

Crazy Canadian Trivia 2

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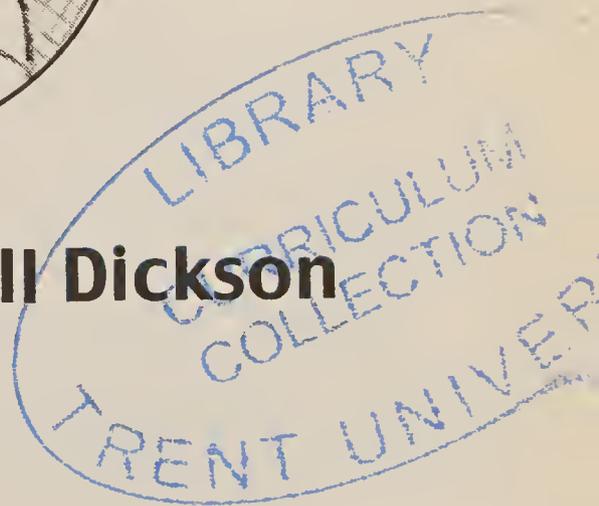
**Crazy
Canadian
Trivia 2**

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Pat Hancock

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*To Owen and Leah, whose safe arrivals distracted me
from things trivial by introducing me to the unimagined
joy of grandmotherhood.*



Introduction

Even though the title of this book is *Crazy Canadian Trivia 2*, the people you'll meet here, and the things they did, aren't crazy — at least, not most of them. But some of them are pretty wild and wacky, and all of them are really interesting, at least in my opinion. That's why I can't resist filling up my trivia files with clippings about them and about all sorts of neat facts about Canada. Here's hoping you have as much fun reading about them as I do . . .

Pat Hancock

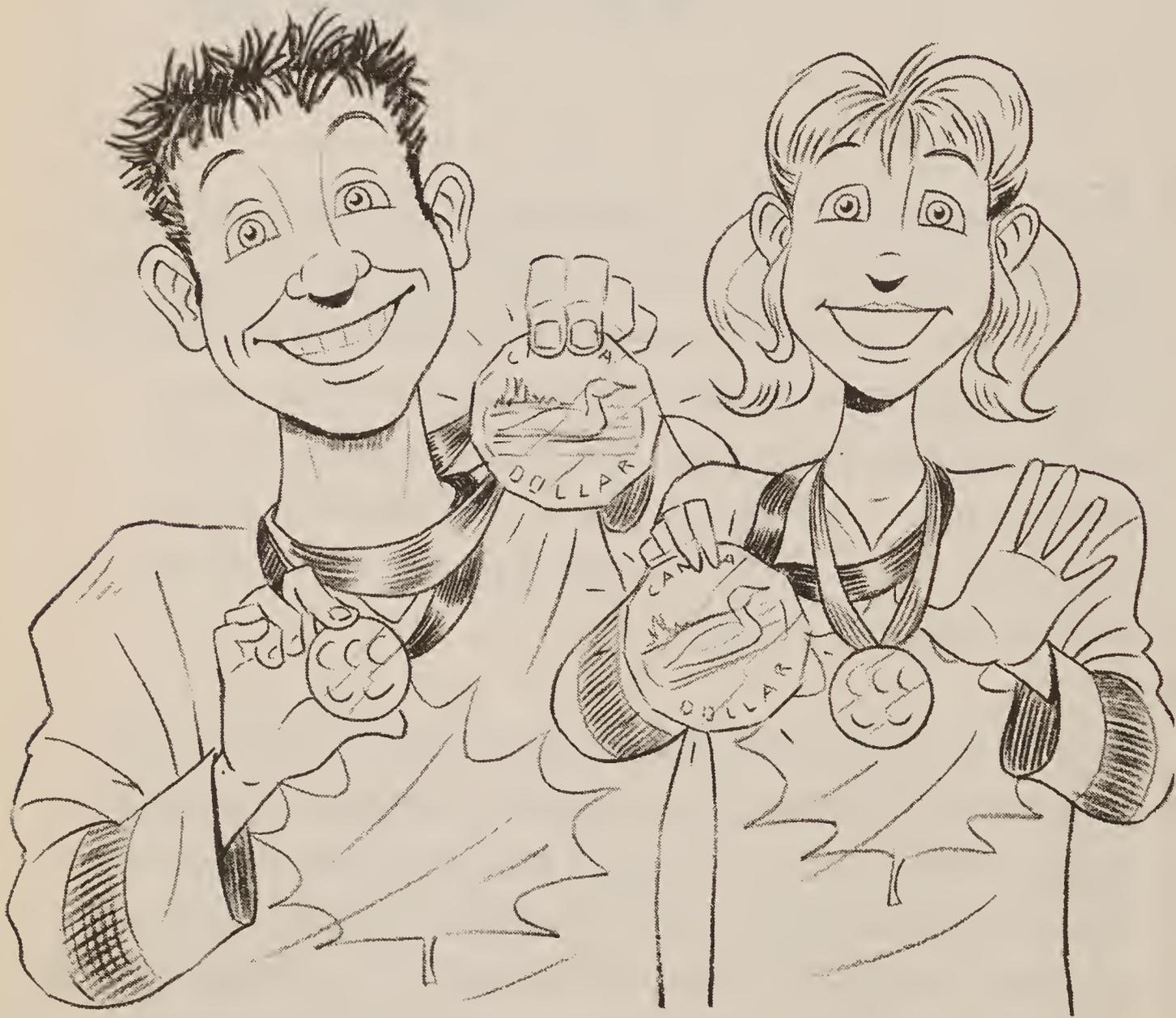


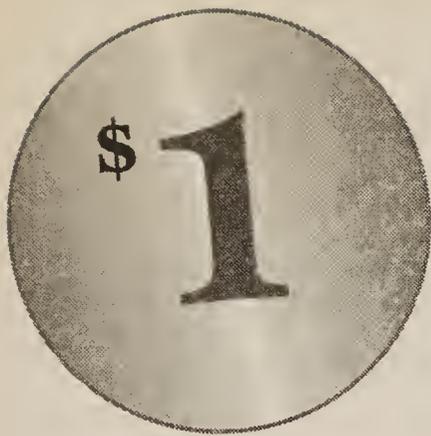
A Lucky Loonie Legend Is Born

Two days after the Canadian women's hockey team won the gold medal at the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt-Lake City, Utah, the men's team did the same. After that game Wayne Gretzky, the team's director, revealed what he thought had been Canada's secret weapon in the tournament — a Canadian loonie coin that Edmonton ice maker Trent Evans had secretly buried at centre ice several days earlier.

That lucky loonie ended up in the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto. One year later another lucky loonie went on display there. Before the gold medal game at the 2003 World Championships held in Helsinki, Sweden, the loonie had been hidden in the padding under the crossbar of the Swedish team's net. Canada won that game in overtime, and the legend of the lucky loonie lived on!

The loonie was in full view when Canada won silver at the World Junior Hockey Championships in Helsinki in January of 2004. That time it was proudly painted on Canadian goalie Marc-André Fleury's mask as part of the mask's contest-winning design. (The design was submitted by 18-year-old Tanner Klassen of Campbell River, British Columbia.)





Lucky Loonie Again

The loonie itself is lucky to "be alive." Back in 1986, plans were well underway to replace Canada's one-dollar bills with new gold-coloured coins. The new coins were to have a picture of canoe-paddling voyageurs, very similar to the scene depicted on the 1935 silver dollar. In November the master dies — the engraved metal designs that would be used to stamp out the coins — were couriered from Ottawa to the mint in Winnipeg. But, mysteriously, they were lost in transit. Afraid that criminals had stolen them to make counterfeit money, officials chose a brand new design, and the new coins featuring a picture of a loon were introduced in June, 1987. But if the voyageur dies had made it safely to Winnipeg, there would never have been a lucky loonie. And who knows what the new two-dollar coins introduced in 1996 would have been nicknamed!

What's that, eh?

Loonie bin is the nickname Canadians came up with for a piggy bank after the one-dollar coins replaced dollar bills in 1987.

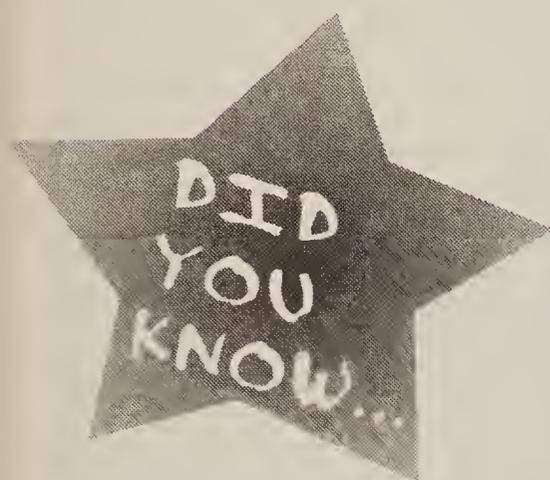


Oh, Borealia, Our Home and Native Land???

How does that sound to you? Does "Oh, Colonia" catch your fancy? Maybe you'd prefer "Transatlantia" or "Britannia"?

These were five of the many suggested names for the new country as plans for Canada's Confederation got underway in the 1860s. Victorialand was also proposed, in honour of Queen Victoria, as was Albertsland, in honour of her husband.

One can understand why Hochelaga and Superior might have been suggested, but why Efigsa or Tuponia? Well, look at the first letters of England, France, Ireland, Scotland, Germany and Aboriginal, and you'll see where the idea for Efigsa came from. Take the first letters of The United Provinces of North America and you get Tuponia, with the "i" tossed in to make it sound more country-like. And if cooler heads had not prevailed, two other suggestions could have led to Canadians having to introduce themselves as Norlanders or Cabotians.



... that documents in the national library in Beijing, China, support claims by some experts that Chinese Buddhist monks visited what's now British Columbia hundreds of years before European explorers arrived there? The writings of a monk named Hwei Shin describe his incredible voyages of exploration, including references to stopping along what might have been the B.C. coast way back in 449.

Just the Stats

On average, Canadians eat 4.4 kilograms of chocolate, in many different shapes and forms, annually. Kit Kats topped the list of favourite chocolate bars in 2003, with Reese's Peanut Butter Cups coming in a close second.

Just the Stats

Vancouver's Capilano suspension bridge is the longest and highest pedestrian suspension bridge in the world. The footbridge stretches 137 metres across the Capilano River canyon and sways 70 metres above it. Crossing it can be a dizzying experience. Some walkers get so nervous they have to turn back part way across.



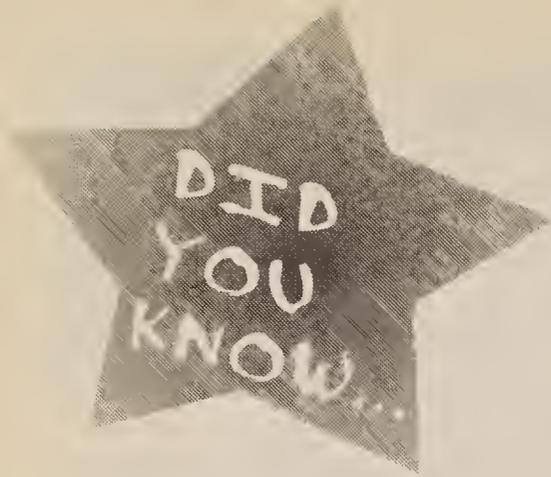
Prince of the Air



Walking across the Capilano suspension bridge would be a piece of cake for Jay Cochrane, who was born in New Brunswick and grew up in Sudbury, Ontario. He has walked across wires strung high above the ground, and he's been blindfolded when he's done it.

Cochrane is one of the world's greatest funambulists, or tightrope walkers, and he holds several records to prove it. In 1972, he walked a record-setting 4.02 kilometres, travelling back and forth more than 36 metres in the air along a 91.4-metre-long wire stretched between two buildings at the Canadian National Exhibition grounds in Toronto. Thirty-two years later, the 59-year-old was back at the CNE, balancing 20 storeys above the ground as he walked back and forth along a 250-metre-long cable no thicker than his finger.

Cochrane is hugely popular in China, where he managed to accomplish an astonishing funambulism feat. In 1995 he tightrope-walked nearly two-thirds of a kilometre across the Yangtze River, about half a kilometre above the gorge.



... that Concord Confections in Vaughan, just north of Toronto, is the only company in the world that makes Dubble Bubble bubble gum? The Canadian candy maker has been mixing up and squeezing out tonnes of the popular treat ever since 1998, when it bought Fleeer, the company that first came up with the winning formula for Dubble Bubble in 1928.

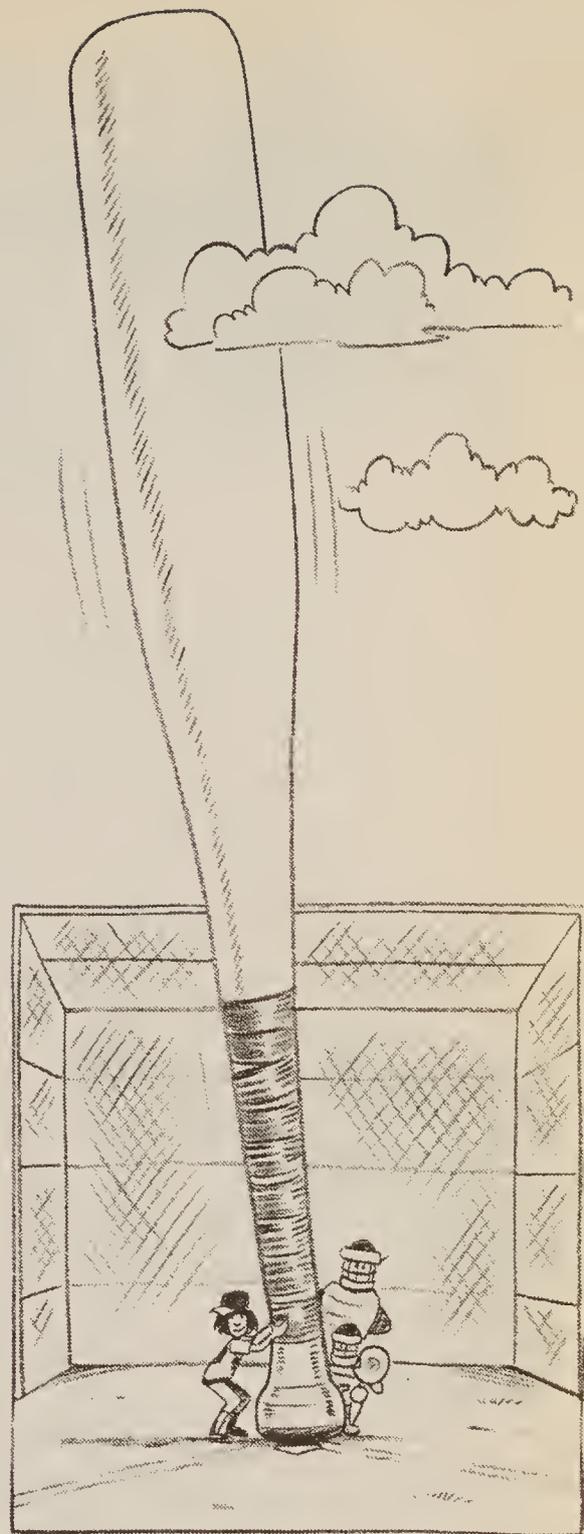


BIG BITE

If you're looking for a giant energy boost, you could always try to take a bite out of the world's largest perogy, located in Glendon, Alberta. Stabbed through by a huge fork, the massive fibreglass-and-steel dumpling is more than 8 metres high and almost 4 metres wide.

Record-Breaking Bat

Canada's biggest baseball bat towers above the corner of 97th Avenue and 118th Avenue in Edmonton, Alberta. At nearly 16 metres long, this aluminum statue hits a home run in the "biggest tourist attractions" game.



Carry a Big Stick

Duncan, British Columbia, is home to the world's biggest hockey stick and puck. The wood-and-steel stick weighs more than 28 100 kilograms and is 62.5 metres long.

DID
YOU
KNOW...

... that a Canadian holds the world record for throwing a baseball the farthest? Glen Gorbous of Drumheller, Alberta, was a right-armed pitcher who played in the major leagues from 1955–1957. On August 1, 1957, when he was pitching for the Philadelphia Phillies, Gorbous threw a baseball an amazing 135.9 metres!

Just
the
Stats

The cat that holds the world record for having the most toes was a Canadian. In September, 2002, the Contant family of Bonfield, Ontario, presented their orange tabby, Jake, for an official Guinness World Record check-up. Sure enough, Jake's 28 toes — 7 on each paw — guaranteed him a place in the record books. The previous record holder, a New York cat named Mickey, had just 27 toes. Most cats have 18 — 5 on each front paw, and 4 each on the back ones.

Batter Up at the North Pole

Captain O.C.S. Robertson was one of Canada's finest sailors. In 1954 he was the first commanding officer aboard the Canadian navy icebreaker *HMCS Labrador* when it became the first ship ever to sail completely around North America in just one voyage. With plenty of experience sailing through Arctic waters, he was hired by the American navy in 1960 as an ice pilot on the *USS Seadragon* to guide the nuclear submarine through its undersea crossing of the Northwest Passage.

When the submarine surfaced near the North Pole, Robertson decided the sailors needed a break from their cramped quarters, so he organized a baseball game on the ice. He placed first base in the eastern half of the world, and third base in the western hemisphere. With the International Date Line running between first base and home plate, players hitting pop flies across it were caught out the day after they had hit the ball! And runners heading for home were actually making a dash for the North Pole, the place where Robertson had put home plate.

One of a Kind

Early in the morning on January 18, 2000, thousands of people living in the Yukon and Northwest Territories, northern British Columbia and southern Alaska heard what sounded like a huge thunderclap, saw the sky light up as if a giant flashbulb had just gone off, and smelled a sulphury odour in the air. Witnesses reported seeing a massive, multi-coloured fireball plummeting to Earth, leaving behind a glowing orange and blue dust trail that drifted across the sky for about 15 minutes after the fiery explosion. This is how what's come to be known as the Tagish meteorite made its spectacular entry into Earth's atmosphere.

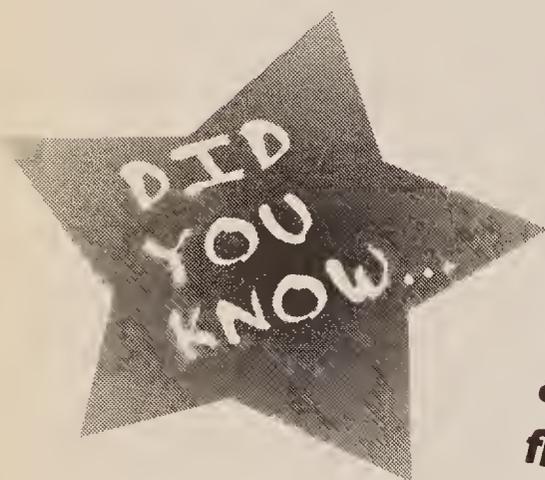
Meteorites are small pieces of space rock that don't burn up upon entry. At least 100 tonnes of them fall to Earth every day, but most are no bigger than specks of dust. The one that landed on Tagish Lake, in northwestern British Columbia, was really big, as meteorites go. It weighed about 200 grams, and more than 500 smaller fragments were collected too. But these bits of space rock might never have been found if Tagish Lake hadn't been frozen when Jim Brook, a local resident, went out on the lake a week later.

Brook was driving home across the ice when he spotted the blackened chunks. He came back the next day, carefully cut out several without touching them with his bare hands, slipped them into plastic bags, brought them home and stored them in his freezer.

The pieces Brook collected would turn out to be the most pristine — or untouched and uncontaminated — meteorites ever found and studied. They would also turn out to be very special in another way. The Tagish meteorite was the

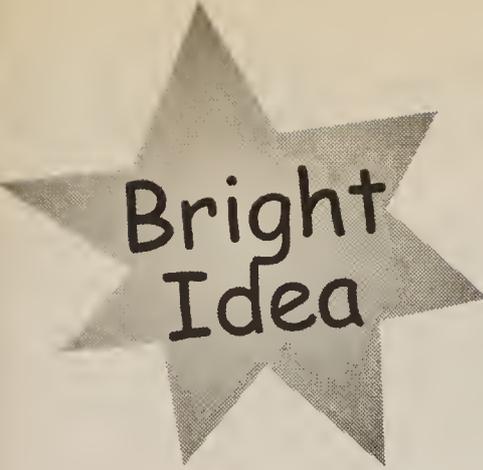


very first space rock to have been identified as coming all the way from a band of asteroids between Mars and Jupiter, about half a billion kilometres away. Researchers will continue to explore the meteor's make-up for years to come, looking for clues to what was going on in the universe so very long ago, when its journey to Earth began.



... that the only meteorite known to have been found in Atlantic Canada fell to Earth on January 16, 1949, near Benton, New Brunswick? The loud, fiery arrival of that piece of space rock frightened some people — they thought a bomb had exploded.

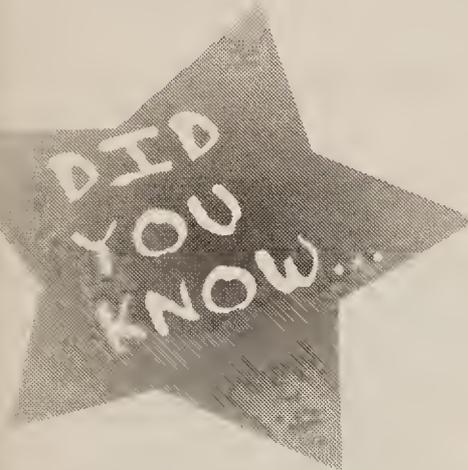
BOOM!



Bright Idea

When city councillors in Calgary voted to replace nearly 50 000 200-watt streetlights with 100-watt bulbs in the summer of 2001, they

didn't do it just to save energy. The switch also cut down on light pollution. Astronomers were pleased, telescope users were happy, and kids were delighted. On a clear night they could see the Milky Way again.



... that peewee curlers in Canada play in Little Rock leagues, and are nicknamed "Little Rockers"? Curling's popularity has been growing steadily over the last several years, and there are now at least 1.3 million curlers in Canada. The game was first played here by Scottish soldiers in 1789.

Rock on!

Band of Fool's Gold

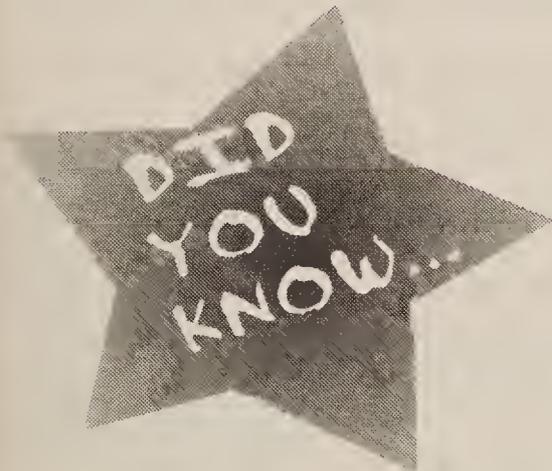
Wildlife workers regularly put metal bands around the legs of migratory birds to track where they go each spring and fall. The bands have numbers on them, and anyone finding a banded bird — dead or alive — is encouraged to report where it was found. Experts studying the birds will often pay a small reward to anyone who takes the time to pass on that information.

These inexpensive bands and the money paid for reporting them are most likely what first inspired a bored prankster or an inventive storyteller to come up with the idea late in the winter of 2001. But once started, the rumour spread quickly around Arivat, Nunavut, and to several other hamlets in the area — a snow goose had been released wearing a band of gold worth a million dollars!

Folks were skeptical when they first heard about the gold ring, but it was a good story, so they passed it on . . . and on . . . and on. Eventually Canadian Wildlife Services started getting phone calls from people wanting to know if it was true. Officials said it wasn't, but since the spring migration had begun, they wondered if more hunters than usual would be taking aim at the returning snow geese. After all, a chance to make a million bucks would be hard to ignore. But a quick investigation showed that hunters weren't shooting more geese. They may have liked the story, but they were too smart to fall for the hoax.

Where did you say?

Thunder Bay, Ontario, isn't a stormy place, as the name might suggest. The city at the head of Lake Superior is actually named after the thunderbird, a powerful figure in many aboriginal legends and myths.



DID
YOU
KNOW...

... that the site of Regina, Saskatchewan, was once called Pile o' Bones? It was named for the buffalo bones left behind after Cree hunters had removed the meat and skins.

What's that, eh?

"Holy" dollars circulated briefly in Prince Edward Island in the early 1800s.

They weren't holy in any religious sense, but they were holey, explaining why locals gave them the "holy" nickname.

A shortage of coins had been a problem in P.E.I. for many years when Lieutenant-Governor Charles Smith arrived there in 1813. To make it easier for people to buy and sell goods, Smith came up with a two-for-one plan. He had the centres punched out of Spanish silver dollars. The outer rings would still be worth the coin's full value, and the doughnut-hole middles would be worth a shilling (about 10 cents).

It didn't take counterfeiters long to spot the plan's major flaw – the two new coins were worth more than the original one. They started punching out dollars on their own, increasing their personal buying power and keeping the added value from the government. The plan was short-lived and the holey holy dollars were quickly taken out of circulation.



DID
YOU
KNOW...

... that the slowest growing tree discovered in the world is clinging to a cliff of the Niagara escarpment in Ontario? In 1996, the tiny, twisted 155-year-old white cedar was just 10.2 centimetres high and weighed a minuscule 17 grams. And if the age of some of its dead relatives is any indication of what lies ahead, it's still got a lot of living — if not a lot of growing — to do. Scientists discovered one dead tree that had reached the incredible age of 1653 years!

Just
the
Stats

*A typical Prairie wheat farmer harvests enough grain each year to make three million loaves of bread.

*On average, every Canadian eats about 36 kilograms of bread annually.

Sneaky, Sneaky . . .

One of the wackiest, but workable, ideas in shipping history was cooked up in Canada. A man named C.M.R. McPherson came up with the idea to avoid paying new taxes that Britain had started collecting on pine and oak timber exported from Canada in the 1820s. He designed a cargo ship that could, in effect, be used to smuggle out taxable timber right under the watchful eyes of port officials. How? By building a disposable ship! It would be built with large, squared-off logs pegged together in such a way that they could easily be taken apart when the ship reached England.

Two such ships were built in Quebec City. The first sailed from Quebec in 1824, but it wasn't taken apart as planned when it arrived in England. It returned to Canada to pick up more cargo, and sank on its second voyage across the Atlantic. However, the second ship was broken up when it made it to Britain, without a cent of export tax being paid on the timbers when they were sold.



Oops, we're sorry

In 2000, Nova Scotia's tourism bureau proudly released a new official map of the province, but pride soon changed to embarrassment. Pictou — the only town in the riding of John Hamm, premier of the province at the time — had been left off the map. When word of the error became public, red-faced officials rushed out to get some "Pictou" stickers printed, and government workers carefully pasted them in the correct location.

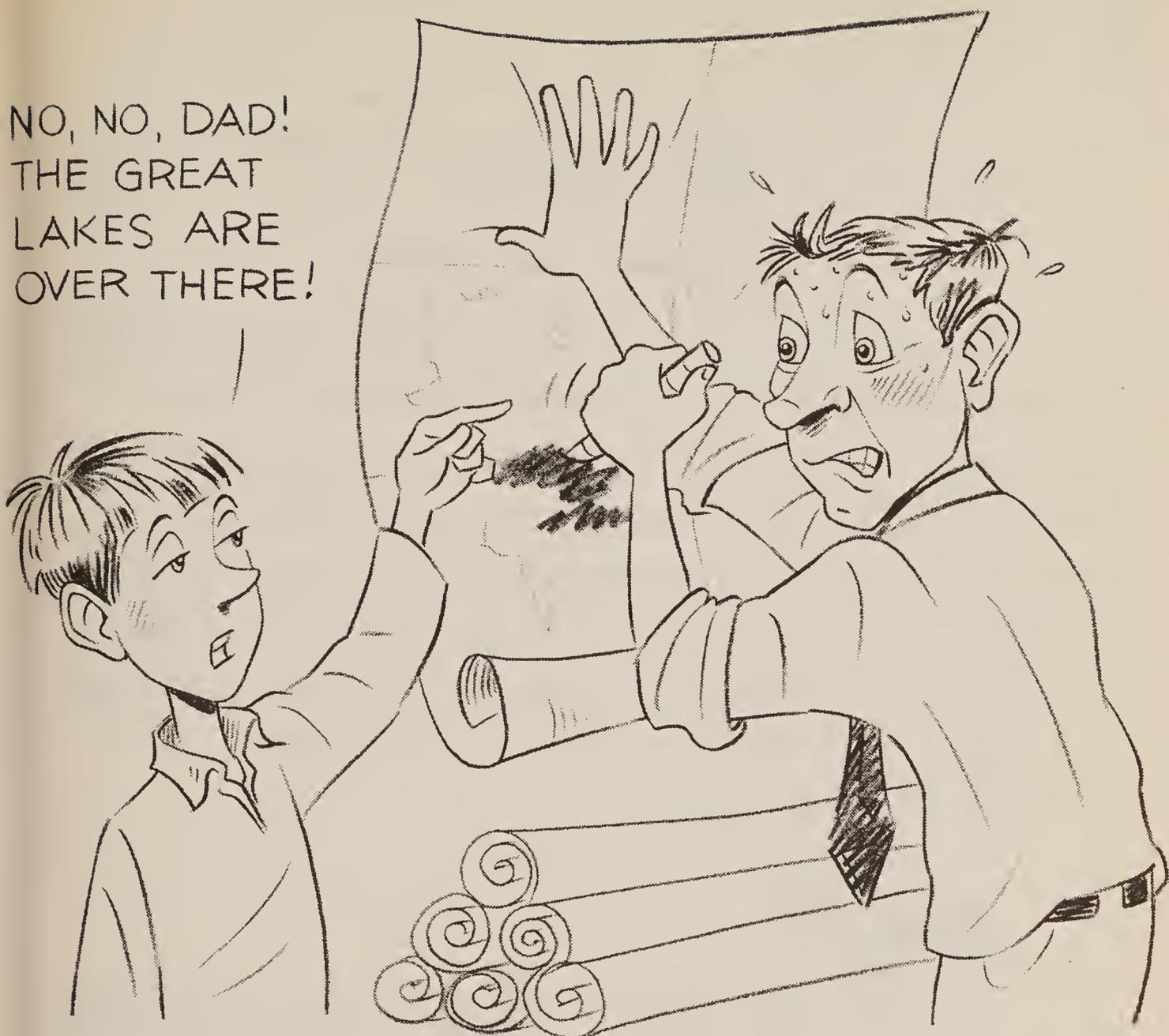
Ooops, we're really, really sorry

It's bad enough to omit one town from a provincial map. But what about leaving a third of one province, all of another one, an entire territory, and the largest freshwater lake in the world, off a map of Canada? You'd probably fail a geography test if you slipped up like that.

The Canadian Tourism Commission definitely flunked out with the public and the media when it did that and more. The Commission meant well. It was the summer of 2003, and tourists were afraid of catching SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome). So officials decided to help attract visitors, especially from the United States, by putting out a travel guide and a glossy magazine called *PureCanada*, featuring interesting places to go and fun things to do. But when the new promotional material was distributed — all 270 000 copies — embarrassed Commission staff had a bit of explaining to do. The maps in both the guide and the magazine were, to put it mildly, incomplete.

Nunavut, Canada's newest territory, had been misspelled as Nunavit, and Halifax and Fredericton — two provincial

NO, NO, DAD!
THE GREAT
LAKES ARE
OVER THERE!



capitals — weren't on the maps. Neither were Brandon, Manitoba, and most of northwestern Ontario. And Prince Edward Island, Yukon Territory and Lake Superior had disappeared too.

The best the Commission could come up with was a promise to get things right in the second edition of *PureCanada*, scheduled to come out later that year.

Slithering into Spring

Each spring, thousands of visitors are drawn to Narcisse, Manitoba, as soon as the last snow has melted. What brings them to this small town about 150 kilometres north of Winnipeg isn't everyone's idea of a great tourist attraction. But the area around Narcisse is home to the largest number of over-wintering red-sided garter snakes in the world, and when up to 50 000 of them emerge from their underground dens, or hibernacula, they are definitely a sight to behold.



After hibernating for seven months, waves of males slither out of cracks in the limestone and wait for the females to emerge. When the females appear, the males swarm all over them, twisting themselves into tangled, seething clumps called mating balls. After they mate, the snakes unravel and slip away in search of their first big meal of the season. Late in September, the ground seethes with life again as the snakes migrate back to their dens about 2 metres below the surface.

The chance to take in this spectacular show is what brings the crowds to Narcisse, especially in the spring. For a few weeks each year the snakes have star billing, winning over even the most ophidiophobic — that's "fearful of snakes" to most of us — members of their audience.

Pass It On

On September 7, 1998, students at Ontario's University of Guelph made it into the record books by forming the world's largest human conveyor belt. On that day 1000 of them lined up and passed a surfboard from hand to hand along the full length of their winding human chain.

Reptile Invaders

Students attending school in Alonsa, Manitoba, in the 1990s didn't need to go on field trips to Narcisse to watch garter snakes come out of hibernation each spring. The snakes came to them, and more than a few of the students and teachers weren't thrilled to see them.

The problem started when the snakes returned to their home one September and found themselves locked out. For years they'd been hibernating in the basement of an old building near the school, but the building's owner had decided to seal off their den. So the snakes slithered around until they found another cozy place to spend the winter — Alonsa's school. Slipping through cracks in the basement wall, hundreds of them moved in and settled down for the winter.

Come spring, they were on the move again, slithering through the air vents and across the ceilings, looking for a way out. Just hearing them squirming around was enough to upset the more squeamish students, but nearly everyone, teachers included, found it hard to cope with them dropping down from vents and slip-sliding along

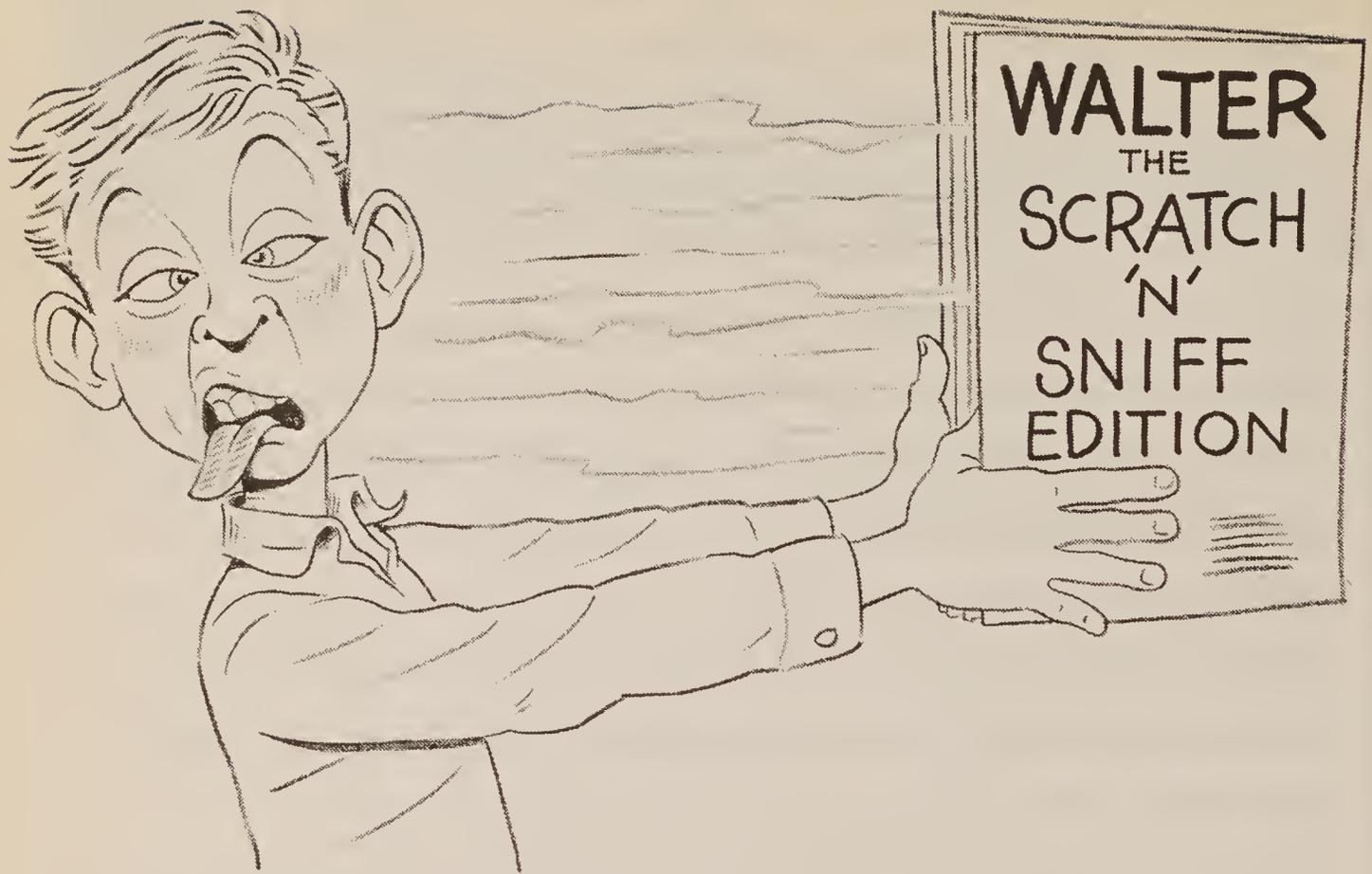
bookshelves. A wildlife expert came to the rescue, collecting most of the reptilian visitors and taking them away to more suitable locations. But when September rolled around, they were back.

Repairing the foundations helped, but a few persistent snakes still managed to sneak into the building, and many of them kept hanging out in the playground each spring and fall. After a few years, conservationists finally convinced them to relocate to a new den built just for them north of the school property. But it took a while for some students to stop wondering what else they'd get when they pulled a book off a library shelf.

Walter

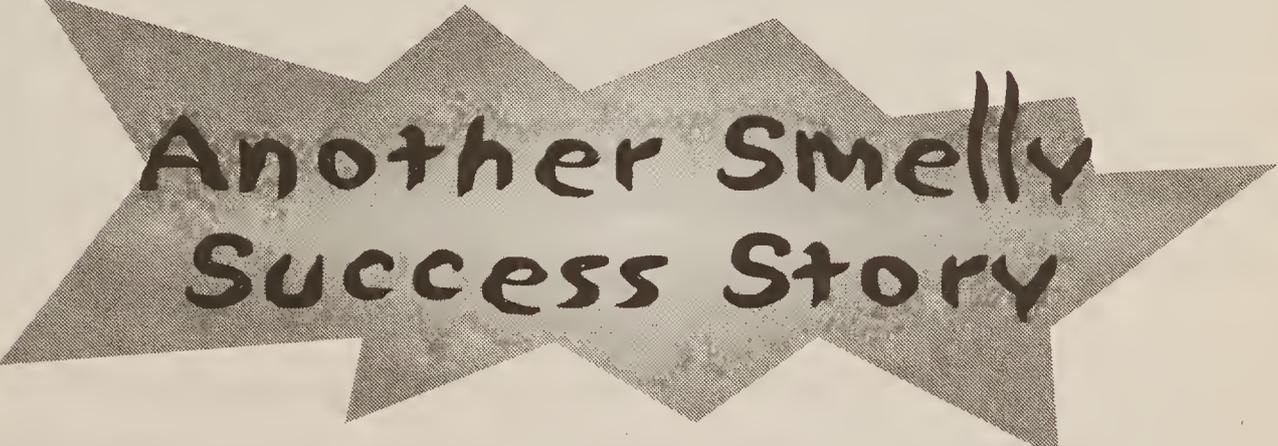
the Famous Farting Dog

Back in the 1970s and '80s Beverly DeLong's pet bull mastiff, Walter, had quite the reputation in Fredericton, New Brunswick. He wasn't well-known because he did heroic things like rescuing drowning children or hunting down bank robbers. He was no fighter either. No, Walter's fame grew because he could empty a room faster than a cry of "Fire!" just by passing gas — something he did with great regularity.



Walter's silent but deadly emissions were legendary, and tales of his "problem" lingered in the Fredericton air long after he had gone to doggy heaven. Glenn Murray, a local educator familiar with Walter's famed flatulence, eventually decided to write a picture book about it. For ten years, though, publishers kept rejecting his manuscript, certain that the smelly subject matter would doom the book to failure. But in 1999, Murray and American author William Kotzwinkle joined forces to produce a version of Walter's story that a publisher liked. *Walter the Farting Dog*, illustrated by Audrey Colman, hit bookstores in 2001, and was soon flying off the shelves. It was on the *New York Times*' bestseller list for most of 2003, and by April of 2004 the book had sold half a million copies.

A sequel, *Walter the Farting Dog: Trouble at the Garage Sale*, followed in the spring of 2004, much to the delight of Beverly DeLong, by then a school principal in Fredericton. She was happy to see that once kids got to know him, they loved the fictional Walter as much as she had loved her real-life pet in spite of his "problem." And Glenn Murray is delighted too. Thanks to Walter's skyrocketing popularity, he's enjoying the sweet smell of success.



Another Smelly Success Story

Glenn Murray isn't the only Canadian writer to have had trouble trying to get a story about gas-passing published. None other than bestselling children's author Robert Munsch ran into similar difficulties trying to find a home for one of his stories. Youngsters loved hearing him tell the tale, but editors figured a book called *The Fart* would never sell. Finally, Doubleday Canada accepted the story, but insisted on a title change. Munsch came up with a new one — *Good Families Don't* — and another bestseller was born.

But when most kids go looking for that story in a library or bookstore, they usually just ask for "the fart book by Robert Munsch." They get a real kick out of saying the word publishers shied away from, and judging from sales, they love seeing it in print too. Fart, fart, fart, fart . . .

Faithful to the End

Torontonian Meryl Dunsmore received the first mysterious valentine card in the mail in 1928, when she was 16. Signed "Your secret admirer," it offered no clues as to who the sender might be. Meryl wondered if it was from a shy boy who had a crush on her in high school, but she really had no idea who had sent it . . . or the one that arrived the next year . . . or the year after that.

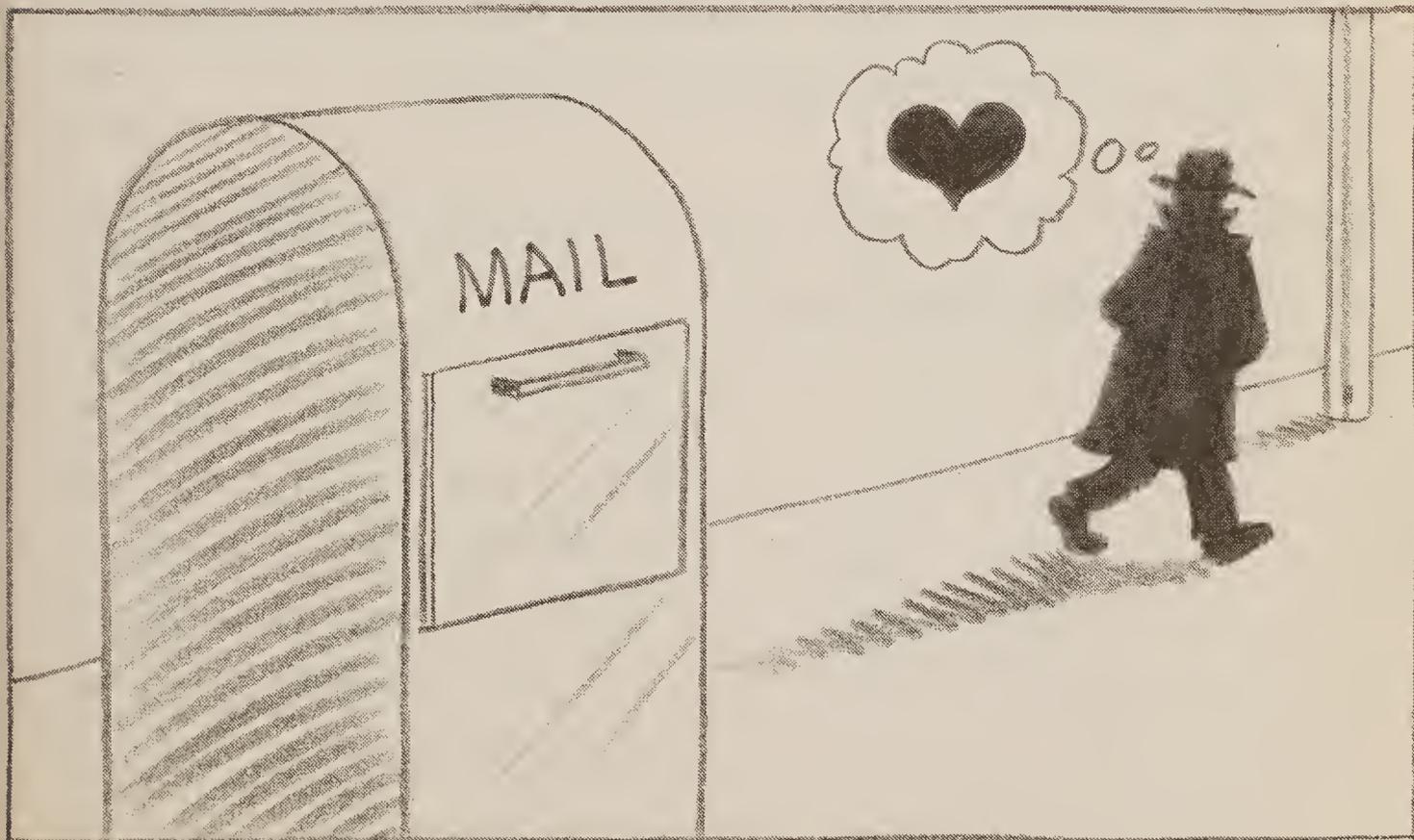
February after February the cards kept coming, even after Meryl had left home, married, remarried and moved six times. Often the cards were mailed from other countries such as France, China, Australia, South Africa and Japan, but they were always signed in the same handwriting from either "Your secret admirer" or "Your secret pal."

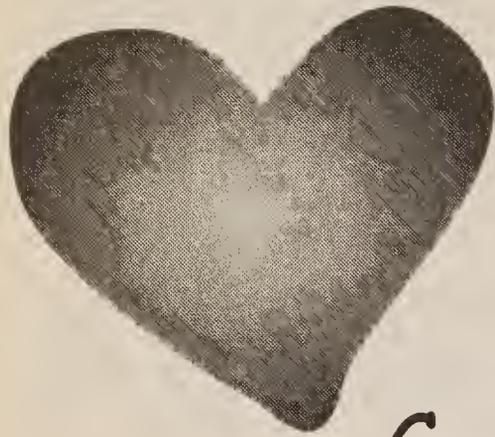
When February, 1968, passed without a card arriving, Meryl and her husband, Alex, couldn't help wondering about what might have happened to the mysterious romantic.

That summer, they found out. A card arrived in July, with a brief note apologizing for missing Valentine's Day because the sender had been ill.

The cards kept coming for another 20 years. The one that arrived in 1988 was the first one sent from Sweden. The verse inside read simply: "An old fashioned wish is always in style, when it comes from the heart, and is sent with a smile."

That was the last message from her anonymous admirer that Meryl would read, but it was not the last one he would send. Meryl died in July 1988. The morning of her funeral, a bouquet of white lilies and yellow mums appeared mysteriously on the steps of the funeral home. There were just five words on the unsigned card attached to the flowers: "Rest in peace, my Valentine."





With Love from — er — **LOVE**

Come February, thoughts turn to Love. And that's *Love* with a capital *L*, as in the name of a small village about 20 kilometres north of Nipawin, Saskatchewan, just west of Tobin Lake. Fewer than 100 people live in Love, but just before Valentine's Day each year, business really picks up at the local post office. Hundreds of envelopes mailed to the postmaster start arriving from across Canada and around the world. Inside the envelopes are more envelopes containing Valentine cards or notes. Each one is sealed, stamped, addressed and ready to be mailed as soon as it receives a cancellation postmark from Love.

What better way to show you care than to send your love to your true love from Love?

BUSYBODY BEAVERS

There were millions and millions of beavers in Canada 400 years ago, but by the 1930s they had disappeared from many parts of the country. So conservationists began reintroducing pairs of *Castor canadensis* in those areas and let nature take its course.

Nature was kind, and with no bears or wolves to prey on the beavers in farming and urban areas, their population grew and grew. By the 1990s in Manitoba, for instance, beaver numbers had soared from the hundreds to the hundreds of thousands. But one beaver can gnaw down more than 200 trees a year, so wherever beaver numbers are going up, lots of trees are coming down. That wouldn't be a problem in the wilderness, but in and near



cities, it is. In Calgary, for example, they've taken a liking to the trees in some parks. Persistent dam-builders have also driven some Prairie farmers to sell their land by turning fields into flooded swamps.

So, the good news is that the *Castor canadensis* population is thriving now. The bad news — for the beavers — is that there's now a price on their heads in some parts of Canada. It seems the country's national animal is becoming a national pest.

3-

2-

1-

Leap!

In 1979, Toronto's CN Tower was the site of the highest stunt fall ever made for a movie. Ace American stuntman Dar Robinson made the leap, plunging from the 335-metre-high Lookout level of the tower. About 91 metres from the ground, Robinson released a hidden parachute that opened just in time to break his fall. Robinson's stunt, performed as actor Christopher Plummer's double, was featured in a film called *Highpoint*.



... that Nana, the children's canine nanny in the novel *Peter Pan*, was a Newfoundland dog, not a St. Bernard as shown in the Disney animated film?

WOOF!

Great balls of plastic wrap?

Well, there was one ball of the clingy wrap at a Toronto restaurant back in 2003. Andy Martell, a cook at Scratch Danial's, started forming the wrap into a ball just for the fun of it. By the time he'd had enough, he'd come up with a record-breaker. The ball measured nearly 140 centimetres around and weighed more than 20 kilos, and could lay claim to being the largest ball of plastic wrap in the world.

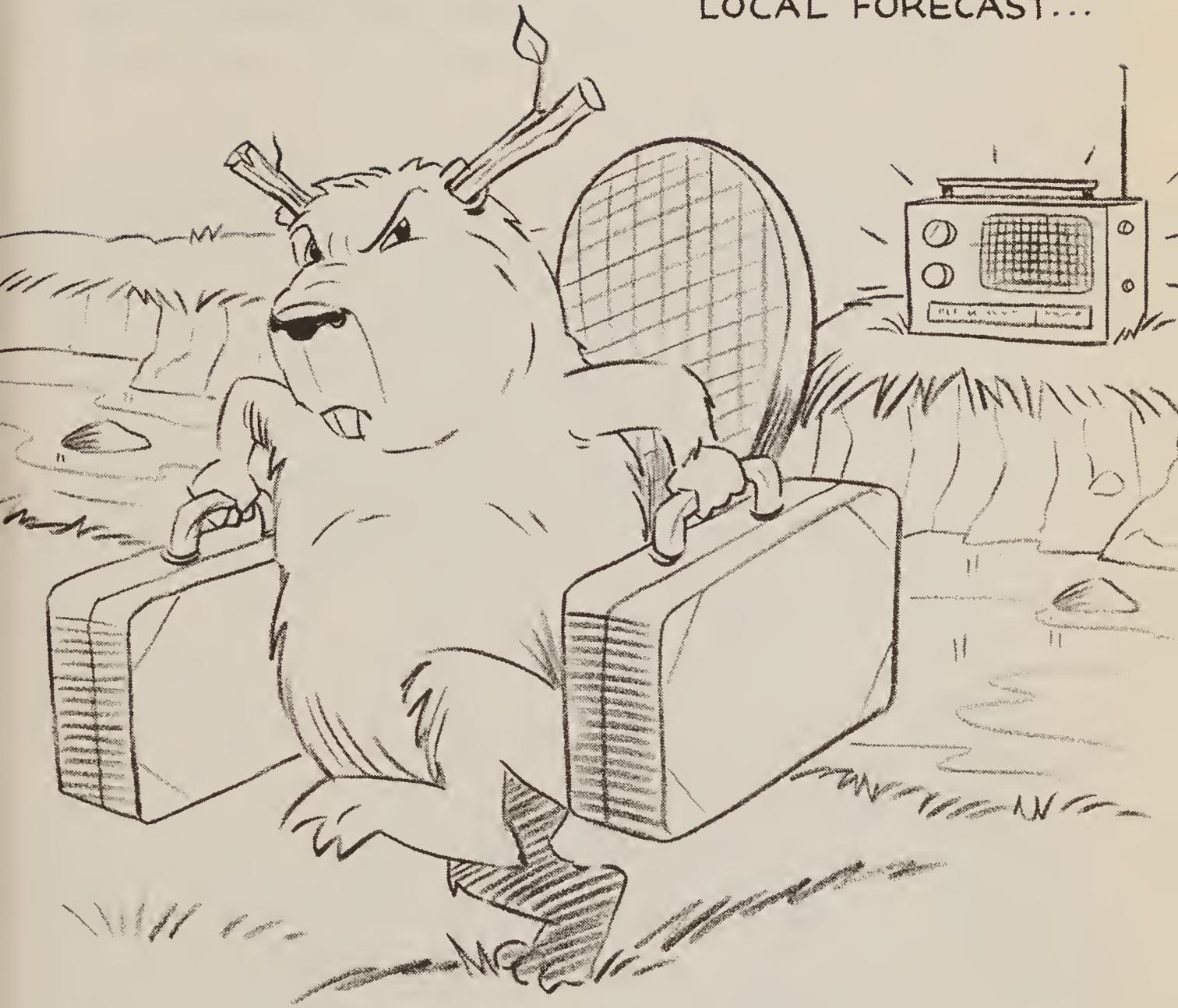
CBC vs. the Beavers

Saskatchewan grain farmer Tom Harper spent the summer of 2002 battling some very busy beavers. Each night the beavers would stuff branches into a culvert, or large pipe, near his house. With the pipe blocked, the creek that ran through it would back up, threatening to flood his home. Each morning, Harper would unplug the culvert, but each night the beavers would be back at work.

Harper tried to get a conservation officer to trap and relocate them, but was told that would cost too much. He shot a couple, but hated doing that; besides, replacement workers were soon back on the job. One night, though, when he was out trying to stop them, he noticed that his yelling and muttering made them back off a little. That's when he got the brainwave about the radio. He brought one outside, tuned in a CBC station that features lots of talking, and turned up the volume. After two weeks, the beavers surrendered and moved on.

Harper's victory was featured on a TV news show. The CTV reporter who interviewed him figured viewers might get a kick out of hearing that Harper's secret weapon against Canada's national animal was Canada's national broadcaster, the CBC.

AND NOW FOR YOUR
LOCAL FORECAST...



What's that, eh?

If you go ice skating on the Rideau Canal in Ottawa, you're bound to come across beaver tails. They're warm, sweet-smelling and delicious, and have nothing to do with the busy, dam-building rodents' tails except for the fact that both are flat, rounded at one end and thinner at the other. Beaver tails are popular pastries that vendors sell from booths scattered along the shores of the canal. They're also sold in many bakeries across Canada.

A taste-testing bite will tell you that a beaver tail is really just a yeast-type doughnut that isn't shaped like one. It is usually coated in icing sugar or plain white sugar right after it comes out of the frying oil, but it is also served spread with jam or coated with maple syrup.

Ride On!

The Canadian Horse is the oldest breed of horse in Canada. The first one was shipped to Canada from France in 1647. Two more stallions and 12 mares arrived in New France 18 years later, and a century after that, there were about 12 000 of their offspring on Canadian soil. Although smaller than many other breeds of workhorses, the Canadian proved to be tough, strong and well-behaved. Settlers rode them

and used them to clear and plow their land and to pull their carriages and sleighs. The breed nearly died out in the early 1900s, but careful planning and financial support from Ottawa has now guaranteed its survival.

On April 30, 2002, Parliament officially named the Canadian Horse as a national symbol of the country, right up there with the beaver and the maple leaf.



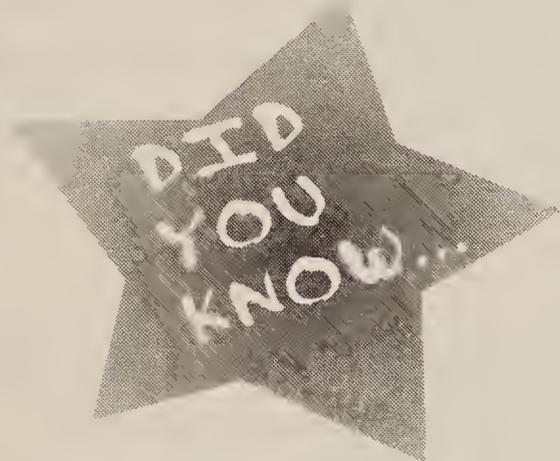
Bow WOW!

Dogs in North Vancouver must be the smartest canines in the world. They don't just jump, heel, fetch and roll over. Apparently, they can read too. Why else would a sign reminding their owners of the "poop and scoop" bylaw, also include the following words:



Just the Stats

Every year dogs bite more than 450 000 Canadians. (There are no reliable statistics on how many Canadians bite dogs each year.)



... that the photo of Queen Elizabeth II on the 49-cent stamp introduced on December 19, 2003, was taken by Grammy-winning musician Bryan Adams? Like the title of one of his hits, he did it "All for Love," receiving just a small token payment for the use of the picture.

A Brave Breed

Newfoundland dogs are named after the province where they were first spotted by Vikings as far back as 1000 AD. Usually black, they're big, gentle creatures who aren't afraid of hard work. They're also perfectly suited to life at sea. Since water rolls off their oily coats and their webbed feet make them superb swimmers, they have often braved the icy Atlantic to rescue people from drowning. Boatswain was one such rescuer, and his efforts actually changed the course of history.

A British navy captain brought Boatswain to England in 1801, when he was just a pup. Thirteen years and several VIP owners later, Boatswain was again in the care of an English navy captain whose ship was anchored off the west coast of Italy, close to the island of Elba. One stormy night a political prisoner living in exile on Elba managed to board the British ship in the hope of escaping back to France. As his supporters worked to secure the ship, the prisoner — who couldn't swim — slipped off the deck into the murky sea. Boatswain was the only one who saw the man fall, and in a flash, he had leapt in after him, holding him above the

waves until sailors could rescue him. The man Boatswain rescued that night was the French emperor Napoleon, who lived to escape and fight another day.

So, if a Newfoundland dog hadn't saved Napoleon that evening in 1814, would he have lived to battle Britain's Admiral Nelson and "meet his Waterloo" in 1815?





Garden of Dreams

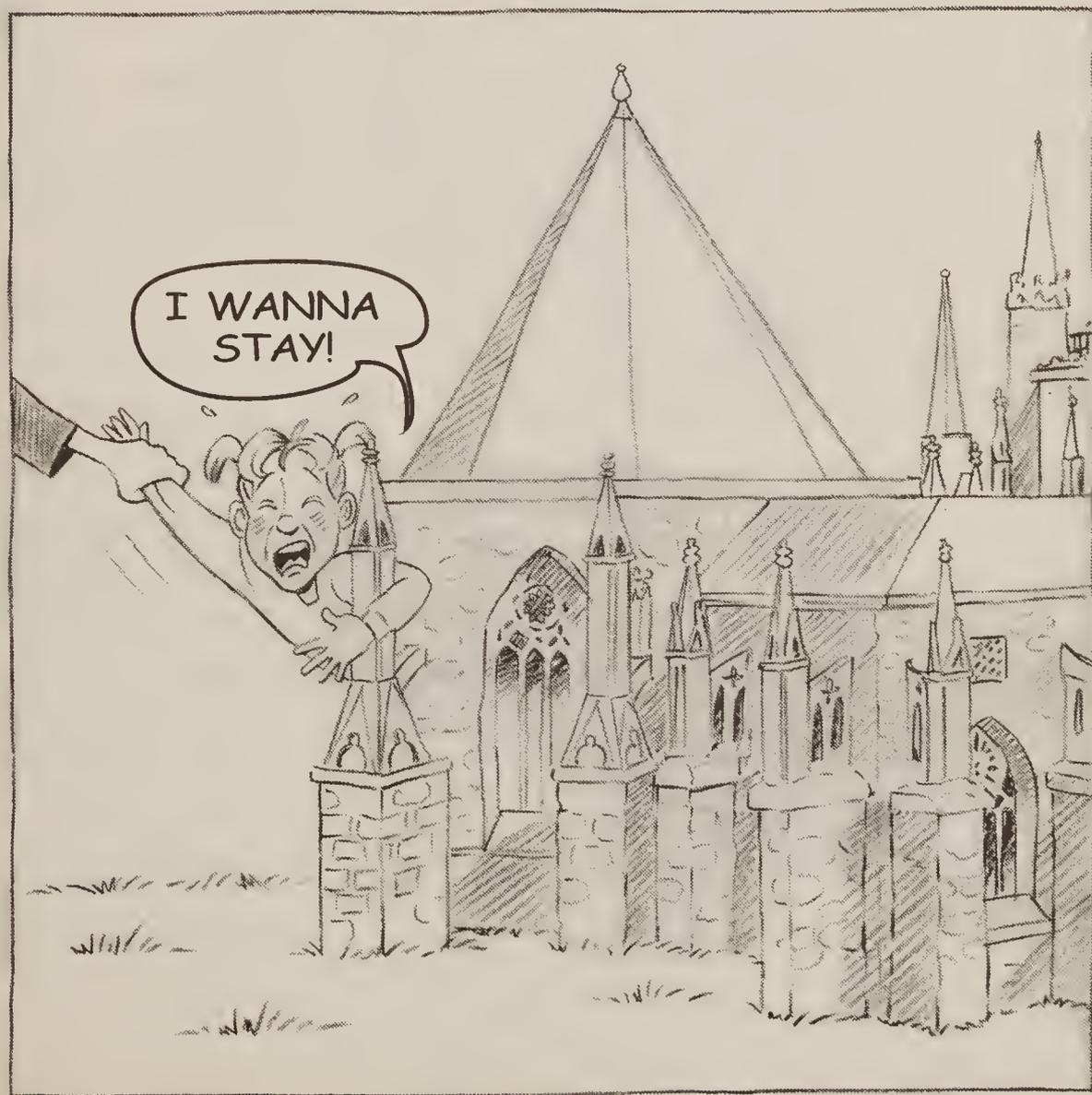
When Canadian soldier Ernest Wilbur Johnstone returned home to Prince Edward Island after World War I, he couldn't forget the striking beauty of the many gardens and parks he had seen in Britain. So he bought a piece of farmland (known locally as the Woodleigh property) near Kensington, and set about trying to transplant some of that beauty to his island home.

Ernest had quite the green thumb, and after years of hard work he made his dream come true. He had surrounded his home with hectare after hectare of lush rolling lawns, shimmering pools and fabulous flowers, shrubs and trees. But after he and his son, Archie, returned from overseas service in World War II, he decided that a few stately buildings were just what his gardens needed to give them an added British flavour.

With Archie's help, Wilbur started building castles and cathedrals. Stone by stone, father and son assembled amazingly detailed mini-replicas of such famous British landmarks as St. Paul's Cathedral, Dunvegan Castle, Yorkminster Cathedral and parts of the Tower of London. Some sections of several of the small buildings were

big enough to move around in. Each one took years to complete. Yorkminster Cathedral, Woodleigh-style, was a five-year effort lovingly fitted with thousands of jewel-bright panes of stained glass fitted into its 145 windows. The Tower of London took nine years to finish.

People from across P.E.I. started dropping by to view the structures, and eventually the Johnstones realized that their private dream had become very public. In 1958, Woodleigh Replicas opened as a tourist attraction. Nearly fifty years later, visitors continue drop by to marvel at what Ernest Johnstone created.



Squeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeze!

According to the 2004 *Guinness Book of World Records*, the skinniest commercial building in the world is in Vancouver. Known as the Sam Kee Building, it's located on West Pender Street in Vancouver's thriving Chinatown district. The land on which it stands is part of a 9-metre-deep piece of property once owned by Chang Toy and Shum Moon, two very successful businessmen who owned the Sam Kee Company.

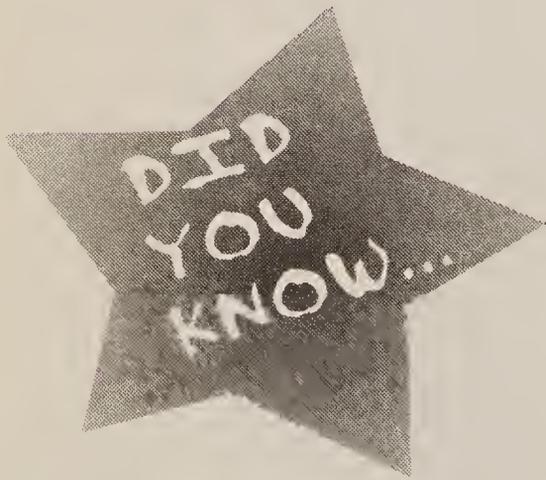
In 1912 the city made the men sell a 7-metre-deep strip of their land as part of a project to widen Pender Street. That left Toy and Moon just a 2-metre-deep section that the city thought the men would give up because it was too thin to do anything with. When Toy asked to be paid for the remaining land, the city refused, so he decided to make the best of it. His company put up a two-storey building less than 2 metres deep and just over 29 metres long. The ground floor housed shops and offices and the second floor was an apartment. In the basement, along the length of the building and stretching out under the street, Toy had public baths built.

Toy died in 1920, but his very mini strip mall still stands today and is a popular stop for tourists walking through Vancouver's Chinatown.



Rock ON!

Pop star Avril Lavigne, of Napanee, Ontario, became the youngest musician ever to reach Number 1 on the United Kingdom's top album chart. Lavigne's bestselling album *Let Go* made it to the top of the charts on January 11, 2003, when Lavigne was just 18 years and 106 days old.



... that in 2004 Céline Dion was the Number 1 contemporary pop singer in the world, with sales of her albums passing the 160 million mark? Dion started performing live in a club her parents owned when she was just five years old. Even then, she was a hit with the locals.

DID
YOU
KNOW...

... that by the spring of 2004, worldwide sales of Shania Twain's mega-hit album *Come on Over* had topped the 36 million mark? Those sales earned Twain the record for the bestselling album by a female artist. *Come on Over* also became the bestselling album by any country music artist. Move on over, Garth Brooks. Shania is Number 1.

SHANIA

#1



A Corner Fit for a Queen

When Queen Elizabeth II visited Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut, in October of 2002, she did something she'd never done before — she unveiled a street sign. Getting a new street sign isn't usually a big deal, but this sign was Iqaluit's first, so Her Majesty did the honours at the corner of Miwik Avenue and a street called Queen Elizabeth II Way.



One of the most honoured women in Canada was known simply as "the nurse." Myra Grimsley was 29 when she came from England in 1921 to work as a nurse on the west coast of Newfoundland's northern peninsula.

Planning to stay for just 2 years, she married a local man named Angus Bennett in 1922 and spent the next 50 years helping people who lived in isolated hamlets there.

Because the nearest doctor was often 100 or more kilometres away, nurse Bennett was often the only person around with any medical expertise. During her long career, she pulled 3000 teeth and delivered 5000 babies — the last one her own grandson. Once, when her brother-in-law's foot was nearly completely cut off in a sawmill accident, she cleaned the wound, numbed it with snow, and sewed the foot back to his ankle. Then she and her husband set out on a perilous three-day journey by dogsled to get her patient to a doctor. When the doctor saw Bennett's stitching, he left it alone, telling the nurse he couldn't have done any better himself. Her re-attachment was so successful that her brother-in-law was eventually able to walk again.

Bennett received many honours, including an honorary doctorate from Memorial University, for her tireless efforts in Newfoundland. She was also awarded the King George V Jubilee Medal, both the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II Coronation medals, an Order of the British Empire medal, and the Order of Canada. Bennett died in 1990, when she was 100 years old.

Feeding the Imagination

[or Nothing Cheesy About It]

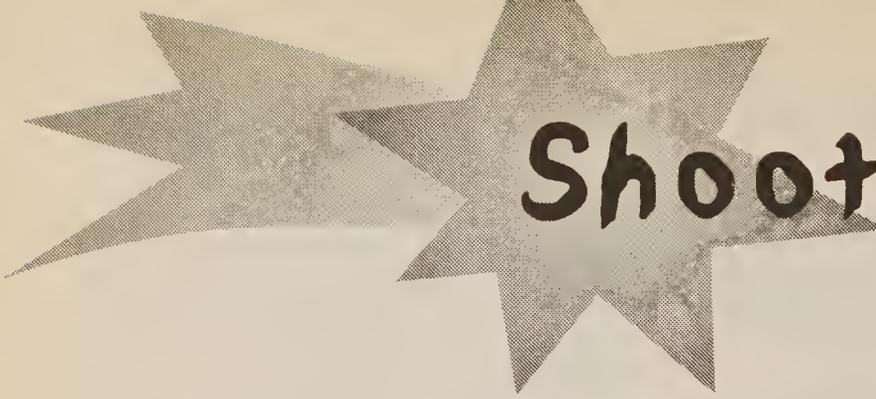
Montreal artist Cosimo Cavallaro's work has included photographs, films, videos and large steel sculptures. But it's his work with cheese — yes, cheese — that has attracted the most publicity.

Cavallaro likes cheese. He sees it as milk, a source of life. After moving to New York City in 1995, he started thinking about "painting" with cheese. He coated a fashion model in it and decorated a hotel room with it. But his biggest cheese piece was an entire house in Powell, Wyoming. In the fall of 2001, he began spraying the vacant house with 5 tonnes of warm, melted pepperjack cheese. The cheese dripped from the ceilings, coated the walls and covered the furniture. It was a site to behold . . . and to smell, too. The house was demolished a few weeks later, but not before eager visitors had lined up to tour it and TV crews had showed up to capture footage of it for the evening news.

Another Canadian artist, Jana Sterbak, turned to a food item for one of her works of art. In 1991 she made a dress from 22 kilograms of salted, raw flank steak. She photographed a model wearing the beef outfit, and placed that picture beside the dress when it was displayed on a



hanger at the National Gallery in Ottawa. Then she left the dress to rot. Some gallery visitors didn't appreciate her vivid reminder of the aging process and decay and the foolishness of paying too much attention to one's physical appearance. Sterbak's art upset vegetarians, and a few meat eaters saw the piece as a waste of food, but it certainly gave everyone who saw it something to think about. Sterbak replaced the decaying piece with a new dress every six weeks.



Shooting Stars

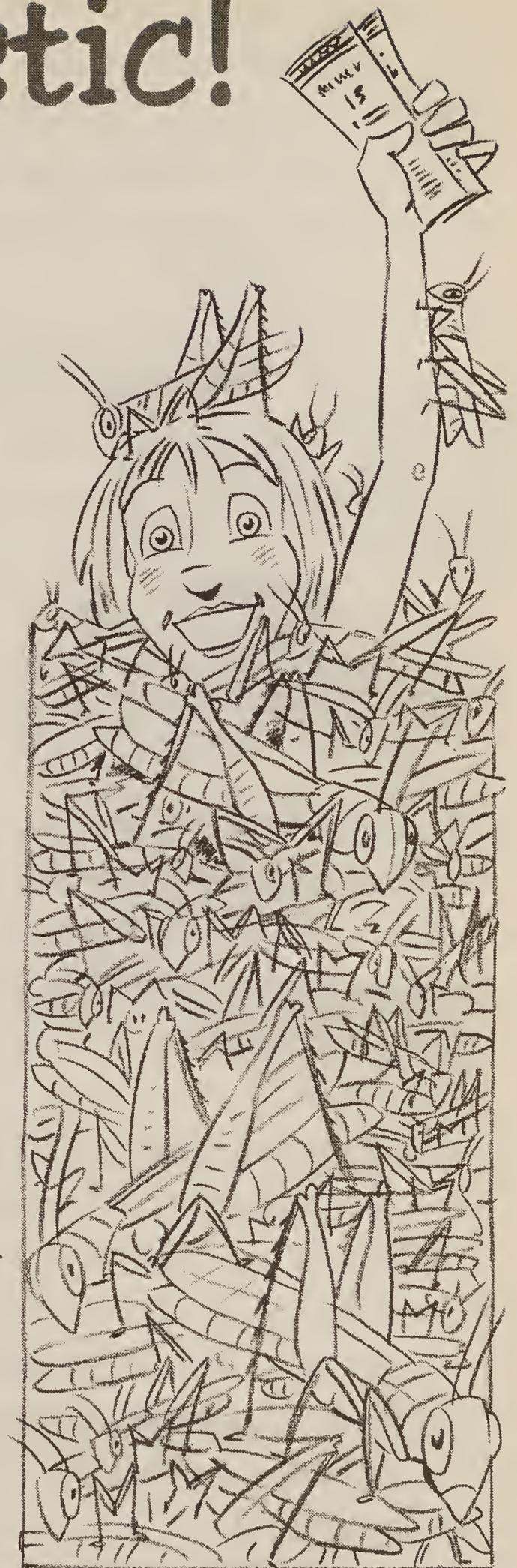
When it came to playing basketball, no team did it better than the Edmonton Grads. A women's team formed in Edmonton in 1915, the Grads absolutely ruled their sport until they disbanded in 1940. Time and again they won city, provincial and Canadian championships; they also represented Canada at the Olympic Games in 1924, 1928, 1932 and 1936.

Because women's basketball was just an exhibition sport, not an official Olympic event until 1976, the Grads never brought home any Olympic medals, but their efforts were golden. They won all 27 of their exhibition matches at the Olympics, and outscored teams from other countries by a total of 1863 points to 297! In a game against a team from Paris, for instance, they won 109-20, and they slaughtered a team from London by a score of 100-2. In all, the 38 women who played for the Grads over the years chalked up an incredible 502 wins. Of the 20 games they did lose, many were exhibition matches played against men's teams. It was the Grads' many triumphs, not Wayne Gretzky's Oilers', which earned Edmonton the honour of being known as the City of Champions.

FANtastic!

Brandy Elliott must have really wanted to see Elton John perform in Saskatoon in August of 2002. Why else would she have spent an entire weekend chasing after grasshoppers? That's what you had to do to have any hope of winning a contest a Regina radio station decided to run. The grand prize — two tickets to the pop star's concert — would go to the listener who brought in the most of those crop-eating, ditch-hopping, juice-spitting insects.

Eager to win the tickets, Elliott started collecting grasshoppers — never in short supply in Saskatchewan — by hand. Fingers stained and back aching, the 26-year-old soon realized she'd have to improve her trapping



technique. Using pieces of screening, she made three big nets, attached them to her truck, and started driving along the shoulders and ditches of a country road. As the startled hoppers jumped and flew up, the nets scooped them up by the hundreds.

Elliott collected several pails of the bugs this way, and when her total was calculated, the radio station announced she had won. Another listener had turned in 33 000 grasshoppers, but Elliott had caught 39 000. The concert tickets were hers.

YES to YUCK!

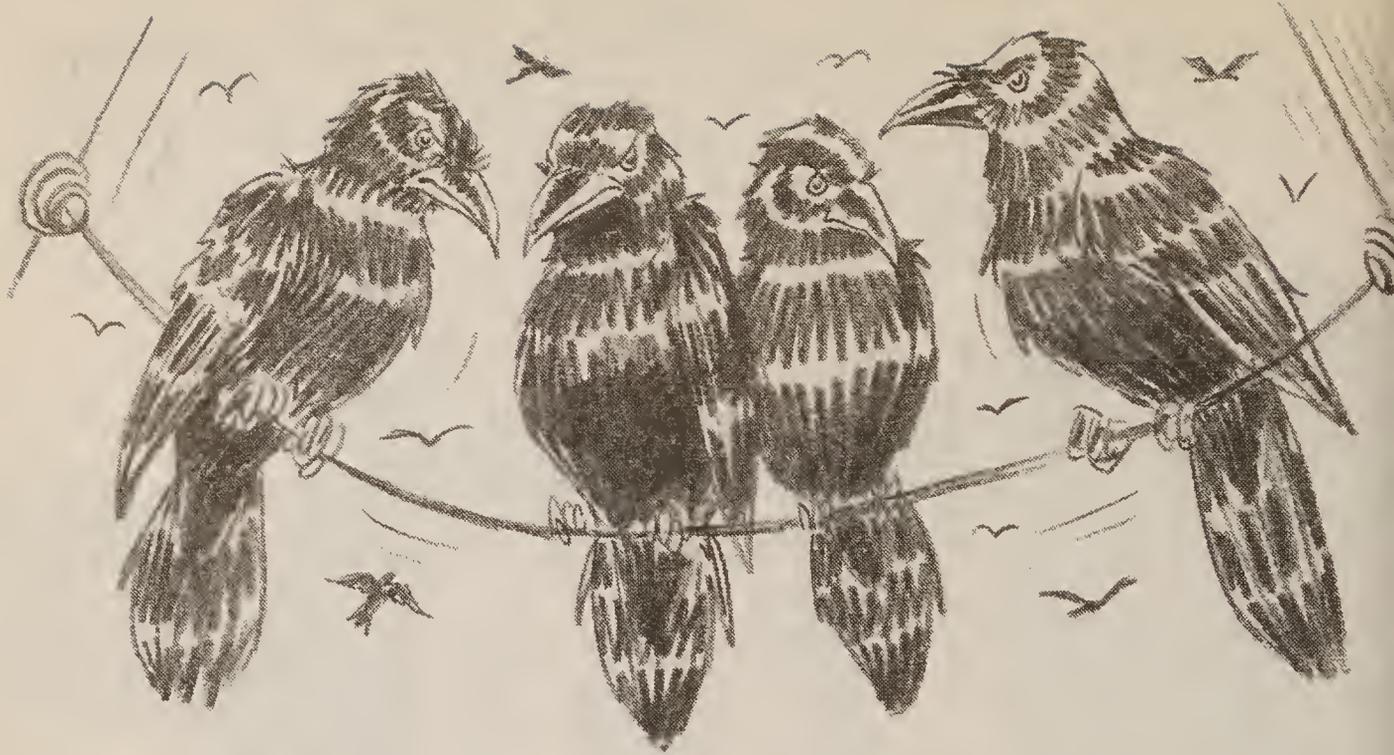
Buckley's Mixture, the famous cough medicine, is a Canadian concoction. Toronto pharmacist William Knapp Buckley worked out the formula for the yucky-tasting stuff back in 1919 during a terrible flu epidemic, and started marketing it a year later.

Buckley realized early on how important advertising was. He was one of the first business owners to start using radio ads to spread the word about his product across Canada. In the 1930s, he introduced Americans to his cough syrup. Like his Canadian customers, they found it soothing, but weren't impressed with its taste. But Buckley believed in his mixture and wouldn't change the ingredients.

"IT TASTES
AWFUL. AND IT
WORKS."



In the 1940s, Buckley's son Frank joined the family business. He was the one responsible for an award-winning advertising campaign in the 1980s that dared to have as its slogan, "It tastes awful. And it works." And he personally appeared in TV spots, saying with a straight face, "I wake up with nightmares that someone gives me a taste of my own medicine." Even if people didn't like Buckley's, they really enjoyed the refreshing blend of honesty and humour the company brought to those ads. W. K. Buckley Ltd. still takes that approach in its commercials. Like the claim made for its bad-tasting mixture, it works.



Feathered Friends - **NOT!**

A collection of geese is called a gaggle, a group of lions is called a pride, and a gathering of crows is called a murder. And murder is what some of the 35 000 residents of Woodstock, Ontario, had in mind when way too many crows moved into town in 2002 — about 20 000 of them, by some estimates. They cawed non-stop as they fought over food they had ripped out of garbage bags, or glared down from trees at nervous passersby. They splattered a thick, foul-smelling layer of droppings on cars, decks and patio furniture, driving many people out of their backyards that summer. And, every now and then, one of the more aggressive ones swooped down like a diving bomber and attacked a person.

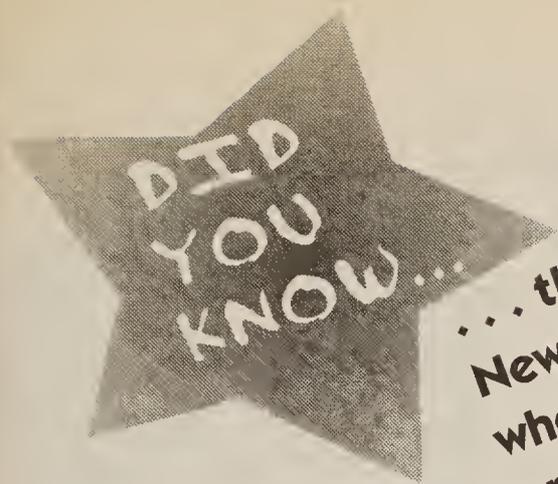
At sunset another 20 000 or so of the crows' country relatives would fly in from surrounding farms, noisily jostling for space on telephone wires, branches and roofs. Darkness brought silence, but not much relief, because everyone knew that the birds were still lurking in the shadows, hunched down on their perches, just waiting for the crack of dawn. Then, they would take off in an explosion of noise, at least two hours before most people needed to wake up. The nightmare was never-ending. In the fall, people desperate for a good night's sleep and fed up with washing off bird poop demanded that city officials take action. So the council hired Martin Wernaart, a professional crow-scarer, to drive off the birds. After weeks of shooting off flare guns that lit up the sky and filled the air with loud pops and whistling sounds, Wernaart managed to convince many of the crows to get out of town.

Chatham, Ontario, suffered through a similar invasion in the late 1990s. By the fall of 2000, nearly 225 000 crows were tormenting its residents. But by January, 2001, fewer than 200 remained. Chatham's solution was to hire a company that brought in trained falcons, hawks and eagles to circle above the city for several days. Workers also walked around with a few great horned owls perched securely on their arms. Clever birds that they are, the crows got the message — leave town or become lunch for their natural enemies. They took off.

Scarecrow Invasion

Scarecrows — not crows — have been invading Meaford, Ontario, every October since 1997. As part of a harvest festival, residents stuff, dress and pose them throughout the town. Some folks also dress up as scarecrows to dance, march and stroll in the parade that's always a festival highlight. In 2002, a world-record-breaking 2043 scarecrows leaned against lampposts, sat on benches, balanced on bicycles, rested on ladders and peeked out of windows, much to the delight of the crowds of tourists who came to check them out.





... that you can't catch poison ivy in Newfoundland? It's the only province where it doesn't grow. And the only province where you might suffer from poison oak is British Columbia.

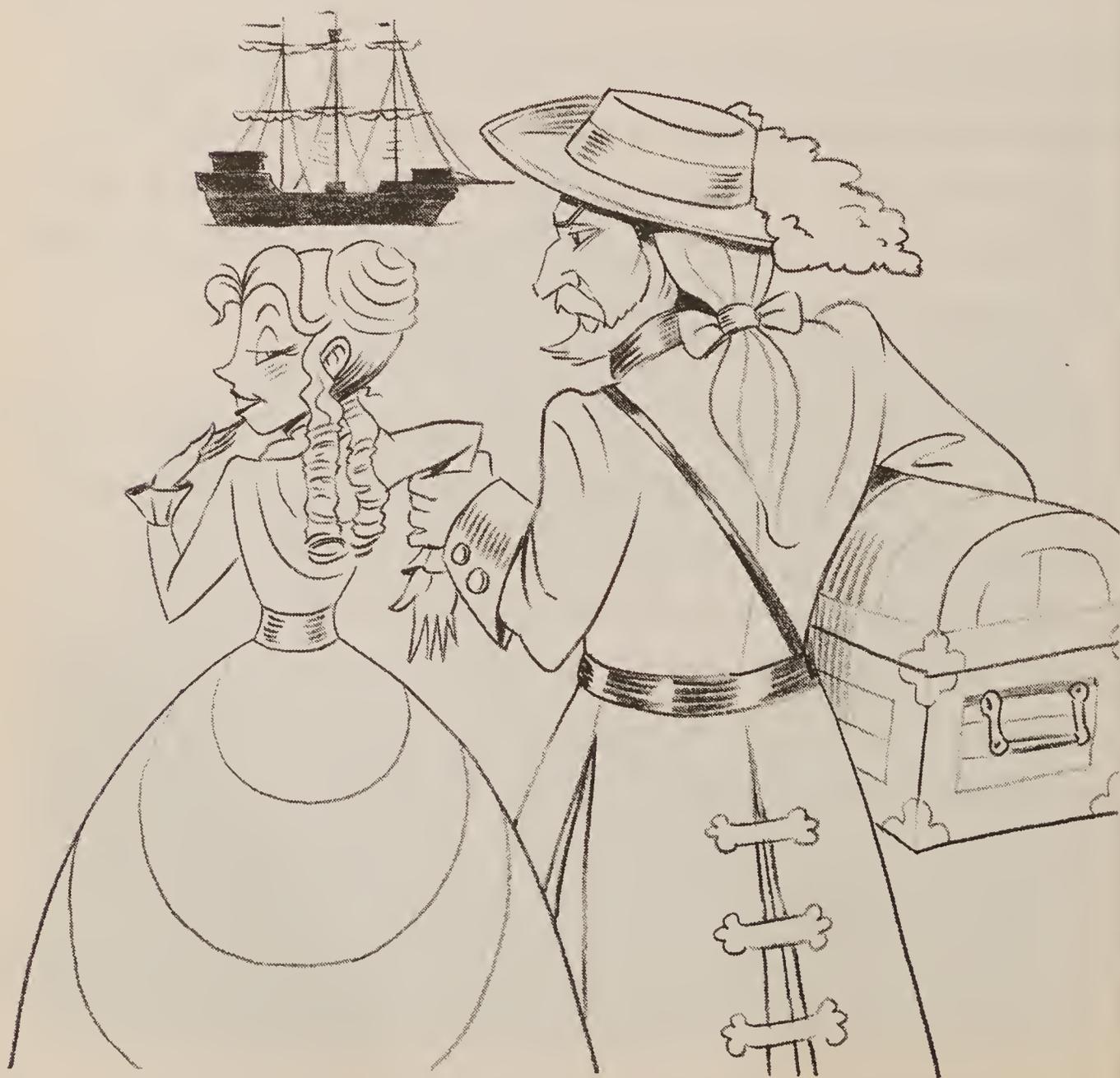
Snow Day — NOT!

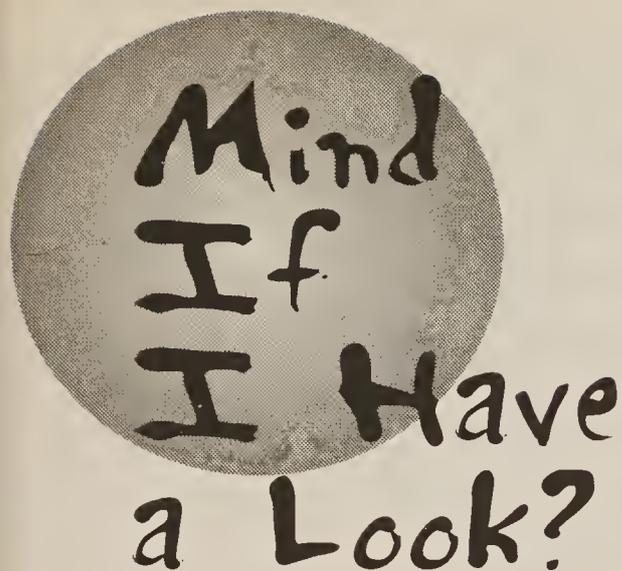
Canadian kids usually cheer when a major snowstorm shuts down schools. But when a blizzard battered the community of St. Anthony, Newfoundland, late in February of 2003, 47 youngsters didn't. Instead of getting the day off, they got stuck at school.

With drifts more than 3 metres high piling up against the doors and windows, only those children who lived in town could make it home in time. So for two days the rest of the students and the staff had to bunk down in classrooms, and eat whatever could be cooked up in the school kitchen. But the kids did get to play games and watch movies with their friends, things they might not have been able to do if they'd been snowed in at home. At least they had some fun, thanks to the efforts of the 29 staff members who probably couldn't wait to hear that the snowplows had finished clearing the roads.

DID
YOU
KNOW...

... that smoking on the street was banned in Quebec for nearly 100 years, from the 1670s to the 1750s? The penalty for public puffing was a whipping with a cat-o'-nine-tails. Public flirting was also a no-no for several years. The daughter of Lieutenant-Governor Pierre André was actually sent back to France in 1736 when she was caught batting her eyelashes and flashing a smile at a handsome fellow on the street.



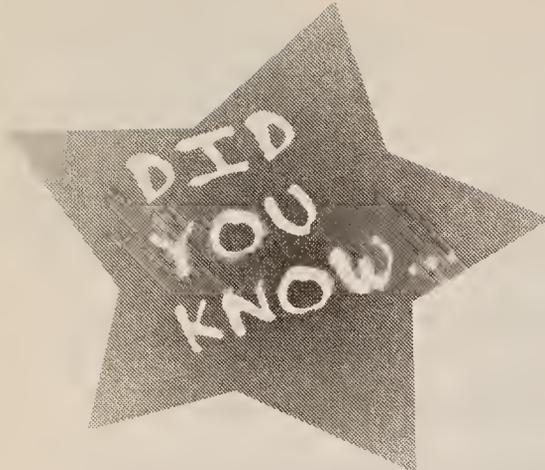


Mind
If
I Have
a Look?

Voyageur Alexis Bidagan, known as Alexis St. Martin, made one of the most important contributions to the modern medical study of human digestion.

St. Martin didn't want to become a famous human guinea pig, but that's what happened after he received a horrific shotgun wound that blew away a large part of his chest in 1822. Dr. William Beaumont, an American army surgeon, treated St. Martin as best he could, but declared that the man wouldn't survive.

Miraculously, however, St. Martin did survive, but he was left with an open wound in his side that lined up with a hole in his stomach that never healed. These two holes served as a window into his digestive tract, one that Beaumont couldn't resist looking through. Some people thought he could have done more to close the wound; instead, he spent two years caring for St. Martin as he was, and then hired him so he could readily see what happened to the food and drink that passed through St. Martin's stomach.



DID
YOU
KNOW...

... that the dark red, sweet-smelling Spartan apple is a Newton Pippin and another world-famous Canadian apple, the McIntosh. The Spartan was bred and first successfully grown in British Columbia in the 1930s.

Toilet Trap

In August, 2002, little Aidin Richard of Riverview, New Brunswick, wasn't potty-trained yet, but he was curious about how toilets worked. Playing in the toilet was a definite no-no, but one day he found the urge to do so irresistible. Fortunately for him, the toilet he decided to explore was new and hadn't been fully installed yet. Unfortunately for him, when he tried to stuff a huge wad of toilet paper into the bowl, his arm got stuck in the hole at the bottom of it. After a few minutes trying to pull his arm out, he did what any curious but frightened two-year-old would do in a similar fix — he started screaming his head off.

His mother, Shannon, came running to help, but Aidin's arm had swelled up and she couldn't budge it. So she did what any frantic mother with a child trapped in a toilet would do — she called the fire department. When the firefighters arrived, they carefully examined Aidin's predicament. Then they did what any self-respecting, well-trained firefighters would do — they whacked the toilet bowl with a hammer. When it cracked apart, Aidin's hand popped free. Aidin, his mother and the firefighters all recovered quickly from the traumatic episode. The damage to the toilet proved to be fatal.



Dinosaur POOP

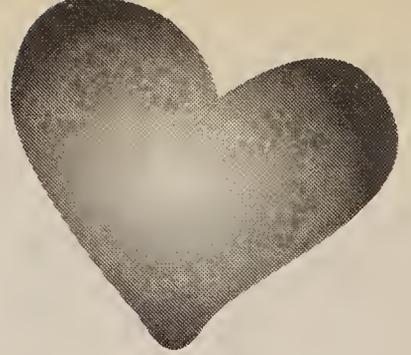
In 1995, staff from the Royal Saskatchewan Museum were busy excavating "Scotty," the nickname given to a *Tyrannosaurus rex* skeleton discovered in 1991 near the town of Eastend, about 150 kilometres southwest of Swift Current. It was just a couple of kilometres from the skeleton site that museum worker Wendy Sloboda made another amazing find — the biggest coprolite, or fossilized dung, that scientists are certain came from a large theropod, or carnivorous dinosaur, most likely a *T. rex*.

As coprolites go, this one was really big — about 44 by 16 by 13 centimetres. About 200 other small pieces of the original "deposit" were found nearby. Add them all up, and you've got a piece of dinosaur poop that would have been about 2.4 litres in volume 65 million years ago.

Scientists can learn a lot about the diets of prehistoric animals by studying the contents of fossilized feces. After analyzing bone fragments imbedded in this king-sized coprolite, researchers concluded that a *T. rex* had most likely dined on a younger, smaller dinosaur about

as big as a cow, crunching it up bones and all. Chalk up another first for Canada. It's home to the biggest known piece of dinosaur poop in the world.





Harlequin Enterprises Ltd., the world-famous publisher of romance novels, is a Canadian company, founded in Winnipeg by Richard Bonnycastle in 1949.

Over the years the lovebirds in Harlequin novels have:

- ♥ kissed each other more than 20 000 times
- ♥ hugged about 30 000 times
- ♥ said "I do" at least 7000 times.

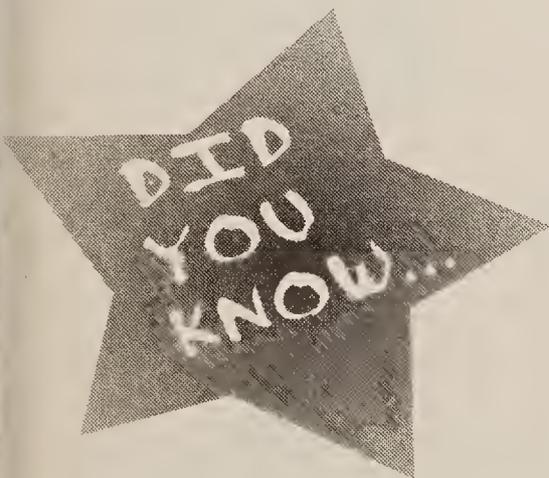
Happy Faces All Around

Montreal is very serious about fun and laughter, so much so that it's home to a museum honouring the important role that humour has played in people's lives. The Just for Laughs Museum is no joke. Nor is the Juste pour rire/Just for Laughs Festival. Held annually since 1983, it attracts hundreds of big-name comedians from around the world, all very serious about trying to make Montrealers and visitors to the city laugh for days on end.

Big Star

Bigger Co-star

Actress Fay Wray, best remembered for her 1933 *King Kong* role as the screaming blond beauty trapped in the clutches of the giant ape atop a New York City skyscraper, was born near Cardston, Alberta, in 1907. Eighty-six years later, in September, 1993, Cardston residents welcomed back their favourite hometown girl, throwing a big party in her honour. Wray died in New York in August 2004 at age 96.



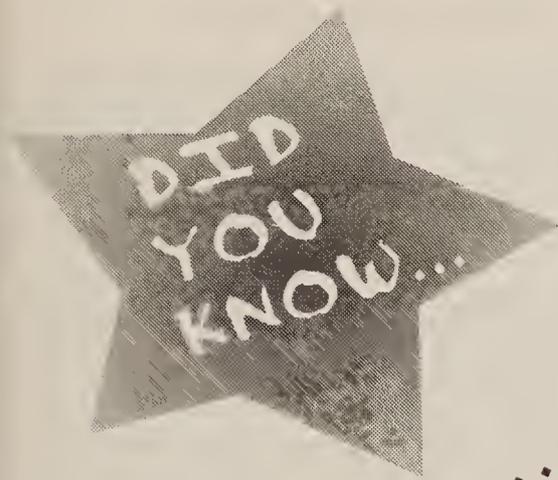
... that until midnight, December 31, 1921, British Columbians drove on the left side of the road? And did you know that Nova Scotians didn't switch to driving on the right until 2 a.m. on April 15, 1923?

What's that, eh?

Poutine had become so popular by the early 2000s that many fast food restaurants across Canada started adding it to their menus. Fernand Lachance of Warwick, Quebec, claimed the honour of being the first to come up with the yummy-tasting, calorie-loaded gooey combo of cheese curds and french fries in his restaurant back in 1957. He would heap both into a plastic bag so customers could take the concoction with them. Later on, at the request of a customer, he added gravy to the mix, and locals loved it.



Poutine's popularity eventually spread across the province, and visitors to Quebec often made a point of finding a restaurant that served it. By the 1990s, the dish was being cooked up in homes and restaurants far beyond Quebec's borders. Now it's known as a distinctly Canadian food item. Dietitians may not approve of its high fat and calorie content, but in the Great White North, it has become one of life's guilty pleasures. Many visitors to the country are also guilty of giving in to its gooey charm.



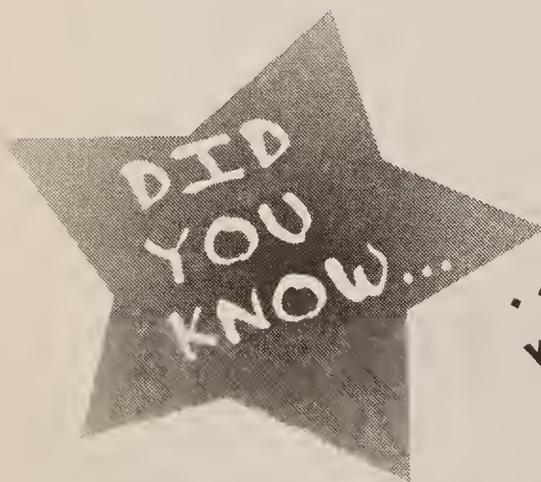
... that the fictional birthplace of Wolverine, the most popular superhero in the comic book series X-Men, is Alberta?

What's that, eh?

A *barber* is the word some Canadians use to describe a strong wind that is blowing sleet or freezing rain cold enough to turn to ice the second it hits your face and hair.

No Eruptions Here, Eh?

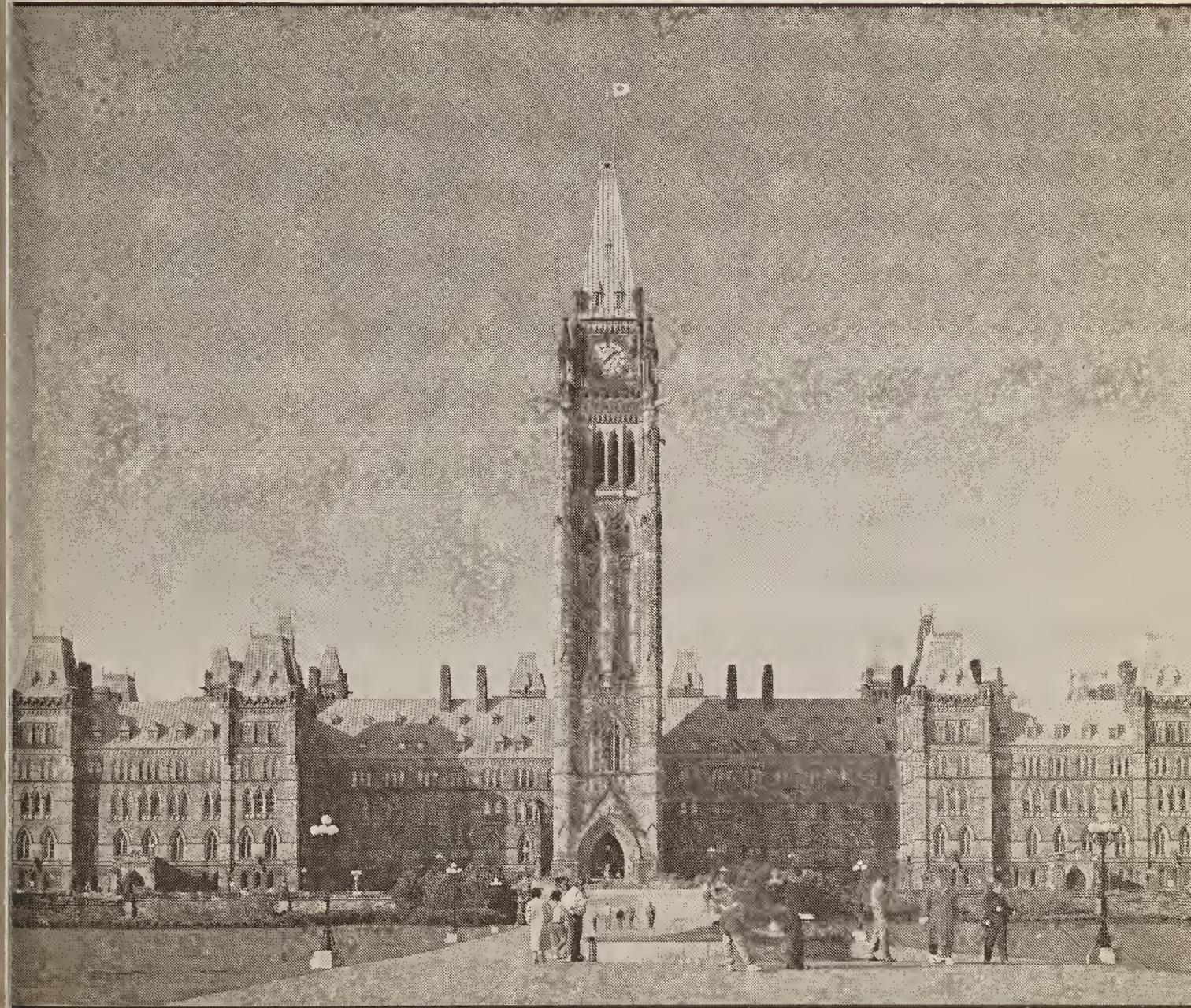
Contrary to some claims, Montreal is NOT built around a volcanic mountain. True, Mount Royal is made of igneous rock — hot melted rock, or magma, that cooled and hardened again. But that magma never made it up to the earth's surface from an active volcano. It worked its way up from the Earth's core, pushing up the rock above it into small mountains and hills like Mount Royal. Over millions of years, the surface rock wore away, leaving the igneous rock exposed and making some people think the Mount must have once been a volcano.



... that in 1854, when they were trying to halt the spread of cholera, Quebec City officials forbade all burials within the city limits?

DID
YOU
KNOW...

... that the Peace Tower in the
centre block of the Parliament
buildings in Ottawa is the largest
monument to peace in the world?

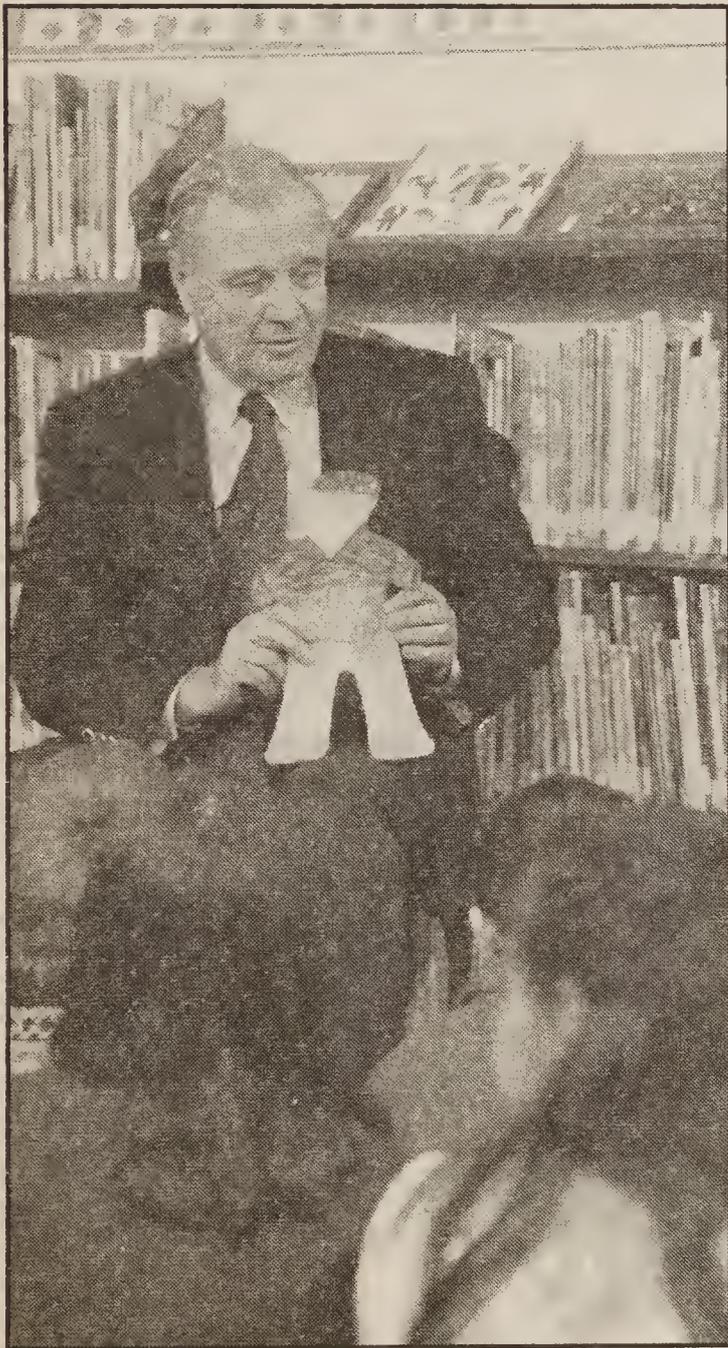


Very Special Delivery

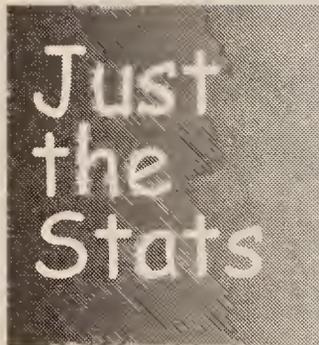
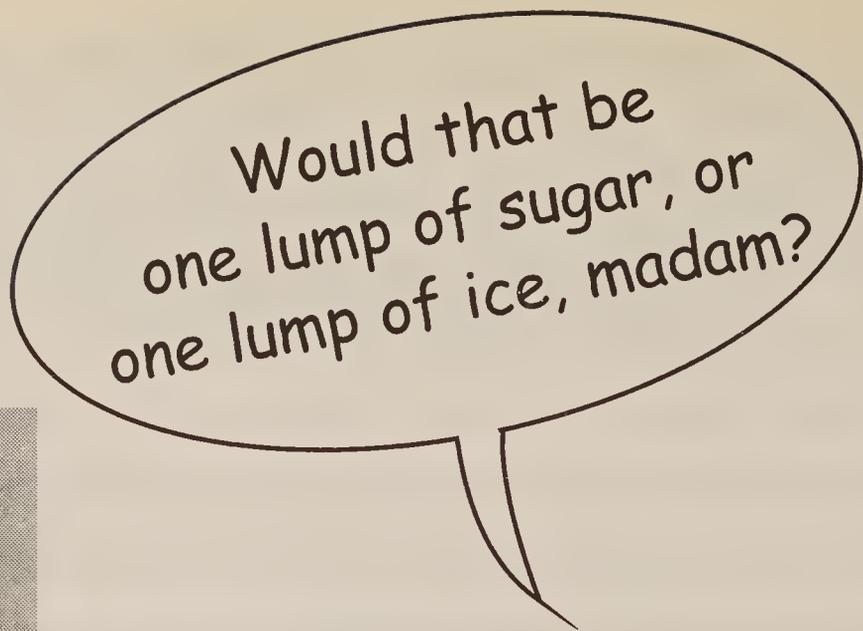
Like Stanley in the children's books by the late Jeff Brown, Flat Mark was as flat as the paper he was made of. To honour Brown's delightful character, Grade 4 students at Fenside Public School in Toronto made Flat Mark after reading *Flat Stanley* with their teacher, Karlo Cabrera. They also made some flat snacks and a flat coat for Flat Mark, because he was about to go on a trip. Then they wrote a letter explaining why they were sending Flat Mark away, slipped it and Mark into a large envelope, addressed it and put it in the mail. They were hoping that the person who received him would take the time to write back, telling them about some of the things Mark saw during his visit.

The person the students had decided to have Flat Mark visit in November of 2003 was Paul Martin, the new leader of the Liberal Party, who was about to become prime minister. Their teacher expected nothing more than a brief letter and a photograph back from Martin, figuring that he could use these to introduce his students to a unit on government. But Cabrera and his students got much, much more.

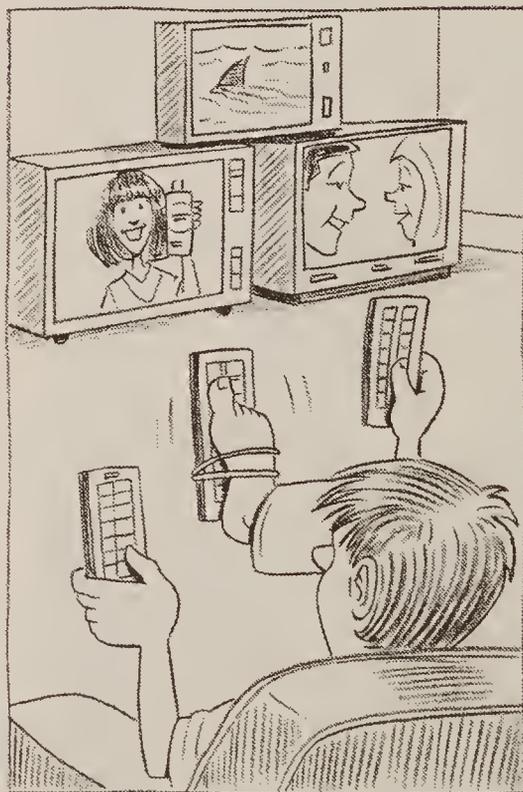
When Flat Mark arrived in Ottawa, he didn't just get to meet Martin; he got to spend several weeks with him. Martin brought Flat Mark to work, took him to lunch and to many important meetings. Flat Mark even got the chance to be on hand when Paul Martin was sworn in as Canada's twenty-first prime minister. What's more, Martin's staff took dozens of pictures of Flat Mark during his time on Parliament Hill, and posted them on a website, along with journal entries briefly describing Flat Mark's — and Martin's — busy schedule.



But the most amazing part of Flat Mark's adventure was his trip back to Toronto. Martin didn't mail Mark back to his young creators. On January 20, 2004, Paul Martin, Canada's prime minister, personally returned him to his senders at Fenside Public School.



More than 95 percent of Canadians prefer to drink their tea hot. In the United States that's not the case. About 85 percent of the tea served there is iced.



As of 2003, 20 percent of Canadian households had at least three colour televisions.

BOW WOW WOW!!!

The world's smartest dog, Chanda-Leah, is a Toy Poodle from Hamilton, Ontario. With love and coaching from her owner, Sharon Robinson, Chanda has learned to respond to more than 500 tricks on command, earning her star billing in the Guinness world records book as the "dog with the largest repertoire of tricks."

Like many other peppy pooches, Chanda can sit, roll over, shake a paw, fetch a ball and play dead when asked to, but what other cunning canine can skateboard, slam dunk, play piano, add, subtract and multiply? Chanda can. She also uses her own little toilet without fail, picks up and puts her toys away, brings Robinson a tissue when she sneezes, unties knotted shoelaces, and picks out specific numbers, days of the week and months of the year from cue cards.

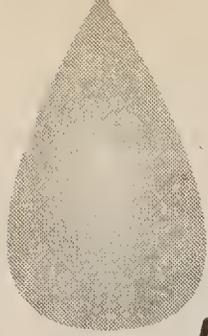
Chanda is smart enough to stand at attention when she hears "O Canada." She's also smart enough to know what to do in a no-win situation. When Robinson asks her, "What do you do when you see a big dog?" Chanda lies down and says her prayers.

How Chilly Is It?

Canadian researchers have come up with a new wind chill index. The wind chill index combines both the real air temperature and the effect it has on us. The old index, based on measuring how quickly water froze in different wind conditions in Antarctica, was calculated more than 60 years ago. Now it's based on the amount of heat humans lose from their faces when exposed to cold and wind. The numbers refer to how cold you feel. For instance, if the weather report says it's -10°C outside and the wind chill is -20 , you know that when you go outside you'll feel as cold as if it were -20°C on a calm day, with no wind.

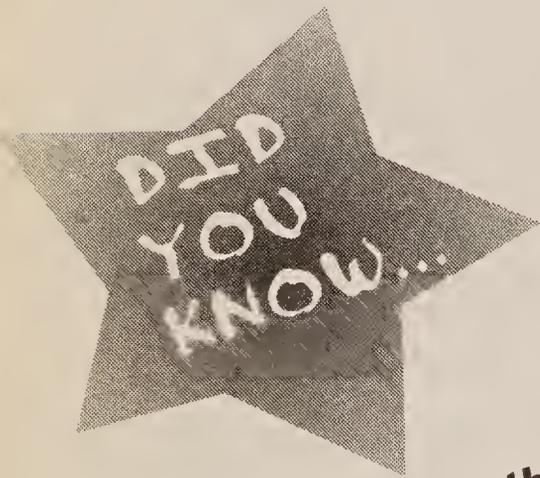
American researchers worked on developing the new index too. It's also used in the United States and many other countries around the world.





Really Hot, eh?

Humidex is a Canadian word. It's a scale used to indicate how much warmer you feel on a hot day when there's a lot of moisture, or humidity, in the air. On a really humid day the thermometer might read 30°C, but you might feel as if it's about 5°C warmer than that. Why? Perspiring can't cool your body down as well on a humid day because sweat can't easily evaporate into air that's already got a lot of moisture in it.



... that the Sphynx cat originated in Canada? In 1966, a regular hairy house cat living in Toronto gave birth to a hairless kitten named Prune. That kitten, obtained by Siamese cat breeders Ridyah and Yania Bawa, is the ancestor of the rare breed of hairless cat known now as the Sphynx. Early on, the breed was called the "Canadian hairless."

Hey, Dad, how about a trophy?

A new job brought Englishman Frederick Arthur Stanley and his family to Canada in 1888. His seven sons could already skate when they arrived in Ottawa, and it didn't take them long to make friends and learn to

play hockey with some local boys who often met at a public rink. When other rink users started complaining that the

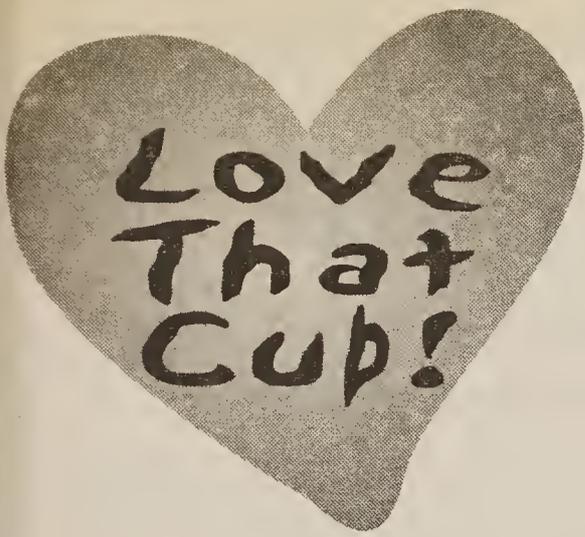


The Rideau Rebels hockey team. Lord Stanley's son Arthur is second from the left in the back row, and his other son Edward is seated far left.

boys were hogging the ice, the brothers said their dad wouldn't mind if the gang came over to play on a rink in their backyard. Their dad just happened to be Lord Stanley, who had come to Canada to be governor general, and their backyard just happened to be the grounds of Rideau Hall, the governor general's official residence in Ottawa.

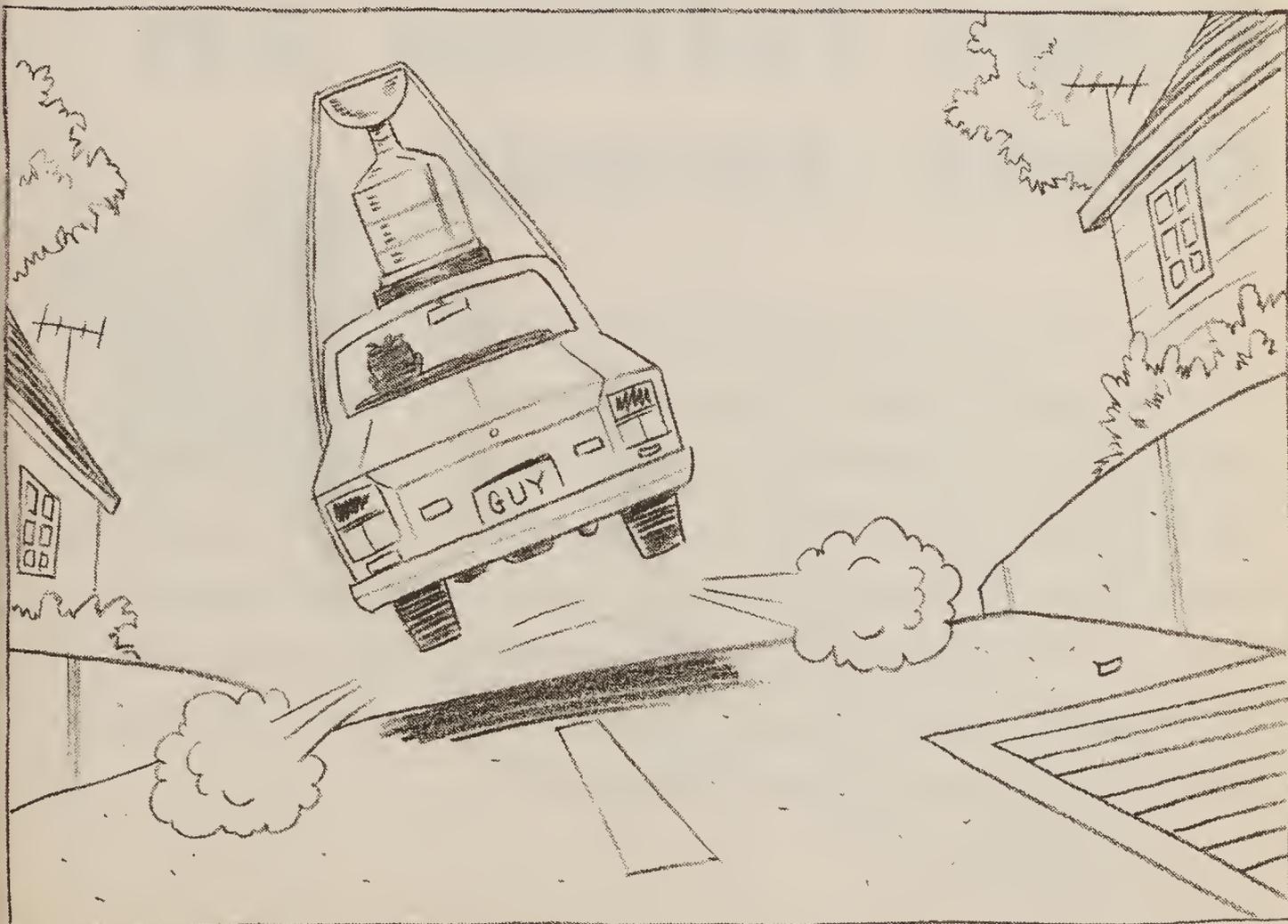
The Stanley brothers loved playing hockey, and Arthur, Lord Stanley's third son, became a huge fan of the sport in general. He's the one who came up with the idea of forming an ice hockey association. He and his brother, Algy, also kept bugging their dad to buy a trophy that could be given to each year's amateur hockey champions. Their father finally agreed, and in 1892 announced that he would be donating such a trophy.

Lord Stanley and his family left Canada soon after the silver bowl he bought was first awarded in 1893, but his boys still kept playing hockey back in England. They even formed their own team so they could play just for the fun of it. In 1895, for instance, they challenged a team from Buckingham Palace to a game. George, one of the palace players, would go on to become King George V in 1910. But the "Stanley" brothers weren't intimidated by royalty. They got so many goals against their opponents that it became rather embarrassing to keep score.



When the Montreal Canadiens won the Stanley Cup in 1978, they were honoured with a victory parade. After the parade, one of the team's star players, Guy Lafleur, snatched the famed trophy when no one was looking,

jumped into his car and drove west to his home town of Thurso, on the Quebec side of the Ottawa River. Grinning like a little kid, the great Lafleur appeared on his parents' doorstep holding the Stanley Cup. After the excitement in the Lafleur household died down, the star forward took the trophy outside so that more relatives, friends and neighbours could see it and have their picture taken with



it. Then he headed back to Montreal and returned the cup to its frantic keepers, who had been looking everywhere for it.

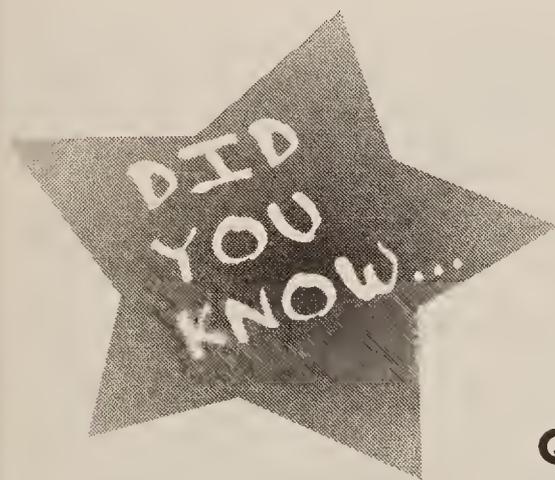
Lafleur was warned never to take Lord Stanley's trophy again without permission. But if Lord Stanley's son, Arthur, had still been alive, he probably would have been pleased to hear that the cup had been in such good, hockey-loving hands.

Snowflakes kept falling on their heads...

... but that didn't mean most Albertans felt much like singing about it. After all, there was still a month of summer left when snow started falling on southern and central parts of the province on August 21, 1992. In some places the way-too-early white stuff reached depths of up to 60 centimetres. The snowfall in Edmonton was the earliest ever, according to weather records for that city dating all the way back to 1884.

There's a Long, Long Trail a Winding...

When the Trans Canada Trail is completed, you'll be able to hike along it right across Canada, from sea to sea to sea. And if you do, you'll be following the longest recreational path in the world. Officially opened in September 2000, the trail is scheduled to have its main section in place by the fall of 2005. When it's done, the trail will span more than 16 000 kilometres, passing through more than 800 communities and through every province and territory.



... that the world's largest pepper grinder can be found at Via Allegro Ristorante, an Italian restaurant in Etobicoke, Ontario? Owner Phil Sabatino got a wood carver in Quebec to make the giant pepper mill. At more than 3.6 metres long, it takes two waiters to haul it over to a guest wanting a bit more spice in his sauce.

What's that, eh?

Back in the "good old days" when there were a lot more horses around than there were hockey pucks, kids and adults alike made do with slapping road apples around on roads and frozen ponds. But road apples didn't drop from trees; they dropped from horses. And when the brown lumps of horse manure froze solid, they made great – and free – hockey pucks.



Cold Cut Puck?

Before rubber hockey pucks were readily available, players in Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia used to saw off slices of tree branches and trunks that were about the right diameter for a puck. Then they'd soak them in water and let them freeze so they'd slide better.

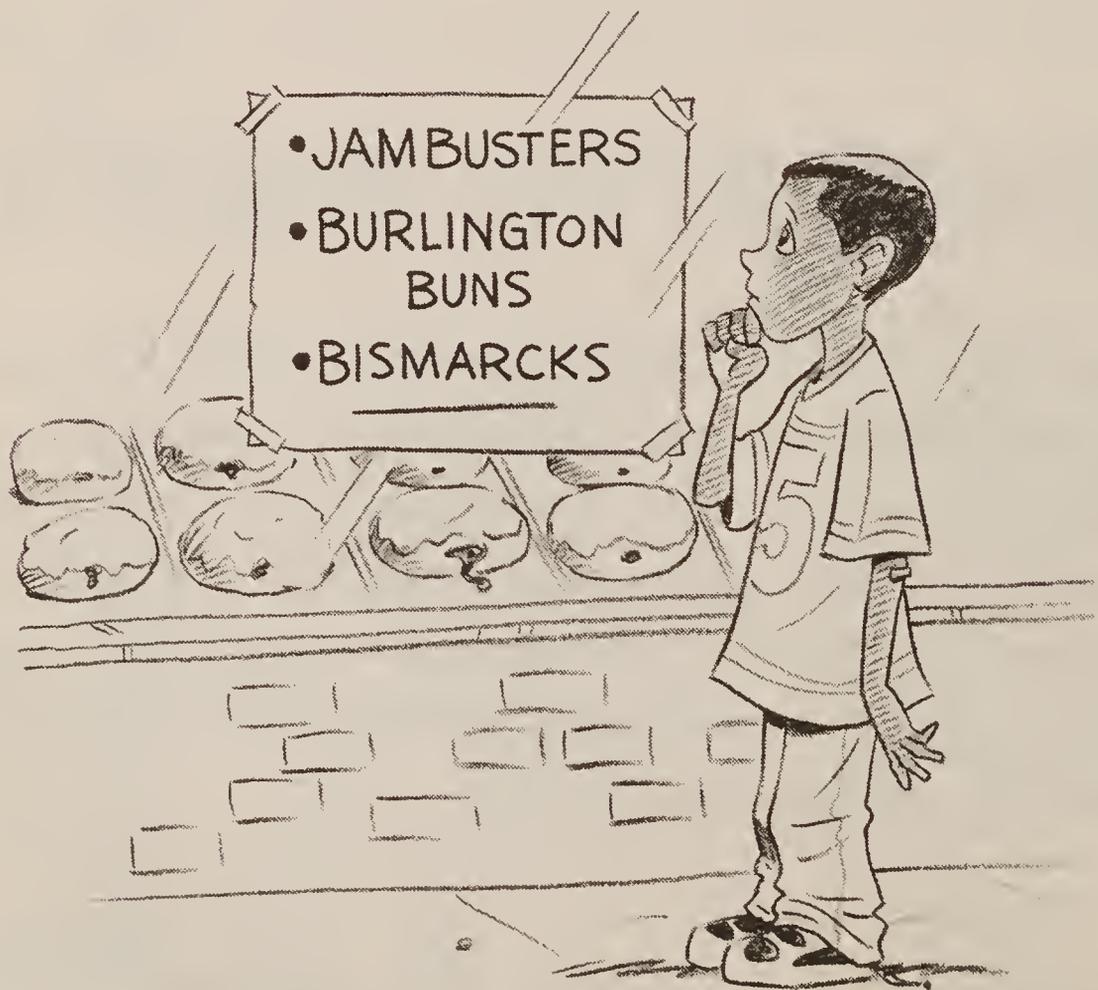
Old boot heels and flattened tin cans also made pretty good puck substitutes.

Here Comes the VERY Young Bride

Marguerite Sedilot, Canada's youngest bride on record, was just eleven years and five months old when she married twenty-year-old Jean Aubuchon of Trois-Rivières in New France (now Quebec) on September 19, 1654. She didn't have any choice in the matter — her father had signed a contract promising she'd marry Aubuchon back in 1643, soon after she was born.

What's that, eh?

In Manitoba and northern Ontario, if you're cutting down on calories you may have given up snacking on jambusters. Calorie counters in Nova Scotia might be avoiding Burlington buns, and weight watchers in Alberta and Saskatchewan could be cutting back on the number of bismarcks they munch for dessert. Jambusters, Burlington buns and bismarcks may not be good for you, but they sure do taste good. They're what many of us call jelly- or jam-filled doughnuts.



Coffee to go, eh?

The first Tim Horton's was opened in Hamilton, Ontario, in May 1964. Hamilton, with 78 franchises in 2003, now lays claim to being the capital of the "Timbit Nation."

Tim Horton, a National Hockey League defenceman, started the coffee-and-doughnut company with a former police officer, Ron Joyce. When Joyce became sole owner after Horton died in a car crash in 1974, there were 35 shops in the chain. Two years later, the company started selling the still-popular doughnut "holes," or Timbits.

Since then the company has gone on to become a great Canadian success story. By 1995, it had 1000 shops, including several dozen south of the border in the United States. That year, the American burger chain Wendy's bought the business, but left the Canadian firm to run its own show. By 2003, with 2200 franchises, Tim Horton's could brag about bumping McDonald's out of its Number 1 position in Canada.

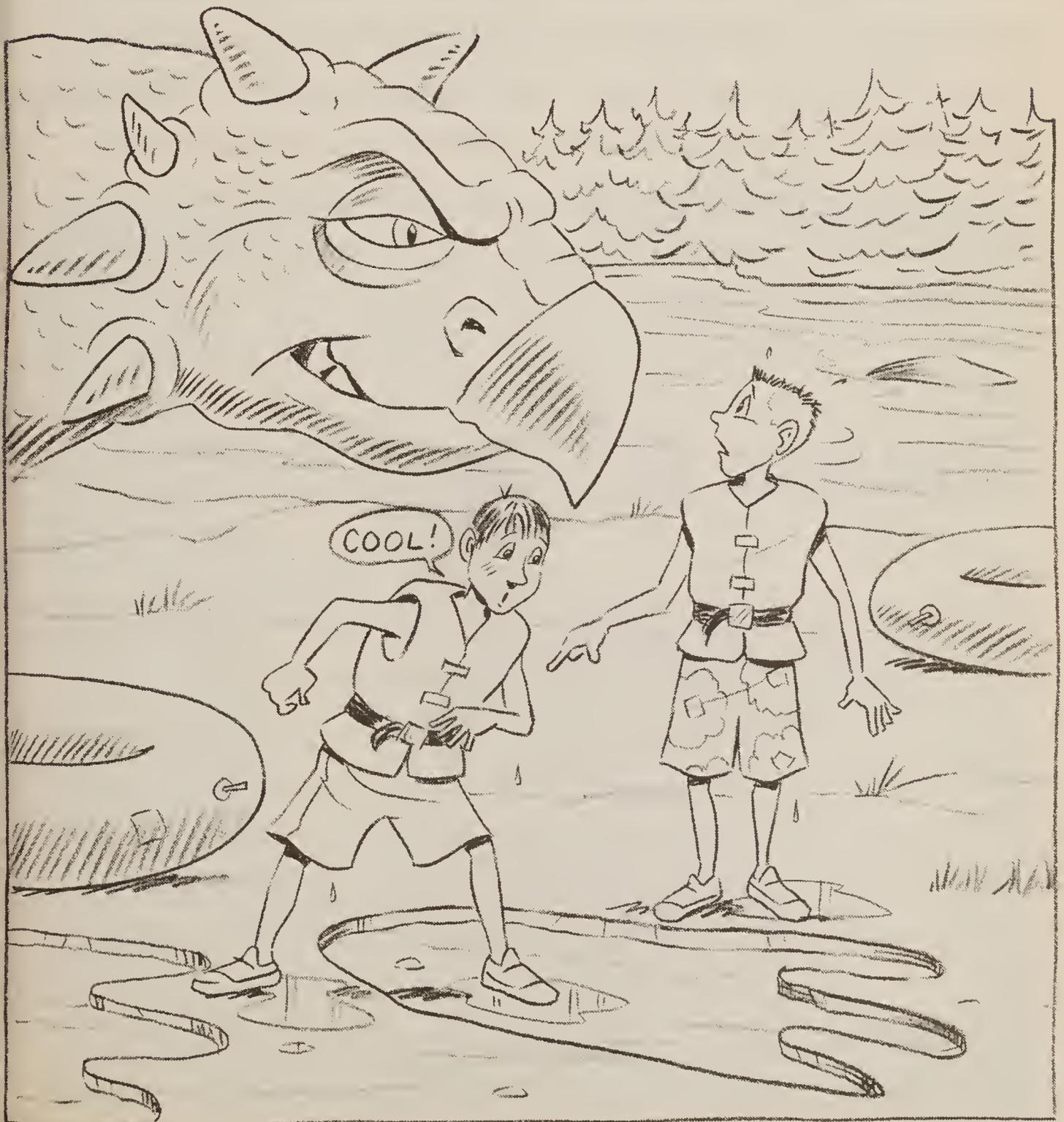
Apple fritters rule. And don't forget the coffee. And the soup, and the sandwiches, and the iced cappuccino and . . .



In August 2000, eight-year-old Daniel Helm talked his parents into taking him and his friend, Mark Turner, tubing — riding rapids on inflated rings — on Flatbed Creek, near Tumbler Ridge, British Columbia. At one point Mark fell into the water, so the two boys grabbed their rings and waded ashore. As they stood on the bank, they spotted four indentations in a long, flat section of rock. To the boys, the impressions in the rock formed a pattern that looked like footprints. But if these marks were fossilized footprints, the animal that had made them must have been huge. Daniel and Mark were convinced they were looking at dinosaur tracks!

Daniel's parents figured the boys' imaginations were working overtime, but they let the youngsters take pictures and measurements, and Daniel's dad eventually helped them get in touch with Rich McCrea in Edmonton, an expert on dinosaur footprints. The pictures and measurements Daniel and Mark sent McCrea led to his going with the boys the next summer to check out their find. And what a find it turned out to be!

Daniel and Mark had been right. The footprints, and 22 others that McCrea and his team uncovered, had been made by an ankylosaur, or armoured dinosaur, millions of years ago. What's more, while examining the footprints, McCrea discovered some dinosaur bones nearby. Suddenly everyone could envision what Daniel and Mark had imagined a year earlier — a huge, four-limbed reptile lumbering down to Flatbed Creek for a drink.



Towering T. Rex

Drumheller, Alberta, about 140 kilometres northeast of Calgary, is said to be the dinosaur capital of the world. It is located in a region of the province known as the Badlands, where some of the greatest dinosaur fossils ever discovered have been found. It's home to the world-famous Royal Tyrrell Museum, where amazing dinosaur skeletons are displayed. It's also home to the world's largest dinosaur monument. The steel, foam and fibreglass model of a *Tyrannosaurus rex* towers 26.2 metres over Drumheller, its tooth-filled mouth gaping open as if it's about to roar. A stairway inside the monster leads visitors to an observation platform in the giant's massive jaws.

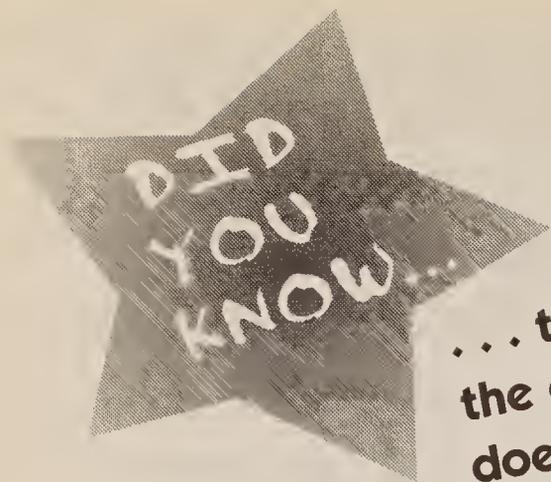
Nanuks of the North

Churchill, Manitoba, is located on the shore of Hudson Bay at the mouth of the Churchill River. It's a small community of just over 1100 people, but each fall its population swells with the arrival of thousands of human and animal visitors. The humans are adventure-seeking tourists, up to 15 000 of them each year. The animals are polar bears, the largest carnivorous land animals in the world.

The bears spend about nine months of the year out on the ice of Hudson Bay, hunting for seals. When the ice melts in

July, they swim ashore and hang out on the land, living off the fat they stored up while eating well over the winter. And just as well, too, because there's little or no food for them on the scrubby tundra. But in late September or early October, as the west side of the bay is beginning to freeze up, they start moving back towards the coast, passing through the area around Churchill as they migrate back to the ice of Hudson Bay. That's why Churchill is such a great place to go to see these magnificent creatures, and why it's known as the polar bear capital of the world.





... that the Northwest Territories is the only place in North America that doesn't have rectangular-shaped licence plates? The NWT plate is in the shape of a polar bear. And did you know that nanuk is the Inuktitut word for polar bear?

What's that, eh?

Muskeg is a Canadian word that comes from the Cree word *maskeq*, meaning swamp or bog. It's a spongy buildup of moss, leaves and other decaying plant material. Water lies very close to its surface. Muskeg covers most of the Hudson Bay Lowlands, and many other parts of northern Canada.

Hands Off Comet's Record

On August 5, 2002, Canadian Tom Comet set a new world juggling record. He performed his death-defying stunt before hundreds of screaming fans at a daredevil stage show in Edinburgh, Scotland. Even in his expert hands, Comet's feat is incredibly dangerous, so **DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IMITATING HIM**. What he did was throw and catch three 5.5-kilogram roaring, whirling chainsaws 44 times. During his record-breaking effort, he stunned the crowd when he dropped one saw after just 22 throws, 20 throws short of the existing record. But the cool Comet picked it up and started all over again. Forty-four throws later he was champion of the chainsaw juggling world. Triumphant, he raised his scarred arms in victory.



What's that, eh?

During the Depression of the early 1930s, many Canadians were out of work. Some people who could no longer afford gasoline used their cars like wagons, hitching them to horses or oxen. These contraptions were sarcastically referred to as Bennett buggies, named after Richard Bedford (R.B.) Bennett, Canada's unpopular prime minister from 1930-1935. Many people blamed him for much of the hardship they had to put up with when his Conservatives were in power.



Queen of the Skies

Amelia Earhart, the world's most famous female aviator, vowed to learn to fly one day when she was in Canada. Earhart, an American, came to Toronto in 1917 after graduating from high school. There she served as a volunteer nurse at a military hospital, caring for wounded World War I soldiers. Several air force squadrons trained in Toronto and there was a lot of air traffic above the city at the time. Earhart was fascinated by the planes and spent much of her spare time at an airport in the north end of Toronto watching pilots-in-training practise takeoffs and landings. Her love of flying took root there, as did her determination to become a pilot. She returned to the United States in 1919 and went up in a plane for the first time in 1920. A year later she kept the promise she had made to herself in Toronto, completing her flying lessons as quickly as she could manage to get instruction and flying time.

In 1932, a year after Charles Lindbergh became the first person to fly solo across the Atlantic, Earhart became the first woman to do so. Three years later, she became the first person to make a solo flight from Hawaii to

California. In 1937, she took off with a navigator to fly all the way around the world. After completing two-thirds of that incredible journey, she, her navigator and the plane disappeared somewhere over the Pacific Ocean.

Just the Stats

On February 29, 2004, there were about 20 650 "leapers" in Canada. "Leaper" is the term for someone born on that date in a leap year.



Brave Hunters of the North

In 2003, the folks of South River, Ontario, held the first annual blackfly hunt, claiming it would greatly reduce the number of the nasty little biters in the area. If only . . .

The month-long hunting season opened on May 3, with town officials giving enthusiastic kickoff speeches and children taking turns whacking a blackfly-shaped piñata. When the candies finally spilled out of the decapitated blackfly, the hunt was on.

This was one very well-organized event. Hunters had to get a licence to be eligible for the prizes that would be awarded at the official weigh-in on June 7. Hunters were told that they should release flies under 2.5 mm whenever possible. They were warned that anyone caught injecting individual flies with water to increase their weight would be disqualified. So would anyone caught adding other species such as mosquitoes to their catch. Anyone caught breaking hunt rules could be used as blackfly bait. Using trained hunting frogs was allowed . . . as long as owners kept them on a leash. Spreading jam and dabbing perfume behind the ears to attract flies was also permitted.

On June 7, prizes were handed out to the most successful hunters, to the best dressed hunters and to the authors

of the best limericks or short poems about blackflies. The event was such a success that on June 9, top hunter Rusty Perkins was interviewed on CBC Radio's "As It Happens" to talk about his winning techniques.

Give South Riverites a round of applause. They scored 10 out of 10 on the "great Canadian sense of humour" scale.



Famous Family

A Nova Scotian named Rose Fortune may very well have been the world's first policewoman. Fortune's family escaped from slavery in Virginia in 1783 and settled in Annapolis Royal when she was 10. When she grew up, Fortune simply put herself in charge of policing the community. To keep ruffians in line after dark, the tiny woman established curfews and went around town sending home anyone still out and about after her deadline. Fortune died in 1864. Seven generations later, in 1984, one of her descendants, Duarene E. Lewis, was elected mayor of Annapolis Royal. She was Nova Scotia's first black mayor.



Butter? Margarine? The War Wages On

The manufacture and sale of margarine was banned in Canada from 1886 to 1948, except during the butter shortages of World War I. Powerful campaigns by dairy producers convinced generations of politicians to keep the ban in place. Finally, thanks to a ruling by the Supreme Court in 1948, the federal government lifted the ban and left it up to the provinces to decide what to do about the less expensive butter substitute. At first, all provinces but Newfoundland said that yellow-coloured margarine couldn't be sold. (Margarine in its raw state is white, so it doesn't look like butter.) A few years later, British Columbia said yellow margarine was okay.

To get around the colour ban in many other parts of Canada, producers sold white margarine in plastic bags that had a cute little button full of food colouring in the middle. One press of the thumb and bright orange liquid squirted out of the button inside the bag. Then the bag had to be kneaded and kneaded to spread the colouring evenly throughout the margarine. Kids were usually assigned this task.

It wasn't until 1994 that margarine the same colour as butter could be sold in Ontario. Before that, it had to be paler or brighter than butter yellow. And as of 2004, butter-coloured margarine was still banned from store shelves in Quebec. Mind you, that law doesn't stop some Quebecers from asking relatives and friends from other parts of Canada to bring the contraband spread with them when they come for a visit.



The Ultimate Lawyer's Joke

When wealthy Toronto lawyer Charles Vance Millar died in 1926, his will showed him to be quite the jokester. Millar had been a bachelor, so he didn't have to worry about leaving his estate to his children. Instead, he drew up a will that would test his belief that everyone can be tempted to give in to greed, if the price is right.

With a delicious sense of mischief, Millar included items in his will that he knew would cause trouble. For instance, he left shared use of a luxurious house to three lawyers who couldn't stand being with each other. He also left valuable shares in the Ontario Jockey Club to two people who had spoken out for years against the evils of racetrack gambling. He even left shares in a brewery to anti-drinking ministers.

But what made Millar's will famous was his leaving most of his wealth to the Toronto woman who had the most children in the 10 years after he died. The media went wild over this bequest, dubbing the race to have babies The Great Stork Derby.

When Millar died, he had no idea that the Great Depression would hit people so hard a few years later, or that his estate — from shares in the building of the tunnel between Windsor, Ontario, and Detroit, Michigan — would eventually be worth three-quarters of a million

dollars. But by the 1930s, many poor mothers in Toronto were dreaming of winning that prize.

Questions about whether stillborn or out-of-wedlock babies should count took years to settle in court, but finally four women who had each had nine children by 1936 were declared the winners. So the Stork Derby ended in a four-way tie, with each woman getting \$125 000 — a very large fortune back in the Dirty Thirties.



Just the Stats

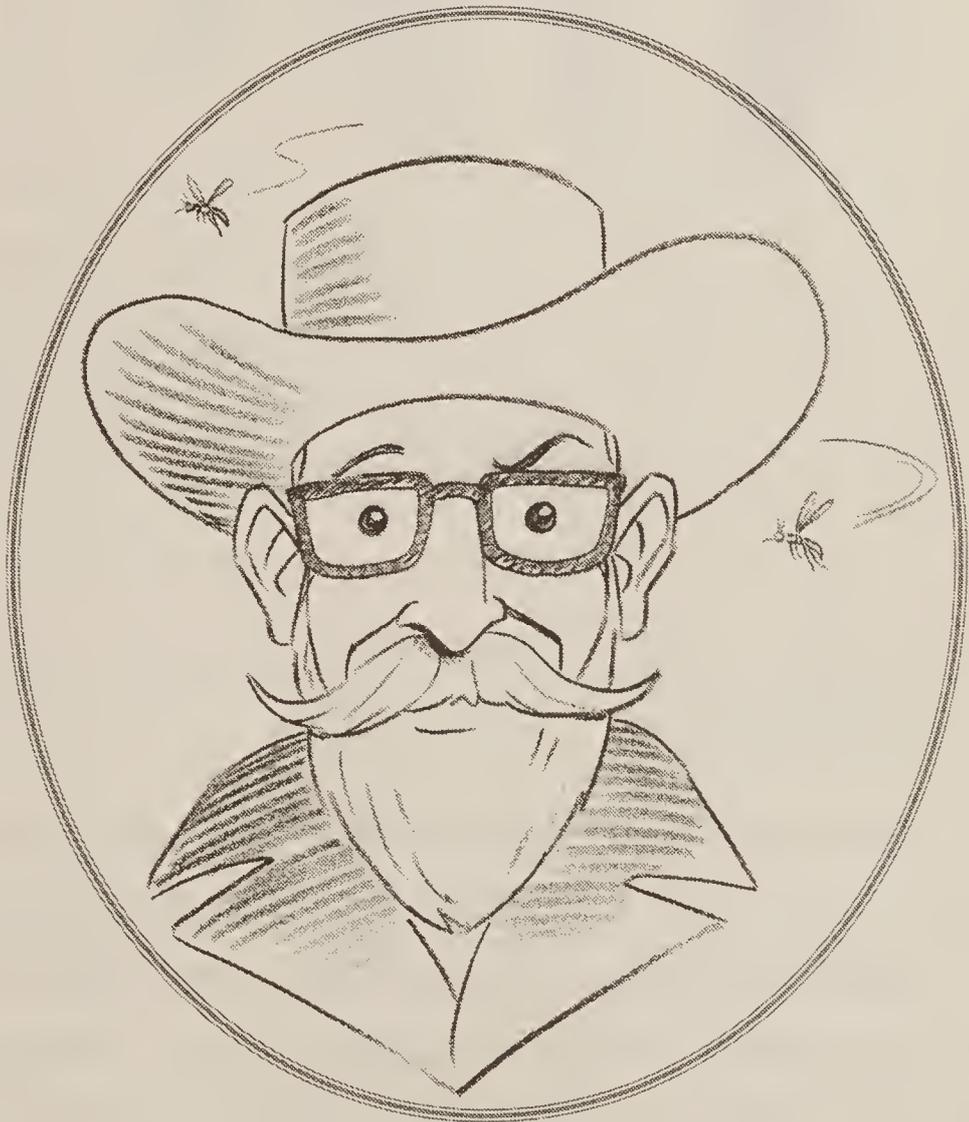
*In 2002, after a rainy June and a hot, humid early July — ideal breeding conditions for mosquitoes — Winnipeggers had to put up with more than 25 bites per minute when the bloodsuckers came out to feed each evening.

*But that doesn't come close to the city's all-time record in the summer of 1991: 184 bites per minute. Don't scratch.

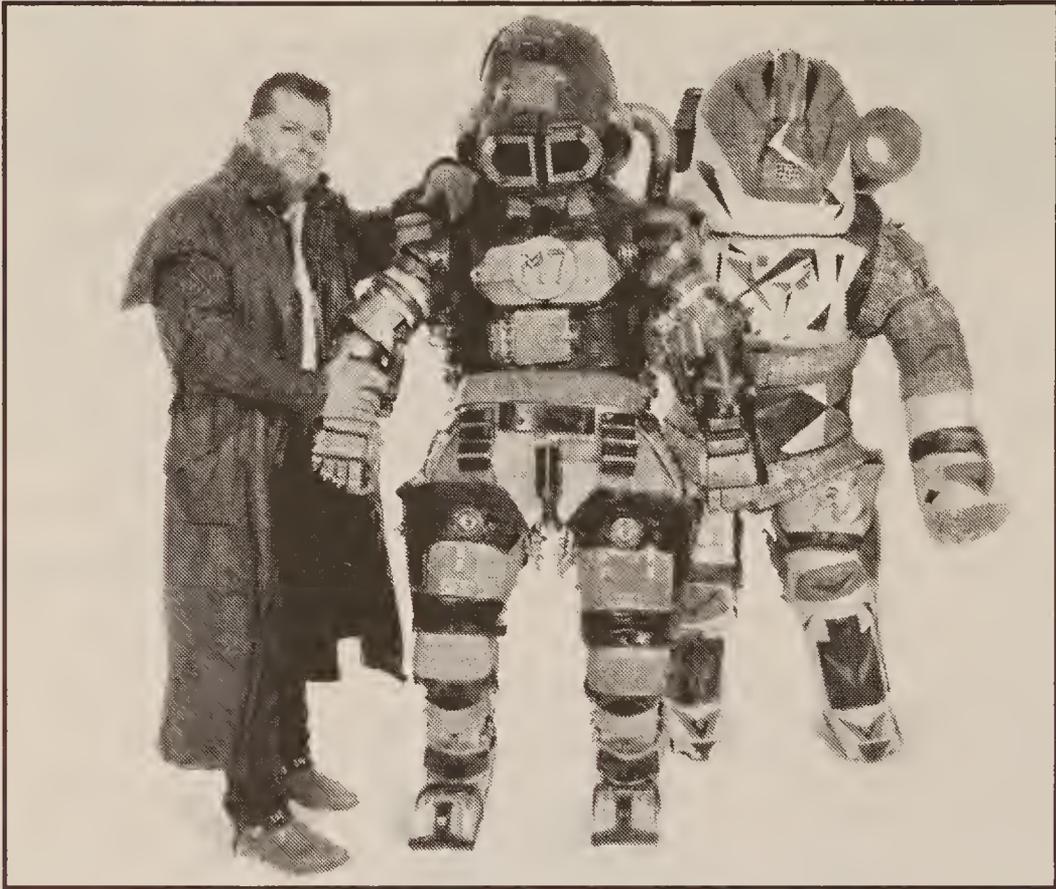


DID
YOU
KNOW...

... that one of the most effective bug repellents in the world is a Canadian concoction? Charlie Coll of Truro, Nova Scotia, created Muskol in the 1970s. Shering-Plough Canada, a big drug company in Mississauga, Ontario, bought Coll's business in 1982, but Charlie wasn't forgotten. He's the man pictured on bottles of Muskol.



The Grizzly Man



In 1984, 20-year-old Troy James Hurtubise of North Bay, Ontario, survived a grizzly bear attack while visiting British Columbia. Three years later, after watching the film *Robocop*, Hurtubise got one wild and wacky idea. He would build himself a protective suit that would let him get close enough to learn more about the type of bear that had attacked him.

Each suit Hurtubise built was an improvement over the previous one, but some of his testing methods were pretty dramatic. Once he threw himself 45 metres down the Niagara Escarpment to see how well his suit withstood such a bumpy tumble. A few other times, he faced a 3-tonne truck going 40 kilometres an hour head-on, and he also let it run over him more than a dozen times.

Fortunately, his armour always held out, but just barely sometimes. However, the stronger he made his suit, the harder it was for him to get around in it.

Hurtubise's sixth effort, the Ursus Mark VI, was a massive outfit made of titanium, chain mail, heavy plastic and lots of duct tape. It weighed nearly 65 kilograms and cost him a fortune to build. It's the suit featured in *Project Grizzly*, a Canadian film made in 1996 documenting his elaborate testing and his trip back to B.C. to get up close and personal with a grizzly. The film shows Hurtubise suited up in the Ursus Mark VI as he's battered by a swinging log, bashed by burly bikers with baseball bats, hit with a shotgun blast and struck by flying arrows. The suit kept him safe, but he could barely move in it. When he and a team of friends finally got to B.C., they spent days searching for bears, but didn't come across one until they were about to leave. By then it was too late for Hurtubise to run back to the suit and put it on before the grizzly took off.

This misadventure left Hurtubise deeply in debt. Creditors eventually confiscated the Ursus Mark VI and he lost his scrap metal business. What's more, his labour of love was ridiculed when *Project Grizzly* came out in 1999. But Hurtubise didn't give up. At last report, he was working on the Ursus Mark VII, a suit supposedly even stronger. But all he really wants to do with it is study, close up, the type of bear that attacked him when he was young. He definitely deserves an A for effort.

You Don't Say

Did you know that one of the sons of Charles Dickens, the famous nineteenth-century English author, was an original member of the North West Mounted Police?

Francis Jeffrey Dickens was the fifth of Charles's ten children. In 1874, thanks to a family friend — Canada's governor general, Lord Dufferin — Dickens was named a sub-inspector in the newly formed police force that would become the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. He was posted to many trouble spots in western Canada and served in the force until resigning in 1886. Some accounts suggest that he wasn't all the force expected of its officers, but his dad was famous, so two scarlet-coated Mounties were on hand in September 2002 for the ceremonial unveiling of a new headstone on the grave of Inspector Francis J. Dickens in Moline, Illinois. Dickens died there of a heart attack at age 42.



Jeffrey Dickens is second from the left in the back row.

One Rock at a Time

About 20 kilometres west of Kindersley, Saskatchewan, a strange stone wall cuts across the fields. It's a big wall. Taller than an adult at its low points, it reaches heights of 5 metres in some places, and stretches on for at least a kilometre. But the wall doesn't "do" anything. It doesn't fence anything in or keep anyone out. It doesn't surround a special building or mark off a famous battle site. It's just there.

Farmer Albert Johnson didn't start out to build a wall when he moved the first rocks into place back in 1962. He just wanted to tidy up a pile of stones that he had cleared from part of his property. So he lined them up, one by one. Then he began stacking them carefully on top of each other.

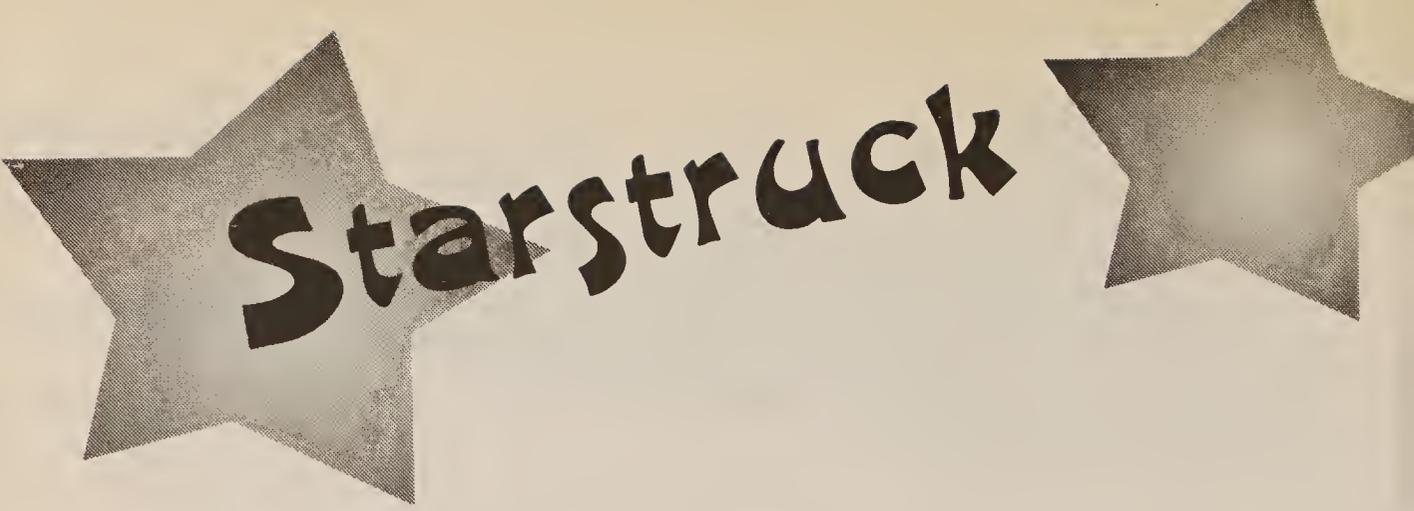
For 40 years Johnson collected, sorted and piled up stones, creating the massive dry-stone (mortar-free) wall. Day after day, week after week, month after month he worked on it, without really knowing why. He just felt he had to.

Now the wall sits there, doing nothing in particular except give people something to talk about and to remember "Stonewall" Johnson by.

Where did you say?

Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump in southwestern Alberta tops most lists of favourite Canadian place names. The last part of the name recalls how, for nearly 6000 years, the Plains First Nations people hunted buffalo by chasing them over steep cliffs there. The trails leading to the cliffs and the thousands of skeletons in the area are some of the best evidence of how aboriginal people lived so long ago. But, according to a Blackfoot and Peguis legend, the "Head-Smashed-In" part doesn't refer to what happened to the buffalos' heads. The legend tells of how a young man stood under a ledge below the cliff so he could have a better view of the hunt. That wasn't such a good idea. His skull was crushed by the buffalo crashing to the ground around him.

In 1981, the United Nations designated the place a World Heritage site.

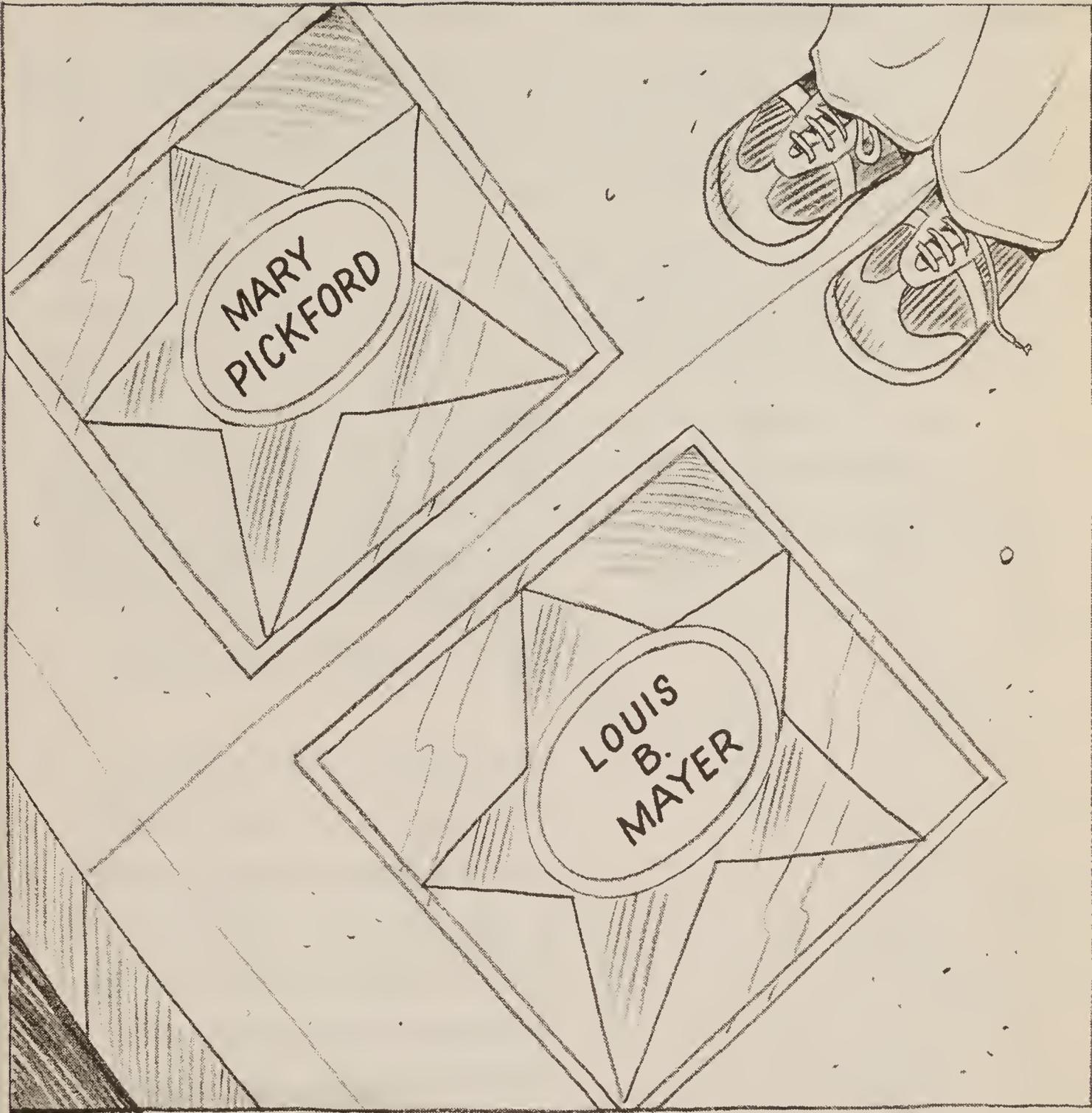


Starstruck

A Canadian, Gladys Louise Smith, was one of the founders of United Artists, the famous movie studio. Smith was born in Toronto in 1892. When she became a popular stage actress in New York, she changed her name to Mary Pickford. Pickford went on to become a great film star. In 1919, she and her actor husband, Douglas Fairbanks, together with two other film giants, Charlie Chaplin and D. W. Griffith, formed United Artists — now one of the most successful film companies in the world.

Another famous film company also has a Canadian connection. Eliezer Meir (later called Louis B. Mayer) was born in Russia in 1885. He and his family emigrated to Canada when he was a boy. He grew up in Saint John, New Brunswick, but moved to the United States when he was a young man. There he would go from scrap metal dealer to theatre owner to owner of a chain of theatres and, in 1917, to founder of his own filmmaking company. That company eventually merged with two others. If you haven't already guessed, he's the "Mayer" in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM).

In 2004 Pickford and Mayer were both given stars on Canada's Walk of Fame in downtown Toronto.



D'oh!

On May 30, 2003, Winnipeg's city council awarded an honorary citizenship to their most famous native son — TV star Homer Simpson. Homer was on hand for the ceremony, as were officials from Global Television, the network that carries "The Simpsons" in Canada.

American cartoonist Matt Groening once joked that because he had based his Homer creation on his own

Canadian-born father, Homer Simpson must be Canadian. When asked where his father had been born, he tossed out the first Prairie city that came to mind — Winnipeg.

It turns out that Homer Groening was actually born in the Saskatchewan hamlet of Main Centre. But that fact of life wasn't about to stop Winnipeg from giving the fictional Homer the keys to the city. Having him as a native son was a claim to fame that city councillors couldn't resist.



You want big? You'll get BIG.

When FedEx came looking for a big box to use in a 2002 Super Bowl promotion, folks at Norampac Inc. in Toronto decided they might as well aim for a world record while they were at it. Sure enough, the huge corrugated cardboard box they assembled in downtown Toronto on October 15, 2001, was a record breaker. Made under a large tent to keep out the rain (the box would have collapsed if it had got wet), the finished box measured a whopping 9.34 x 3.04 x 2.19 metres, big enough to hold a school bus.

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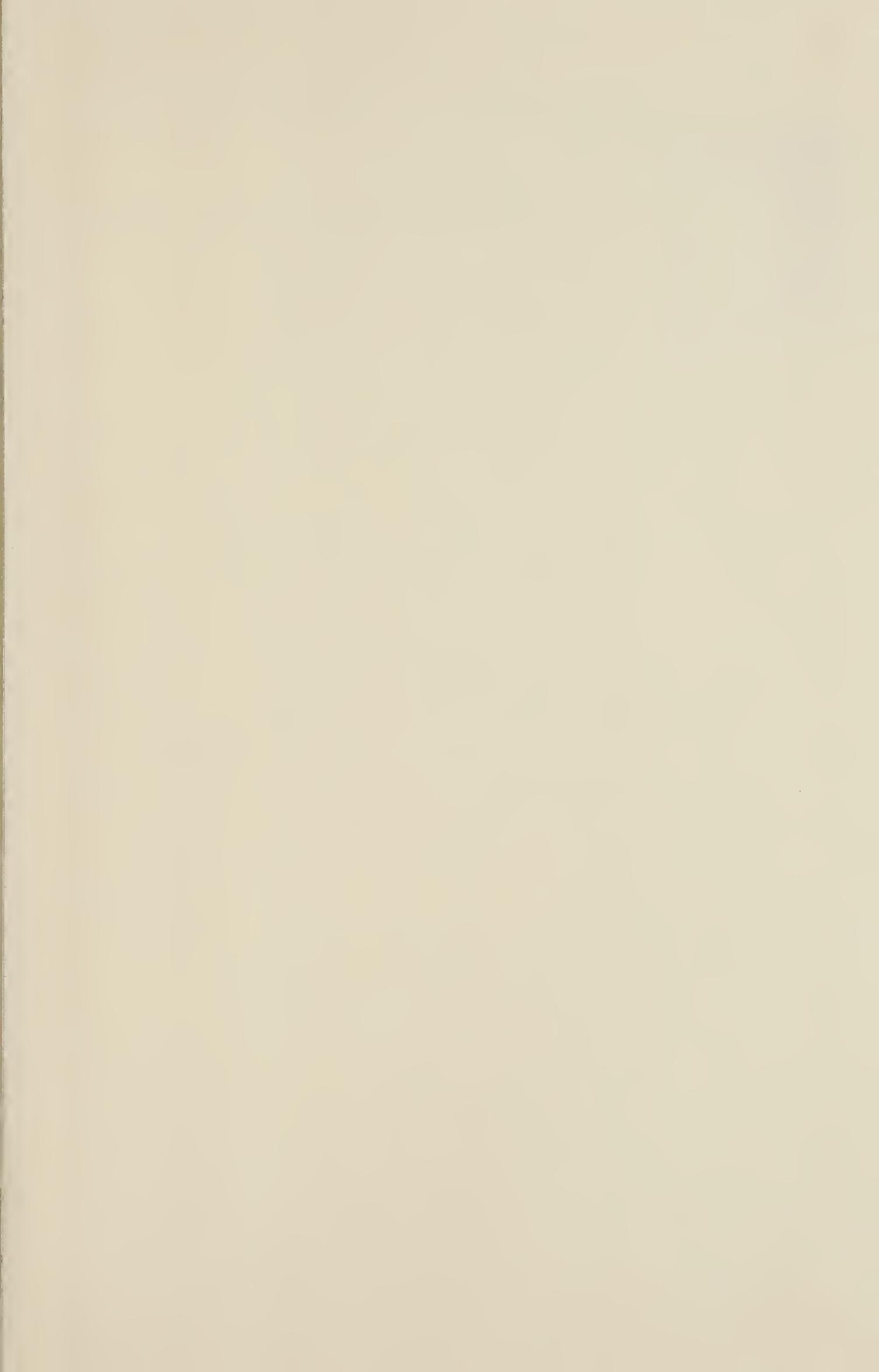
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