland Magazine in 1977, and it succeeded. "The series leads you to the realization that immigrants are a special breed, probably tougher, more resilient, more adventurous than their friends and relations who stayed behind."

When the series was near completion, Jack Armstrong, then president and chief executive officer of Imperial, wrote: "For over a year and a half we have been working towards bringing together as many outstanding Canadian artists as possible. We want a great many people to contribute their talents to the development of [producers] Dick Nielsen and Pat Ferm's remarkable theme. We hope that

To mark its centenary in 1980, Imperial sponsored The Newcomers television series, which told the stories of groups of Canadian immigrants as well as native people

this contribution to social history through motion pictures will meet a need in the process of understanding ourselves and other leaders."

Imperial has now wound down its role as one of Canada's corporate movie moguls. The company that was an early supporter of the Canadian Film Centre (directed Norman Jewison's academy for Canadian film makers) and the Toronto International Film Festival has turned its philanthropic activities more towards education, and Canadian film now stands nicely, diversely and powerfully in its own.

Barbara Wade Rice's recent book Budge: What Happened to Canada's King of Film was released in November.
Calls of the Wild

For nearly a decade, Ian and Karen McAllister have devoted their lives to preserving the Great Bear Rainforest, one of the most remote and spectacular areas of the country.

BY SHAWN BLOBE

One late September morning in 1990, on the banks of a river more than 400 kilometres north of Vancouver, Ian McAllister broke in the boughs of a hemlock tree. The autumn sunshine hadn’t yet cleared the mountain tops, but already the eagle’s nest of coastal fog was dissipating, leaving behind a necklace of shimmering water beads streaming along the ropes of his hammock. Periodically, as one or another of those little jewels grew too large, gravity would overcome surface tension and the droplet would detach itself and fall, splashing into the ephemeral plant life on a lower bough with a soft plop.

That wasn’t what had woken him.

Down below in the estuary of the Kwey River (pronounced “Kwe-y”) the tide had gone out, exposing the broad gravel riverbed, leaving the migrating salmon heavy with eggs and sperm – to wriggle and flip through the shallow ripples on their journey to their spawning grounds in the deeper pools beyond.

The sound of this reproductive struggle was curiously muted, a liquid fluttering punctuated by an occasional splash.

That hadn’t woken him either. This was something louder, something bigger.

It was then that 500 kilograms or more of grizzly bear came galumphing down the estuary, its great paws sending up sprays of water and mud, its presence sending the salmon into even greater panic as a struggle for survival. To no avail. With a hack of the head and a slash of paw, the grizzly scooped up a chunk, bit it quickly through the spine and then, pausing for a moment to secure the fish upright between long black claws, crunched open the cranial cavity and.depthed out the juicy brain. Then the bear was off again, stomping across another nipple, baring at one fish, scooping up another without bothering to stop, just a chop and a backwords now and the grizzly was on its way again, looking for yet another meal.

In the year-long struggle for sustenance, the fall salmon run is a caloric urge for the grizzly, a last chance to build up layers of faturing fat for the long winter months ahead. This bear had likely been going through the night, following the remaining tide line and snatching up salmon on the way.

At that moment, in his perch by the estuary’s edge, 21-year-old Ian McAllister made himself a promise: he’d come back to the British Columbia rainforest.

Getting there ever once hadn’t been easy. Lying roughly between the Alaskan border and the north tip of Vancouver Island, British Columbia’s northern mainland coastline looks like nothing so much as a fractal-painting program gone mad. Passages lead to channels that open onto sounds that turn into estuaries that lead back to long, semicircular valleys scooped out of the rock by long-vanished glaciers. In all these thousands of kilometres of convoluted coastline, there are but two roads leading to the rest of the province. It’s one of the least accessible places in the country. And one of the most moving.

Charting the area in the summer of 1792, the English explorer George Vancouver at first tried to record the geography of the rainforest with something approaching objectivity. "The sides of the channel," he wrote on August 13, referring to Baker Channel, "were composed of compact, stupendous mountains, and nearly perpendicular, rocky cliffs, producing pine trees to a considerable height above the shores, then nearly barren to their lofty summits..."
which were mostly covered with snow." Very quickly, however, the greaterundra of the raincoat began to rear its head. Its deliberate and determined march is a masterpiece of nature. Words like "desolate" and "melancholy" began creeping into his log, intermittently at first, then with ever greater frequency.

By August 20— scant weeks after his arrival—Vancouver had turned tail and taken off southwards. The raincoat had exactly the opposite effect on Ian McAllister. Having visited it once, he found he couldn't stay away. That first stint in the fall of 1990 has turned into an odyssey, now in its eighth year. Along the way, the desire to see the pristine valleys of the coast has grown into a far grander mission. McAllister is now working to preserve the valleys and the creatures they contain. To do that, he will have to help fashion an economic transition from industrial logging to a more sustainable system of selective forestry, fishing and ecotourism. Not at all an easy task.

That he became involved with the raincoat in the first place was his father's fault, in a way. It was Peter McAllister who organized that first trip to the Kooeye River valley. A longtime conservationist and Scout Club director, he illustrated a three-masted schooner called the North Star and invited along some journalists, photographers, biologists and botanists. Ian, at the time, was planting trees in British Columbia's north country as a way of financing his studies at the University of Victoria. By stroke of luck, he returned for the full term just as the boat was getting set to depart, and somehow managed to squeeze himself aboard. Thus was one life changed.

"We set out from Port Hardy," recalls Ian, "and no one knew what we would find, but we were just smitten. Big sandy beaches, Swells rolling in. At low tide you could see wolf and bear tracks. There were bald eagles and salmon jumping everywhere." As they sailed back south, the conversation returned again and again to the same question: If all this was to be found in just one valley, what lay waiting in the others?

At the end of 1990, a subset of the Kooeye veterans got together to form a society—the Raincoat Conservation Society—dedicated to the exploration and conservation of the mainland coast. Ian and Peter were founding members. So was Ian's wife-to-be, Karen Schults.

An Alberta native, Karen (who now uses the surname McAllister), like Ian, was studying biology at the University of Victoria. She was also a tree planter, putting in 100 days or more of down-to-dirt labour in the bush in order to fund another year at university.

In the summer of 1991, in the small parcels of time between tree-planting contracts, Ian and Karen made their first visit foxy into the raincoat. One of the society's directors flew them there in his small airplane, a wing-mounted video camera rolling as they swooped along one valley or another. Then a friend told Ian of a boat for sale. It had been out of the water for several years. It was in storage way out in Ontario. It was cheap.

"He and Karen bought it—a little wooden trimaran called the Companion—sight unseen over the phone. The two then flew out to Ottawa and dropped it in the water. Since it didn't sink, they headed for the eastern seaboard, trying to make it south before the canals froze over. By the time they reached Panama, Ian had learnt to sail. By the time they hit Hawaii, Karen had mastered celestial navigation. They turned the Companion east and set sail for the raincoat.

Some distance off the north tip of Vancouver Island, the wind died. An impenetrable fog rolled in. Sailing was useless; navigation impossible. "I couldn't see a blasted thing," wrote Karen in her journal. "It didn't seem right that after sailing more than 2,000 nautical miles [3,700 kilometres], I wasn't even going to get the pleasure of witnessing my own landfall.

Then I made out the distinct fragrance of rainforest.

The smells were so familiar. I recognized the wonderful strange perfume of my favourite recipe: red cedar and salal tappled with a generous helping of skunk cabbage and a twist of sphagnum. We were home at long last."

After a quick stop at Port Hardy, the north end of Vancouver Island, they set sail northwards, stopping in at Barnett Beach on the mainland coast near Cape Caution. "It was the first beach I came to," says Karen, "so it was the most flabbergasting for me. I was just blown away to land on a beach that stretched for ever, to see wolf prints and bear prints and grey whales spouting out in the distance and not a human footprint.

Nor were tracks the only thing to discover, as the duo found out later in Ballock Channel, just a little farther north up the coast. "We arrived in early spring. We were travelling along the estuary and saw these darkumps on the beach, and I didn't really think anything about it," says Ian. "We kept on walking and rolled right into a wolf pack."

But it stumbling across a wolf pack was a pleasant surprise, stumbling across a grizzly was something else again, as Ian found out one day while lugging a canoe along a mushy path. "The canoe weighs 20 pounds [11 kilograms], and I have camera gear on," recalls Ian. "It's a grizzly bear trail, but I'm not really paying attention. Then I see a mother bear. She stands up by her cubs and gives that big exhalation that they do—grizzlies don't roar, they that's the only sound. They give a constant exhale. When you hear that, you know you're in trouble."

The bear changed. Ian threw himself face first into the mud, letting the canoe drop down over his back like a fibreglass toilet seat. I could hear her snorting and stomping around for a bit," he says, "and then she took off through the bush." The canoe may have saved his life.

Then again, it might not. The coastal rainforest has one of the highest concentrations of grizzlies in Canada. Serious grizzly attacks, however, are very rare indeed. The McAllisters have found that the bears either run or simply ignore them. After a while, both Ian and Karen began to develop the feeling that coastal bears can tell the difference between those people that pose a threat—like hunters—and those that are merely minding their own business.

Scientists who study coastal grizzlies have their reservations about this theory. They do agree, however, that coastal bears differ in significant ways from their cousins in the interior. Coastal bears tend to be larger and occur in greater densities. Studies carried out farther north, in Alaska, have shown that the situ- uation of the mainland coast support grizzly popula- uation densities of up to 10 times those found in the highlands. This richness is the result of the verdant growth of growing foods like Lysysh's edge and skunk cabbage, of the longer summer berry season and, espe- cially, of the fattening feast of salmon that arrives in the fall, just before the bears begin searching out a den in which to sleep away the long winter months.

Interestingly, as Professor Tom Reichen's of the University of Victoria is just starting to discover, bears are not merely the passive recipients of this windfall, but instead are active participants in their own good fortune.

A specialty in foraging ecology, Reichen's interest in bear's particular black bear—begins with an interest in salmon. To him, the yearly return of mature salmon represented an incredible gift of nutrients and energy, one whose effects on the ecosystem had never really been traced. To find out just what was becoming of all that biomass, Reichen stalked out a little salmon river in the rainforests of Haida Gwaii (the Queen Charlotte Islands), across Hecate Strait from the naincoat, and made a note of every salmon taken from the river.

"I discovered very quickly that bears are the major players in the ecosystem," says Reichen. "Each bear was actually taking 700 salmon into the forest, 75 per-
cent of which had spawned out." At these kilograms a chum, with up to eight beans working the river, it added up to about 1,600 kilograms of fish per bear over the 40 days of his study. And as Reinchen discovered walking the kilometre and a half of riverbank each day, bears only eat about half of each fish, meaning that some 800 kilograms of salmon per bear was being made available to the rest of the ecosystem.

As he plotted the spatial distribution of salmon carcasses, Reinchen made another discovery. The beans discarded some 80 percent of the salmon with in five metres of the riverbank, precisely the same region where the biggest bears are found. He believes that far from being a coincidence, the one fact follows directly from the other. "This is a nitrogen-limited ecosystem," says Reinchen. "The amount of nitrogen coming in from salmon is about 120 kilograms per hectare. The amount the forestry department uses when they're fertilizing trees for maximum growth is 100 to 200 kilograms per hectare."

The salmon, then, are providing sustenance not just to the bears, but also to the trees. In return, the trees foster optimal habitat for salmon. It's what the B.C. bear biologist Wayne McCroty calls "the coastal trinity of big bears, big trees and big salmon." The valleys of the rainforest, says McCroty, are among the last places on earth where the system still functions. Keeping it intact means preserving all three elements of the system - the trees, the fish and, of course, the beans.

**CRUIZIES ON THE RAINCRAFT GENERALLY SPEND THE FIRST WEEK OF THE Rensitive few hours of state and growth, the trees and trees where the grizzlies quickly hibernated with a thick white insulating blanket.**

The McAlisters, at this time of year, work on raising awareness of the coastal rainforest. In early 1992 they started putting on slide shows, first in Victoria and Vancouver and then further afield, in places like Seattle and San Francisco. The format was fairly simple. Ian showed slides of the area and related some of his adventures, then explained what was special about the rainforest and why it was worth preserving. Getting people excited about the area wasn't difficult, he found. However, giving a name to it was.

On maps, the area is variously called the mid-coast, the northern mainland coast and the mid-coast timber supply area. It was in preparation for one of these winter meetings that Ian decided to give the area one more name, one that he hoped would subsume the others: the Great Bear Rainforest.

In the summertime, when the Aleutian low retreats back to Siberia and the rain eases up as much as it ever does on the rainforest, the McAlisters dig out their equipment and head north. Ian and Karen now devote all their time to the task of preserving the rainforest, living on Ian's small salary from the Rainforest Conservation Society and the money he makes from nature photography. Having come to know the people and the settlers of the coast - places like Klemtu and Kitimat and the big coastal city of Prince Rupert - Ian has become convinced that any plan to preserve the rainforest will have to find an accommodation with the needs of those already living there. The solution, he believes, lies in nonintrusive methods of wealth extraction, including selective logging, value-added manufacturing and expanded ecotourism. Making that transition, he feels, will be difficult but doable.

For its part, Rainforest Conservation - with the help of grants from the Bulletin and the W. Alton Jones foundation and from the artist Robert Bateman - is now working on a comprehensive survey of the Kweye River inlet area, mapping the rainforest habitat of the salmon and grizzly. The organization plans to extend the project to the entire Great Bear Rainforest from Knight Inlet to Alaska. That task, however, is the work of others within Rainforest Conservation. Ian's job is doing what he loves most: showing people what's special about the rainforest.

The bright yellow bulbs of skunk cabbage are just pushing their heads out of the squelchy red rainforest muck when Ian hikes up into the Johnstone Valley in early May 1998 with a group of visitors. He stops for a moment to point out a large, lone hunkdred standing by the edge of the trail. The bark has been scraped off along most of one side and sap is oozing slowly from the wood. Reaching up, he extracts a single crinkled grizzly hair and holds it up to the sunlight, where it shines with a soft silver color. "With a tree like this, the bears just love to get right up there and scratch and scratch," he says. "The scent gets right into the sap, and then every other bear in the valley knows who's been here. It's like a bear hotel registry."

"What are the odds of seeing a bear?" the nervous man from a BBC television news crew inquires. "There's still plenty sleepy this time of year," says Ian, explaining that the snow has just lifted off the higher elevations, where the bears like to sleep away the winter. "When they first come out of hibernation they usually stay higher up grazing on the south-facing slopes. And sometimes you do meet a bear at this time of year, but he'll be so grumpy he'll likely just stare at you and blink."

That same month, Ian and Karen moved up to the rainforest for good, settling into a little house they bought in the coastal village of Shearwater, about 500 kilometres north of Victoria. Once it's been fixed up, they plan on turning it into a kind of base camp for researchers interested in reaching the region. They will continue working for the preservation of the Great Bear Rainforest. And they both intend to carry on exploring. There's still so much to see.

It wasn't until the fall of 1996, after all, six years after setting out on their odyssey, that Ian and Karen finally reached the last valley on their list, Smokehouse Creek, about 50 kilometers southeast of the Kweye, where the journey began. About that same time, the pair found their first bear den. They had been following a bear trail up the steep sides of a valley. The trail led up hundreds of metres to a towering giant of a cedar tree.

It was Ian who noticed the den, a small dark opening at the base of the cedar's great trunk. Curious, they crawled in. Lying on their backs, Ian and Karen rubbed their shoulders into the roots and dry soil, smelling the mix of cedar and old bear. Ian reached up with his hands along the wood, varnished smooth by generations of grizzlies. Here and there his fingers touched tiny parallel grooves - scratch marks from a newborn bear cub trying out a brand-new set of claws.

It was the last piece of the ecosystem puzzle. Salmon feeds bear. Bear feeds tree. Tree provides a home for bear. They crawled back out into the autumn sunshine, and Ian looked down the forested slopes to where the Companion floated on the smooth waters of the inlet. Everything seemed to resolve itself into a sharp, clear focus: the trees, the salmon, the bears. And this magnificent place, where all three come together.
Jean Trickey

Social Activist

"The hero in me and the hero in you, that’s what I’m here to talk to you about tonight. There are times when things are so unfair. We feel sad and helpless. What do we do then? Well, the answer is, we do something. At the darkest possible moment, when we think there is no hope, we can make the choice to act. I did that and so can you. Just as there was a hero in me at age 15, there’s a hero in you, whether you’re seven or 60."

Jean Trickey is speaking to an audience of about 100 students and teachers in the cafeteria of D’Arcy McGee High School in Hull, Quebec.

A resident of Canada for the past 31 years, Trickey played a key role in the American civil rights movement. Just over 40 years ago, Trickey, known then as a teacher, decided to join in the struggle. If we don’t do it in history when she and other black youth in Arkansas—soon to be recognized around the globe as the Little Rock Nine—challenged southern resistance to school desegregation, enrolling in an all-white American high school. Today, Trickey, an Ottawa social worker, mother of six and grandmother of one, remains a committed and outspoken activist. Her causes include human rights, anti-racism, anti-violence and environmental protection.

Tall and statuesque, the 57-year-old Trickey is dressed simply but strikingly in black and red. Her gestures are large, and she likes to stride as she talks. Her bold presence charms her audience, but it’s her words that have her listeners riveted. As she speaks, people begin to share their experiences.

A young aboriginal man tells of the pressure he has felt to conform to white Canadian society. A senior citizen talks about her need to demonstrate against the international arms trade. A nine-year-old girl asks what she can do to help her cousin, who is of mixed race and the butt of racist name calling at school. Trickey tells the child that she is already doing something by speaking out. "It’s important to overcome the sense of isolation," she adds. "It doesn’t help anyone when we allow racism to be a big, dark secret. We need to open it up to discussion. That’s how change can begin."

It was a bright, sun-filled September day in 1957 when Trickey and the eight other black teenagers faced the wrath of thousands when they attempted to enter Central High School in Little Rock. Although the U.S. Supreme Court had outlawed school segregation in 1954, the southern states had been slow to respond to the legislation. Given the prevailing climate of fear, ignorance and racism, it was not surprising that there was widespread outrage among local segregationists when Virgil Blossom, Little Rock’s school superintendent, announced in 1957 that area schools would be slowly desegregated. Warned Orval Faubus, Arkansas’s governor at the time: "If Negro pupils should attempt to enter Central High School, blood will run in the streets."

On September 4, an angry mob (its efforts aided by the Arkansas National Guard, operating under orders from the governor) gathered to prevent the teenagers from entering Central High. The students made it into the school but by noon had fled amidst cries that they be burned. It was not until three weeks later, after President Dwight Eisenhower ordered more than 1,000 members of the 101st Airborne Division to Little Rock, that Trickey and the other black students gained access to their new school. Retelling these events to her audience in Ottawa four decades later, she comments, "What a tragedy it is that we had to be escorted by soldiers to go to school."

Although the first battle was won, the war continued. Each black student was assigned a personal guard from the 101st Airborne, and the soldiers did little to stop the continual harassment by some of the school’s militant white pupils.

Trickey found the decision particularly hard to cope with. In December, she gave way to her frustration and dumped a bowl of chili on a white student who, with three others, had been tarnishing her in the cafeteria. She was suspended for her action.

Two months later, she retaliated again. When a white student sat down on the head of a heavy-armed Trickey responded with the words, "White trash." The Little Rock school board expelled Trickey. Outraged at the injustice, a progressive private school in New York offered a scholarship. Trickey accepted and left Little Rock.

In the early 1960s, she became an undergraduate at the University of Southern Illinois, and it was there that she met her future husband, Roy Trickey, a graduate student in marine biology. Both were staunch opponents of the war in Vietnam and consequently moved to Canada in 1967. After a brief stay in Toronto, the Trickeys purchased property near New Liskeard, Ont., where they spent the next 25 years, farming the land and raising and home-schooling their growing family. In the early 1990s, after separating from her husband, Trickey moved to Ottawa, where she earned a master of social work degree from Carleton University. She continues to live in the nation’s capital today with her two youngest children, 18-year-old Spirit and 16-year-old Lelia.

According to Trickey, her experiences at Little Rock were seminal. "Everything I have done in my adult life is a natural progression of the ‘big bang’ that occurred when I was 15," she says. "My activism didn’t stop with Little Rock, it only began there."

Certainly, Trickey’s current interests and activities attest to an individual whose commitment to just causes is very much alive. She teaches social work at Carleton and counsels at Ottawa’s Tungasenguaat Inuit community centre. It’s a position she says, that suits both her education and her life experience. "Like black people, native people have also been the victims of social injustices over the years," she says.

Trickey also works diligently on a number of other fronts. She is a contributor to a recently published anti-racism training manual and regularly speaks to community groups and students at high schools as well as universities across Canada on issues ranging from anti-racism to empowerment.

"I especially love talking to young people," says Trickey. "I always like to look out on the fresh and beautiful faces. The openness of their expressions is, to me, a symbol of the Potentia of what we can all become."

Fittingly, "children" is the subject of the message Trickey leaves with her audience as she ends her talk at D’Arcy McGee High School. "For those of you who are not children, be mindful of the energy and vision that children have need a helping hand," she says. "Take the hand of a child and... show him or her the beauty and diversity of the world. Teach your children that life is all about giving and receiving and expanding. Teach them, too, that when one child is hurt, all children suffer. Tell them that we can right wrongs. If we do this, we will make the world a better place." — Shane McKay

16 Winter 1998

TRICKEE WALKED INTO HISTORY WHEN SHE AND EIGHT OTHER BLACK YOUNGSTERS—SOON TO BE RECOGNIZED AROUND THE GLOBE AS THE LITTLE ROCK NINE—CHALLENGED SOUTHERN RESISTANCE TO SCHOOL DESegREGATION, ENROLLING IN AN ALL-WHITE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL.
Made in Canada

Based on an ethic of openness and knowledge sharing, Responsible Care® is a Canadian program that's helping to improve the environmental and safety performance of chemical companies around the globe.

by Paul Miller

Quick, name four Canadian inventions that have had a major impact around the globe. Let's see. There's kerosene, invented by a physician named Abraham Gesner. There's basketball, invented by James Naismith. There's insulin, developed by Frederick Banting, Charles Best and James Collip. And there's Responsible Care, developed by the Canadian chemical industry.

Responsible Care is a program that the chemical industry has adopted to ensure that their operations are conducted in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. The program is based on the principles of openness, transparency, and accountability, and it is designed to help chemical companies improve their environmental and safety performance.

The Responsible Care program was launched in the late 1970s and is now adopted by the chemical industries in 42 countries around the globe. The program has been embraced by industry leaders, who recognize the importance of responsible chemical production in protecting the environment and public health.

Many chemical companies are improving their environmental and safety performance, and are now committed to maintaining a high standard of performance. The Responsible Care program has helped to establish a framework for continuous improvement and has contributed to the development of a culture of responsibility within the chemical industry.

The Responsible Care program is an important example of how the chemical industry can work together to address environmental and safety concerns. It is a testament to the commitment of chemical companies to ensure that their operations are conducted in a responsible manner, and it is an example of how the chemical industry can contribute to a sustainable future.
The text is not completely visible or legible due to the quality of the image. However, the title and some parts of the text are readable. It appears to be an article discussing various topics such as community awareness, emergency response, and waste management. The text mentions the impact of chemical industries on the environment and solutions being developed to address these issues.

The text also references a company named DuPont and its relationship with the Canadian Chemical Industry Association (CCIA). It discusses the difficulties in creating a comprehensive database of emergency response plans and the importance of community involvement in these efforts.

The text further addresses the issue of waste management, particularly hazardous waste, and its management through regulations and compliance.

Overall, the article seems to be a broad overview of environmental and safety issues related to industry and the measures being taken to address them.
Acadian Triumph

Canada's Acadians have overcome a history of oppression and today are enjoying an unprecedented confidence

BY HARRY BRUCE

BACK WHEN TRAINS CRIED FROM EVERY DIRECTION, it called itself the hub of the Maritimes. It can no longer claim that title, but in the summer of 1999, when it will host a major international gathering, Moncton, N.B., will be the hub of the entire French-speaking world. The city will welcome 52 leaders, representing millions of people, to a summit of all French-speaking (and partly French-speaking) nations. The purpose of the summit is to promote common values, peace, justice, security, solidarity, democracy and the respect of human rights. From Asia, Africa and Europe, from islands in the Caribbean Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, close to 2,000 dignitaries, officials and journalists will descend on Moncton to attend the summit.

Since they began in 1986, these summits have been held in many cities, including Paris and Quebec, but never in one as small as Moncton, where only a third of the 115,000 residents call French their mother tongue. So, how did such a place land the world's most important gathering of French-speaking leaders?

The answer lies in the near miraculous rise of the Acadians to prominence in the political, business and cultural life of New Brunswick. Descendants of settlers who came from France during the 17th century to make their homes in the Maritimes, Acadians make up the overwhelming majority of the 280,000 Maritimers whose first language is French. (Most of these French-speaking Maritimers, about 240,000, live in New Brunswick.) Acadians have faced adversity and oppression because of their Catholic religion and their language. Their story, however, is one of triumph. Léopold Bellefleur, former mayor of Moncton, is a symbol of this triumph. An earnest, talkative man, he was Moncton's first Acadian mayor, a position he held for nine years, beginning in 1989. Today, Bellefleur says, Acadians are widely respected by New Brunswick's English-speaking community, but he recalls the days when this wasn't the case. As a child during the 1930s and '40s, he remembers feeling so humiliated by his own French tongue when he went shopping downtown with his mother that he would only whisper to her. For much of the 20th century and before, he says, Acadians were seen as secondclass citizens, forced to send their children to inferior schools, barred from many jobs and refused bank loans for their businesses. Even as recently as the early 1980s, says Gérard LeBlanc, an Acadian poet, Bellefleur's election would have been impossible. "On the night Léopold Bellefleur was first elected, I was completely overcome. His ascendency to the mayorship, though, was only one of the many signs that Moncton's francophones and anglophones were joining hands as never before."

IT WAS 1604 WHEN THE FIRST SETTLELERS FROM FRANCE arrived in the region of the Maritimes known as Acadia, which then included parts of current-day Nova Scotia and New Brunswick as well as Prince Edward Island, and was initially governed by France. By 1713, when the British took over, there were about 2,000 Acadians in the region. Most lived in what is now Nova Scotia at the mouth of the La Have River on the south shore and in the communities of Port Royal on the Annapolis Basin, Grand Pré on Minas Basin, and Beaubassin (now Amherst), now today's New Brunswick border. Just about everyone in an Acadian village was related in one way or another and had kin in other settlements as well. Blood ties created a network of support, the more fortunate rescuing the victims of natural disaster or warfare. No one recognized Acadians as a nation, yet it had a kind of national solidarity, and its system of family organization helped it cling to a countryside that great powers coveted for more than a century. The Acadians had cattle, sheep, hogs, fish, grain, vegetables, orchards, maple sugar and plenty of firewood. Hunting provided meat and hides for both clothing and trade. Defying the orders of France, Acadians bartered their furs and grain for Boston's clothes, tools, dishes and rum. By the time the British took over, they had come to love their land more than they loved France or hated England.

In 1755, when mainland Nova Scotia had been under British rule for 42 years, about 13,000 Acadians lived there. With war between Britain and France breaking out, they were seen as a potentially overwhelming threat by the colony's lieutenant-governor, Colonel Charles Lawrence. Reportedly they had been asked to swear an oath of allegiance to Britain. But since the Acadians had the right to kill anyone, especially French-speaking Catholics like themselves or France's Micmac allies, they stubbornly refused to take the oath, which would obligate them to bear arms for the king of England. Eventually, wrote the historian Donald Creighton, the lieutenant-governor "collected the armed and bewildered people and shipped them off to the other English possessions," including Massachusetts, the Carolinas and Delaware. Many were also sent to England and France.

By 1763, the British had deported 10,000 French-speaking Acadians, men and children — many of whose families had been in the region for more than a century. Hundreds of others fled into the forests, where some lived in hiding for years, while others either starved to death or were captured by the Redcoats. Many of those deported lost their lives in shipwrecks or died of smallpox and other infectious diseases, which spread rapidly in the 80th, overcrowded vessel. The survivors often endured violent anti-Catholicism in the British colonies to which they were sent. Miserable and stateless, some sought more congenial localities and found their way to the West Indies, South America and even the Falkland Islands, where there were French settlements. Some resettled in France but yearned for the freedom of North America and eventually joined exiled relatives who established themselves in Louisiana.

After the end of the Seven Years War between Britain and France, Acadians began to trickle back to the Maritimes. The first farms they had once owned, however, had been taken over by British subjects (mostly New Englanders), leaving the Acadians no choice but to settle on inferior land, much of it control. But at least they were back in the part of the world they loved best.

Acadians still call the expulsion "le grand drageon," or "the great blowup," and the place they once called home "la belle Acadie," or "the beautiful Acadia." "On the right Léopold Bellefleur was first elected, I was completely overcome. His ascendency to the mayorship, though, was one of the many signs that Moncton's francophones and anglophones were joining hands as never before."

"On the right Léopold Bellefleur was first elected, I was completely overcome. His ascendency to the mayorship, though, was one of the many signs that Moncton's francophones and anglophones were joining hands as never before."
"The Université de Moncton has changed this city totally."

The number one hero in dragging the dark times the Acadians endured was Louis Robichaud. A senator since 1973, Robichaud was the only Acadian ever elected premier of New Brunswick. In 1960, at 34, he led the Liberals to an upset victory, and during the next 10 years, his government imposed revolutionary changes on the province. It passed its own Official Languages Act to put French and English on equal footing in the province, increased the number of Acadians in the civil service, established the first French public school system that was equal to the one English-speaking children enjoyed, and in 1963 created the Université de Moncton, which is North America's largest French-language university outside Quebec and the only one in a city with an English-speaking majority.

By 1969, the university had become a home of a multilingual community. The issue that perhaps aroused the most action from the students— as well as from other Acadians in Moncton— was Mayor Leonard Jones’s English-only policy at city hall. Jones was regarded by some as being so unfair regarding the mother tongue of a large number of Moncton residents that, in the memory of many Acadians, he did more than anyone else to unite them. “This chap was the ideal villain,” the writer Robert Pitchette remembers. “He was straight out of central casting.”

Claude Savoie was among the leaders of a student delegation that marched on city hall in 1968 to ask for the implementation of the recommendations of the federal Royal Commission on bilingualism and biculturalism. Jones’s less-than-accommodating response prompted two students to leave a pig’s head on his doorstep. In the 30 years since, Savoie, now president of Acadian Construction Ltd. and owner of so many properties in Greater Moncton that some call him “the king of Main Street,” has become a luminary of the Acadian business class that sprang from the university and continues to provide a tremendous amount of support and leadership to the institution. (Consultants advised the university that it would be tricky to collect $9.7 million during its most recent fund-raising drive, but with Savoie at the helm, the campaign raised $19 million.)

Another highly successful business person who was a militant Acadian nationalist in his student days is Denis Losier. In 1971, when Assumption Life began building Assurance Place in downtown Moncton, Losier was among the hundreds of noisy young Acadians who gathered at the construction site to defend their language. Assumption Life was the supreme Acadian business institution. Its president and chief executive officer was Gilbert Tierce, a future president of the Université de Moncton and lieutenant-governor of New Brunswick, and the many still see as “the godfather” of the Acadian business community in the province. Assurance Place, on Main Street, in the heart of the city, would house not only the insurance company’s office tower and the biggest hotel in town, the Beaujolais, but also city hall. Acadians, in short, would build and own city hall, but city hall would not serve them in their own language. That’s why Losier and so many others raised a ruckus at the construction site. “To see the way Acadians were treated back then— with all we were bringing to the city,” he says. “We just said, ‘Enough is enough.’”

Mayor Jones and his council were so far as to have an English-only crest hung over the outside doors of city hall. This violated the city’s lease with Assurance Place, which required all signs placed on the building to be bilingual. Recall this time: “We gave them until four o’clock in the afternoon to take it down.” Down it came. Up went a bilingual crest.

“That was important to us,” Tierce says. “Either we Acadians would be accepted as partners in the city or we’d be walked over once again.”

More than a quarter century after the construction of Assurance Place, the president and chief executive officer of Assumption Life is none other than Denis Losier. In his office, 18 floors above the spot where he once participated in street demonstrations, he reflects on the significance of the complex. “In Moncton, there was nothing, and there’s still nothing, quite like this building. Its construction was a turning point in that English-speaking business people started to say, ‘Well, you know, that Acadian community has achieved some success. They’re investing some of their money in this city. Let’s start understanding what they can do and working together.’”

But no institution did more to inspire New Brunswick’s Acadian renaissance than the Université de Moncton. It is a major reason why, according to quarterly polls by Corporate Research Associates, Moncton consistently ranks itself as the most confident city in the Maritimes. By attracting academics and students, with all their need for supplies, the university bolstered the economy of southeastern New Brunswick, and more importantly, it created an...
"Every year, Assumption Life has this big do... Every year, I'd use the same Acadianus theme. But after Denis Loisel took over, I noticed a lot of English-speaking people in the crowd... Loisel said. "We can't grow just within the Acadian community."

"Culturally, Acadia is shining both at home and abroad, especially not only such famous artists as the novelist Antonine Maillet, winner of France’s Prix Goncourt for her novel Pilgrimage in 1979, folk singer Edith Butler, pop-singer opposite Rock Voisin and globetrotting soprano Rosemarie Landry, but also a slew of lesser-known poets, short-story writers, filmakers, playwrights, actors, painters, printmakers, millers, guitarists and rock-performers," Mario Théroux, a vice-president of GCP Strategic Communications, says that a generation ago it was considered "a minor miracle" if Acadia simply managed to have a book published or song recorded. "But today we have natural. Now Acadia artists are not satisfied with having their work produced. They want their work, be it, to reach a broad audience."

"The work of Serge Patrie Thibeault, a Montreal-based Acadian poet, will certainly reach a broad audience. In 1996, he won the Governor General's Award for poetry in French. It did not escape the notice of those who are proud of Acadia achievement that the man who gave it to him, Governor General Roméo LeBlanc, was himself an Acadian from Memramcook."

The Acadian renaissance has also had the effect of drawing people back to their Acadian heritage. Janice Goguen, a communications director for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency in Moncton, grew up in an Acadian family that had become assimilated into the English-speaking community. English had become the first language of the home and Goguen and her siblings went to English schools. And those of her siblings who had children raised them in English. Janice, however, was born 11 years after the youngest of her siblings. "By the time I was a teenager," she says, "the renaissance acadia had really taken hold. We had the university, the growth of the francophone media and francophone schools. The Acadian movement was strong and you really wanted to be a part of it."

"So I became aware of the duality of cultures within my own family. Why was it that the family had lost touch with its Acadian roots in less than two generations? But a strong sense of belonging to the Acadian culture was developing in me, and I decided that when I had children I would raise them in French. My family thought this was just a passing phase, but it wasn't. It was something I believed in. I know other people of my age who went through the same thing. Today, I am pleased to say, I have three children whose first language is French."

As Monique LeBlanc says, "At the Acadian Connection, our film on the gigantic LeBlanc clan, "Acadians are here to stay, and the world is going to see us." The film ends at the LeBlanc family reunion during the first World Acadian Congress, which was held in 19
New Brunswick communities during August 1994. Fifty thousand Acadians from across Canada, France, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Maryland, Louisiana, Texas, and California showed up in southeastern New Brunswick to revel in the picnics, concerts and some 20 family reunions. Although not Acadian, Prime Minister Jean Chretien and then United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros- Ghali were among those who enjoyed the celebrations.

The unexpectedly huge crowd delighted organizers (5,000 LeBlancs and LeBlancs attended one family reunion). As the 10-day event opened, the first several thousand Cajuns arrived in Moncton from Lafayette, Louisiana (in the American South). "Acadian has long since become "Cajun". The pounding rhythms of Cajun zydeco music and the roaring, driving beat of Moncton's enormously popular folk-rock band 1755 filled the summer air. So did the aromas of Cajun dishes such as chicken festo (soup), tourtiere (meat pie) and po'boy rice (a pork and potato con- coction), and Cajun jambalaya, gumbo, crawfish and alligator meat smothered in spicy sauce.

There are some 700,000 Cajuns in Louisiana. In 1992, the New Brunswick journalist Jon Everett reported that the Cajun part of Louisiana, known as Acadia, was like "a bona-fide, booming-hot Maritime province... Everywhere in Acadia, you see faces of people who remind you of those you've known all your life back home." Professor Carl Brasseur, a specialist in Cajun history at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, was born and raised in the state. "But he looks like someone from Gambelton or Bouchacou," wrote Everett.

In Lafayette, the Cajun cultural capital of Loui- siana, Girard LeBlanc notes, "You see the same faces as here. Even the same gestures!"

Mark Robichaux, a reporter, flew from New York to Moncton for the congress and later wrote in the Wall Street Journal, "To my amazement, nearly 1,000 other Robichauds came too... We Robichauds met in an empty hockey arena. Amid the strains of Acadian songs played by a worn violin, Robichauds from Belle Chase, La., and Boston, Mass., reminisced with Robichauds from Que- bec and Vietnamese. I met dozens of distant coun- terparts, but I froze when I laid eyes on Father Donat Robichaud, a local priest. As he introduced himself, I could only stare at the uncanny resemblance to my Uncle Gerald in Louisiana:" This instant recog- nition of total strangers occurred countless times at the congress. "That congress was a beautiful celebration, just beautiful, and it did a lot to build our pride," recalls Fernand Landry, a former vice-president of the Universite de Moncton and executive secretary of the 1993 summit of la francophonie. "The international recognition of our vitality and existence that will result from the summit will build our pride for further. We've come a very long way in 25 years."

DURING GEOGRAPHY AWARENESS WEEK in May, the Geography class at the university received a gift, a copy of Geography General Roméo LeBlanc's Millennium Editions of the official map of Canada. It is a bold, bright map of the country as it will look entering the new millennium. What immediately catches my eye is the huge new territory of Nainasiotz, which will be officially published on April 1, 1999, and will constitute 20 percent of the coun-try. On Banks Island in the Far North is the new national park, Aulac, identified for the first time, as are Canada's 12 World Heritage Sites, including Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump Provincial Historic Site in southwestern Alberta, the Historic District of Quebec City and Old Town Lunenburg in Nova Scotia. As well, there are glaciers and ice- fields, expressways, rail lines, airports and major airports. But what strikes me most about the map is its focus: I don't find myself looking from our southern border northward, but rather on to the entire country from above. Hudson Bay domi- nates the centre of the map, and it is clear that Canada is a northern country that's almost as tall as it is wide. "Look how close we are to the North Pole," said one grade 5 student on first seeing the map.

Jeanne Freppier, a geographer with Natural Resources Canada, led the team that developed the new map. "We didn't set out to make a map to send to schools," admits Freppier, whose division produces a vast variety of official maps and atlases. "Just January, while we were preparing a new relief map of Canada, we heard that the Governor General was looking for a good, up-to-date map to hang in his official res- idence." Freppier and her group thought that, with a few address maps, the map they were working on would be ideal and pre- sented a special copy to Roméo LeBlanc, says Freppier. "He thought it was beauti- ful and said, 'Wouldn't it be nice if all classrooms in Canada could have one?'"

In the spring, Freppier happened to be meeting with members of the staff of Canadian Geographic magazine and men- tioned the Governor General's idea. Such a project, everyone agreed, would be a major undertaking - maps would need to be supplied to schools (grades 5 and up) in the more than 16,000 schools across Canada. But, says Freppier, they thought it was a good idea and said, 'Let's see if we can find a corporate sponsor.'" And that's where Imperial Oil enters the story.

IT WAS ABOUT 6:00 P.M. ON JUNE 29 when Barbara Heydey received a call on her cel- lular phone. Heydey, president of the Imperial Oil Charitable Foundation, had just left a reception for a team of young mathematicians who would represent Canada at the International Mathematical Olympiad in Taipei and was on her way across Toronto to a focus group meeting on education. The voice on the phone was that of Lorri Swinson, Imperial's contri- butions administrator. "I got a call regard- ing the request for us to sponsor the dis- tribution of the Governor General's map to classrooms," she said. "If we're going to go ahead with this, we need to provide a letter of intent today."

"Making the decision to sponsor the project wasn't hard," says Heydey, who receives nearly 12,000 requests for fund- ing each year. In fact, she had been struck by the worthiness of the project from first seeing the proposal the previous week. "The focus of our charitable giving is youth and education, and we really felt that this was a very valuable project - it's so important that schools have good tools with which to teach children."

Heydey says she is aware that some teachers are apprehensive about corpo- rate involvement in the classroom. "Some are concerned that companies might market to children or try to intro- duce them to curriculum," she explains. "I do think it's vital that corporations be sensitive to these concerns and con- tribute in appropriate ways, but the real- ity is that these days there are things - like this map, perhaps - that wouldn't be pos- sible without help from corporations."

Ken Henderson's grade 7 and 8 stu- dents were thrilled when they read the let- ter announcing that they would be receiv- ing the map that has been called a "technical masterpiece." "My students thought it was neat that the Governor General was taking an interest in them," says Henderson, who teaches social science and music at Truro Junior High in Nova Scotia. "We put the letter on our bulletin board." Henderson believes the map will be an excellent resource for classrooms. "There are many maps of Canada around," he says, "but you'd be surprised how many classrooms don't have one. And the ones that do exist certainly aren't as current as this one. Kids are going to see how this country is changing. And they are going to take an interest in the map because it's new and visually exciting."

LOOKING AT THE MAP, I AM REMINDED OF something I already know: the vast major- ity of this country is untouched. This course the land will take is very much in the hands of our children, and so it seems fitting that they should be the recipients of what Esri D'Arcy, a former publisher of Canadian Geographic (and the person responsible for putting the project together), has termed a "unique gift to all Cana- dian schoolchildren on the eve of the mil- lennium. I hope it will inspire dreams that will play a part in shaping a fine future for Canada." - Salmi Lowley

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