

CANADA'S

BONUS

2017 SUMMER READING GUIDE

# HISTORY

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# BIG

# QUESTIONS OF



# CANADA



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*on immigration*

**RY MORAN**

*on reconciliation*

**CHARLOTTE GRAY**

*on culture*

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#### On the cover

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## COMING UP IN CANADA'S HISTORY

### Beaver Utopia

Canada's national animal was an object of much fascination in the early days of exploration. Europeans believed beavers toiled within large hierarchal societies – how else to explain their magnificent dams? Plus: The heroines of the Grenfell Mission, the stories behind Canada's royal place names, and the making of a movie fiasco.

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Canada's History magazine was founded by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1920 as *The Beaver: A Journal of Progress*. The HBC's commitment to the History Society and its programs continues today through the Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation. Canada's History Society was founded in 1994 to popularize Canadian history. The society's work includes: *Canada's History* magazine, *Kayak: Canada's History Magazine for Kids*, *CanadasHistory.ca*, and the Governor General's History Awards.



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ISSN 1920-9894

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Postmaster - Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: Canada's History PO Box 118 Station Main, Markham, ON L3P 3J5

Postage paid in Winnipeg.  
Publications Mail Agreement No. 40063001  
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## Big questions

Fifty years ago, Canadians celebrated their country's centennial with Expo 67, a joyous and hopeful coming-out party for the nation. A half century later, the sesquicentennial of Confederation is being marked by introspection and uncertainty.

Remember how the twentieth century was supposed to “belong to Canada”? Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier’s brash prediction turned out to be off the mark. And, as we wade deeper into the twenty-first century, Canadians everywhere seem to be questioning much of what they thought they knew about their country.

For instance, my parents, and their parents before them, were taught that Canada’s story began with the arrival of the “two founding peoples” — British and French — and continued in a steady linear path toward “progress.”

That version of history is, well, *history* now — and rightfully so. Today, teachers, students, historians, and everyday Canadians are delving deeper into the national narrative, shining new light on stories that were for too long pushed to the margins of history texts.

We are realizing that there have been winners and losers in this Confederation game. We’ve broken treaties with our First Peoples and at times stumbled badly on the road to equality for all Canadians. Our Dominion has somehow become a country of have and have-not provinces — and have and have-not Canadians.

And yet, at the precise moment when we are doubting ourselves the most, we are increasingly seen by other nations as one of the best places in the world in which to live.

As I write this, it’s hard not to think of the asylum seekers who, last winter, nearly froze to death stumbling through snowy fields to cross illegally from the United States into Canada. Imagine the desperation that drove their journey north toward freedom and a better life — toward *Canada*.

In this issue, we mark the 150th anniversary of Confederation by looking both to the past and to the future.

The centrepiece of this double-sized issue is “The Big Questions of Canada,” an essay series that tackles issues of crucial importance to all Canadians. What does it mean to be a nation of immigrants? How do we achieve true reconciliation with Indigenous peoples? Does federalism have a future? These are tough questions. Together, we’ll need to find the answers.

Is Canada perfect? No. Decidedly not. But we’ve gotten more things right than we’ve gotten wrong. And this July 1 I will be toasting Canada’s 150th with the hope that we can learn from our past mistakes, and also help future generations not to repeat them.

*Mark Reid*



*in the company of*  
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*Our history creates our identity. It paints a picture of our past and opens a door to our future.  
History is a testimony of the human experience — a powerful tool to inform, instruct and inspire.*

**T**he importance of understanding ourselves by examining our history has been an anchoring belief at Canada's National History Society. Our work is to bring relevance and awareness to our nation's past, illuminating the people, places and events that unite us as Canadians.

This year, our country marks its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Confederation. In 2020, our flagship magazine, *Canada's History*, celebrates one hundred years of storytelling as the second-oldest magazine in the country. In celebrating these milestones, Canada's National History Society is establishing a new *company of Adventurers* — champions of history who will help Canadians communicate our collective identity, shape new thinking and open fresh frontiers.

The initiative is designed to encourage major and multi-year contributions from community leaders from coast to coast to coast. Our work has only just begun, and we are grateful for the early support of these leaders *in the company of Adventurers*.

Our founding patron, the Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation, is the principal private donor to Canada's History Society. Since our inception in 1994, the HBC History Foundation has helped to support the Society and sustain the publication of *Canada's History* magazine, formerly *The Beaver*.

Since 2002, TD Bank Group has been a loyal sponsor, celebrating the great work of recipients of the Governor General's History Awards. The annual event honours the exemplary work of history teachers, writers, filmmakers, scholars, museums and community groups.

H. Sanford Riley, *Manitoba*, has encouraged and supported us in many ways, bringing together Manitoba leaders to advance the work of the Society and creating

the Great Writers initiative, a new fund to bring prominent writers to the pages of *Canada's History* magazine.

Several of Canada's leading families have joined the *Adventurers* to date, including The Asper Foundation, *Manitoba*; John and Pattie Cleghorn and Family, *Ontario*; The Molson Foundation, *Quebec*; The Pollard Family Foundation, *Manitoba*; and Richardson Foundation, *Manitoba*.

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Key individual *Adventurers* include W. John Bennett, *Quebec*; James W. Burns, *Manitoba*; Cecil and Susan Hawkins, *Ontario*; Edward and Stella Kennedy, *Manitoba*; Joseph E. Martin, *Ontario*; Richard W. Pound, *Quebec*; J. Derek Riley, *Manitoba*; and David Ross and Audrey Loeb, *Ontario*.

National leaders such as CDS Global Canada, Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life, together with MTS, RBC Foundation, and Canada's first community foundation, The Winnipeg Foundation, are key among the *Adventurers* who help us engage youth, share authentic Indigenous histories, grow a national dialogue and celebrate our national history community.

Every province has borne witness to significant events and people who have made thoughtful investments in our nation's growth. It's time to join together to ensure that our collective story is told.

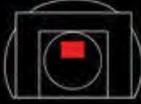
History has the power to give meaning to our lives, to heal wounds, and to set the record straight. Together, we are embarking on the journey of a lifetime to protect, preserve, and promote this critical national resource.

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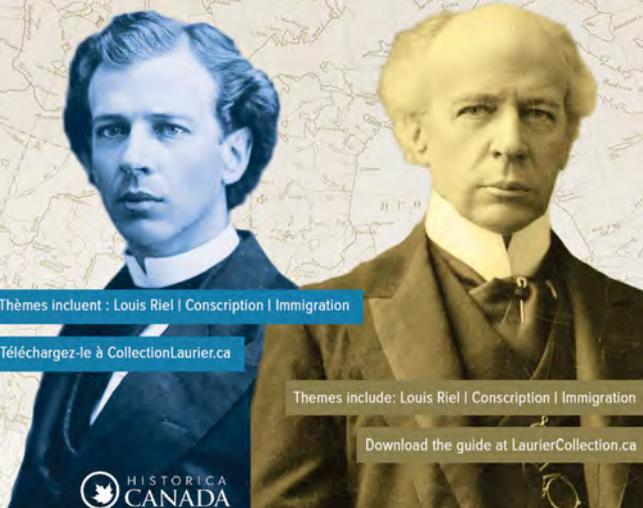


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# Touched by Vimy

**A** big thank you to all involved in putting together the stories and pictures of Vimy at 100 in the April-May issue. Having a family connection to the site made it all the more poignant. I had four great uncles who fought in the First World War, one of whom was with the No. 2 Tunneling Company. A farmer from Treherne, Manitoba, he was one of the labourers who stuffed the sandbags and hauled them out. Sadly, he was killed in March of 1918.

Of note, there is a memorial in Victoria, British Columbia, that has a cenotaph similar to the Vimy memorial but on a much smaller scale. Whenever I drive past it I can't help but think of Vimy Ridge and my great uncles.

*Shirley Waldon  
Victoria*



## De-lionizing Vimy

“Give me a real victory, not just another Vimy,” said King George V. The Battle of Vimy Ridge was a small part of a bigger battle, the Battle of Arras, April 4 to May 9, 1917, in which there were nearly half a million casualties. It was basically a failure in that the line of battle did not really change.

As for being when Canada came together, consider Sergeant Masumi Mitsui, a Japanese-Canadian soldier who fought bravely at Vimy, was wounded, and received the Medal of Valour. In 1942, the police came to his home and took him and his family off to a prison camp without trial. The story is that the sergeant threw his medal on the floor.

*Vern Huffman  
Burnaby, British Columbia*

## An uncovered jewel

I really enjoyed Mark Reid's Currents piece on the Dayspring mansion and museum in New Brunswick [April-May 2017]. Canada is full of hidden gem museums and historical buildings, but they're not always in the guide books and online lists. It's great to be made aware of these relatively unknown places.

*Adam Montgomery  
Atikokan, Ontario*

## Deep roots in Quebec

I found the article about the founding of Montreal [“Montréal 375,” April-May 2017] most interesting. Five of the members of “La Grande Recrue de 1653” were my direct ancestors: master carpenter Paul Benoit, wooden shoe maker Louis Guertin dit Le Sabotier, locksmith Jean Cadieux,

Marin Deniau, and Julian Daubigeon.

My grandson is the fourteenth generation of my family living in Quebec.

*Jack Garneau  
Sawyerville, Quebec*

## A real page-turner

I read with some gratification and a large measure of trepidation Janet Walker's article on “Delivering Canada's stories to a growing digital audience” [April-May 2017]. I sincerely hope you will continue to reach some of us aging relics who still prefer quiet times to read and reflect upon things that show up in our post office box, may be passed around to our neighbours, and are welcomed like a visit from a dear friend.

*Brian Priest  
Kearney, Ontario*

## Call it what it is

I read with much interest Garrett Wilson recounting the events around the arrival and exit in Canada of the Sioux people from the United States [“Refugee Crisis,” February-March 2017]. The article is well presented and ought to be read by all Canadians. The cross-border politics are fascinating.

I am troubled only by one aspect of the telling. The conclusion talks about the starvation of the Sioux, which was a key factor in most refugees returning to the United States.

When the author talks specifically about the buffalo as a factor in these events, he unfortunately uses descriptors such as “vanish,” “gone,” “shrank,” and “shortage.”

The buffalo did not so much vanish, as the herds were systematically slaughtered. It concerns me that the language used may

serve to hide the fact that the lack of buffalo likely was part of an intentional and sinister act of duress.

*Don Chapman  
Surrey, British Columbia*

## Headed for the landfill

In The Packet section of the April-May edition, Blanche and John McMillan of Burlington, Ontario, speculated on whether or not Minnedosa, Manitoba, was the western terminus for the usage of the term “nuisance ground” to describe the local garbage dump. Having been a boy some seventy plus years ago, in Swift Current, Saskatchewan, I can attest to the fact that nuisance ground was a common descriptor for the local dump. However, to most of the citizenry it was just “the dump” — and it truly was!

*Peter Smith  
Saskatoon*

## Errata

*Montreal's historic city hall was mistakenly identified as part of the city's Griffintown neighbourhood in a photo that ran with the April-May 2017 article “Montréal's Griffintown Reborn.” In the same article, St. Ann's Church was in fact the second Catholic church built by Montreal's Irish community — not the second built in the city. In the April-May 2017 Album, Westmount is identified as part of Montreal. However, it is also a city, with its own mayor and council.*

During the fur trade era, outposts regularly received “packets” of correspondence. Email your comments to editors@CanadasHistory.ca or write to Canada's History, Bryce Hall Main Floor, 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9 Canada.



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## Bale Seals

Tales and Treasures from the rich legacy of the Hudson's Bay Company

**B**ale seals were crimped to fur bundles that had been sorted and prepared for exhibition to potential buyers. The earliest seals were made from lead, but these twentieth-century seals were made from processed sheet iron that had been protected from corrosion with some kind of lacquered finish. The HBC Collection at the Manitoba Museum has a few late-nineteenth- and early twentieth-century varieties but no examples of earlier lead seals. How did the seals work? Furs were wrapped in forty-kilogram burlap bundles,

and a rope or cord was tied around the exterior. The burlap was stencilled with important information regarding the point of origin and ownership, and the seals were likely crimped around the cord. Bale seals are one of the most commonly forged Hudson's Bay Company artifacts on the market, with many crude examples of flat metal pieces with conjoined HBC and beaver iconography mistakenly listed as bale seals.

— *Amelia Fay, curator of the HBC Collection at the Manitoba Museum*

---

*The Beaver* magazine was originally founded as a Hudson's Bay Company publication in 1920. To read stories from past issues, go to [CanadasHistory.ca/TradingPost](http://CanadasHistory.ca/TradingPost). To explore the history of the Hudson's Bay Company, go to [hbcheritage.ca](http://hbcheritage.ca), or follow HBC's Twitter and Instagram feeds at [@HBCHeritage](https://twitter.com/HBCHeritage).

# Think You Know Everything About Expo 67?



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## HIDDEN HERITAGE

## 24 Sussex Drive

Traditional home to prime ministers is steeped in history. *by Alanna Wilson*

The house at 24 Sussex Drive in Ottawa is often perceived as merely the residence of the prime minister of Canada. But its history and heritage value extend far beyond its role of housing Canada's head of government. The evolution of 24 Sussex Drive follows the development of Canada as a nation, reflecting our ever-progressing cultural, political, and social climate.

Joseph Merrill Currier built 24 Sussex Drive as his private residence in 1868. A lumber baron as well as a Member of Parliament, Currier was an influential figure in the nation's growing capital. Sussex Drive was the hub of Ottawa social life, hosting the rich and famous of this lumber town-cum-national capital.

Currier built 24 Sussex Drive in the English Gothic revival style, which was popular in the new nation for its reflection of English roots and authority, as evidenced by its use at the Parliament Buildings. He also named the new home *Gorffwysfa*, which means "place of peace" in Welsh.

The next phase of 24 Sussex Drive was ushered in by another lumber baron and MP, William Cameron Edwards, who purchased the house in 1902. Edwards renovated 24 Sussex Drive to reflect the *château* style, whose picturesque forms were seen to embody Canada's rugged landscape and



Above: The house at 24 Sussex Drive sits atop a promontory, overlooking the Ottawa River.

Right: The living room at 24 Sussex Drive is traditionally used by the prime minister's family and invited guests.

to reflect the nation's French heritage. That style, also used in a series of monumental hotels owned by Canadian Pacific, symbolized to many a distinct, united Canadian identity.

Fearful that someone might commercialize the historic structure, the government of Canada bought 24 Sussex Drive in 1946, making it the official residence of the prime minister in 1950. Following the purchase, the house was renovated in a stripped-down style reflecting the clean, modern, streamlined aesthetics of a progressive postwar Canada.

The home at 24 Sussex Drive — currently vacant while it awaits extensive renovations — is steeped in Canadian history, having housed key figures from our past and having evolved with Canadian society.

Provided by the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada in collaboration with Carleton University's History and Theory of Architecture program.

## TIMELINE

# Cheering Confederation

The ways Canadians toast their country have changed with the times. by Alison Nagy

Say the words “Canada Day,” and images come to mind of fireworks, barbecues, outdoor concerts, and trips to the lake or the beach. We owe this public holiday to the Dominion Day Act, which received royal assent on May 15, 1879, and set July 1 as Dominion Day, the day to celebrate Confederation.

Since then, Canadians have marked July 1 in many ways. During times of peace and periods of war we have used the holiday to connect with each other and with our country. Here are a few examples of how past generations have observed the holiday.



## 1867

July 1, 1867, marked the enactment of the British North America Act, uniting Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick as a single dominion of the British Empire. In 1868 Governor General Charles Monck proclaimed that Canadians should celebrate the anniversary of Confederation, yet the federal government held no official Dominion Day ceremonies until 1917.

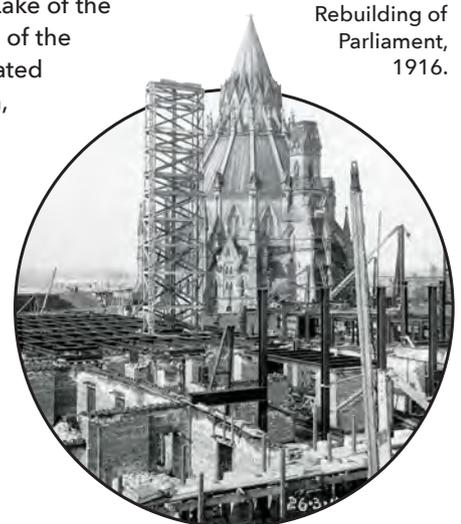


## 1892

Canada's twenty-fifth anniversary did not pass unnoticed. The *Manitoba Free Press* reported “trainload after trainload” of men and women arriving at the Manitoba Turf Club for the day's races. Explicit references to Dominion Day and Canada's twenty-fifth anniversary in the newspaper were largely relegated to advertisements for commercial businesses, community picnics, and a grand excursion to Lake of the Woods in Ontario to take in the “fresh breezes of the lake.” Across the country, communities celebrated in similar ways, with picnics, trips to the beach, fairs, and horse, foot, and boat races.

## 1917

Canada's fiftieth birthday saw the first official federal government program for Dominion Day. In Ottawa, Governor General Victor Cavendish, Prime Minister Robert Borden, and Opposition leader Wilfrid Laurier each delivered speeches in front of the Parliament Buildings, part of which were being rebuilt. The Centre Block of the previous Parliament Buildings had burned in 1916. With the First World War raging in Europe, the new Centre Block of Parliament was dedicated “as a memorial to Confederation Fathers and to the valour of Canadians fighting in the front line.” Across the Atlantic, Canadian soldiers in France also took part in a special Dominion Day service.



Rebuilding of Parliament, 1916.

## 1942

Canada's seventy-fifth anniversary fell during one of the darkest periods of the Second World War. Germany had captured most of Europe, and Japanese forces were advancing throughout the Pacific theatre. In an effort to boost morale, officials declared June 29 to July 5, 1942, to be Army Week. In Ottawa, events included military and cadet parades, a presentation of the flags of the Allied nations, and a mass singalong open to all on Parliament Hill.



Army Week participants in Ottawa, 1942.

Aviator Charles Lindbergh speaks in Ottawa, July 1, 1927.



## 1927

On July 1, 1927, telegraph and telephone companies and twenty-three radio stations united to give a cross-country broadcast of Canada's diamond jubilee celebrations at Parliament Hill. *Canadian National Railways* magazine reported that "at least five million people" listened to the broadcast.

## 1967

Spirits were high as Canada entered its centennial year. A bold new vision of the future was unveiled on April 29 in Montreal: Expo 67, a world's fair that ran with sellout crowds until the end of October. Expo 67 was considered a shining moment for the country, which was eager to be recognized on the world stage. Popular historian Pierre Berton would later refer to 1967 as "Canada's last good year."



## 1983

In 1982, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's Liberal government introduced Bill C-201, An Act to Amend the Holidays Act. The act stated that Dominion Day should be renamed Canada Day, with the first Canada Day to take place on July 1, 1983. The name change was praised by some Canadians and lamented by others, who saw it as further erosion of our traditional historic ties to Britain. In honour of the first Canada Day, the *Globe and Mail* published a Canada Day history quiz.



Pierre Trudeau and sons on Parliament Hill, July 1, 1983.



NEWS

## The art of reconciliation

Artist Kent Monkman won't let us turn away from shame and prejudice.

Sometimes challenging the idea that there is one official version of Canada's past is handled best by artists.

Drawing on his Cree roots, art history, and a deep well of both rage and humour, Kent Monkman has created clever, beautiful, unsettling works of art that force us to re-examine what we think we know.

Monkman's gender-bending time traveller (his description), Miss Chief Eagle Testickle, pops up in the past, present, and future to jar viewers out of complacency. Picture the famous Robert Harris painting of the Fathers of Confederation. Monkman's version features the same men in the same setting, but with a naked Miss Chief posing, or perhaps holding forth, in front of them. In this version, called *The Daddies*, many of the august gentlemen are holding or eyeing booze, evoking the famous observation that "Confederation was floated through on champagne."

Monkman's work combines Indigenous symbolism, classical technique, and historical reality to create an unflinching look

at colonialism's devastating impacts. In *Struggle for Balance*, men on a residential street help — or rape? — a Picassoesque woman while a car burns and an Indigenous woman sits with a baby on her lap. From the skies, a bald eagle and tattooed angels out of Caravaggio look on. Despair, hope, love, and violence collide, unresolved.

Painful and joyful in almost equal measure, *Reincarceration* depicts emaciated wooden figures emerging from a distant residential school, wading into water, and emerging on the other side to become fully human as they dance around a fire.

In one installation, a long table is laid for a feast, with fancy canapes, china, crystal, and silver. At the far end are a few plates on rough boards scattered with bones of small animals. The piece, which highlights the impact of the end of the fur trade on Indigenous people, is titled *Starvation Plates*.

The brightly painted *The Scream* shows Mounties, priests, and a nun ripping Indigenous children from their families — perhaps to take them to residential schools, perhaps as part

KENT MONKMAN / THE ART MUSEUM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



Clockwise from left: Kent Monkman's *The Scream, Struggle for Balance*, and *The Daddies* offer scathing commentary on traditional "official" histories of Canada.

of the "sixties scoop." The Mounties are nearly identical, with pale faces and short hair. They betray little emotion, while the children and their parents scream and weep in anguish.

This is not a painting to glance at and walk by. It is a painting that enters the bloodstream and floods the heart. On the black walls to left and right are rows of neatly organized spaces. A few are filled with beautifully carved or beaded cradleboards, others with institutional metal frames, and some simply bear grim outlines resembling nothing more than small coffins. This is art that steps in where impersonal, official history falters. It makes us wiser and more vulnerable, taking us to a place where understanding, and then healing, may just be possible.

Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Reconciliation originated at the Art Museum at the University of Toronto. It runs from June 17 to September 10 at Calgary's Glenbow Museum, after which it will tour across Canada as part of sesquicentennial commemorations. — Nancy Payne

LYNDA CHIRILLIA

## THEATRE

# Wherefore art thou Canada?

Stratford Festival turns the spotlight on our country's history.

They stick out immediately from the 2017 Stratford Festival lineup: two plays featuring vivid moments from Canadian history, real and imagined, alongside *Romeo and Juliet*, *Tartuffe*, and *Guys and Dolls*.

*The Komagata Maru Incident* tackles the 1914 barring of a shipload of Punjabis, many of them Sikh veterans of the British army, from Vancouver. In *The Breathing Hole*, commissioned by the festival, a polar bear witnesses the first contact between European and Indigenous North Americans, the Franklin expedition, and passengers cruising an ice-free Arctic Ocean.

Antoni Cimolino, artistic director of the southwestern Ontario theatre festival, spent years considering how to mark the sesquicentennial in a thought-provoking way. "Canada is very much worth celebrating, but we have to acknowledge that it's a recent nation set against a backdrop of people who've been here for thousands of years."

The Canadian plays fit his vision of a season examining the complexities of identity — think of Romeo's anguish at being a Montague, or *Tartuffe's* hypocritical piety. Likewise, if Canadians see ourselves as a welcoming nation, how do we account for acts of racism and exclusion? "We're never very far from parts of our history we'd rather not remember," Cimolino observed.

He said *The Komagata Maru Incident* playwright Sharon Pollock welcomed the chance to expand her 1976 work to include more voices, especially those of the passengers, and to incorporate traditional Sikh storytelling.

Playwright Colleen Murphy and director Renelita Arluk, who has Inuvialuit, Cree, and Dene roots, spent time in the Far North with an Inuit sister organization before staging *The Breathing Hole*. Several cast members are Indigenous; like others in the Stratford company, they have roles in multiple productions.

Franklin and his shipmates are treated with dignity. "Sending up members of a British expedition would be the easiest thing in the world, but these men lost their lives," said Cimolino.

The plays represent a departure from the self-congratulatory history Canada has tended to celebrate — an important step, he said, in "the push and pull of how we identify ourselves." *The Komagata Maru Incident* runs from August 5 to September 24 and *The Breathing Hole* from July 30 to September 22 at the Stratford Festival. — Nancy Payne



Actress Kiran Ahluwalia appears in *The Komagata Maru Incident*.

## BRUSH STROKES

### The Drive

by Tom Thomson, circa 1916,  
oil on canvas, 20 cm x 137.5 cm

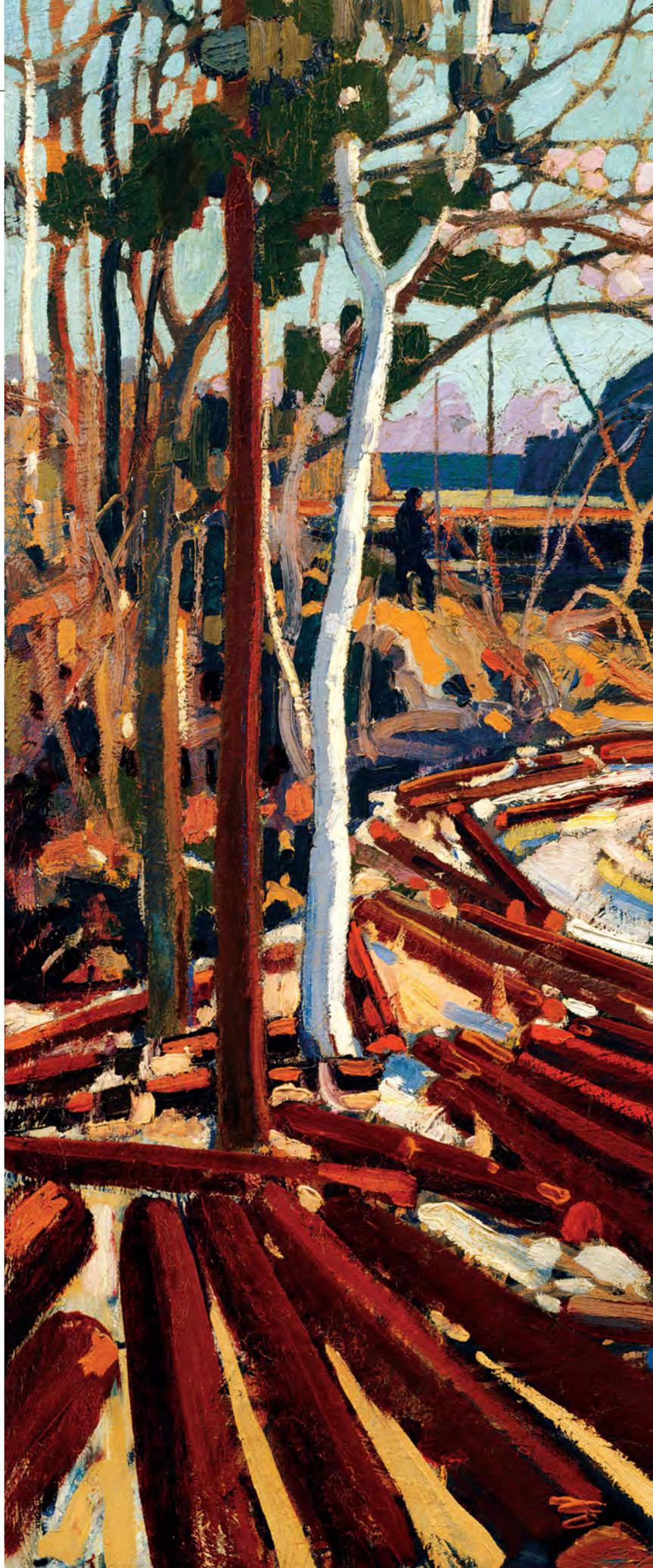
This summer marks one hundred years since the still-mysterious drowning of Tom Thomson at Canoe Lake in Ontario's Algonquin Provincial Park. Born in rural Ontario, Thomson met future members of the Group of Seven while working as a commercial artist in Toronto. His friends encouraged him to paint, and the patronage of Dr. James McCallum eventually allowed him to work full-time as an artist.

By 1912 Thomson was making summer canoe trips to paint in northern Ontario, while in winter he developed some of his smaller sketches into larger canvases. He is perhaps best known for paintings such as *The West Wind* and *The Jack Pine* that depict the North's rugged landscape. Yet Thomson also worked as a guide and fire ranger in the park, where the lumber industry was (and remains) a presence, and he made several paintings of the fishing and logging activities that were part of the surroundings he found there.

One of these is *The Drive*, which was painted in his studio during the winter of 1916–17 and is based on a sketch made in the fall of 1916. It portrays the power of the swirling water and the force of logs that are being sent downriver to a mill, while a few small figures labour in the background. Curator Dawn Owen calls it "a remarkable piece" and says "the looseness of the brushwork and bold palette are iconic of Thomson and his contemporaries."

Thomson experimented with new styles and approaches to painting, which, according to Owen, "verged on the abstract" in paintings such as *The Drive*. Like other large canvases from his final winter in his studio, it was left unfinished (and untitled) when Thomson went north the following spring. In July 1917, eight days after he disappeared on a canoe trip and just shy of his fortieth birthday, Thomson's body was found on Canoe Lake. — *Phil Koch*

ONTARIO AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE PURCHASE WITH FUNDS RAISED BY STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF, 1926. UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH COLLECTION AT THE MACDONALD STEWART ART CENTRE







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## CANADA'S HISTORY SOCIETY

The importance of understanding ourselves by examining our history has been an anchoring belief of Canada's History Society. Established in 1994 through the generous support of the Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation, we bring relevance and awareness to our nation's diverse past, illuminating the people, places, and events that unite us as Canadians.

The society's work includes: *Canada's History* magazine, *Kayak: Canada's History Magazine for Kids*, [CanadasHistory.ca](http://CanadasHistory.ca), and the Governor General's History Awards.

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## SOCIÉTÉ HISTOIRE CANADA

L'importance de comprendre notre propre identité par le truchement de l'histoire est au cœur de la philosophie de la Société Histoire Canada. Le travail de la Société, fondée en 1994 grâce au généreux soutien de la Fondation d'histoire de la Compagnie de la baie d'Hudson, consiste à faire connaître le passé diversifié de notre pays et à l'ancrer dans le contexte actuel, mais également à mettre en valeur les gens, les lieux et les événements qui nous unissent en tant que Canadiens.

La Société offre notamment aux Canadiens le magazine *Histoire Canada*, le magazine *Kayak*, *Navigue dans l'histoire du Canada*, le site [HistoireCanada.ca](http://HistoireCanada.ca) et les Prix d'histoire du Gouverneur général.

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CANADA'S  
**HISTORY**

**HISTOIRE**  
CANADA

**KAYAK**  
MAGAZINE



Q &amp; A

## On a mission

New documentary reveals untold story of Expo 67.

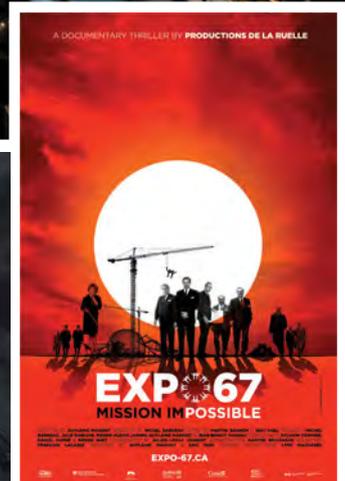
Today it's remembered as the greatest world's fair ever. But Expo 67's success was never a sure thing. Now, a new documentary is recounting the dramatic story behind Expo 67. *Expo 67 Mission Impossible* was created by Productions de la Ruelle, a Quebec film company whose past films include *Disunited States of Canada*, a look at the founding of Canada through the lens of Western Canadian separatists, and *Time Bombs*, about Canada and the Cold War. *Expo 67 Mission Impossible* combines exclusive interviews, never-before-seen photos, and film of the event to explore the enduring legacy of Expo 67. A companion website, [Expo-67.ca](http://Expo-67.ca), features access to multimedia educational content. *Canada's History* spoke recently with Eric Ruel, executive vice-president of Productions de la Ruelle, about the new film.

### Why do a documentary about Expo 67?

With *Expo 67 Mission Impossible*, our aim is to surprise those who know Expo, those who think they know Expo, and those who don't know anything about Expo at all, with a completely different side of the story. From the first minute to the last, this film is a real-life thriller, after which everyone will understand how Expo 67 came to be something of a myth, as it has in so many ways shaped today's society.

### How did you obtain the wealth of material for the film?

*Expo 67 Mission Impossible* was made possible by a collaboration between Productions de la Ruelle and Library and Archives Canada. This partnership has allowed us to see the enormous amount of work that goes into preserving the materials that we consider to be the backbone of this country. Thousands of never-before-seen archival fragments have been brought to light for the first time, including brand



From top: Dale Gervais, senior film conservator at Library and Archives Canada, examines film footage from Expo 67; Film producer Eric Ruel; poster for *Expo 67 Mission Impossible*.

new images from beautiful 35-mm films and high-resolution colour photographs. The professionalism and spirit of Library and Archives Canada is deeply cherished among our team.

### What did Expo 67 mean to Canadians?

Expo 67 created a deep sense of pride and belonging for organizers and visitors alike, as it was an opportunity to put differences aside in pure celebration of mankind, culture, art, and innovation. It also showcased the extent to which Canadians are capable of groundbreaking accomplishments.

### Why do you think Expo was so popular?

At a time when the Internet didn't exist in mainstream society, world's fairs were the ultimate opportunity to discover what the rest of the world had to offer. *Expo 67 Mission Impossible* demonstrates how Expo defied all expectations, showed the best of mankind, and broke all the world records as a result of teamwork, skill, and determination. It set the bar incredibly high for everything that was to follow. We really tried, with this documentary film, to get to the heart of this gigantic success.

To learn more about *Expo 67 Mission Impossible*, go to [Expo-67.ca](http://Expo-67.ca).

# ALL ABOARD!

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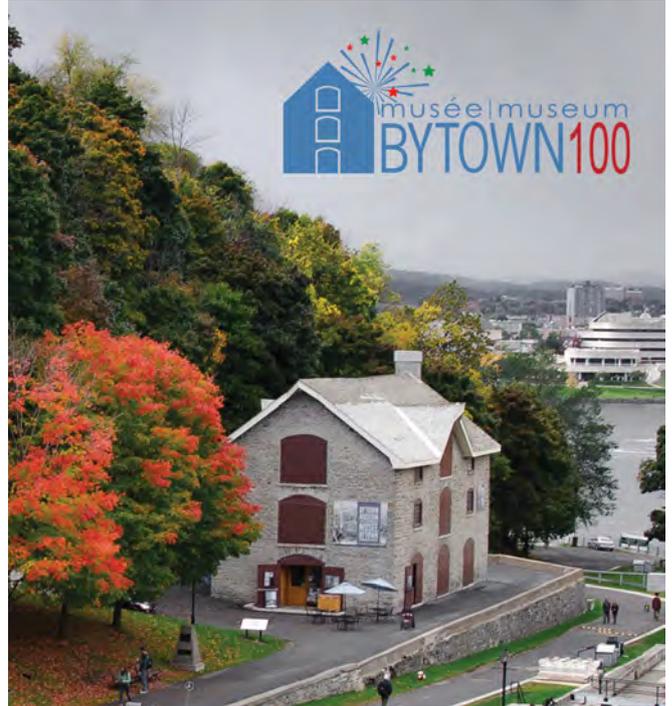
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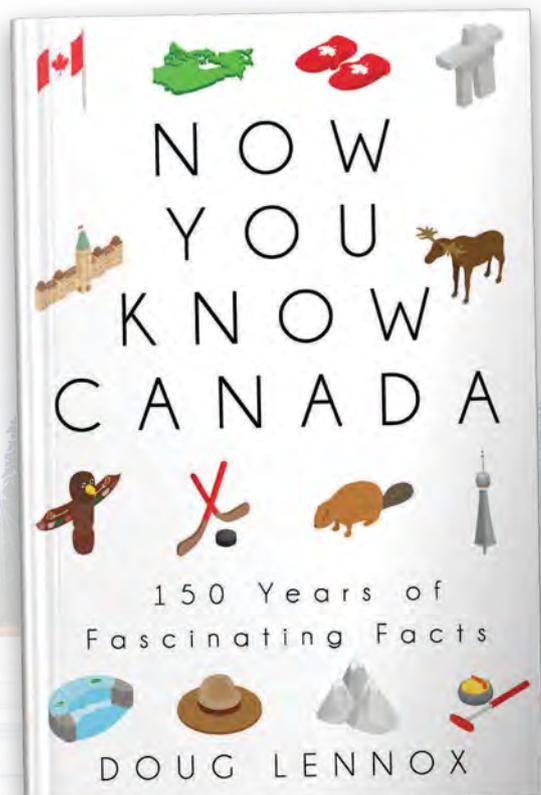
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Celebrating 45 Years





# BIG QUESTIONS = OF = CANADA



*We explore the past to find answers for the future.*

**T**he Canada of 2017 would be scarcely recognizable to Canadians of 1967 and completely unrecognizable to the citizens of the newly minted Confederation of 1867.

Its population has multiplied tenfold since the United Province of Canada merged with the colonies of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and its territory is many times larger.

Society has been transformed to include what our forebears could not have imagined, such as multiculturalism, women's rights, same-sex marriage, and Indigenous reconciliation.

We have come a long way. But the Confederation project remains a work in progress. As we prepare to mark the sesquicentennial of Confederation, our celebrations are tempered by the uncertainty we feel about the future. What kind of country will our children and our grandchildren inherit?

In the Big Questions of Canada, our guest essayists explore issues that loom large as we move into the future. We invite you to join the conversation. Because the answers to these questions will only be found by talking — and really listening — to each other.

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# MARCHING ORDERS

by Lieutenant General Roméo Dallaire (retired)

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*Canada can use its sesquicentennial to launch a new, more peaceful world order.*

**O**NE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AGO, four British colonies peacefully united, and the country of Canada was created. But what really makes a country? Is it signatures on a document alone? Or is it a visceral, emotional coming together of a people?

Fifty years after Confederation, one hundred years ago this April, our Canada — the Canada of justice, and responsibility, and self-sacrifice — was born on the battlefields of France. At Vimy Ridge, the youth of our nation answered a rallying cry from the other side of the world. They crossed the ocean, bled, and sacrificed for their country. Thanks to them, the Canada that had been built through diplomacy and political negotiation was finally recognized by the world as a true nation-state.

The year 2017 is a seminal anniversary, indeed, but what of it? Is this to be a year of mere remembrances of past glories and great people? A year of ribbon cutting and parades? Or could it be, in fact, an opportunity to rally the incredible potential that has been built up in this country to take its place in the world?

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## BIG QUESTION

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### HOW CAN CANADA BE A GLOBAL LEADER?

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Back in 2007, when I was a senator, I stood up in caucus and asked my colleagues, “What is special about the number 2017?” I was met with total silence. So, I prompted: “What’s special about the year 2017?” Same answer. I reminded them that 2017 will be the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary

of one of the most stable democracies in the world and the one hundredth anniversary of the year this country took a major stride from being a colonial cousin to a nation-state.

I asked the question, “So, what’s the plan? Do we eat cake? Build skating rinks and plant gardens? And, more importantly, what’s the plan beyond 2017? What do we want to do with this incredible country of ours? What’s the vision? What is the focus? Where are we going to fit in the complex arena out there in the world?” There was no answer.

Five years later, in 2012, I stood up again. I asked the same questions and got the same answers; and, if you look at the political parties’ platforms during the last election, you





General Roméo Dallaire, right, with moustache, and other Canadian peacekeepers with children at Kigali, Rwanda, June 1994.

will see that the only plan therein was to “commemorate” the sesquicentennial.

I guess we are going to eat a hell of a lot of cake.

This, I feel, is a missed opportunity of enormous scale. When the world was in chaos in 1917, young Canadians answered the global cry of people in need. In 2017, the world is again in chaos. Crises in Libya, in Syria, in Ukraine, in Darfur, and in the Congo urgently required our strong and steady hand; but we did not act with urgency, so catastrophe prevails. Potential crises in South Sudan, Iraq, and Burundi all demand we intervene before they, too, turn cataclysmic.

**C**anada was once a nation that understood true leadership. Canada played an integral role in the formation of the United Nations. Canada forged the concept and practice of peacekeeping. Canada introduced the notion of the responsibility to protect. However, for about a decade, Canada slowly, quietly, and coldly abandoned the principles that made us renowned. I think we are now back on track.

Canada was, and still can be, uniquely positioned as a leading middle power: We aim not to forge empires (though our failure to reconcile our treatment of First Nations has taught us some very painful but important lessons); we believe strongly in human rights, and we have the tools necessary to advance those rights and make this the focus for our future.

With a seat on the UN Security Council, our altruistic participation in wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping missions around the world, and a solid international reputation, Canada became known as a very humane nation, a place that produced good people and interesting leaders, with common sense, who brought out the best in others. We Canadians were acknowledged the world over for our sense of humanity, our respect — not just tolerance, but *respect* — for others.

I believe these values are founded in Canada’s linguistic and cultural history, which had a unique and profound effect on our national psyche and engendered within us a depth of experience with minority populations who want to maintain their identity as well as to join the larger Canadian community. Though we have had bumps along the way, our overarching commitment to bilingualism seems to have sparked a visceral, almost unconscious commitment to the value of diversity, respect for fundamental human rights, and the general promotion of peace.

We are kind, but, unbeknownst to many of us, Canada is also one of the most *powerful* countries in the world. With our mastery of technology, our enormous land mass, and our beneficent beliefs, we have emerged as a leading middle power, and this puts us in a very special position in terms of our international role.

Our past has earned us great respect beyond our borders. Developing countries see us as an honest broker, so we have the diplomatic capacity to resolve or even to prevent conflict in areas where superpowers would be viewed with suspicion. As such, we are uniquely positioned to exercise significant influence for good in the world. We can, and we must. As Winston Churchill said, when a nation acquires power, it acquires responsibility beyond its borders.

And so, this great nation of ours is poised to lead the way in the



The Canadian National Vimy Memorial at Vimy Ridge, France.



A child soldier in Rwanda, 1994.

midst of today’s staggering revolutions in borderless communication, in climate change and the environment, in human rights, and in social and global responsibility. We are poised to grab our leadership reins once again, reorient our focus, and articulate a forward-looking vision.

We are poised, but we have not leapt. Why not?

I believe that before we can truly claim our place again on the world stage we need to coalesce. To do this, we require leadership to tap our strengths and bring us together. We are a nation in need of guidance, of a single, encompassing Canadian identity that will propel us into the world as one.

Military history has given us many examples of coming together as a nation with a cohesive understanding of who we are — this happened with Vimy, this happened on D-Day, and this happened during the heyday of the blue berets. But it never took us far enough, perhaps because the accomplishments of our armed forces alone



A Royal Canadian Dragoons reconnaissance squadron on UN Cyprus patrol. Canada has had peacekeepers in Cyprus since 1964.

is not enough. We have many diverse examples today of admirable leadership in various disciplines: Astronaut Chris Hadfield has helped to bring us together through science and technology; scientist David Suzuki through environmental protection; businesswoman Heather Reisman through literacy; soccer player Christine Sinclair through sport; humanitarian Stephen Lewis through human rights; Lieutenant General Mike Jeffery (retired) through an educated military officer corps; Senator Sandra Lovelace Nicholas through Indigenous women's rights; singer Gord Downie through music.

And yet we still do not recognize in ourselves the enormity of our potential, and we continue to define ourselves by what we are *not*, instead of what we are, or even what we strive to be.

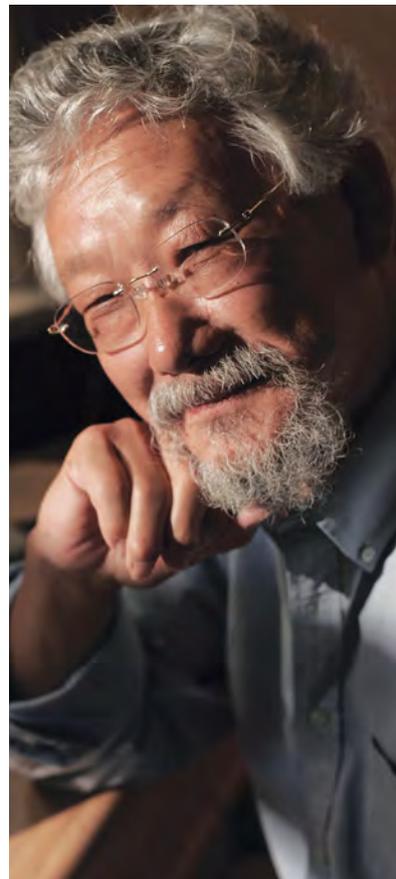
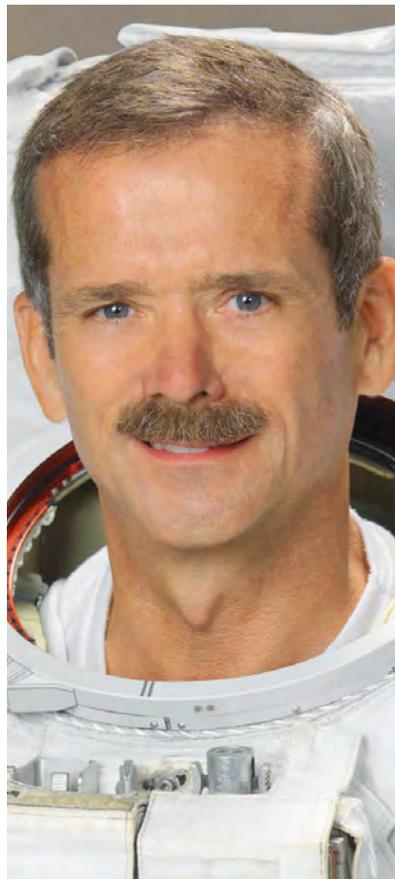
What is required is a visionary, grand strategic leadership that understands the best of our core and looks ahead and beyond, that engages in *shaping* the future, not merely responding to it

day to day. We need the leadership to bring these disparate facets together so that we can significantly influence humanity. And we should be using this anniversary year to start.

I can think of a few concrete suggestions that would serve to unify the country and to secure its cohesiveness well into the future, physically, symbolically, and internationally.

We could start with something as simple as a high-speed cross-Canada passenger train service. We did this when the country was young, and it effectively consolidated the country (for its day, it was high-speed, too!). Yes, it may take decades to build, but it would be a tangible project to connect the people of our country and to encourage them to explore and to better understand both the vast richness of our land and one another.

To inspire hearts and minds, I would recommend the erection of a statue on the shore of the Ottawa River — a copy of Mother



Left to right: Senator Sandra Lovelace Nicholas, astronaut Chris Hadfield, soccer champion Christine Sinclair, and environmentalist David Suzuki.

Canada (the original stands on the Vimy Memorial in France) facing directly at Parliament Hill so that every politician there would see her every day and be reminded of the very real consequences of the decisions they must make. This could be particularly poignant when, as a nation, we are called beyond our borders again. This representation from Vimy Ridge would be a grand gesture to the sacrifices Canada makes when our elected officials send troops, and NGOs, and diplomats into harm's way; it would be a reflection of the human cost — of individual lives as well as the families they leave behind — of our commitment to humanity.

Perhaps the most powerful demonstration of true statesmanship and forward-thinking leadership to which we could commit ourselves as a country would be taking on the reform of the United Nations. The recommendations are there; former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan produced them more than ten years ago, and still nothing has been done to implement them. Wouldn't it be something if Canada used its sesquicentennial as a launch pad to implement those recommendations? Or Canada could implement a proposal of its own — such as creating a lower council made up of middle powers like us. We could push the member states of the United Nations to fully embrace the responsibility-to-protect doctrine, revolutionize the Westphalian concept of sovereignty, and make protection of the *individual* paramount. Again, this would

not be a quick job. It's twenty years of work, at minimum. But we have the brainpower, we have the economic independence, we have the work ethic and resilience to sustain the sacrifices, and we have the time to do it.

## Canada may end up leading the global reversal, shepherding the world back to globalization.

These are things, I think, that go a little farther than building another centennial rink. And, while I recognize the importance of those rinks back in 1967, and how the subsidization of those rinks brought people together within and between communities through the “good old hockey game,” I also recognize that, fifty years on, we are ready to go further.

CANADIAN PRESS: NASA, DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION

Finally, the most important (if least tangible) suggestion I would make is to engage the youth of our progressive nation, to broaden their horizons, and to turn them into global players.

Over the past few generations, advances in technology, transportation, and communication have shrunk our perspective of the world. When I was a young man, just graduating from the Royal Military College of Canada, human beings landed on the moon, and even more revolutionary than the sight of those astronauts walking on extraterrestrial soil was the view they had of Earth from outer space. For so many of us, this was the first step in seeing ourselves as one, humanity as a whole.

**T**oday, when we can communicate with such ease, with almost no consideration of borders or boundaries, and when intercontinental travel is little more than a sophisticated bus ride, generations are growing up with an instinctive world view, which is reinforced every moment of their connected lives. They can physically and virtually touch all of humanity in real time. Globalization is no longer a concept for them, it is a reality.

Yes, we are in a (hopefully short-lived) period of backlash, with a resurgence of nationalism and a thirst for patriarchal, supremacist nostalgia. Right-wing isolationist movements are gaining popularity in democratic societies, and this is very unsettling. We have countries wanting to abandon the International Criminal Court. We have others questioning the responsibility-to-protect doctrine (approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005, this was the only true reform in our time to attempt to prevent mass atrocities and abuses of human rights).

We have massive numbers of refugees and internally displaced people growing up with no education, no settling, no way of getting back to their roots, and so creating horrific generational turmoil that will affect us all for decades to come. We see those preying on fear of the “other,” threatening the basic human rights of others in the process, proclaiming superiority and pounding on their chests, while wantonly disregarding international conventions and slamming shut borders.

In Canada, we have just gone through a decade of our own isolationist, myopic perspective. But we survived it; and I am confident that the world will survive, too. In fact, it is possible that Canada may end up leading the global reversal, shepherding the world back to globalization. We now have a progressive, youthful, risk-taking, and innovative leadership, with the potential to articulate a movement that projects our fundamental values and defines us by them.

Now the question is: Who should be the target of that movement? Both within Canada and throughout the developing world, I believe it must be the youth. I call this generation the generation without borders — the under-thirties who unwittingly hold the balance of power in their hands but who urgently require guidance to maximize their incredible potential. We have already seen examples of this group utilizing their numbers and their mastery of the communications revolution to effect change — the Occupy movement, for instance, or the Arab Spring. These were examples of the bravery and influence young people can demonstrate when they have a focus and something or someone to direct them.



Lester B. Pearson, then Canadian ambassador to the United States, speaks to a United Nations committee in San Francisco, 1945. Pearson became Canada's prime minister in 1963.

The potential for activism among Canadian youth is just screaming to be rallied for causes that they are aware of but with which many are reticent to engage. Some simply do not know how to proceed; some are stymied by the system, imposed by previous generations, that values making money more than making change. Yet, despite their hesitation, they are equipped like no other generation with the potential to break the mould, to shift the social structures away from working to survive and to a social commitment that insists that humanity thrives fairly and within the tenets of human rights for all.

As a middle power, Canada could take this special moment in our history to nurture leadership among youth and to encourage coalitions of young people from this nation and other countries — especially those in the developing world — to create a powerful, influential movement. Their numbers and their technological savvy, plus their inclusive, global perspective, give them more power than any other generation has ever had.

Believe me, belligerents around the world understand the value of youth. They have already recognized the enormous untapped energy of children and young adults. I saw it in Rwanda, over twenty years ago, when the majority of the killings during the genocide were being committed by the youth wing of the extremist



Participants in the Canada World Youth – Youth Leaders in Action Program harvest green beans in the community of Kpovié in Benin. The women took part in the program in 2011-2012.

## We are a young country, still searching and seeking cohesion.

party called the Interahamwe. We see it today with ISIS, al-Qaida, Boko Haram, and al-Shabaab, not to mention innumerable local street gangs and organized crime syndicates. All use and rely on children to do the dirty work of ruthless, unconscionable adults. In fact, almost every conflict in the world today has the use of child soldiers as the primary weapon of war.

I have devoted the rest of my life to eradicating the use of child soldiers. Along with my team at the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, I actively advocate for a global partnership that is committed to ending the recruitment and use of child soldiers worldwide. I believe the issue of child soldiers could serve as a major policy step on which various governmental departments could co-operate, including and especially youth engagement in peace processes and the prevention of conflict. We must appreciate the incredible value that young people have to contribute to a movement. How is it that the “bad guys” have picked up on this so profoundly when we “good guys” have not?

This is the key. This is how I believe that we, Canada, with our new young leader, can and should energize and guide the youth of our country to prepare for the inevitable unified future that our world can look forward to. We must maximize our human and resource potential and then mould it into international leadership potential, to a commitment beyond our borders.

We have done it before. Young people built up this country back in the nineteenth century; young people fought at Vimy Ridge half a century later; and young people engaged in UN peace operations in the decades during and after the Cold War.

As we celebrate their bravery and sacrifice, let’s encourage our young population to make similar efforts for their country and for humanity. Let’s use this anniversary year to coalesce again. Children are being used to fight war; let’s engage our youth to *prevent* war.

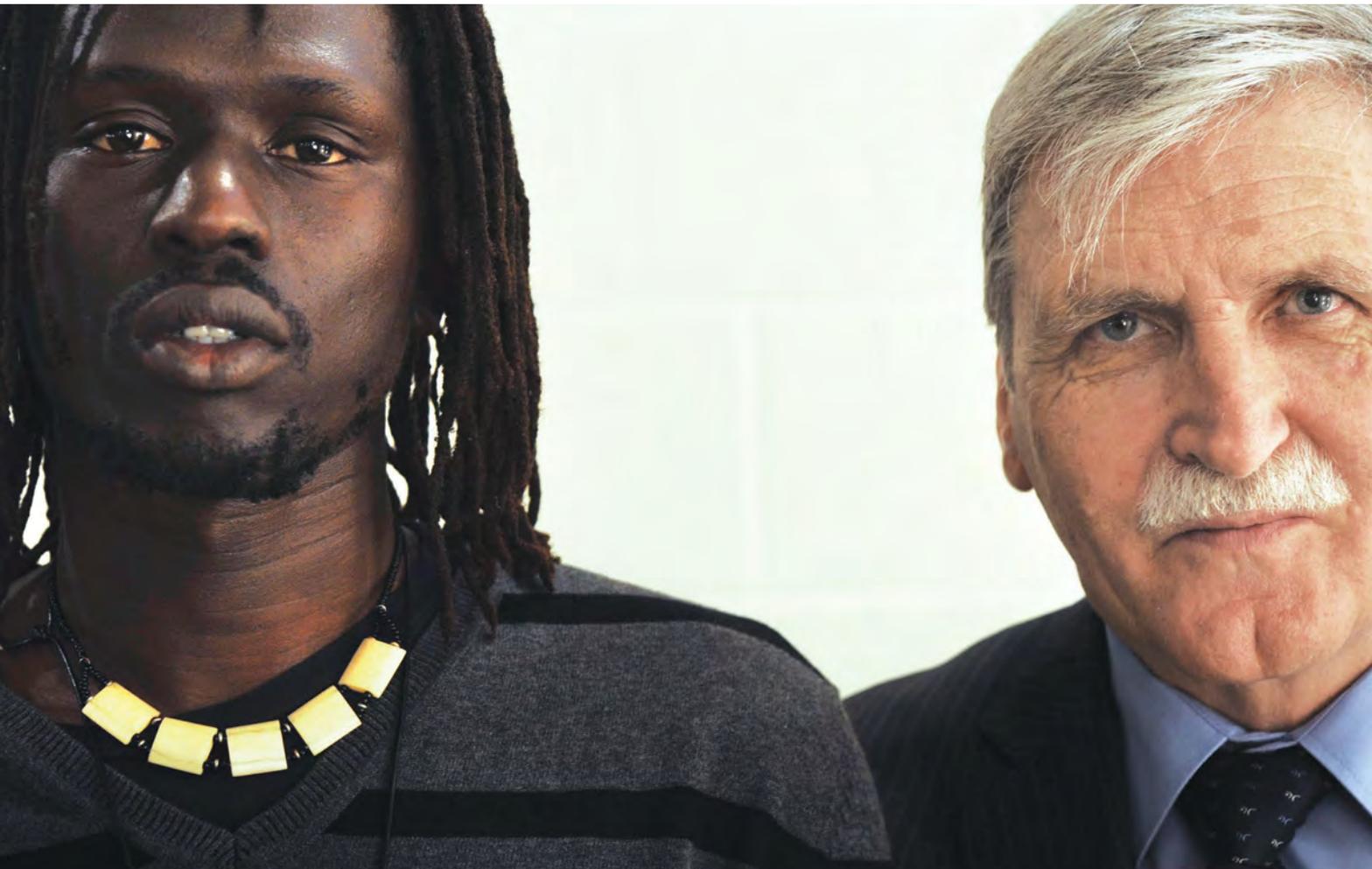
I have noticed that youth in Canada are no longer going en masse to Europe — like my generation did — to look at the past and what the West built on the backs of others. No, they are going to countries that are developing. They are trying to prevent poverty and conflict, and they want to be on the front lines of the future of peace. We must encourage this impulse for young people to engage with their global peers, to create a sense of solidarity between the youth here in Canada and those at risk of being used to wage adult wars.

I would consider it wise for this nation to instill a formal rite of passage after high school: that every young person have a pair of boots under their bed that have been soiled in the earth of a developing region — in another country or in the neglected areas of the Canadian North. Let them experience for themselves what is happening to eighty per cent of the world and bring that knowledge and passion back to the twenty per cent of the “haves.”

Both physically in the field and as activists at home, young Canadians could help us all to rethink how we see peace and how we see the world. Peace cannot just be here; peace is achieved when humanity — all of us, equally — will be at peace.

I am so confident that the youth today, who do not see conflict as inevitable and problems as insurmountable, can crack the code and bring that eighty per cent into the body politic of humanity. Only they have the cohesion and the leadership to guide them.

This year, as we celebrate our peaceful and plentiful democracy, let us be inspired by our past accomplishments. But let us also rethink those policies that have been guiding us. Let’s encourage real leadership to guide our country into the future — a country



Former child soldier Emmanuel Jal, left, with Roméo Dallaire in Toronto in 2010 to launch the campaign to end the use of child soldiers.

whose balance of power is in the hands of those under thirty. Let's advance humanity by using our unique skills and potential.

We are a young country, still searching and seeking cohesion. I see the good and the bad. I see Indigenous peoples running out of patience as their youth self-destruct. I see new faces and foreign ways to pray; I see them embraced and celebrated in their differences. I see respect of fairness for others.

I see a solid system of governance, responsible to all its citizens, and I see those among them who are choosing to commit themselves to it in a wide variety of disciplines. I see untapped energy

and potential that is often stymied by a lack of focus and of vision. I see a disparate grouping of adventurous and generous people, just waiting to be brought together.

So let this be the rallying cry to our leaders during this special year: We are ready! Give us our marching orders! Show us a future in which we may all participate in shaping, for a thriving and peaceful humanity, a future in which we seek security, serenity, and human rights for all. It is my sincere hope that this cohesion — the understanding of what “being Canadian” truly means — may be held up as an admirable model for “being human.” 🐾



### ROMÉO DALLAIRE

Lieutenant General the Honourable Roméo Dallaire (retired) is the founder of the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, a global partnership with the mission to end the recruitment and use of child soldiers. A celebrated advocate for human rights, especially in regards to child soldiers, veterans, and the prevention of mass atrocities, General Dallaire is also a respected government and United Nations adviser, a bestselling author, and a former Canadian Senator.

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# CANADA'S HISTORY Youth Forum

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Young historians aged 10 to 16 are becoming digital filmmakers, using new technologies to share stories from Canada's past.

Top students recently converged at a national Youth Forum held in Ottawa.

The work of these Young Citizens is given a wide audience at [YoungCitizens.ca](http://YoungCitizens.ca), and the 2017 videos will be released online on June 12.

This transformational initiative, which reaches more than 110,000 students through the Heritage Fairs network, is made possible thanks to the generosity of valued partners who believe in the future of history.

Thank You!



The Gwaii Haanas Legacy Pole is moved to its base on Lyell Island in Haida Gwaii, British Columbia, in 2013. It was the first such pole to be erected in the area in 130 years.





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# RIGHTS AND RECONCILIATION

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by Ry Moran

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*The future of Canada rests on adopting the balanced world view of Indigenous people.*

**EVERY STORY HAS A STARTING POINT**, a moment frozen in time and space that allows the rest of the narrative to unfold. This year in Canada we are celebrating our 150th anniversary as a country, and, just like all great tales, the starting place from which we begin to tell the story is as random as any.

So let's try to start the story in a different place.

Once upon a time, there was no British Columbia, no Alberta, no Northwest Territories, no New Brunswick, no Nova Scotia, and no Prince Edward Island. There was no "new found land." There was a Manitoba, a Saskatchewan, an Ontario, and a Quebec. But the names had different meanings than what are ascribed to them today by the vast majority of Canadians.

Once upon a time, this geographic space we now call Canada was referred to by many names. It was called home by millions of Indigenous peoples in over sixty different Indigenous languages. Life here in Turtle Island was self-determining — the rivers ran as rivers, the elk roamed as elk, and the many nations of Indigenous peoples charted their own paths to the future.

Life was balanced in a framework of rights. Everything had the right to life. The deer had an inherent right to life; it had the right to be a deer, and it had a right to live in a healthy home and to raise its children in a kind and loving way. The peoples of this land, too, had the right to life, to raise their children in the manner they saw fit. Teachings were given, and ceremonies, names, knowledge, and understanding were passed through the generations.

Life did not exist in isolation but was part of a complicated web of being and understanding.

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## BIG QUESTION

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**HOW DO WE  
ACHIEVE TRUE  
RECONCILIATION?**

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While each had a right to life, it did not mean that those rights could not be infringed upon. This was, and remains, a necessity for life. The hunter, in order to ensure his own children were cared for, needed to infringe upon the deer's right to life. The berry picker needed to harvest the unborn seed of the plant.

But when a rights-based framework of life is understood, the corresponding effect is that an understanding develops of the infringement. In harvesting, the hunter is required to pray, and to be

## At its heart all wealth generated on this planet comes from the earth. Humans beings need life in order to live.

of clear mind before the hunt, and to ask for the deer to give itself to the hunter. The surrender of life required acknowledgement of the animal's life and then honouring that deer with a respectful death. Atonement for interrupting life needed to occur.

Under this framework, everything is connected and there is a drive towards balance. Balance is the state wherein the rights of all living creatures are respected, acknowledged, and honoured. Human life becomes contextualized within a web of mutual accountability and need wherein life cannot occur without the support of other life. Humans are neither above nor below other forms of life but part of a dynamic web of all forms of creation.

In the discovery of the “new world” by European settlers, all forms of Indigenous life in Canada underwent a prolonged attack on their rights. As people and ideas began to flood in from Europe, the rights-based framework of life in balance was eroded. Natural laws were replaced by common laws that placed humans outside of the natural world and turned all forms of life into subjects to be ruled over. It is no coincidence that the Latin root of dominion — as in Dominion of Canada — is *dominus*, which means master and implies having control over another. Dominate has the same root.

Indigenous peoples quickly found themselves living in an ever-shrinking bubble. Under the new dominion paradigm imported from Europe, Indigenous peoples no longer had the right to self-determine. The Indian Act imposed vast restrictions on nearly all aspects of the lives of First Nations peoples, while both Métis and Inuit communities underwent oppression, relocation, dispossession, and subjugation. Ever-increasing policies restricted social practices, including the right to ceremony, the right to determine who is and who is not a member of the community, and, most fundamentally, the right to land.

Perhaps the most egregious of these policies involved the residential schools that eliminated the right of Indigenous parents to raise their own children. Through the residential schools, Canada authorized state-sponsored child abduction while simultaneously preventing parents from having a meaningful relationship with their children. Children were cut off from their languages and traditional names while being renamed as numbers and taught to speak and think like Western Europeans.

But in order to understand the residential schools, it is essential to situate them in the broader context of what they enabled this country to achieve.

Access to the life that existed here — be it the trees, the fish, the fur-bearing mammals, or the life given by the fertile soils of the prairies — drove the need to settle and to establish dominion across Canada. While Indigenous peoples saw the need and ability to live life in balance, colonial authorities saw the life present in Turtle Island as something to subjugate, dominate, own, and convert into capital.

Eliminating questions of ownership to the land controlled by Indigenous peoples became a central thrust of the colonial agenda. In places such as British Columbia, most of the land was simply occupied without First Nations ever surrendering their rights to it. The promises of treaty were viewed through colonial eyes as a means to settle the question of ownership.

Indigenous perspectives on treaty remain little understood and as yet unrealized. The ideas of committing to a relationship of peaceful coexistence between equals and that life can exist in balance remain elusive goals for us as a nation.

The liquidation of the natural resources of this country is at the heart of who we are as a nation. The primary economies that paved our streets, built our hospitals and our skyscrapers in this colony we call Canada have come directly from the conversion of life into capital. When we walk on Bloor Street in Toronto or stroll on Robson Street in Vancouver, we walk on the bones of countless life forms that, before the importation of European ideals, had an inherent right to live.

While we have now developed means to create vast sums of wealth solely by leveraging financial vehicles to make more money off more money, at its heart all wealth generated on this planet comes from the earth. Humans beings need life in order to live.

But this is not the narrative we typically hear taught in our schools today. Nor is it a particularly comfortable narrative for us to discuss in public forums.

The reason for this is that we, as a society, live in a world that's profoundly out of balance. We rob and steal from future generations; we use rivers as our ditches and oceans as our dumping grounds.

Life is collapsing across the planet; human beings are causing animal species to go extinct at a rapidly increasing pace.

Canada is one of the richest nations in the world. But this wealth has come at a great cost and at the direct expense of others. In but a blink of an eye in geological time, we have converted Turtle Island from a land of great riches and thriving Indigenous peoples to a land mass scarred, defaced, and in crisis. Indigenous



Top: A clear-cut area at Idaho Peak in the Selkirk Mountains of British Columbia. Above left: The Whanganui River in New Zealand now has the same rights as a human being. Above right: People wear masks as a thick haze of smog envelopes Beijing, China, 2015.

communities struggle each day to overcome the genocide unleashed on this territory in the search for wealth and riches.

These are profoundly challenging times we are living in, and we need not just to be asking ourselves how we are addressing these challenges but to be fundamentally re-examining our core beliefs and values as a society.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was asked to bring forward dark truths in order to propel our country forward down a path of reconciliation. Some of the dark truths that emerged focused

on the inhumane treatment of children inside the residential schools.

But central in the findings of the TRC was also the recognition that we as a society have been lied to for years. Indigenous peoples have never been properly reflected in the history textbooks, museums, or cultural fabric of our society. Indigenous perspectives remain little heard. And, while there is much that is starting to change, the cover-up of the true history of our nation has yet to be fully exposed.

Out in B.C., as you drive along any of the major highways or roads, you will see beautifully forested hills stretching high to the tops of the



Survivors of St. Michael's Residential School in Alert Bay on Vancouver Island hug on February 18, 2015, after a symbolic demolition of the former residential school.

## We need to start taking a hard look at the truths of Indigenous people and of life as a whole on Turtle Island.

mountains. Preserving a sense of “beautiful B.C.” scenery is an intentional policy of the provincial government. Views along major highways are carefully constructed to avoid clear-cuts or other industrial activities.

But lurking behind an often thin buffer of trees beside the highway is the true story of who we are. We continue to convert life into resources in a manner that is not balanced and does not recognize the fundamental right of all life that once lived in that forest to have a good life. We continue to erase Indigenous histories from our consciousness.

The evidence of what this land mass once was can still be found. Photo albums and historical documents recount the Great Plains being covered with more than sixty million bison while coastlines teemed white with herring roe. The records also document the

destruction of all of this — and of the Indigenous people who stood in the way — as natural resources were exploited.

Truth is the path forward. We need to start taking a hard look at the truths of Indigenous people and of life as a whole on Turtle Island.

**R**esidential school survivors helped us pull back the curtain to expose the wizard. They helped us understand that truly the emperor has no clothes. We as citizens of this country need to pursue the truth with vigour, all the while understanding that the truth passes through many filters, prejudices, and previous teachings before it even reaches us.

A rights-based framework is the future of reconciliation in this country. This is why the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is listed as the first of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's ten principles of reconciliation. Rights, and the preventative steps to ensure that the abrogation of rights does not occur, are the foundation upon which this country can transform itself.

Our friends far to the south in New Zealand recently recognized the inherent right of a river to be a river — that is, to have the same rights afforded to it as a human being does. The new legislation recognizes the Whanganui River as an ancestor of the Whanganui Maori tribe — something for which the tribe has been fighting for 140 years. The new status means the law now sees no differentiation between harming the tribe and harming the river, because they are one and the same. And, not long after, a court in India cited the New Zealand legislation in its decision to grant the Ganges River and its tributary the Yamuna River the same rights as people. The Ganges is considered sacred by most of India's population.

Indigenous languages are rooted in the land, and Indigenous sovereignties are rooted in the language. Without language, Indigenous cultures, ways of knowing, being, and understanding, become lost. Once lost, the connection to the land is lost as well.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples affirms that “Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.”

In order to understand who we are as a country, we must become much more aware of the complex need for balance. Indigenous life has come under prolonged and direct attack, from the assault on Indigenous peoples to the ongoing assault on Turtle Island. As the TRC has said, the establishment and maintenance of mutually respectful relationships — all relationships — is the path for real reconciliation to occur. 🐸



### RY MORAN

Ry Moran is the director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation based at the University of Manitoba. In his earlier role, he was with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, where he facilitated the gathering of audio and video testimony from about seven thousand residential school survivors and obtained documentary history from government and church archives. A member of the Métis Nation, he is committed to the preservation of Indigenous culture, language, and heritage.

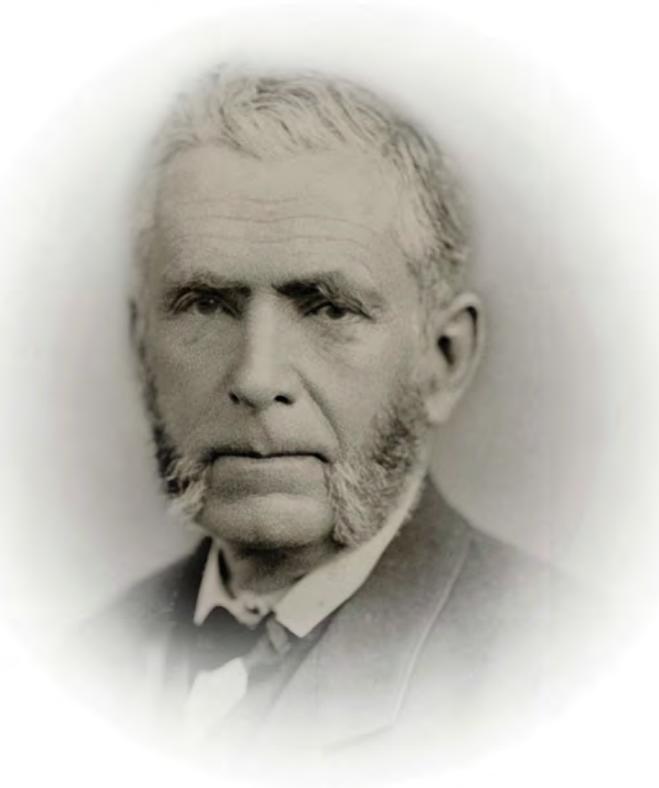


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# WOMEN OF WORTH

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by Merna Forster

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*Here's an idea for a sesquicentennial project:  
Let's close the gender gap.*

**T**HERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF REMARKABLE WOMEN in Canadian history. Yet it has taken a long time for a Canadian woman's face to appear on the front of a banknote. The image of civil rights icon Viola Desmond (1914–65), a successful black businesswoman who challenged racial segregation, will grace the new ten-dollar bill in 2018. Female representation on banknotes should not have required discussion — let alone a battle that dragged on for years.

Recognition matters. Identifiable women, other than the Queen, have appeared on Canadian currency before — images of a statue of the Famous Five and of the medal for the Thérèse Casgrain volunteer award were put on the *back* of the fifty-dollar note in 2004. When those images were replaced in 2012 by an icebreaker, I appealed to the Bank of Canada to end sexist banknotes and to ensure that all future banknotes celebrate female Canadian historical figures.

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## BIG QUESTION

### IS GENDER EQUALITY ACHIEVABLE?

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With no signs of change, in the summer of 2013 I launched a petition that was signed by more than seventy-three thousand Canadians. My hard-fought national campaign finally brought the promise of action on International Women's Day in 2016. However, I'm still holding out for the kind of gender parity seen on currency in Australia and Sweden.

The selection of Viola Desmond for our money sends a powerful message about who we celebrate on an important national symbol: A courageous black woman who fought for racial equality joins our reigning monarch and white, male prime ministers. Desmond will remind us of the often-hidden history of racism in Canada.

Desmond had to go to Montreal, New York, and Atlantic City to be trained as a beautician, because beauty schools in her hometown of Halifax refused to accept black students. After returning to Halifax, she established a beauty salon and a school. She was probably too busy making a living to think about civil rights activism, but all that changed after her



Suffragist Nellie McClung, right,  
with British women's rights activist  
Emmeline Pankhurst, June 17, 1916.



car broke down in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, in 1946 during a business trip. As she waited for the car to be repaired, Desmond bought a ticket to see a movie. Shocked when the manager demanded that she move from the whites-only section, Desmond refused to budge. A burly policeman hauled the young woman off to jail. Bruised and humiliated, she spent the night in a cell with male prisoners. Though she lost her legal challenge in court, Desmond inspired many to defy racism, and her case led to the official end of segregation in Nova Scotia in 1954.

Along with Desmond, the Bank of Canada received nominations of hundreds of Canadian women we should be celebrating in some way. The finalists included trailblazers who fought for gender equality in many areas. Fanny Rosenfeld (1904–69) — known in her day as the world’s greatest woman athlete — participated in the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics. Until that year, women were not allowed to compete in track and field because of concerns about their “frailty.” Rosenfeld stunned naysayers by earning more



The banknote with Thérèse Casgrain and the Famous Five was replaced in 2012 with currency bearing an image of an icebreaker.

## Every aspect of our economy and our society suffers when women aren’t equal.

points for Canada than any other athlete at the Games. She later advocated for the equality of women in sport throughout her twenty-year career as a columnist with the *Toronto Globe and Mail*.

Banknote contender Elizabeth MacGill (1905–80) pioneered in the male-dominated field of engineering. She excelled as the first woman in Canada to earn an electrical engineering degree, the first female aeronautical engineer in North America, and the first woman in the world to design and test an airplane. During the Second World War, MacGill supervised production of the Hawker Hurricane fighter planes. A feminist who fought for the rights of women and children, she was appointed as one of the seven commissioners on the newly established Royal Commission on the Status of Women in 1967.

Idola Saint-Jean (1880–1945), another finalist on the banknote list, was a fiery feminist from Montreal who took on provincial and federal politicians, the Catholic clergy, the Supreme Court, and even King George V in her battle to secure the vote and basic rights for women in Quebec. A fearless champion of a multitude of social causes, she faced particularly hostile attacks because she was an assertive unmarried woman. But Saint-Jean never gave up and stood firm in her beliefs: “Feminism is based on social justice, for it claims but the equality of rights and possibility between men and women.”

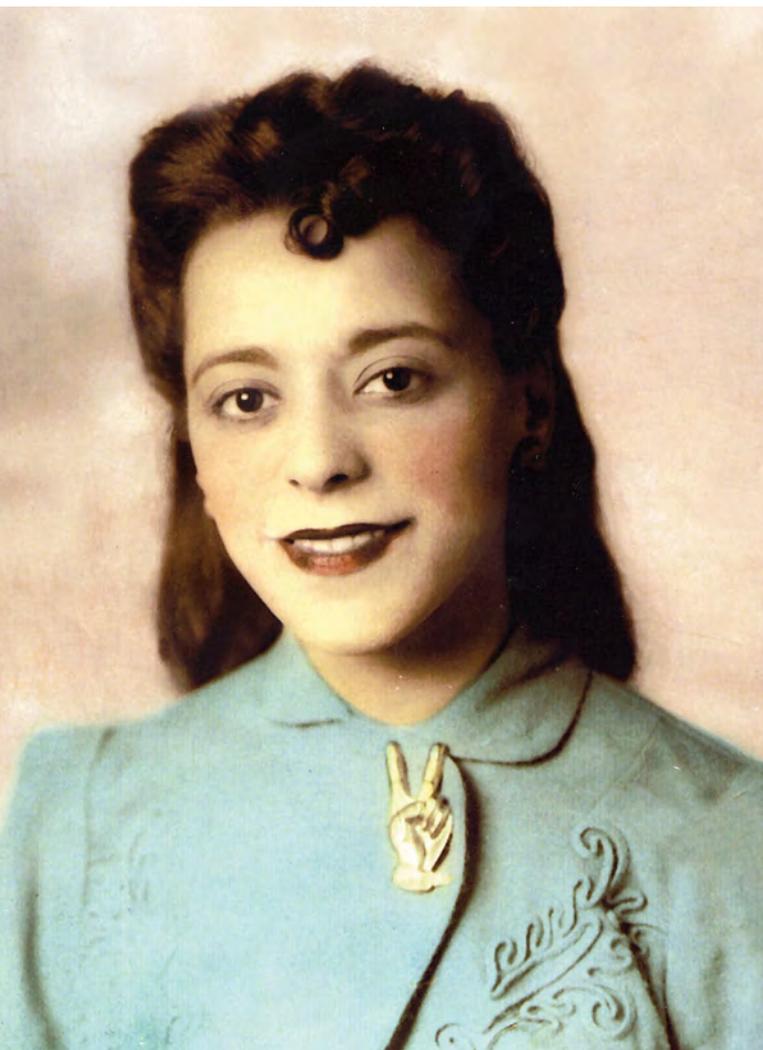
**T**he images that surround us contribute to our view of the world and our potential role in it, and they reflect whom and what we consider important in our culture and our history. Excluding half the population is unacceptable. Though our federal government boasts that “Canada is a world leader in the promotion and protection of women’s rights and gender equality,” the reality is that we’re moving backwards on many key issues and need bold actions to make real progress.

When the Global Gender Gap Report was released in 2016, Canada ranked only thirty-fifth in the world. Worse, we’ve been dropping in the ranks — we were in thirtieth place in 2015 and nineteenth in 2014. A similar review from the United Nations called on Canada to eliminate discrimination against women. Some of the biggest concerns are violence against women (especially Indigenous women and girls) and unequal pay for equal work. Canadian women now earn about \$8,000 a year less than men for equal work — double the global average. Not having an equal voice in politics also holds Canadian women back.

Gender inequality impacts us all — from girls and women living in fear for their safety to children living in households that are stressed because of the lack of affordable daycare and mothers not earning fair wages. Every aspect of our economy and our society suffers when women aren’t equal. The good news is that there are many things we can do to move Canada towards gender equality; but all of us need to be involved, and action must be taken now. Waiting for gradual change to eventually fix the problems isn’t working.

In the political sphere, a significant milestone was achieved in November 2015, when Prime Minister Justin Trudeau appointed Canada’s first gender-equal federal cabinet. This was a powerful moment. But with women holding only one in four seats in the federal Parliament, we’re behind much of the world. According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Canada ranks sixty-second out of 193 countries for the representation of women in Parliament; at the rate we’re going it will take until 2075 for women to hold half the seats. There won’t be gender parity in our lifetimes unless we implement incentives or quotas. The latter have proven successful in many countries; think of Rwanda, where women hold 61.3 per cent of the seats in Parliament, and Bolivia, where women hold 53.1 per cent. In the fall of 2016, NDP MP Kennedy Stewart introduced a private member’s bill to encourage political parties to nominate more women or risk financial penalties. Unfortunately, his motion was defeated.

Closing the gender gap requires changes in laws, policies, or



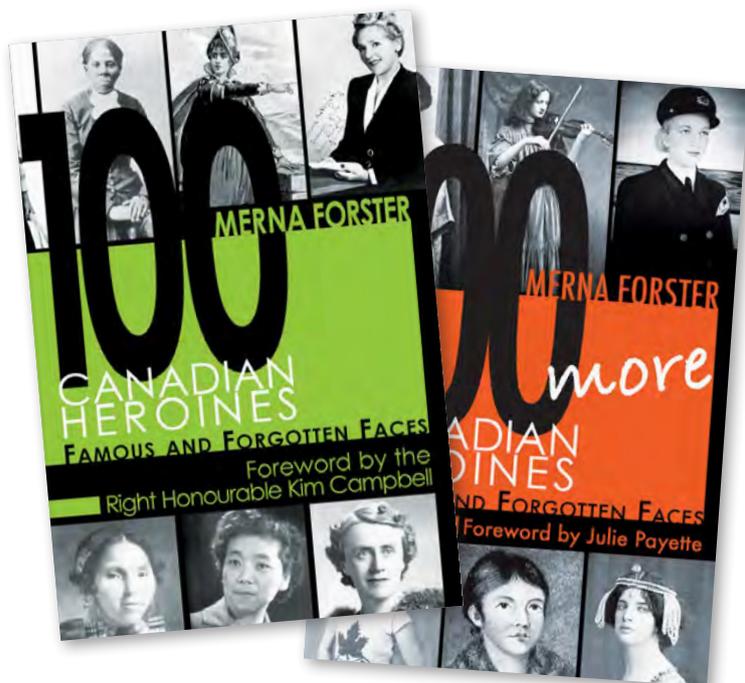
Top: Canadian athletes Ethel Smith (678) and Fanny Rosenfeld (677) at the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics.

Above: Humanitarian Lotta Hitschmanova in Korea, 1954. She was longlisted to appear on a Canadian banknote.

Left: Viola Desmond, Halifax beautician and civil rights activist, 1938.

Right: Aeronautical engineer Elsie MacGill oversaw production of the 1940s-era Hawker Hurricane.





Merna Forster's books on notable Canadian women.

programs. As violence against women is a major problem, I'm encouraged that the government of Canada launched an inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. We can hope that valuable recommendations will be made and that the role of police will be addressed. Presumably, the federal government will play a leading role in ensuring that concrete changes are made.

As for ongoing violence against women, the insufficient reporting of attacks, and low conviction rates for rape, we need judicial changes so victims aren't on trial and so women threatened with violence are protected. If you were a woman who had been sexually assaulted, how likely would you be to press charges — especially when you hear about a judge chastising a rape victim for not keeping her knees together during an attack and high-profile trials resulting in alleged rapists walking free after not having to take the stand and answer a single question?

What about your place of work? A male relative suggested to me that everyone should have to take gender-sensitivity training, including receiving information on diversity and discrimination, gender equality, feminism, misogyny, sexual-orientation issues, the impact of gender-biased language and policies, sexual harassment, and violence against women. Mandatory sensitivity education might sound extreme, but I think my friend is right. All of us would benefit.

Every organization, institution, employer, and business owner should have zero tolerance for sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace and should have policies for preventing and responding to abuse and violence against women. Organizations, including governments, should identify ways to increase the meaningful involvement of women at every level. They should pay equally for equal work and support parents by providing on-site child care and flexible work schedules.

If your company is among the forty-five per cent of those traded on the Toronto Stock Exchange that don't have even one woman on its board of directors, step up. Many countries introduced quota systems for their boards; Norway has required that at least forty per cent of board members be female since 2004.

If you are a parent or an educator, you can help young Canadians become more aware of gender equality issues by discussing the topic in your classrooms and around the dining room table. Talk about the negative impacts of the violence against women and sexist female stereotypes depicted on the Internet and in movies, television programs, advertisements, textbooks, and toys. Engage young people in conversations about the impact of sexual harassment through social media.

From the perspective of a historian, I'm also keen on ensuring that more Canadians have a greater knowledge and understanding of women in history. I wrote *100 Canadian Heroines: Famous and Forgotten Faces* and followed that up with *100 More Canadian Heroines*. Awareness of the accomplishments and challenges experienced by women in history showcases them as role models, inspires girls and women, and builds respect.

During my campaign to get Canadian women on banknotes, I was shocked at the lack of respect and even the hatred towards women revealed by some misogynistic callers on radio talk shows and by social media trolls; but this was minor compared to the abuse and threats of violence faced by female politicians such as Alberta

## Are there statues in your community that celebrate women? Are any parks, streets, buildings, or other public spaces in your area named after women?

Premier Rachel Notley and Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne.

Content providers can help to shatter gender stereotypes by sharing the stories of female historical figures as well as of the amazing women doing great things today. Let's make sure that this information is included in school learning materials, movies and television programs, books and plays, museum exhibits, websites, and more. If you're a teacher, are you incorporating women's history in your lessons and during Women's History Month in October?



Demonstrators participate in the International Women's Day March in Toronto, March 5, 2016.

We can all encourage celebration and pride in the achievements of Canadian women — in the past as well as the present. You can contact the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada to suggest a notable woman to be recognized as a person of national historic significance. Given that Canada has designated just ninety-five women, compared with 601 men, the board needs your nominations. Are there statues in your community that celebrate women? Are any parks, streets, buildings, or other public places in your area named after women?

I was encouraged to learn that the city of Montreal, as part of its 375th anniversary, is creating a bank of names of notable women that will be used to increase the representation of women in Montreal place names. The announcement noted that of the six thousand names currently given to public spaces just six per cent refer to women. Your community could do something similar to

celebrate the contributions of women — and you don't need to wait for a special anniversary.

Let's recognize the achievements of modern Canadian women and promote them as role models. Among the one hundred appointees to the Order of Canada announced in December 2016, only a third were women. I contacted staff at Rideau Hall and learned that, though the percentages vary, Canadians nominate fewer women than men.

Millions of men, women, and children joined women's marches across Canada and around the globe on January 21, 2017, to support women's rights and equality. But a placard carried by one of the marchers highlighted the frustrations of long-time activists: "Tired of holding up this sign for sixty years." I'll be thrilled to have Viola Desmond in my wallet next year, but I'm counting on all Canadians to help close the gender gap. 🐾



### MERNA FORSTER

Merna Forster is a historian and public speaker who advocates for the recognition of female historical figures and gender equality. She received the 2016 Governor General's History Award for Popular Media (Pierre Berton Award) and led the successful national campaign calling for Canadian women on banknotes. She also wrote *100 Canadian Heroines* and *100 More Canadian Heroines*.

Singer Gord Downie, centre, with his bandmates in The Tragically Hip in Victoria on July 22, 2016.





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# STATE OF MIND

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by Charlotte Gray

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*A thriving Canadian culture is one of the most significant achievements of the past century and a half. But will it last?*

**ONCE UPON A TIME**, the phrase “Canadian culture” caused eyes to glaze over. The phrase usually followed over-emphatic protests that of course this country had its own culture, prompting suspicions that perhaps it didn’t; perhaps we were just a mash-up of British and American creative trends.

Today, that insecurity has evaporated. But there is no neat definition of Canadian culture. Sometimes it encompasses any artistic endeavour that reflects values on which we pride ourselves, such as inclusivity and tolerance (Hello, CBC’s *Little Mosque on the Prairie*). Other times it is straight nationalism (such as Charlie Pachter’s images of the Queen on a moose). Most often, it’s simply a laundry list of popular themes — landscape painting, soulful ballads, novels featuring multi-generational families, any art form featuring bears or blizzards.

But we are not all reading the same books, admiring the same paintings, listening to the same music, attending the same theatrical or ballet performances. While British Columbians embrace the cheerful seascapes of E.J. Hughes, five thousand kilometres away Newfoundlanders admire Christopher Pratt canvases that capture the cold Atlantic light. While immigrant community dramas dominate Ontario bestseller lists, two days drive away on the Prairies it is the travails of Indigenous families that capture readers. And francophone Quebec has developed its own TV, film, pop artists, and literature that are largely unknown in the rest of Canada and completely distinct from the Hollywood machine.

As Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told the *New York Times* soon after his 2015 election, “There is no core identity, no mainstream in Canada.” So a homogenous Canadian culture is unlikely.

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## BIG QUESTION

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**DOES CANADIAN  
CULTURE NEED  
PROTECTING?**

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Yet ... there are moments. In the summer of 2016, The Tragically Hip gave Canadians a rare opportunity to imagine that, for just a nanosecond, almost all of us were on the same cultural page. When The Hip — a hugely popular band with no profile outside of Canada — gave their final concert in their hometown Kingston, Ontario, in August 2016, an astonishing one third of all Canadians tuned in on television, radio, or via online streaming during the three-hour broadcast. Gord Downie, the lead singer now suffering from terminal brain cancer, sang about us: His lyrics are littered with references to Jacques Cartier, prairie winds, frozen lakes, small towns, residential schools, the Rideau Canal.

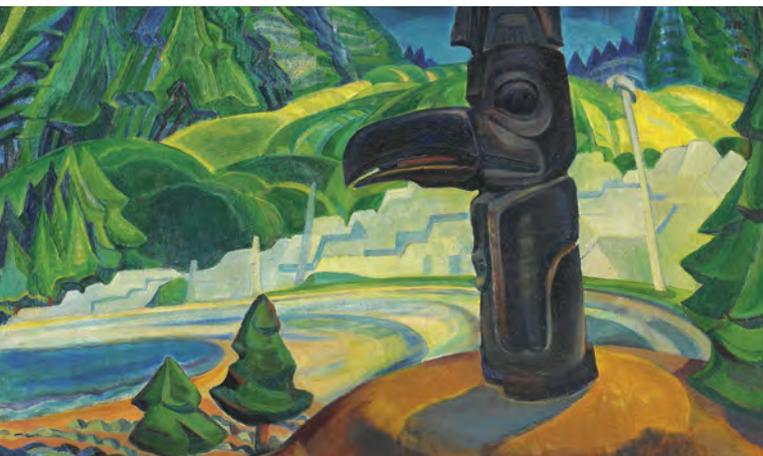
Why is this important? Given the gulfs between regions, why should we value our artists and performers, let alone allow governments to allocate tax dollars to subsidize them and their access to the public? This question goes to the heart of our national character. Regardless of Prime Minister Trudeau's proclamation of Canada as a "post-nation-state" with no core identity, a collective sensibility has quietly evolved in this country since Confederation, in spite of

the landscape on which they were perched. Ambitious creators and performers fled to New York City or to London, not least because that's where the publishers, galleries, and audiences were.

At Confederation, the new country had only six museums and no publishing industry or concert hall. Tastemakers in Halifax, Montreal, and Toronto (the only substantial cities of the day) ignored the rich traditions within particular communities, such as the extraordinary artistic skills of Indigenous peoples, the music and songs of rural Quebec, the fiddlers and dancers of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton.

How far we have come! But it took time. A literary culture began to emerge in anglophone Canada with (among others) the "Confederation Poets" — Charles G.D. Roberts, Bliss Carman, Archibald Lampman, and Duncan Campbell Scott. Although traditional in style, their poetry was unmistakably Canadian because they wrote about classic Canadian themes: water, winter, woods.

Then came the extraordinary performance artist E. Pauline Johnson, daughter of a Mohawk chief and his English wife, who



Emily Carr's *Skidegate*, 1928.

## In British Columbia, Emily Carr was painting not only the lush rain forest but also the extraordinary creations of the Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian, and Nisga'a peoples.

regional differences. Today's polling repeatedly shows that, wherever they live, a majority of Canadians attach a high priority to the values of accommodation, human rights, and diversity; we trust government to promote tolerance and to mitigate economic inequality.

These values are in dramatic contrast to those currently reflected elsewhere, particularly in the United States of President Donald Trump. And, as The Tragically Hip concert tour suggested, artists reflect that identity. Artists help to illuminate our world a little better and to capture our unique sensibility. It has been one of the most significant achievements of the past century and a half. But in a shrinking world Canadian culture and identity remain fragile.

In the early years of the Dominion of Canada, this country remained a colony as far as the arts were concerned. The "vision" came from elsewhere. Poets borrowed the rhythms of Alfred Tennyson or Algernon Charles Swinburne; painters made Canadian maples look like British oak trees; authors rarely set their novels within

penned both bloodthirsty ballads about Indigenous warriors and lyrical verse about canoes and sunsets. Next, a handful of novelists emerged whose fiction was set in Canada but appealed to English-speaking readers everywhere — Ralph Connor, Lucy Maud Montgomery, Stephen Leacock. But on their home turf, it was slim pickings within a philistine society.

Visual artists were making the same effort to capture on their canvases the dramatic geography of the new Dominion. Group of Seven paintings (many painted in Ontario's Algonquin Park) have been described by critic Robert Fulford as "our national wallpaper." In British Columbia, Emily Carr was painting not only the lush rain forest but also the extraordinary creations of the Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian, and Nisga'a peoples. But few artists made a living from their work, and cheap reproductions of European art were the most common feature of Canadian parlours.

It takes money to build a national culture. Artists need appreciative audiences: buyers for their books and artworks; ticket purchasers



Above left: Mohawk poet E. Pauline Johnson, circa 1890s.

Above: Members of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences (Massey Commission) in 1951.

Far left: Writer Madelaine Thien in a 2015 interview in Germany.

Left: Stephen B. Leacock, 1935.

Right: The cover of a 1964 edition of *Anne of Green Gables* by L.M. Montgomery.



for concerts, ballet performances, and plays; patrons for cultural initiatives; properly financed art schools and music colleges. And, until the middle of the twentieth century, most Canadians were scrambling to make a living. This was a poor country, and there was neither time nor cash for what were widely regarded as “frills.” Ottawa, the national capital, boasted no proper public art gallery, no decent museums, and only a small amateur theatre company. For the most part, provincial capitals depended on a handful of local philanthropists to support the arts.

This all changed in the buoyant years after the Second World War. A commitment to building a national culture gained momentum in lockstep with the growth in gross national product. In 1949, the Liberal government in Ottawa appointed the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences,

with Vincent Massey (the future Governor General) as chair. The five commissioners went on a cross-country tour and returned to Ottawa aghast at what they had found. They had heard that the arts were starved and that “the cultural environment is hostile or at least indifferent to the writer.” The commissioners argued in their final report that if Canada was to mature as an independent country it needed state support for the arts in both English and French.

**T**he Massey Commission was a turning point for this country’s artists, as well as for Canadians generally. There were a few political roadblocks — Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent is said to have responded to the report in shock: “Fund ballet dancers?!” But the postwar economy was booming, fuelling an appetite for cultural distinctiveness. The most important initiative was the Canada Council



Above: The Royal Winnipeg Ballet's Evelyn Hart and John Kaminski perform *Giselle* in 1982.

Above right: Writer Margaret Atwood in 1991.

Left: Playwright Robert Lepage as Jean Cocteau in a 1992 production of *Needles and Opium*.

Right: A Tribe Called Red, with, from left, Tim "Zoolman" Hill, Ian "DJ NDN" Campeau, and Bear Witness. The electronic music group gives voice to Indigenous issues.



for the Arts, established in 1957 with a mandate to “foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in, the arts.” The council not only distributed its dollars to artists throughout Canada; it also built support for the idea of the arts as an important element in national identity. As Margaret Atwood, Canada’s global literary superstar, put it in *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*, “I’m talking about Canada as a state of mind, as the space you inhabit not just with your body but with your head.”

From the 1950s onward, the fizz of national self-discovery exhilarated everybody. Two institutions established in the 1930s, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the National Film Board, were given more independence and bigger budgets; like the

Canada Council, both served anglophone and francophone Canadians. Theatre festivals sprang up across the country, with the Stratford Festival in Ontario as the crown jewel. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet, founded in 1939, developed into a national touring company, and in Toronto, Celia Franca founded the National Ballet of Canada in 1951. On Canada’s hundredth birthday, the national capital finally got a National Arts Centre, followed a few years later by two important cultural institutions — the National Gallery of Canada and the Canadian Museum of Civilization (now the Canadian Museum of History).

People began to speak of CanLit as an English-language genre in its own right (with a heavy emphasis on heroines who survived

COURTESY ROYAL WINNIPEG BALLET; ALAMY; MATT BARNES; ALASTAIR MUIR; GETTY.

against terrible odds). By the late twentieth century, CanLit was flourishing, thanks to government grants and a raft of glittering prizes such as the Scotiabank Giller Prize. When Alice Munro won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2013, there was coast-to-coast chest-thumping.

Postwar Quebec also enjoyed a literary surge, with novelists like Marie-Claire Blais and Nicole Brossard, and playwrights including Gratien Gélinas and Michel Tremblay, rethinking the values of a society that had, up to then, been profoundly traditional. The gulf between anglophone and francophone cultures — what Montreal writer Hugh MacLennan famously called “two solitudes” — deepened; few critics operated in both languages. But both genres had authors who proved adept at widening their appeal and at including the voices of immigrants, such as Ontario’s Rohinton Mistry, Indian-born author of *A Fine Balance*, and Montreal’s Dany Laferrière, Haitian-born author of *Comme faire l’amour avec un nègre sans se fatiguer*. The 2016 Scotiabank Giller Prize winner was *Do Not Say We Have Nothing*, by Madeleine Thien, a Canadian whose parents were of Chinese origin.

By the early years of this century, opera companies, orchestras, chamber music groups, local museums, and art galleries proliferated, thanks to a combination of both private and public-sector funding. Two new national museums were established: the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax and the Canadian Museum of Human Rights in Winnipeg. Carefully designed tax measures and an interlocking system of government subsidies allowed Canadian magazines and journals to “explain Canada to Canadians.” Not all these initiatives thrived, but those that did nurtured creative talent.

One hundred and fifty years after Confederation, Canadian artists and cultural industries seem pretty sturdy; Canada as a “state of mind,” in Atwood’s words, is recognizable. Most of our fellow citizens can name a couple of cultural icons that are uniquely Canadian — not just pop culture idols such as The Tragically Hip or Trailer Park Boys but also high-culture icons such as Tom Thomson, Glenn Gould, Robert LePage, and Michael Ondaatje. And the contemporary arts scene reflects a much wider sensibility than the Britain-derived culture of Canada’s first century. Indigenous peoples, so cruelly marginalized for so long, are finding their way into the cultural mainstream today, particularly as authors (Richard Wagamese, Joan Crate), musicians (A Tribe Called Red, Tanya Tagaq), and visual artists (Kenojuak Ashevak, Rebecca Belmore, Kent Monkman).

But nothing lasts forever. In the past few decades, harsh crosswinds have blown through this carefully constructed edifice of

## Canada is not alone in this predicament. Most countries are struggling to protect their distinct identities and cultures against global forces.

creators and spaces, undermining its stability. During economic downturns, right-wing politicians regularly demand cuts to grants to artists and cultural institutions. More recently, the federal government led by Stephen Harper was particularly critical of the CBC, which it perceived both as biased against the Tories and as a waste of money; the national broadcaster’s budget was steadily cut, and there were constant rumours that the government wanted to dismantle it. (The Justin Trudeau government restored its budget.)

At the same time, the tsunami of globalization and digital technology has raised more challenging questions. As Kate Taylor, culture columnist for the *Globe and Mail*, puts it, “How can a mid-sized power maintain any notion of cultural sovereignty in the face of the aptly acronymed FANG (that’s Facebook, Amazon, Netflix, and Google).” The Internet allows these U.S.-based companies to drain dry local cultural economies, because profits from advertising, Netflix subscriptions, and online book purchases now flow south.

Canadians who want to create and to market TV shows, video games, documentaries, books, or feature films — projects that collectively raise billions for the economy — scramble to find financing from private and public sources. If those sources shrink, creators will move to where there are larger audiences and more funding, just as their predecessors did one hundred and fifty years ago. Canadian culture will slowly dissolve in the larger North American ocean. Would our unique identity follow?

Canada is not alone in this predicament. Most countries are struggling to protect their distinct identities and cultures against global forces; France is a leader in this battle. But, along with most of its European neighbours, France has developed its own culture over centuries and has relied on language barriers to protect it. In Canada, the national culture remains young and porous, and without government support it could rapidly dwindle. 🐼



### CHARLOTTE GRAY

Writer Charlotte Gray is well-known across Canada as an author and public speaker. Her latest book is *The Promise of Canada: 150 Years – People and Ideas That Have Shaped Our Country*. Her nine previous non-fiction bestsellers include *The Massey Murder*, *Gold Diggers: Striking It Rich in the Klondike*, *Reluctant Genius: The Passionate Life and Inventive Mind of Alexander Graham Bell* and *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Lives of Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill*.

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# CONFEDERATION DERAILED

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by Andrew Coyne

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*You can't call Canada a nation anymore.  
How did this happen?*

**F**OR THE BETTER PART OF FIFTY YEARS, Canadian politics was consumed with the question: Is Quebec a nation? Should it be recognized as such, constitutionally or otherwise? From the early “special status” and “*deux nations*” formulations of the Lester Pearson and Robert Stanfield era, to the debates over the “distinct society” clause in the Meech Lake and Charlottetown accords, to the resolution passed by Parliament under the Harper government recognizing that “the Québécois form a nation within a united Canada,” the question was never far from the headlines.

As nationalist fervour has subsided in Quebec (whether because of former Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s resolution or in spite of it) the push for “national” status and recognition

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## BIG QUESTION

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### DOES FEDERALISM HAVE A FUTURE?

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has passed to Aboriginal groups, including First Nations. It was at one point proposed that “the Indigenous nations of Canada” — all six hundred of them — should be recognized in the Constitution of Canada. While that idea may not have gotten much traction, the notion that the concerns of Indigenous Canadians should be dealt with not as those of other citizens of Canada are but via “nation-to-nation” negotiations is increasingly accepted as orthodoxy, even if no one quite knows what it means.

The one idea that is politically impermissible to express is that Canada is a nation. The term has more or less disappeared from use, like “Dominion.” There are vestigial references to the Department of “National” Defence and such, but the more usual term for any institution of the only government that represents all Canadians is “federal.” (In Quebec it is not Canada that is defended but “federalism.”)

It is permissible in certain quarters to talk of a kind of residual nationhood representing some unspecified part of Canada — the phantom nation of English Canada, for example, implied by concepts of *deux nations*, or the nation that would presumably engage in nation-to-nation negotiations with Indigenous Canadians. But the idea that there is some broader Canadian nation that includes everyone, that transcends and embraces those nations that may be contained within it, is more or less taboo.



Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, left, and Quebec Premier René Lévesque, right, at constitutional talks on September 9, 1980.





Protestors besiege Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau (balding, with his back to the camera) in Calgary, June 1974. The Trudeau government's energy policies were hugely unpopular with Albertans and critics said this contributed to western alienation.

Try to imagine the response if it were proposed that Parliament should recognize the existence of a Canadian nation, or that a clause be added to the Constitution instructing that it is to be interpreted “in a manner consistent with the recognition that Canada is a nation.” Unthinkable. It would be seen as an intolerable affront. Indeed, this is more than just a thought experiment. When, during an early round of the patriation wars (the debates about bringing Canada's Constitution home and out of the jurisdiction of Britain's Parliament), the federal government issued a draft preamble that began, “We, the people of Canada,” the response from Quebec nationalists was apoplexy. The draft was hastily withdrawn.

The “one Canada” championed, in different ways, by former prime ministers John Diefenbaker and Pierre Trudeau has ceased to be. Rather, we are taught to say that Canada is a country, a state, a federation, or, in former Quebec premier Robert Bourassa's incomparably dry formulation, “a superstructure.” But a nation? Perish the thought.

This is, needless to say, odd. The Americans, diverse as they are, have no difficulty in referring to themselves as a nation. The French, likewise, or the Germans, or Italians, or most members of the United Nations. Even the Swiss, though they speak four languages and live under perhaps the most decentralized system of government on earth, still have a robust sense of nationhood, as reflected in the name of their parliamentary lower house: the National Council. The British may be going through something of an identity crisis at

the moment, but though they contain four nations they still refer to the “British people” and to British institutions as “national.”

It's particularly odd that “nation” is taboo in Canada, when one considers that in large measure the declared intent of the Fathers of Confederation was to create just that: a single, all-inclusive Canadian nation.

The intent wasn't, certainly, to erase all linguistic or cultural differences, or to purée them into an indistinguishable whole. But the Fathers were explicit in their purpose. They were not just federating the provinces, they were creating a new nation, making the citizens of British North America a single, self-governing community. Over and over, the leading men of the day hailed the arrival of “a new nationality.” George-Étienne Cartier called it a “political nationality ... with which neither the national origin nor the religion of any individual would interfere. ... In our federation we should have Catholic and Protestant, English, French, Irish, and Scotch, and each by his efforts and his success would increase the prosperity and glory of the new Confederacy.”

The Fathers were certainly aware of the linguistic and cultural diversity of the nation they were creating — how could they not be? — and they made allowances for it, at both the federal and provincial levels. Assimilation had been tried in the remembered past, and it had failed. But if it was nowhere part of the aim of Confederation to create a homogeneous national identity, neither is it possible to construe their work as a pact between “two founding peoples,”

English and French. The political leaders of British North America did not think of themselves that way. They did not organize themselves in that way. And they most certainly did not enshrine any such understanding in the Constitution.

Particular assurances and protections might be given to minority groups, notably in the matter of denominational schools. The French and English languages might be given equal status in the legislatures and courts of the new Dominion and of the province of Quebec (the same did not apply, significantly, in Ontario). Certain jurisdictional distinctions might remain between provinces, notably in the retention of the system of civil law in Quebec. But, as to the overall political and legal structure, the Fathers were clear: The “new nationality” of which they spoke was in the singular, not the plural. French-Canadian leaders who supported Confederation did so in the confident belief that their language and culture could be accommodated within the roomy confines of this “political nationality.” Those who opposed Confederation did so precisely because it had not been constructed on binational lines.

And yet, no sooner had the Fathers finished their work than the project began to unravel. Provincial premiers, led by Ontario’s Oliver Mowat, propounded the idea that Canada was not, at its founding, a union of citizens, to whom federal and provincial governments, each sovereign in its own sphere, would separately be accountable. Rather, they viewed Canada as a “compact” among the provinces, of which the federal government was a kind of extrusion.

**T**he Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, until 1949 the highest court in — or, rather, out of — the land, more or less rewrote the British North America Act in a series of rulings in the 1880s and 1890s, converting a document that was intended to give primacy to the federal government (see the reservation, disallowance, declaratory, and residual “peace, order, and good government” clauses) into a declaration of provincial rights.

With the addition of the Western provinces, even as the bulk of the population, and political power, remained in Central Canada, the federal government came to be resented over much of the country as a remote, even autocratic presence. As the pan-French-Canadian nationalism of Henri Bourassa gave way to the Quebec-centred nationalism of Maurice Duplessis and his more liberal-minded successors, Quebecers, too, were encouraged to see the federal government as the government of “*les autres*” — even though Quebec played a big part in electing it (from 1867 to 1988, just four majority governments were elected that did not also contain a majority of the members from Quebec). As Quebec’s demands for powers and money to be transferred from Ottawa escalated, were the other provinces to be expected to let that pass without demanding the same?

The provinces found their champions federally, too. The old notion that a part of the federal role was to protect minority rights from the depredations of local majorities — so much a part of Sir John A. Macdonald’s vision of the country — took a blow from Sir Wilfrid Laurier’s compromise in the Manitoba schools question, from which it never recovered. Until around the Depression,



Children in Calgary celebrate Canada Day in 2015. While Canadians often unite for causes and celebrations, politically it is difficult to identify Canada as a nation.

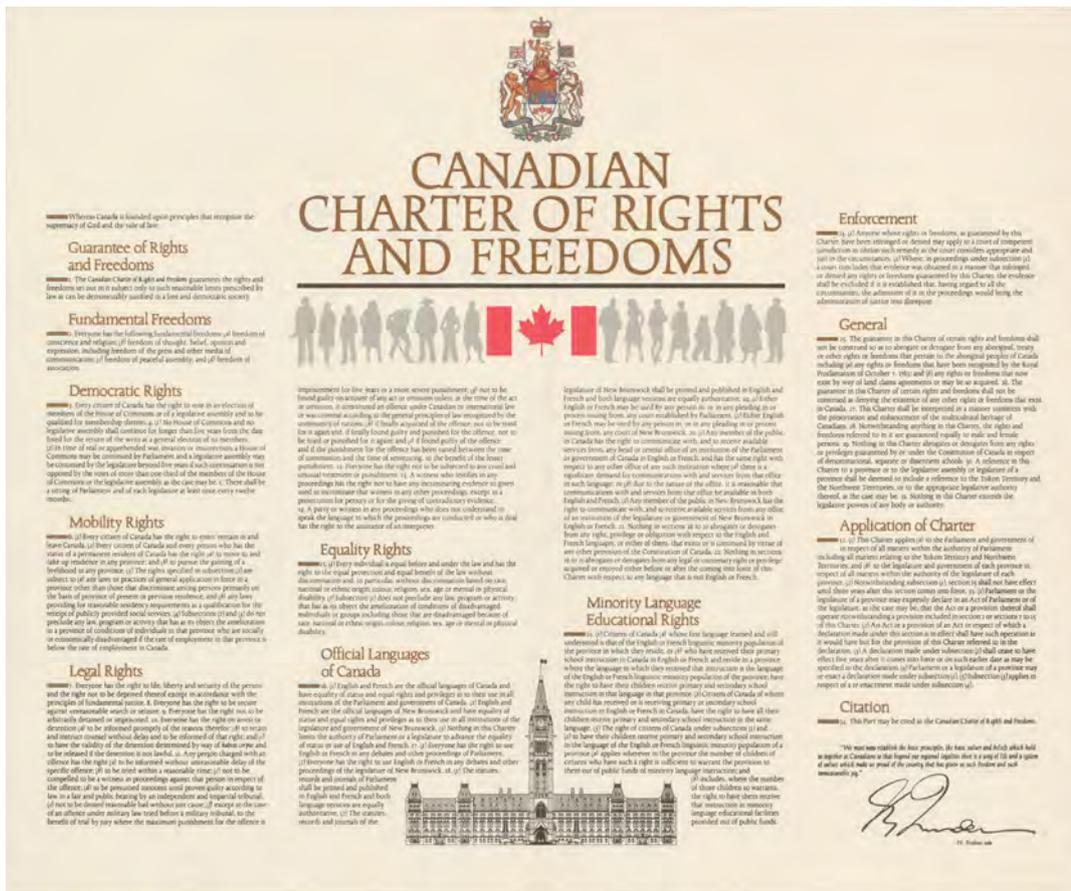
the Liberal Party saw itself as the defender of the interests of the provinces against the federal government; after the Second World War this was more typically the cause of the Conservatives, especially as the federal role began to expand in the 1960s and 1970s, in line with that of the state generally. In the patriation battles, the provinces were given a great assist by the Supreme Court, which ruled against the Liberal government’s attempt to “bring the Constitution home” unilaterally. The document that resulted was accordingly vastly tilted towards provincial interests, not least with regard to the amending formula, the price of Pierre Trudeau’s much-prized Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Add in the massive fiscal retrenchment of the 1980s and 1990s, as the federal government tried to rescue itself from the debt hole it had dug for itself in the deficit years — and the increasing perception (and reality) that members of Parliament are no longer sent to Ottawa to represent their constituencies, but, as the saying has it, are sent back to their constituencies to represent Ottawa — and you have today’s desiccated, depleted federal government, unable to do much of anything without the consent of the provinces.

Even an activist government like the present one finds it can do little — on everything from climate change, to health care, to pipelines, to pensions — but plead with the premiers. The danger is not so much that the country will fall apart as drift; if there is less impetus to separation these days, it may be because federalism has become so irrelevant.

Not even enforcement of the common market within our borders, perhaps the quintessential federal role, is considered something that can be safely entrusted to federal authority. Though it has the undoubted constitutional power to strike down provincial trade barriers, Ottawa plainly does not feel it has the legitimacy to do so. At any rate, it does

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is part of Canada's Constitution and came into effect in 1982.



not dare. The best it can do is to try to coax the provinces into agreeing to open their borders to each other reciprocally, by way of multilateral negotiations, in the style of sovereign states, though with rather less success. Which is why, one hundred and fifty years after Confederation, though we have free trade agreements with dozens of countries around the world, we still don't have free trade with ourselves.

I want to suggest that these two trends — the decline of a sense of Canadian nationhood and the decline of federal authority — are not unrelated. The reason we are still plagued by hundreds of internal trade barriers, in a way that would not be tolerated in other countries, is not because Canadians are less apprised of the virtues of free trade. Rather, it is because of our attenuated sense of nationhood. Trade barriers, after all, are supposed to protect “us” from “them.” A Spaniard would think it absurd to put up trade barriers within Spain, not so much because he had strong views on the theory of comparative advantage but because, well, it would be protecting us from us. But Canadians have been encouraged to view each other not as part of a single national us but as a number of different them, without common interests or values.

This is true more broadly. Democratic government is only possible among a group of people who mutually agree to sacrifice for each other, to defer to each other, to be ruled by each other. The minute the idea takes hold that the government to which they are asked to submit is not their government but someone else's, the necessary consent of the governed will be withdrawn — if not wholly, then in part.

We can see this most vividly in the failure of the European project, certainly with regard to monetary union and the larger goal of an “ever closer union.” There has never been anything remotely resembling such a thing as a European nation, a single, self-governing people that regarded itself as such. National governments, consequently, have been unwilling to cede much power to a European government, and certainly not to the European Parliament to which they might answer. Instead, the European Commission is appointed by, and mostly answerable to, national governments; whatever role the European Parliament might have played in calling forth an emerging European national consciousness has failed to materialize.

And yet we are presented, to the south, with a counter-example: the United States of America. Whatever their deep divisions as a country, the idea of Americans as part of “one nation, indivisible” is uncontested and, indeed, incontestable. Though the U.S. Congress is held in disrepute, it is held in disrepute equally over most of the country. Where there are calls to return powers to the states, it has more to do with arguments of efficiency and good government than with any deeper questions of legitimacy. The federal government has a role in national affairs of which Canadian governments could only dream: Why, there is even a national Department of Education!

Part of that, of course, is shaped by the historic calamity of the Civil War. But much the greater part of it is that America has

realized the dream of our own Fathers of Confederation, the creation of a “political nationality” rooted not in blood or soil but in common values, common aspirations, and common principles of government, all summarized in the Constitution, for which Americans have a reverence bordering on the cult-like. It was very much part of Pierre Trudeau’s ambition for the Charter that it would play the same nation-defining role here, and perhaps it will over time. But at this stage of our development it is still the case that too many Canadians have absorbed the idea, consciously or unconsciously, that real nations are ethnocultural nations.

I think much of the blame for this should be attached not to Quebec nationalists, or to Indigenous nationalists, or to provincialists, but, odd as it may sound, to classical Canadian nationalism. The latter is the self-obsessed creation of southern-Ontarian elites, not much in evidence now but hugely influential back in the 1960s and 1970s. They gave us CanCon, the Foreign Investment Review Agency, and the National Energy Program. But their worst legacy was the idea that what matters about nations is that they are different from one another — the “narcissism of small differences” (also observable in today’s more generalized identity politics).

**C**anadian nationalism of this kind was essentially an attempt to create a kind of ersatz ethnicity: The differences that would define us as separate and apart from the Americans, and therefore justify our distinct nationhood, were not of blood but of cultural identity. This a largely fictional exercise — it would be difficult to find two peoples on Earth more culturally similar. And the whole exercise of fetishizing difference left classical nationalists peculiarly vulnerable to the objection of identity groups within Canada: Wait a minute, we’re different from you.

The conflict between these two conceptions of nationhood — ethnocultural versus political, predetermined versus self-determined, European versus American — is the subject of much academic literature. It’s not my intention here to rehearse the whole debate. I only want to point out the indispensability of the idea of Canadian nationhood. The whole point of a federation, after all, is to have a federal government — a government with powers to deal with matters that transcend provincial interests and cross provincial boundaries. If we weren’t interested in having such a government, we could just govern ourselves as ten or thirteen sovereign states and exchange ambassadors. But we will never agree to a meaningful federal government — a government with meaningful powers versus our provincial governments — until and unless we are agreed we are a nation.

The virtue of a “civic” nationalism is that it implies no contradiction

## The Charter of Rights is one bedrock on which a civic nationalism can be built and strengthened.

with narrower forms of association, including those we might describe as nations: You can be a member of both the Québécois nation and the Canadian nation, without injury to either. For that matter, it implies no contradiction with broader forms, either: As a civic nationalism is not rooted in an obsession with differences with other nations, it need not see its interests as inevitably conflicting with theirs.

A civic idea of Canadian nationhood, rooted in a shared commitment to certain ideals of liberty, democracy, and solidarity, might be broadly similar to that of the United States, or Britain, or any other liberal democracy, but so what? It needn’t be different from others’ to still be ours. Our ambition should not be to be different from other nations, as if differentness were something valuable in itself, but to be the best exemplar of ideals we might well hold in common with them; to be true not to “thine ownself” but to universal values. “Canada is free,” said Laurier, “and freedom is its nationality.”

The Charter of Rights, then, is one bedrock on which a civic nationalism can be built and strengthened: a pledge to protect the rights of every Canadian citizen, equally, binding upon provincial and federal governments alike and enforced by courts at every level, with the Supreme Court as the final arbiter.

A similar commitment to uphold our economic rights as “citizens of the whole” rather than merely the parts — that is, to trade freely with one another wherever we may live, as spelled out in the Constitution, with the federal government as enforcer — would also do wonders for our national sense of self. But the *sine qua non* is a federal government that is seen to be much more democratic.

The nationalist project of our times is radical democratic reform at the centre: to make governments more responsible to Parliament, Parliament more representative of the people, leaders more accountable to MPs, and MPs once more the emissaries of the people to Ottawa, rather than the other way around. When Canadians come to see their Parliament as their national assembly, they will in turn be more likely to see themselves as a nation.

The issue, then, is not whether Canada is a nation but whether it can be. Or no, I am sure it can be. Rather, it must be. 🐾



### ANDREW COYNE

Andrew Coyne is a political columnist with the *National Post*. His journalism career has also included positions with *Maclean's*, the *Globe and Mail*, and the Southam newspaper chain. In addition, he has contributed to a wide range of other publications, including the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *National Review*, *Time*, and *Saturday Night*. Coyne is also a long-time member of the At Issue panel on CBC’s *The National*.

Adrienne Poy (Clarkson), centre, and her brother, Neville, right, play with their French-Canadian neighbours in the Poy's backyard at 277 Sussex Street, Ottawa, in 1945. The family had been in Canada for two years.





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# ROOM TO GROW

by Adrienne Clarkson

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*No matter where we have come from, we are all Canadians.*

**W**HEN MY FAMILY FIRST CAME TO THIS COUNTRY with one suitcase apiece, we knew we were very lucky to be welcomed by Canadians named Potter, Marcotte, Proulx, and Molot. They took us in even though they had no particular reason to do so. All of these Canadians were very positive and warm towards my parents and to my brother and me. Their children walked us to school; the women taught my mother how to cook. We learned about Canada through meeting and being cared for by its people.

All of those Canadians — our first friends — were very positive towards us. We were in the middle of the Second World War in 1943, and they took pity on us because we had lost everything. They would say what they thought was the nicest thing possible: “In one generation, your children will be Canadians.” When we were alone, my father would always say, after we had heard one version or another of this idea, “We aren’t going to wait for one generation. You are Canadians *now!*”

I believed it then, and I believe it now. I have always felt that I could be, and wanted to be, Canadian. At the age of three, I could hardly have been expected to understand that this would involve not only acceptance by the people who were already here but also that I would have to make adjustments and that, in making those adjustments, perhaps I would lose something.

All people who come to this country have lost something. We have all lost our original place in the society in which we were born. We have lost the acknowledgement of who we were in our birthplace — in the streets and mountains, and by the lakes and the sea, of where we come from. We have lost geographies of emotional and physical landscape. That is why everyone who comes to a new country and makes her life there is to be admired for her courage and her leap of faith that things will be better.

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## BIG QUESTION

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**WHAT DOES IT  
MEAN TO BE  
A NATION OF  
IMMIGRANTS?**

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*Canoes in a Fog* by Frances Anne Hopkins, circa 1869.

Often, of course, we as newcomers to a country do not even try to assess that loss. In my family, my father emphasized to us that we must never think of what we had lost, that we must never look backwards. Turning resolutely forward, I always assumed, through my father's attitude, that we would gain more than we had ever lost. I have never forgotten that feeling that there was going to be more for me than there had been in the lifetimes of my parents.

As I grew older in the little city of Ottawa, I saw some people arrive after the Second World War who were called displaced persons — people taken in by our country because they had nowhere to go. I saw people who had tattooed numbers on their arms — from Nazi concentration camps — working in our local corner store. I welcomed kids in my classroom who could not speak any English in Grade 9 but within three months had learned the language with only a bit of an accent.

I lived alongside these stories of hope and salvation all through my life. And I lived the hope and salvation myself. Probably that is why I am totally prepared for it to go on, always, the way it has. It seems to me that Canada will always be what we have been — a place that welcomes people and knows that, even though they have lost everything, they are prepared to play the game again to win everything back, and more on top of that.

Everyone knows that Canada became an immigrant country right from the start when the French landed on these shores in the

**Water is not just a metaphor in Canada; it is the means by which we discovered this continent and made it part of us.**

sixteenth century and made a deal with Indigenous people to settle here. We, as new immigrants, did not stay by the seashore. The St. Lawrence River meant we were able to penetrate deeply into the continent right from the beginning. We only needed the Indigenous people to show us how to do it. We did not stay a seafaring nation, and we did not become one even after the British took over from the French in the eighteenth century. Our destiny was always to go inland via the lakes and rivers.

I think the opening of our country — which was then thoroughly populated by Indigenous peoples — through its waterways made our immigration into a kind of absorption into the land. Water is

not just a metaphor in Canada; it is the means by which we discovered this continent and made it part of us.

As newcomers, we would never have been able to explore the continent without Indigenous help. They showed us, for instance, how to take birchbark and make it into a canoe. Only the canoe made sense in this roadless country, where horses and wheeled carts would have been useless. The French colonizers were determined to go inland to seek further wealth. Their ultimate destination, they thought, was China, but what they were really searching for was ultimate riches.

In the end, wealth was found in the fur of the beaver, which lives in the continent's waterways. And this made us into the kind of country we are. Political economist Harold Innis has pointed out that penetrating the country through its rivers and lakes made us different, made us become another kind of economic entity. We became a country by osmosis. We did not initially have to drive anything through the continent, like a road or a path. Existing waterways — and guidance by Aboriginal people — led to the expansion of the European world into the new continent.

By contrast, our neighbours in the Thirteen Colonies to the south concentrated on their closeness to the ocean. They started to cultivate crops such as tobacco, rice, wheat, corn, and indigo according to their climate. Then, several decades after American independence, cotton became important. Dependence on cotton, and therefore dependence on slaves, drove what became a formidable and powerful American economy.

Our history was concentrated on the fur trade — and on cooperating with First Peoples to find, trap, and skin beavers and then process their pelts and package them to be carried out in the same canoes that had carried the fur traders in. I feel that the history of the fur trade really leads us to an understanding of how we were able to take our place in this country. That's why the emphasis Innis places on this is seminal to everything we can believe about our country.

Of course, in the late-nineteenth century, the transcontinental railway came, enabling people who arrived by ship to be transported to the other side of the country. Later, people arrived by airplane. But I'm convinced that the initial two hundred years of fur exploitation and fur trading characterized our country forever. Even if you have come from Hong Kong and are Chinese, this history is subliminally written into everything you have become as a Canadian.

In 1942, when my family arrived, this country was predominantly white, British, and insular. We met French Canadians, and we heard French being spoken, and we understood that that was also important and that there was something original about that combination. Also, the people had decent values and a proper infrastructure of parliamentary democracy and common law. That layer of complexity, that francophone reality — which had its own legal system and was part of the Canadian fabric — made Canada different. It set us apart from the Americans.

At the time I went to school, geography was taught extremely thoroughly, and the names of all the explorers were the names by which I understood what our country was, why our country had



Fourteen-year-old Adrienne Poy (Clarkson) and her mother, Ethel Poy, at their family cottage on McGregor Lake, Quebec, 1953.

been explored in all its enormity. The exploration of the West by David Thompson, Peter Pond, and Samuel Hearne was heroic and extraordinary. The attempts by missionaries to carry the Word of God as far as possible convey an extraordinarily romantic vision of our country. And the history of the Grey Nuns of Montreal, who travelled by canoe into western and northern Canada in the mid-nineteenth century to provide health care, is heroic — I'm always amazed that it is so little celebrated. Again, all of this exploration was by the natural waterways of our country.

Our great literary scholar Malcolm Ross wrote that Canada is a country like a tray of melting ice cubes. The cubes represent the identities of people when they get here; as they slowly melt they blend together to make one watery mass. I've always liked that analogy because I think it suits us and it tells us, in a way, what we are. It shows us that we were once solid and that we could become fluid, and that at any time we could again become frozen together. Once the divider in the ice cube tray has gone, and the ice cubes start melting together, we become one mass.

I believe also that we did not become like our European forebears: We might have looked like them, we might have talked a bit like them, but we are not them. The United States of America was much more successful in promoting the European model for the kind of state it became. As John Ralston Saul often points out, they took on the Westphalian model, and it fit them to a T. In Canada, nothing like that happened, because we were English, French, and Indigenous,

and our geography and the way in which we discovered and became part of our geography did not lend itself to a Westphalian model. The fact that we were Catholic and Protestant, Aboriginal, French, and English, and that we penetrated the wilderness, made us completely different.

The United States developed its European model with the declarative nature of American life: the Declaration of Independence and the emancipation of the slaves. Ours was an inhabited nature not written declaratively in ringing sentences but rather lived and absorbed. We are, in fact, a soluble nation. Fresh water continued to be very important to us when the fur trade diminished and we shifted our major commodity to lumber. We had to have waterways to float the timber downriver to be milled and then sent over the ocean to Great Britain and the markets of Europe.

We did not have to wait for European methods of cultivation to open our part of the continent. By the early seventeenth century, Samuel de Champlain was already trading inland, beginning what became a sophisticated political economy in the interior. And we didn't wait, either, for the kind of settlement that we decided to have when we boosted our immigration at the beginning of the twentieth century. According to the Canadian Council for Refugees, 41,681 immigrants came to Canada in 1900. By 1913, with the immigration policies of Sir Clifford Sifton under the Wilfrid Laurier government in full swing, that number had jumped to 400,810. The land itself was prepared by the nature of its exploration, and by the choice of its political economy in the fur and lumber trade to receive the people who came.

**W**hen I'm in Europe, people frequently say to me, "Of course you can take immigrants, you've got such a huge country." It is as though they think we've spaced out our population, placing each immigrant on one square kilometre of land. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Our immigration comes to large cities just as immigration comes to large cities in Europe. We had a policy of settling people on the prairies, but that was always based upon cultivating the land and providing newcomers with animals, seed, and tools. Very little was left to chance in the way in which we settled our West.

Our manner of accepting immigrants is very much coloured by the past. Most of us have either been immigrants or carry within us a family memory of immigration. But we should not forget that the knowledge and the welcome Indigenous peoples initially provided were critical to successful immigration in Canada. A statement made by Grand Chief John Kelly to the 1977 Royal Commission on the Northern Environment demonstrates the remarkable generosity displayed by this country's original inhabitants. Kelly described how the Ojibwa were cheated by Treaty 3, which was originally signed in 1873. In that agreement, the Ojibwa surrendered 14,245,000 hectares of land in what is now northwestern Ontario in return for annual payments, reserves, farm equipment, and other tools. However, many Treaty 3 people maintain that their forebears only intended to share their land with the government; they did not intend to surrender it completely.

In his testimony, Kelly pointed out that we are all part of the same circle, and we all depend on the same resources. We work together

by allowing people to join the circle, not by hierarchy, nor by sheer will and force of power. Implicit in this is the idea that we, in our turn, should be accepting: "It also appears that, as the years go by, the circle of the Ojibway gets bigger and bigger. Canadians of all colours and religions are entering that circle. You might feel that you have roots somewhere else, but in reality you are right here with us. I do not know if you feel the throbbing of the land in your chest and if you feel the bear is your brother with a spirit purer and stronger than yours, or if the elk is on a higher level of life than is man. You may not share the same spiritual anguish as [when] I see the earth ravaged by a stranger, but you can no longer escape my fate as the soil turns barren and the rivers poison. Much against my will, and probably yours, time and circumstance have put us together in the same circle. And so I come not to plead with you to save me from the monstrous stranger of capitalist greed and technology. I come to inform you that my danger is your danger, too. My genocide is your genocide. To commit genocide it is not necessary to build camps and ovens. All that is required is to remove the basis for a way of life."

**"Those who come at the eleventh hour will receive as fair treatment as those who have been here a long time."**

**—Wilfrid Laurier**

Because we are able to see each other across a circle, because we are touching each other in the circle, we listen to each other's stories, and we meet each other as people, and we acknowledge that we are all standing together on the same land. It is very hard to deny people's rights to belong when they are standing in a circle, holding hands. It is, in effect, the most profound acknowledgement of our belonging to the human race.

Of course, in the past we have tried to deny others their place in the circle. We have had ugly episodes like the Chinese head tax, the forced relocation of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War, the refusal to take in the Indian migrants of the *Komagata Maru*, and the refusal to take in the desperate Jewish refugees on board the *MS St. Louis* at the start of the Second World War. These are episodes of shame. However, we have always attempted to make it right in the end. I think that is what enables us to be a healthy society. It does not make us better than anybody else. It just helps us not to be sick.

The wisest among us have understood that we must accept the world in the way the Indigenous peoples are able to accept all people. In 1840, Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine, the francophone Roman Catholic who became prime minister of our country's first re-



Above: Immigrants arrive at Union Station in Toronto, circa 1910.



Left: Children, probably in Montreal, date unknown.

Right: Ugandan-Asian refugees are received at CFB Longue Pointe, Montreal, October 1972.



Below left: Scottish immigrant mother and child, circa 1911.

Below centre: A girl receives a vaccination shot from a doctor with the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, circa 1950s.





This photo of RCMP officers assisting a refugee family crossing into Hemmingford, Quebec, in 2017 illustrates the complexities of accepting newcomers to Canada. While welcoming this family with open arms, the Mounties also had to arrest them for crossing illegally.

sponsible government, the United Province of Canada, published his “Address to the Electors of Terrebonne,” in which he stated, “Canada is the land of our ancestors; it is our country, as it must be the adopted country of the various populations which come from diverse portions of the globe to make their way into its vast forests as their future resting place of their families and hopes. Like us, their paramount desire must be the happiness and prosperity of Canada, as the heritage which they should endeavour to transmit to their descendants in this young and hospitable country. Above all, their children must be like ourselves, Canadians.”

The key phrases in this speech — “adopted country,” “diverse portions of the globe,” “their paramount desire must be the happiness and prosperity of Canada” — are relevant to us today. A logical evolution has taken place because of a fundamental belief that was first enunciated by LaFontaine. We need these ideas as our guide as we move beyond 2017.

As Canadians we absorbed complexity early in our history — two languages and two religions, for starters. We have done so to such an extent that living with ambiguity, vexation, and some measure of discomfort is acceptable and even desirable to us. This does not mean that it is easy for us to accept people from all over the world, but it makes it possible.

In Canada, we live in an uncomfortable climate, and we are used to dealing with difficult geography and a great deal of change. Change is something people don’t talk about very much in Canada, but we have evolved enormously in my lifetime. I arrived here seventy-five years ago to a country that was white bread and white snow. The background hasn’t changed, but in the foreground all sorts of things have changed. It is difficult for us to imagine now that in 1970 we probably had only about a thousand Muslims in Canada. That same year we accepted ten thousand Ismailis, which was pretty impressive.

We aren’t better than other people because we accept the world in our home. We are simply used to the fact that our home can become the home of many other people, just as we once made our home where the Indigenous people lived. Change is the name of the game for us in Canada. We have always lived with the complexity of one quarter of our population being francophone, and we are used to dealing with the situation even as we can all be alternately annoyed, upset, and exasperated by it. The way I see it, our irritations with each other are like those that happen among family members who learn to accept each others’ particularities and differences. I also believe that our ability to live with unresolved questions makes us conscious that not everybody is alike. In Europe, people often ask

me, “When will the problem of Quebec be solved?” and I am very happy to reply, “Never!” We know how to live with our complexity; we are not going to let anybody else try to solve it for us.

I think our ability to understand that our society is not just a multiplication of each of us as individuals — but includes many who are not like us — has been the healthiest sign of what we are as a country. We are fortunate that we have been able to have so many people in our country who are not like ourselves, who do not come from the same background, and whom we may not necessarily like.

The chance to build a society not only with people who are like us but also with people with whom we disagree, and with whom we do not ever wish to be enjoined in friendship, is actually a strength. Societies are made by people who are different and who make space for each other because they are different. Before making judgments, we have to search for our common humanity, our decency, and our generosity.

In the future, when we look at what the policies are going to be for populating our country, we have to realize that we are going to get contributions from people of whom we would never have dreamed, and that perhaps changes will be made that we might even feel uncomfortable with. We have to understand that there are going to be differences, and we have to listen so that we know how to work that out with each other. We want to be listened to, so therefore we’re going to have to listen, and we’re going to have to strengthen our democratic heritage. We must let other people be, as they will let us be. I am very sure that Canada is at its best when it offers benevolent neglect so that people find their way, sometimes stumbling, but without obstacles put in their path.

When my family came to this country, we wanted to be included. And we were. We were fortunate in that we came from an English-speaking colony of Great Britain and therefore had no language problems. We were also colonial people and had been Anglicans for four generations. So society and the church were great bulwarks for us as a family. But it was individuals who made the difference to us: the Jewish pharmacist near us, who would walk my brother home after filling our prescriptions; the girl whose parents were determined that we would not have to walk alone to school through the snow, and who came to call on us each day; the wonderful French-Canadian families who taught my mother how to cook *tourtière*. They gave of themselves, without really asking where we had come from and without asking us to give anything back.

We don’t have to indicate to people that we understand everything about their backgrounds. When we accept people into this country as citizens, we are really just saying to them, “Now just go ahead and live your lives.” That is the healthiest thing about Canada that we can say to anyone.

**E**veryone wants to be included. I never believe it when people say that certain groups don’t want to be included, that they want to live separately. The only reason they could possibly have for not wanting to be included is that they feel so totally excluded that they can’t think of how to make the effort to be included. The notion of inclusion is part of our Aboriginal heritage, and it is part of being part of the circle, where, as Grand Chief John Kelly said, “you might feel that you have roots somewhere else, but in reality, you are right here with us.”

When Alberta and Saskatchewan entered Confederation in 1905, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the country’s first French-Canadian prime minister, recognized that the Prairie provinces were filling up with a different type of immigrant: people from Eastern Europe and religious minorities like the Doukhobors, the Mennonites, the Hutterites. They were as diverse a group as the British-centric bureaucracy could ever have imagined. But Laurier welcomed them with these words: “Those who come at the eleventh hour will receive as fair treatment as those who have been here a long time. We do not anticipate, and we do not want, that any individual should forget the land of their origin or their ancestors. Let them look to the past, but let them also look to the future: Let them look to the land of their ancestors, but let them also look to the land of their children. Let them become Canadians.”

The co-founder of responsible government, LaFontaine, and the prophetic prime minister who brought settlement from all of Europe to Canada were in agreement. We could be the kind of country we have become.

In the future, that is what we must always keep as our guiding principle: that we acknowledge what we have been, and that we continue to be that. I think it is something we can hang on to if we continue to understand that our geography is our particular land, that our history brought us economic wealth through fur and timber, and that the use of our waterways is vital to our remembrance of our roots. That is what we must always hang on to, and it will carry us on through to the next centuries. 🐾



### ADRIENNE CLARKSON

The Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson served as the 26th Governor General of Canada from 1999 to 2005. The former television broadcaster is also a bestselling author and wrote a series of essays for the 2014 CBC Massey Lectures entitled *Belonging: The Paradox of Citizenship*. She also wrote *Heart Matters: A Memoir* (2007), *Room for All of Us: Surprising Stories of Loss and Transformation* (2011), and a biography of Norman Bethune (2009).

*The Big Questions of Canada was made possible thanks to the Great Writers initiative. Supported by H. Sanford Riley, the Great Writers initiative encourages prominent writers to explore issues of historical significance to all Canadians.*

People in the Vancouver Island village of Quatsino are dressed for a potlatch, circa 1895-98.



# ROOTED IN RESILIENCE

Long before Confederation, Indigenous people lived under their own complex system of rights, rules, and responsibilities. *by Joanne DeCosse*

**T**his year's sesquicentennial commemorations are a striking reminder that the story of Canada can be told in countless ways from many diverse perspectives. However, it is also clear that some stories are told more often than others. Popular histories of Confederation and the birth of the country are deeply rooted in the world views Europeans brought with them to North America. Their values, beliefs, and ideals, as well as their political, economic, and social systems are reflected in conventional accounts of the past. Yet these narratives aren't the only versions of events.

Long before Confederation, Indigenous peoples shaped the physical, political, and economic landscape of what we today call Canada.

Their experiences attest to alternative versions of history. Their stories challenge what we know and believe about our past and offer valuable insights into the workings of contemporary Canada.

Indigenous peoples in Canada are subject to Canada's laws, rules, borders, and policies. Yet many have held on to, and continue to carry out, their own governance-related procedures, rituals, and ceremonies. These practices are often tied to sophisticated methods of managing resources as well as to their political relationships.

For instance, the Iroquois confederacy's Great Law of Peace is an incredibly detailed history and oral constitution. It defines the rights and duties of individuals, families, and leaders, and it outlines traditional ways of governing, including the rules and makeup of

councils, hereditary laws, decision-making processes, record-keeping practices, and so on. The Anishinabe and the Blackfoot confederacies developed sophisticated clan-based systems of governance. Readers might be familiar with the Pacific coast potlatch ceremonies, but they may not know the potlatch's role in governance. The ceremonies — which included lavish gift-giving — marked important events and were used to confer and to validate names, privileges, and social rank.

Centuries of colonization and harmful government policies such as residential schools, segregation, and discrimination led to the erosion of traditional styles of governance. Yet all across the country, Indigenous communities continue to work towards independence, self-sufficiency, and building a more just and equal relationship with the Canadian government. The following examples explore the history of governance in Indigenous communities that are today striving to rewrite conventional understandings of history and to gain control over their past and present.

## WAMPUM DIPLOMACY

Wampum belts are not just beautiful gifts offered during historic agreements between Indigenous and settler peoples, nor are they simply works of art or currency. They form part of an important governance tradition, called wampum diplomacy, used by the Anishinabe, Haudenosaunee, Mi'kmaq, and others. Alongside other traditions, such as storytelling and the divvying up of responsibilities among clans, they exemplify distinct ways of governing and of understanding political relationships.

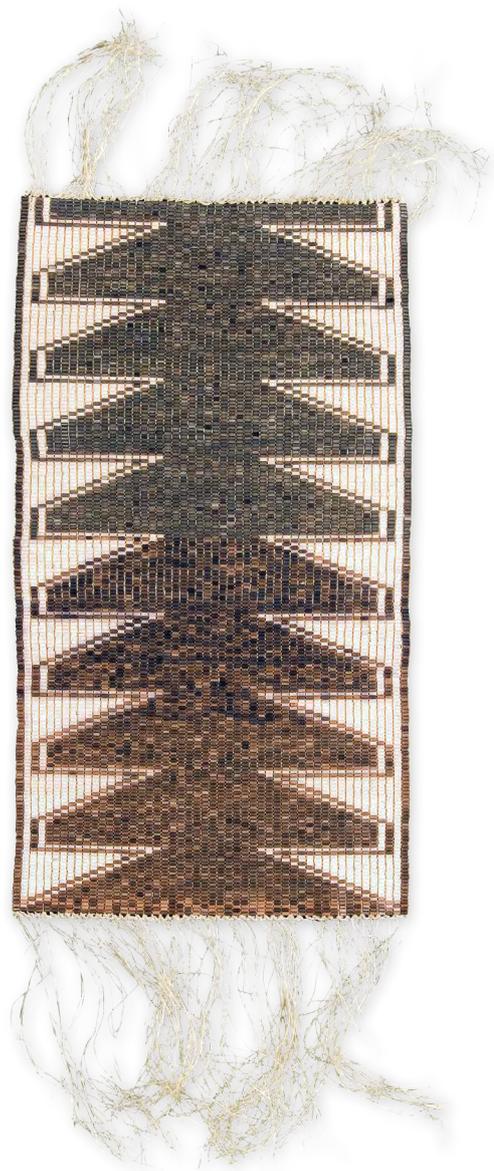
Wampum are small tubular beads, made mostly from whelk shells and quahog clamshells native to the east coast of North America. Strings of these beads are woven into intricate patterns, complex sets of icons that represent significant relationships between nations. The symbols can be read using specific sets of rules and conventions, becoming concrete records of the relationships they depict.

Contrary to the persistent stereotypes of Indigenous peoples as strictly oral and non-literate, wampum belts illustrate “widespread development of symbolic literacy across multiple Indigenous nations,” said Lynn Gehl, an Algonquin Anishinabe Kwe writer, advocate, and artist who holds a doctorate in Indigenous studies.

Gehl, who wrote *The Truth that Wampum Tells*, has analyzed the wampum belts exchanged during the signing of the 1764 Treaty at Niagara. These belts confirm the terms set out in the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which outlined the guidelines for European settlement on Indigenous lands in North America.

She has argued that these belts are constitutional documents: “It is with these three belts that the Indigenous understanding of Canada’s constitutional beginnings is codified. And it is in this way that the [1763 Royal] Proclamation is only one of Canada’s first constitutional documents.”

The three wampum belts were exchanged following the lengthy discussions and decisions that took place during the treaty process. One of the belts depicts “a chain secured to a rock on Turtle Island, running through the twenty-four Nations’ hands, and attached to a British vessel,” Gehl wrote. “This represented the ne-



The Dust Fan Belt of the Onondaga Nation represents the Tree of Peace and is used to explain the Great Law. It also represents the need for chiefs to have clear vision. The belt symbolically wipes the dust – issues that obscure clear vision – from the leaders’ eyes.

gotiating process Indigenous nations were to take to ensure their equal share of the resources and bounty of the land.” As such, the belts codified an equal relationship between independent allies.

As with contemporary constitutions, great care is taken to preserve wampum belts. The belts are carefully kept by wampum keepers, individuals who are responsible for preserving wampum records and knowledge.

Over time, many wampum belts have been lost, stolen, or otherwise removed from Indigenous communities. Some have been repatriated. Remarkably, several of these belts’ meanings and stories have been kept alive underground, like much Indigenous knowledge over the last few centuries of colonization. Though they are often the subject of much debate, these belts and the alternative narratives they embody challenge national histories of Confederation. They offer important context for the breaches of treaties that followed the founding of the country as well as land claims in present-day Canada.



A model of people and canoes engaged in reef-net fishing. The representation created by Nick Claxton and Saanich elders became a focal point for the curriculum of a school at Tsawout First Nation, British Columbia.

## REEF-NET FISHING

Reef-net fishing is a traditional way of catching salmon that's unique to the Strait Salish people of present-day British Columbia. The method is used in the Salish Sea — an area of coastal waters off south-western British Columbia. A net is suspended between two canoes using a set of underwater anchors. Water is funnelled in through the use of a lead in front of the nets. To be effective, reef nets must be used in specific locations, and their use requires detailed knowledge of salmon migration patterns, tide flow, and the local environment.

"It is more than just a fishing technique," Nick Claxton, a member of the Tsawout band and WSÁNEĆ nation, wrote in his Ph.D. dissertation. "It is a model of governance over an integral part of what it means to be a WSÁNEĆ person." Claxton, who teaches at the University of Victoria, said the Saanich reef-net fishery's history is intimately connected to the values, spiritual beliefs, economics, social system, and self-governance of Indigenous communities once sustained by salmon. For the Saanich peoples, the reef-net fishery is based on a profound spiritual respect for the salmon and for the interconnectedness of the environment and all living things. This holistic perspective is inherently linked to a distinct way of sustainable governance of the land, its resources, and the people living within it.

Within this system, each Saanich family was headed by the CWENÁLYEN. The CWENÁLYEN was most often the elder in the extended family unit. These captains were responsible for passing down and overseeing Saanich fishing practices, history, laws, teachings, and knowledge. Through generational transmission, they upheld governance structures that protected a Saanich person's right to NE, HIMET — that is, their right to their personal belongings, their reef net, their fishing and camping locations, the longhouse, and access to fresh water. Family fishing locations, or SWÁLET,

were of particular importance given the complexity of reef-net technology and were passed down with family names. As emphasized by Claxton, reef-net fishing "formed the core of Saanich society" and allowed members of the community to maintain their unique identity and way of living.

Reef-net fishing was made illegal by the British Columbia government in 1916. Scholars such as Claxton have since argued that the ban contravened the 1852 Douglas Treaty. That treaty between the pre-Confederation colonial government and the Saanich nation outlined the Saanich right to carry on with their fisheries, to "fish as formerly."

As Claxton asserted in an article, since "WSÁNEĆ people's traditional governance, social organization, and use of the land and resources, including the reef-net fishery, were all intertwined ... [this right] means more than just the right to fish... It means a right to ownership of all those fishing locations ... and to the system of governance that stood in WSÁNEĆ for thousands of years or more."

Nevertheless, a later provincial government saw reef nets as "fish traps." The new regulations soon dismantled traditional fisheries, forcing the Strait Salish to adapt to European methods of self-sustainability and resource management. Saanich claims to traditional fishing rights and to the lands of which they were dispossessed remain unresolved today.

In spite of this troubled legacy, Saanich people are striving to revitalize reef-net fishing as well as the key role it played in Saanich society. "A new relationship needs to be forged between First Nation peoples and the state," said Claxton. "Historic treaties such as the Douglas Treaties should be recognized as such; then a new nation-to-nation [relationship] could emerge where both nations have something valuable to offer, and both could prosper not at the expense of each other, or at the expense of the environment."



*Buffalo Hunting in the Summer* by Peter Rindisbacher, 1822.

## THE MÉTIS BUFFALO HUNT

Throughout the nineteenth century, hundreds of Métis families came together to participate in seasonal, large-scale buffalo hunts across the western prairies. The herds of bison provided these communities with a stable food source, formed the centre of their mobile economy, and helped to shape a distinctly Métis form of self-governance.

Buffalo hunts were an organized affair. Métis families from different regions pooled their resources and skills to ensure their mutual safety and to make certain that every family benefitted from the hunt. The distribution of responsibilities and duties was determined through open discussions, voting processes, and the election of temporary leaders, including a chief of the hunt and several captains who oversaw smaller hunting parties.

Adam Gaudry, assistant professor in the Faculty of Native Studies and Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta, said the hunt was organized in a manner that we would today call democratic, and it facilitated the coordination of hunting strategies and armed resistances when necessary. The authority of the leaders was temporary, preventing power from becoming concentrated in one place. This helped Métis communities to work together while also maintaining the independence of separate families. Notably, families were not forced to partake in hunts or military confrontations but were able to choose whether to join in.

“The democratic strength of the Métis community ... lies in its organic forms of governance and its ability to organize itself without centralized authority,” Gaudry wrote in his 2009 thesis on reclaiming Métis cultural spaces. “Traditional Métis leadership is situational, and never coercive. Since consent to leadership could be revoked at any time, all Métis life remained independent of a permanent centralizing force like a state system.”

The freedom to live independently was a fundamental element

of Métis identity. The lifestyle, however, was not without its duties and obligations. Métis values and governance were — and continue to be — deeply rooted in kinship and family, said Gaudry. Métis people maintained extensive family networks and could call upon each other in times of need, knowing that help would be returned in the future if needed. Significantly, family ties often went beyond national, religious, and language barriers, resulting in a diverse set of intertwined communities. For instance, while many Métis were Catholic and French- or Michif-speaking, some were Protestant and English-speaking, while others followed traditional Indigenous spirituality and spoke mostly Cree or Ojibwa.

Métis governance, anchored in consensus and kinship, shaped Métis history in ways that stretched beyond the buffalo hunt. Buffalo hunt tactics informed Métis resistance against Canadian incursions into their territories. The model of the hunt was used by Métis men to take Upper Fort Garry in the 1870 Red River Resistance and again to combat federal government forces at the 1885 Battle of Batoche. Communities brought their values and governance strategies with them as they moved west and formed new settlements.

Over time, they had to deal with new obstacles. As white settlers rapidly colonized the West, the buffalo herds disappeared, and the Métis lost a major source of subsistence and suffered widespread discrimination. Still, their desire for independence, self-sufficiency, direct participation in politics, and lasting kinship ties endured. These values continue to resonate in modern Métis communities and in their efforts to establish contemporary self-governance. 🐾



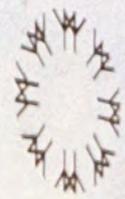
**JOANNE DECOSSE** is a bilingual public historian and interim program coordinator for Canada's History Society. She thanks Nick Claxton, Adam Gaudry, Lynn Gehl, and Brian Rice for their help with this article.



expo67

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JOURS OUVERTURE

28. AVRIL 1967

DAYS TO GO OPENING

28. APRIL 1967

EXPOSITION UNIVERSELLE ET INTERNATIONALE DE 1967 MONTREAL CANADA

UNIVERSAL AND INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF 1967 MONTREAL CANADA

Expo 67 officials gather in 1965 for an official countdown ceremony marking the number of days until opening day.



expo67



# Mission Impossible

As an eleventh-hour stand-in for the world's fair, Montreal had to pull off a miracle to get Expo 67 ready on time.

by Julie Barlow and Jean-Benoît Nadeau

**A**part from the 1851 Great Exhibition in London and the 1889 Exposition Universelle in Paris, few world's fairs have resonated as much within their host countries and around the world as Montreal's Expo 67. The fair in Canada's centennial year attracted more than fifty million visitors, an incredible turnout for a country that at the time had a population of only twenty million. It brought together a record-setting sixty-two nations. Expo 67 marked an era with its avant-garde, humanist ambitions, redefining the word Canada.

"World's fairs are about the future, and the great exposition which took place on the man-made islands in the St. Lawrence River in the summer of 1967 was about the future of Canada as well as the future of science, architecture, education, and cinematography," journalist Robert Fulford wrote in 1968, reflecting on the several months he lived at the Expo 67 site while covering the fair for the *Toronto Star*.

But Expo 67 was actually something of a miracle. Its organizers had only four and a half years to prepare — rather than the intended seven.

The responsibility for that lies with Moscow, the host city designated for the 1967 world's fair by the Bureau international des expositions (BIE) in May 1960 — in anticipation of the fiftieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution. (The Canadian bid was defeated in the fifth round by a sixteen-to-fourteen vote.) But, two years later, the Soviet Union backed out, officially because of the cost — unofficially out of fear of capitalist propaganda.

Montreal Mayor Jean Drapeau convinced Prime Minister John Diefenbaker to take the project on, coinciding with the Canadian centennial. On November 13, 1962, the BIE voted unanimously in favour of the Canadian bid. The 1967 world's fair would open its doors in Montreal on April 28, 1967 — four years, five months, and fifteen days later.

The organizing committee soon came up against the problem of a site. Where would they find five square kilometres near downtown and primary approach roads?

While the organizing committee considered a half dozen options, Drapeau upset the apple cart with an ambitious announcement: Expo 67 would be held in the middle of the river — on an island that didn't even exist yet. His plan was to fill in a series of small islands and shoals to expand Saint Helen's Island and to build a two-square-kilometre island from the water up: the future Notre Dame Island.

The idea wasn't all that far-fetched: It would prevent real estate speculation while giving Expo the most beautiful site anyone could hope for. But it added a Herculean task to an already break-neck schedule; it would take eleven months and countless trips by truck to pile up the twenty-eight million tonnes of stone and earth required.

Against the advice of the organizers, Drapeau persuaded Ottawa and Quebec City that his idea should carry the day. But once work started in August 1963, the two chairs of the organizing committee, Paul Bienvenu and Cecil Carsley, resigned. Even the computer at



The Canada pavilion under construction in the summer of 1966, featuring Katimavik, the iconic inverted pyramid structure named for the Inuit word for “gathering place.” Right: A conceptual sketch of the Canadian pavilion.

California’s prestigious Stanford Institute predicted that Expo could not possibly be ready before 1968, even 1969. The majority of the public and political leaders thought that it should be postponed or called off. Expo 67 wouldn’t be getting off the ground.

“I would be less than frank if I did not add that I feel we all have cause for concern over the magnitude of the tasks that must be accomplished if the fair is to be the success it must be,” Prime Minister Lester Pearson said on August 13, 1963, at the inauguration ceremony kicking off construction of the fair site.

Expo 67 was salvaged by its two new leaders, appointed at the beginning of September. The new commissioner general, the ambassador Pierre Dupuy, had worked for a number of years at the BIE, making him one of the leading specialists in this type of event. The new deputy commissioner general, engineer Fletcher Shaw, headed up the largest engineering firm in Canada, making him the best person to run the show, including construction.

This pair rejuvenated the Expo 67 team, breathing optimism into the project, as journalist Raymond Grenier described in a 1965 book that predated the fair, *Inside Expo 67*. Dupuy and Shaw exuded confidence, telling all who would listen that choosing to go with the islands was the best decision that could have been made in terms of engineering, aesthetics, and selling the event. Expo 67, they vowed, would happen in 1967!

They put together an organizing committee made up of six francophones and four anglophones. Its composition was in and of itself a new approach because the members were all bilingual and on equal footing. According to Diana Thébault Nicholson, who worked on protocol and operations and was a spokesperson, at the time it was more common to see francophones reporting to anglophones. “Their equality was the most remarkable thing,” she said.

The committee wound up with an unusual nickname: “Les Durs,” or the tough guys, for their relentless drive to make Expo happen and to impose their will, even on the government. In December 1963, Pearson was astonished to learn that the budget had grown from \$40 million to \$167 million; it was still approved, but by just one vote. The vocal opposition attacked the choice of logo, the official song, the hostesses’ uniforms, but to no avail: The tough guys did whatever they wanted. And, even though the social climate of the day was one of labour protests, they managed to achieve union peace during the construction.

They borrowed a number of ideas from Disneyland. The organizers wanted Expo to leave Montreal the legacy of an amusement park: La Ronde. Philippe de Gaspé Beaubien, the director of operations and future “mayor of Expo” in charge of proceedings, would even get to meet Walt Disney in person. “I told him: ‘Your grandfather was born in Canada. Would you be willing to help Canadians,



Above: Workers assemble the German pavilion, August 1966.  
 Right: Pierre Dupuy, the commissioner general of Expo 67, oversees construction of the Canadian pavilion in 1966.  
 Below: The Expo 67 control centre, considered state-of-the-art in 1967.  
 Lower right: A scale model of the proposed Expo 67 site.



who know absolutely nothing about amusement parks?”

In July 1964, the city of Montreal officially handed over the islands to the organizing committee. Just two years and nine months remained — 1,015 days! — to complete the ambitious project. They had to build 847 pavilions and buildings, twenty-seven bridges, seventy-five kilometres of roads and sidewalks, forty kilometres of sewers, 150 kilometres of pipes, twenty-five thousand parking spots, 256 basins, and 6,150 streetlights.

Everything rested on the shoulders of the director of installations, Colonel Edward Churchill, who would coordinate over six thousand workers. During the Second World War, the military man from Manitoba had helped the Allied advance by building 192 airports. A man of his times, Churchill borrowed an organizational technique from NASA: the critical path method. “This technique, which was brand new at the time, involved distributing work in such a way that 178 or 180 pavilions could be built at once,” the director of public relations, Yves Jasmin, recalls.

With leading-edge computer monitoring, Churchill was able to order all the materials at once, build all the foundations and infrastructures simultaneously, and coordinate the construction of some one hundred buildings in a very specific order. By winter 1965, he had already started planting trees.

By fall 1966, the pavilions were virtually all finished, and exhibi-

tors started setting up, as Montreal launched its brand new metro and opened new highways. Expo 67 would be ready on time.

But on the eve of the inauguration, an unusually cold April meant that the grass was still yellow. The head of the horticulture department, one Pierre Bourque (the future mayor of Montreal), had the grass dyed green; Expo 67 would be delivered on time, and it would be perfect!

The fair borrowed its theme — Man and His World — from French philosopher Antoine de Saint-Exupéry’s book *Terre des Hommes*, a memoir filled with dreams and hopes for the future. As for Expo 67’s utopian vision, Neil Compton, the English department chair at Concordia University in Montreal, in 1967 wrote that the fair offered cause for optimism — and caution — when it came to technology’s impact on humanity:

“This juxtaposition exactly epitomizes the theme Expo is supposed to embody: The thrilling but anarchic energies released by technology can be humanized only if we are aware of what they may destroy as well as create. A civilized future must be based upon both piety toward the past and respect for the complex actuality of the present. Otherwise, Saint-Exupéry’s vision will be turned upside-down, and machines will colonize man. On the whole, with the exceptions noted, Expo 67 seems to offer grounds for moderate optimism.”



Top left: A poster promotes the Expo 67 theme. Top right: A woman holds a fan made out of international stamps in this promotional photo. Above: Macy's department store in New York. Centre right: The Larkettes cheerleaders pose with a giant Expo 67 sign, circa 1965. Right: Expo 67 passports.



# Mad Men of Expo

**Selling Montreal's fair to the world was hard, but selling it to the Canadian public was harder.**

by Julie Barlow and Jean-Benoît Nadeau

**F**rom start to finish, Expo 67 was a story of massive crowds, endless lineups and jam-packed restaurants. While 200,000 visitors were expected for the opening, 330,000 showed up at the ticket booths. The millionth visitor went through the turnstile on day three, along with a record single-day crowd of 570,000 people. Fifty million people would flock to the site that summer, half of them Americans.

This triumph of marketing was even more remarkable since, four years earlier, the organizing committee hadn't been able to sell the project to the Canadian public. No one knew how. "Canada had never seen a gathering of two hundred thousand people," said director of operations Philippe de Gaspé Beaubien, who was responsible for the proceedings.

The media, particularly the Canadian media, remained negative about — and, in some cases, even hostile to — Expo 67 for a long time. Many Canadians didn't believe that foreigners would be interested in their little "subarctic country, uncertain of its identity," as journalist Peter C. Newman wrote. Foreigners, particularly Americans, didn't know what they would do in Canada.

The team responsible for selling the fair made a series of brilliant decisions early on, starting with the name. Beginning in 1962, Montreal Mayor Jean Drapeau started referring to "Expo," and the term soon caught on. "The official name was the '1967 International and Universal Exposition, First Category, Montreal, Canada.' A ridiculous name! Ridiculous!" de Gaspé Beaubien said.

The Bureau international des expositions (BIE), which oversees the exhibitions, initially didn't approve of the abbreviation "Expo," but the organizing committee insisted. The point was not to water down the concept of an international exhibition but rather to convey to a North American audience that the event in Montreal would be something new to the continent, with an educational, cultural, scientific, and humanist calling. Eventually the BIE came around: It would be called Expo.

At a time when Expo 67 existed only on paper and part of the site was still underwater, the event organizers were already trying to give it a solid image. They erected the giant letters E-X-P-O in concrete, which could be plainly seen from the shore of the St. Lawrence River, and created many mock-ups of the site. Beginning in 1964, they organized all-expenses-paid press tours, first

by helicopter when it was impossible to reach the site, then by bus and on foot. On Sundays, they even opened the construction site to the public, which also had access to a ten-storey observation tower.

In addition to traditional campaigns of flyers, posters, and souvenirs, the organizers created their own information medium, *Expo Digest*, a newsletter with a circulation of over a hundred thousand. They shot a series of short publicity films with major international stars of the day — French singer Maurice Chevalier, American television personality Ed Sullivan, British actor James Mason, Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin — inviting the audience to meet them in Montreal. American TV stations liked the end product so much that they aired the campaign for free.

"It was the first time that this sort of event was sold as a destination rather than just an exhibition," said Diana Nicholson, who worked on protocol and operations and was a spokesperson for the event. The concept of "a trip to Expo" would be pushed to the limit with the revolutionary idea at the time of a Man and His World passport. This season's pass, which looked like a real passport, encouraged users to visit every pavilion — and have their passport stamped with the pavilion's visa. Fifty years later, hundreds of thousands of Expo passports are still keepsakes for Canadians.

Thanks to the nearly five thousand audiovisual conferences held by the organizing committee and its representatives, they were able to recruit invaluable allies. One of them earned Yves Jasmin, director of public relations, a call from the vice-president of marketing for the New York department store Macy's in November 1965. John Blum told him point blank that he intended to build an eight-metre mock-up of Expo for display on Macy's fourth floor. "He told me, 'American Express will sell your passports at the display. And we are going to feature you in all our windows!'" said Jasmin.

The tipping point came at the end of 1966. The first enthusiastic articles appeared in the American press, and the Canadian press started to believe. "I saw a major shift in attitude," de Gaspé Beaubien said. "All of a sudden, audiences weren't resisting anymore. They wanted us to tell them how it was going and what it would be like."

Expo's Mad Men had pulled it off. 🐸



# Welcome to Utopia

Expo 67 was so revolutionary, so fresh, that it was as if a whole new world had been created.

by Julie Barlow and Jean-Benoît Nadeau

Nothing of the sort had ever been seen in Canada, or in North America, for that matter: five thousand films (thirty a day!), fifteen thousand artists, thousands of works of art. Expo 67 gave the public a chance to discover spaceframe architecture, interactive film, hands-free phones, landscape architecture, and fully agile urban planning.

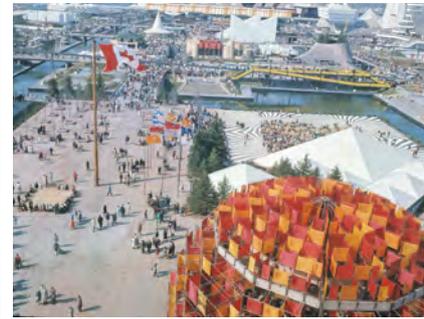
Expo 67 was a triumph of modernity in virtually everything it touched. It was an expression of an ambition, an era, and a dream. “The people who built Expo were thinking big,” Robert Fulford wrote in *This was Expo*. “They wanted it to be beautiful, but grandiose as well; they succeeded.”

In the commemorative book *Terre des Hommes/Man and His World*, author Gabrielle Roy writes about her visit to the site six months before it opened: “It was the highly developed outline of a city, partly emerging from the water, partly surrounded by water, a unique city not to live in but to visit. ... As soon as I set foot there, I was transported to another place. A thousand details, a thousand perspectives that were striking, captivating and enchanting. ... It formed a landscape in the image of modern man like I had never seen before.”

Fulford agreed: “There was so much that was new and never seen before, so much daring even, that it was like seeing a new world of architecture be born; we thought we were seeing the beginnings of a revolution.”



Above: People line up for the Man the Explorer complex. It featured four exhibit areas, including Man and Life; Man, his Planet and Space; Man and the Oceans; and Man and the Polar Regions.



Top left: The West German pavilion. Top right: A scale model of Habitat 67. Centre left: A woman sits in front of Kaleidoscope, a pavilion dedicated to Man and Colour. Centre middle: The Minirail glides past the French pavilion. Centre right: The People Tree, formed from orange and red fabric featuring images of Canadians. Left: Space exploration dominates the American pavilion. Above right: Katimavik at the Canadian pavilion.

Expo 67 made architectural flights of fancy possible: cubist and traditional, shingles, ceramic, steel, concrete, and logs. The German pavilion was a fifteen-storey plastic tent. The Dutch pavilion was a giant assembly of aluminum tubes. With Habitat 67 and the geodesic dome, architects Moshe Safdie and Buckminster Fuller left Montreal two monuments that would become part of its lasting identity.

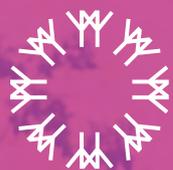
Everything was done to convey an idea of the times — real or imagined. Expo 67 proposed the new idea of a carless city, where everything is clean and people get around by foot, bike, gondola, or a half dozen means of mass transit, such as the metro, the Minirail, an aerial tram, a shuttle ferry, and even hovercraft. Street furniture — phone booths, streetlights, even garbage cans — was designed for visual appeal. Even the pictogram signage was new — generating a great deal of consternation around the bathrooms, where people weren't used to signs representing a man and a woman (an Expo 67 invention).

Expo 67 was such a success in interactivity, design, architecture, and culture because its organizing committee had understood early on that they had to do more than organize — they had to provide artistic direction. Like previous world's fairs, there had to be a theme. The theme the committee came up with was Man and his World.

Organizers also set the mission of creating a variety of pavilions to illustrate the theme — such as Man the Explorer; Man the Producer; and Man in the Community — that were as popular as the various country pavilions.

The committee tried to impose its educational, humanist vision on every exhibitor, whether they were countries, associations, or private interests. As a result, the Kodak pavilion educated the public about photography, rather than selling Kodak products.

Expo 67 aspired to be a utopia. Expo 67 aspired to be, and was, a window on the “future today.” Moving beyond consumerism, 1967 was a year of optimism, a year when everything was possible, a year when the future was literally within reach. 🐾



# Dressed for Success

## Fashioning Expo 67

The late-1960s era was marked by excitement and optimism but also civic turbulence and social unrest. As society was changing, so were social mores and modes of dress.

At Expo 67, younger generations were enjoying increasing freedom of expression and flaunted it through their clothing choices. Colours were vibrant, and miniskirts inched ever upwards.

To mark the 50th anniversary of Expo 67, as well as the 375th anniversary of the founding of Montreal, the McCord Museum recently launched a new exhibit, titled Fashioning Expo 67, that explores the world's fair's influence and legacy through the clothing worn by both employees of Expo 67, as well as visitors to the fair. Also showcased are

Top, left to right: Pavilion hostesses at the Place des Nations. Three women model hostess uniforms in 1965. Middle, left to right, A coloured dress. A paper dress designed by Eleanor Ellis. A hostess from the Atlantic pavilion. A hostess uniform designed by Michel Robichaud. A dress, entitled *Mon pays c'est l'hiver*, designed by Jacques de Montjoye.

clothing and accessories designed by leading Quebec designers of the era. The exhibition features more than sixty outfits, from hostess uniforms to hats, gloves, purses and more. The exhibit, launched in March, runs until October 1. 🐾



# Celebrity Spotting

Expo 67 was the place to see and to be seen.

**A**mong the millions of visitors to Montreal's world's fair were a few who stood out.

The royals: Queen Elizabeth, then forty-one years old, arrived in high style on the royal yacht *Britannia* in July. Dressed in pink floral, the Queen happily toured the site by Minirail. Four months later, her glamorous younger sister, Princess Margaret, dropped in unofficially. Also on the visitors list was Grace Kelly, the Oscar-winning-actor-turned-Monaco princess, who wore a suitably stylish hat.

The presidents: American President Lyndon B. Johnson's quick visit was briefly interrupted by Vietnam War protesters. French President Charles de Gaulle came by the day after dropping his

bombshell "*Vivre le Québec libre!*" declaration at Montreal's city hall.

The Kennedys: Widowed American first lady Jackie Kennedy spent two days at Expo, graciously stopping to speak with visitors and journalists. In a separate visit, her popular brother-in-law, New York State Senator Robert F. Kennedy, brought his wife and seven children. A year later he was killed by an assassin's bullet.

The entertainers: Ed Sullivan hosted two live shows from Expo. One of them featured Diana Ross and the Supremes performing their hit "The Happening." Also performing at Expo were Marlene Dietrich, Luciano Pavarotti, Sir Lawrence Olivier, Jack Lemmon, Harry Belafonte, Carol Channing, Robert Wagner, and many more. 🐾

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Far left: A crowd in Montreal greets actress Marlene Dietrich, 1967.

Left: Queen Elizabeth II tours the grounds in July, 1967.

Above: American first lady Jackie Kennedy, centre, tours the site in October, 1967.

## CONTRIBUTORS



**JULIE BARLOW AND JEAN-BENOÎT NADEAU** are the award-winning authors of four bestselling books, including *Sixty Million Frenchmen Can't be Wrong* and *The Story of French*. The couple's latest book is *The Bonjour*

*Effect: The Secret Codes of French Conversation Revealed*. Barlow and Nadeau worked as researchers on the *Productions de la Ruelle* documentary, *Expo 67 Mission Impossible*. The couple is based in Montreal, where they live with their twin daughters.



This satirical cartoon by J.W. Bengough, published in 1872, depicts Joseph Howe, right, being shunned by John A. Macdonald and other Fathers of Confederation. It accuses the Nova Scotia leader of preferring annexation to the United States to keeping the province within Canada.

# CANADA'S FIRST SEPARATIST

Joseph Howe was determined to keep his beloved province of Nova Scotia from being forced into Confederation.

*by Dean Jobb*

**A** RARE BLIZZARD DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON OF 1866 LEFT London as cold and bitter as Joseph Howe's reception in some quarters of the British capital. Nova Scotia's leading statesman had been in England for months, lobbying politicians, government officials, journalists, and anyone else who would listen as he railed against the imminent merger of Britain's North American colonies.

Howe "was furious at the plan of union" and "indignant at the risk of [Nova Scotia's] absorption" into a new country, recalled Oxford professor Thorold Rogers, who was among those who were buttonholed by Howe. Howe mocked Confederation as the "botheration" scheme, a "crazy confederacy" foisted on his province without a mandate from its citizens.

He was laid low with a chest cold over the holidays but rebounded in the new year. His booming voice, he assured his wife, Susan Ann, in a letter home to Halifax, was once again "as clear as a trumpet." As 1867 dawned he was ready to resume his struggle to keep Nova Scotia out of Confederation.

But Howe faced overwhelming odds. An array of powerful forces — political, economic, military — was solidly behind the plan to create the Dominion of Canada. In 1864, delegates to a conference in Quebec City produced a blueprint for a self-governing federal state. The British government was onside and eager to be free of the cost of defending its sprawling northern possessions against a possible American invasion.

Howe had never backed down from a fight. He had battled for press freedom and to establish a more democratic form of colonial government — and he had won. He had been a muckraking journalist, a political reformer, a champion of British imperialism. And he was a patriot to the core. Nova Scotia was his country, and he was determined to prevent it from becoming an outpost of a vast continental nation, subservient to lawmakers in the distant capital of Ottawa.

As Canadians mark the 150th anniversary of Confederation, many are unaware that this country faced the threat of disintegration at the moment of its birth. Separatism is not only a twentieth-century phenomenon — it began in the beginning, with Howe's stubborn opposition to union. It grew into the powerful anti-Confederation movement he led even after Canada was officially established on July 1, 1867.

Howe was the René Lévesque of his time, a renegade on a mission to tear the country apart. Prime Minister John A. Macdonald would have to muster all of his formidable political and diplomatic skills to head off Canada's first separatist movement and bring Nova Scotia — and Joe Howe — into the Canadian fold.



**E**ven as a young man, Howe displayed a restless, contrarian spirit. He would never be, as he put it, “content to go along quietly and peaceably like my neighbours and at the end of some fifty or sixty years tumble into my grave and be dust.”

Born in Halifax in 1804, he inherited a reverence for all things British from his father, the Loyalist refugee John Howe. He was largely self-taught, devouring books by firelight. His father was the King’s printer, the publisher of the colony’s official government newspaper, the *Nova Scotia Royal Gazette*. Joseph Howe began working in his father’s print shop while in his teens.

The independently minded Howe chafed at the need to toe the line in print. “As we are under government,” he complained to a friend, “we cannot enjoy here the free expression of our sentiments and are not infrequently subject to the caprice of men in office.”

In an era when freedom of the press meant owning one, Howe struck out on his own. In 1827 the twenty-three-year-old became the proprietor of the *Novascotian* and transformed it into the most influential paper in the province. He used its columns to promote Nova Scotia’s economic and intellectual development and to demand political reform. In 1835 his dramatic acquittal on a charge of libelling corrupt officials in Halifax catapulted him into politics.

Heavy-set, his high forehead ringed with unruly tufts of dark hair, Howe was a spellbinding orator on the campaign trail and in the legislature. Historian Keith Thomas described him as “a master of factual detail and its skilful presentation,” a rhythmic smooth talker who could win over a “range and variety of audiences” like no other politician in British North America.

Elected to the provincial House of Assembly in 1836, he quickly became the point man in the drive to force the colonial government — a governor backed by an appointed council of well-connected cronies — to share power with the elected assembly. His demands for democratic reform so outraged members of the local Family Compact that, in 1840, the son of the chief justice challenged him to a duel in Halifax’s Point Pleasant Park. When his opponent shot first and missed, Howe magnanimously fired his own pistol into the air to end the affair without bloodshed.

In 1848, largely through Howe’s efforts, Nova Scotia became the first of Britain’s North American colonies where a premier and cabinet governed with the support of a majority of the members of the assembly — a modern-style “responsible government.” It was a political revolution, he boasted, won without “a blow struck or a pane of glass broken.”

Once in power, Howe oversaw the building of Nova Scotia’s first railway and urged Britain to allow colonial politicians to play a role in managing the Empire. He served as premier in the early 1860s but lost the 1863 election to the Conservative Party of Charles Tupper, a physician with mutton-chop sideburns who would become a staunch proponent of Confederation.

Howe took on a new role: The British government appointed him to a commission set up to resolve a fisheries dispute with the United States. But another challenge was looming. Responsible government may have been a peaceful revolution, but for Howe the fight against colonial union would mean all-out war.

**T**he idea of union had been in the wind for years; as early as the 1820s muckraker-turned-rebel William Lyon Mackenzie was touting the advantages of an “enlightened and *united* general Government” for the colonies. In 1856 the *Montreal Gazette* endorsed the idea of “founding here, apart from the United States, a Northern nationality for ourselves.” The American Civil War brought the issue to the fore; tense diplomatic disputes between Britain and the administration of U.S. President Abraham Lincoln raised the spectre of an American invasion.

Concrete proposals emerged in the late summer of 1864, when colonial delegates gathered in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. A follow-up conference in Quebec City that fall hammered out most of the details of a federal constitution for a new nation. Provinces joining the union would retain control of local affairs such as natural resources and education, but a powerful central government would take precedence. John A. Macdonald and other proponents of Confederation were determined to prevent the disunity and regional divisions that had put America on a path to its disastrous civil war.

Uniting the far-flung colonies, however, would mean overcoming geographical isolation and stubborn regional differences. “We don’t know each other,” Halifax’s *Acadian Recorder* newspaper warned in July 1866. “We have no trade with each other. We have no facilities, no resources, or incentives to mingle with each other. We are shut off from each other by a wilderness geographically, commercially, politically, and socially.”

Newfoundland and P.E.I. opted out of the proposed union. If Howe’s province joined New Brunswick and the Province of Canada (present-day Ontario and Quebec), its population would account for barely ten per cent of the new nation. A province with a long and proud history would be relegated to the status of a junior partner in Confederation. And there was a strong business case against union: Shipbuilding, fishing, and overseas trade formed the backbone of Nova Scotia’s economy, while Canada’s future prosperity would be based on developing the continent’s resource-rich interior.

Opponents of union, Howe noted in 1864, included most of Nova Scotia’s “leading bankers and merchants, the wealthiest farmers, and the most independent Gentlemen in the Province.” Like him, they were comfortable with Nova Scotia’s role as a major military and seafaring arm of the British Empire and wary of new tariffs that could stifle trade.

As momentum for Confederation was building, Howe was on the sidelines. He turned down Tupper’s invitation to join the Nova

## **A STRONG AND UNITED BRITISH EMPIRE, NOT CONFEDERATION, HOWE ARGUED, WAS THE BEST DEFENCE AGAINST AMERICAN AGGRESSION.**

Scotia delegation to the Charlottetown conference, citing a potential conflict with his appointment as an imperial fisheries commissioner. Privately, it was said, he bristled at the thought of having to “play second fiddle to that damn’d Tupper.” The best he could do was to denounce the proposed union anonymously, in a series of “Botheration Letters” published in the *Halifax Morning Chronicle* in early 1865.

Despite the widespread opposition within Nova Scotia, Tupper and his government were committed to Confederation. In 1866 a sudden threat of foreign invasion won over hostile politicians and sealed the deal. Irish-American extremists known as Fenians — many of them Civil War veterans — prepared for attacks on Canada in a bid to force Britain to grant independence to Ireland.

When Fenians gathered in large numbers on the Maine coast that spring, Nova Scotia mobilized its militia, and Royal Navy warships sailed from Halifax in a show of force. Tupper seized the moment and rammed a resolution supporting Confederation through the legislature. Politicians opposed to union panicked. At the height of the scare, and just hours after the unnerving spectacle of British redcoats marching through Halifax’s streets on their way to the border, Nova Scotia’s lawmakers voted thirty-one to nineteen to support Confederation.

Tupper’s gambit outraged Howe. The people of Nova Scotia — not a handful of politicians — should decide the province’s future, he fumed. Confederation had been foisted on “an unwilling people ... without their revision and passed without their consent.” He knew, as Tupper knew, that Confederation would be soundly rejected in a referendum or election.

When his imperial duties ended in 1866, Howe was free to lead what would soon be known as the anti-confederate cause. He barnstormed the province to speak out against union, then headed for London. His plan was to raise doubts in the minds of enough British power brokers to delay passage of the legislation ratifying Confederation. Tupper’s mandate was running out, and he had to go to the polls by the middle of 1867. His unpopular government was certain to be defeated, and the Confederation proposal might go down with him.

Howe did not need to defeat the “Botheration” scheme. If he could buy some time, even a few months, it might defeat itself.

**A**s 1866 came to a close, London became the temporary headquarters of Canada’s nation builders. Delegates from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the Province of Canada gathered at a hotel overlooking the Houses of Parliament to finalize the British North America Act, the legislation uniting their colonies. Macdonald, a master of forging alliances and consensus, chaired the sessions and became, in the estimation of one British official, “the ruling genius” of the conference.

Howe had been in London since the summer but was barred from the closed-door sessions. As he feared, the provinces would be relegated to second-place status; the federal government was granted wide powers and the right to pass laws to ensure “the peace, welfare, and good government” of the new country.

Provinces also ceded their powers to levy customs and excise taxes. For Nova Scotia, with its brisk trade, that meant giving up seventy-five per cent of its provincial revenue. As compensation, the provinces were to receive annual federal subsidies, including fixed amounts paid annually and a yearly grant worth eighty cents per resident.



This illustration by C.W. Jeffreys depicts Joseph Howe being carried aloft after making a rousing speech.

The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick negotiators won a commitment to build an 1,100-kilometre railway connecting Halifax to central Canada’s rail system. By Christmas Eve the delegates had signed off on a sixty-nine-point resolution that formed the structure of the new federation.

While most British legislators supported union as a way to reduce the cost of governing and defending the colonies, domestic turmoil threatened to delay, and perhaps even scuttle, the Canadians’ grand plan. Britain was in turmoil over demands to extend the franchise to its increasingly powerful and vocal working class. Parliament rejected electoral reforms in the summer of 1866, forcing the government to resign and sparking riots in London’s Hyde Park. Lord Derby, the prime minister, formed a new administration, but his Conservative Party was under pressure to enact the reforms. When Parliament reconvened in early 1867, the Confederation proposals would be dumped into this political firestorm.

Howe, meanwhile, denounced Confederation in a pamphlet circulated to British MPs and journalists. He derided the unionists’ “premature aspirations” to statehood and warned that Nova Scotians would not support “a domination which they repudiate” or “a nationality they despise.” A strong and united British

Empire, not Confederation, he argued, was the best defence against American aggression.

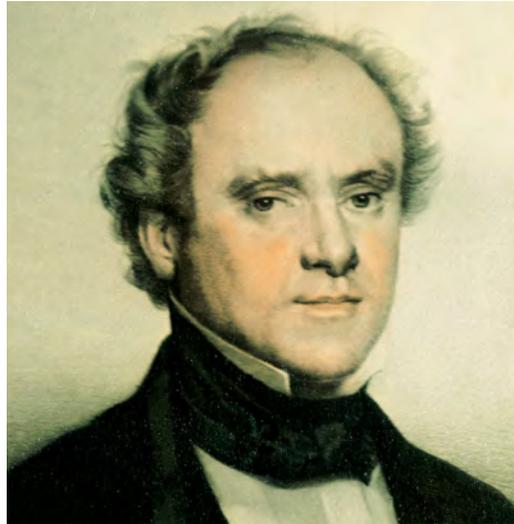
In private, Howe spread alarming tales about Macdonald's weakness for the bottle. Lord Carnarvon, the colonial secretary, was among those listening and warned his prime minister, Derby, that Macdonald was "occasionally so drunk as to be incapable of all official business for days altogether." But John A.'s stellar performance — and relative sobriety — as chair of the London conference was enough to overcome Howe's trash talk. "In spite of this notorious vice," Carnarvon

anti-confederate MPs won by acclamation. Howe, elected to Parliament for Hants County, led a bloc of MPs committed to pulling one of the four founding provinces out of the union. In Lunenburg, Confederation supporter Adolphus Gaetz dismissed the landslide as the product of "lying, bribery, corruption, and intimidation."

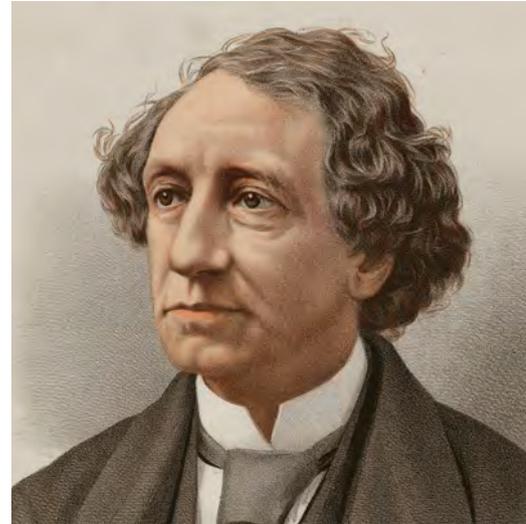
John A. Macdonald, elected prime minister with a comfortable twenty-one-seat majority, was confident he could defuse the anti-confederate uprising. Despite Howe's belligerence, the wily Macdonald sensed he was dealing with a man who would be amenable to persuasion



Sir Charles Tupper, circa 1880s.



Joseph Howe, circa 1851.



Sir John A. Macdonald, circa 1880.

assured Derby, he remained "the ablest politician in Upper Canada." Macdonald once joked that voters preferred him drunk to one of his rivals sober; the British, desperate to see their northern colonies fend for themselves, agreed that he was the best bet for Canada's future.

More than character assassination was needed to defeat Confederation. An anti-union petition bearing thirty thousand names — the signatures of one out of thirteen Nova Scotians — was presented and ignored. Howe's last-ditch appeal to Carnarvon failed, and the BNA Act was rushed through Parliament with little debate in February 1867.

British politicians, Howe noted with disgust, had scant interest in Canadian affairs, let alone Nova Scotia's opposition to union, and were "over anxious to get rid of us."

**H**owe returned to Halifax in May 1867, primed to continue the fight. At public meetings he vowed to "punish the scamps" who had dragged Nova Scotia into Confederation. At one point he appeared to advocate armed rebellion. "I would take every son I have and die on the frontier" with Canada, he declared, "before I would submit to this outrage."

The first federal election in September coincided with Nova Scotia's provincial election. Both campaigns became a referendum on Confederation, and there was no doubt where the province stood. Anti-confederates swept thirty-six of the thirty-eight seats in the Nova Scotia legislature and eighteen of the nineteen new federal ridings. Tupper won his federal seat by less than a hundred votes, and four

and compromise. "By and by," he told a colleague, Howe would be "open to reason" and could be enticed with an offer of a federal position — "tickled," as Macdonald put it, "by something worth acceptance."

When Parliament opened in Ottawa that November, Howe was one of the first to speak. "The people of my province were tricked into this scheme," he complained. "They feel they have been legislated out of the Empire by being legislated into this Dominion." Canada might be "your country," he told his fellow parliamentarians pointedly, but "his country" was still Nova Scotia.

The vehemence of the attack surprised Macdonald. Howe "talked a great deal of nonsense," in his opinion, "and some treason." But his presence alone was a minor victory for Macdonald — there had been fears the anti-confederates would refuse to take their seats, making any effort at reconciliation more difficult.

In early 1868 Howe took the fight back to London, leading a delegation that urged the British government and its new prime minister, Benjamin Disraeli, to repeal Nova Scotia's entry into Confederation. Nova Scotia, he complained, had been "swindled out of our independence." Behind the scenes, Macdonald urged the British to stand firm; otherwise, he said, "professional agitators" such as Howe "will keep up the agitation."

Howe returned from Britain with nothing more than promises to urge Ottawa to review the impact of its tariffs and other policies on Nova Scotia's industries. His faith in Britain's commitment to justice and fair play was shattered. In January 1869 he negotiated a better financial deal for Nova Scotia and entered Macdonald's cabinet.

## DIED.

Last night, at twelve o'clock, the free and enlightened Province of Nova Scotia. Deceased was the offspring of old English stock, and promised to have proved an honour and support to her parents in their declining years. Her death was occasioned by unnatural treatment received at the hands of some of her ungrateful sons, who, taking advantage of the position she had afforded them, betrayed her to the enemy. Funeral will take place from the Grand Parade this day, Monday, at 9 o'clock. Friends are requested not to attend, as her enemies, with becoming scorn, intend to insult the occasion with rejoicing.

The anti-confederate movement never recovered from the loss of its charismatic leader. Macdonald was elated. It was “glorious,” he told Tupper, to have “Nova Scotia pacified.”

Ironically, Howe played a role in building the country he had struggled to destroy. As secretary of state for the provinces he oversaw Manitoba's entry into Confederation in 1870. But when he publicly criticized the British for sacrificing Canadian interests in treaty negotiations with the U.S., Macdonald concluded that Howe “had outlived his usefulness.” In May 1873 he was sent home to serve as Nova Scotia's lieutenant-governor.

But Howe's health was failing; he was sixty-nine and had never fully recovered from the rigours of fighting a mid-winter by-election when he joined the federal cabinet. On June 1, 1873, after less than three weeks in office, he died at Government House in Halifax.

**H**owe became a folk hero in Nova Scotia, where his statue stands next to the provincial legislature building and schools, streets, and parks bear his name. In 2016 the province's mid-winter Heritage Day civic holiday was dedicated to his accomplishments. An annual journalism symposium at Halifax's University of King's College celebrates his legacy as a pioneer of press freedom in Canada.

Outside Nova Scotia, though, his pivotal role in Canadian history has been largely forgotten. His opposition to Confederation made him a villain in the heroic story of Canada's march to nationhood. Historians, most notably the eloquent nationalist Donald Creighton, have dismissed him as a misguided egotist who was more interested in promoting his own political career than in defending his native province. Even some of Howe's defenders considered him an opportunist and a traitor to Nova Scotia for his about-face on Confederation and his defection to Macdonald's government.

But Howe deserves to be remembered as more than a tragic figure who wound up on the wrong side of history. His anti-confederate movement foreshadowed the see-saw federal-provincial battles that have been a feature of our history, as Canada's regions struggle to keep their interests and problems on the national agenda.

He correctly foresaw many of the risks Confederation posed for Nova Scotia. The province's economy, already threatened as the era of wooden sailing ships waned, suffered under national trade and tariff policies. Canada's westward expansion, as Howe feared, left it on the margins with little political clout. And he rightly demanded that Nova Scotia should not be dragged into Confederation without the consent of the governed.

Howe failed in large measure because he faced the same challenge as any opponent of change — the lack of a viable alternative to Confederation.

By the 1860s the British government was determined to have its North American colonies stand on their own feet. Nova Scotia's prospects if it had struck out on its own, as an independent state without British support, would have been grim. Another option, annexation to the U.S., was anathema to most residents, Howe included.

Howe fought valiantly to reverse Nova Scotia's forced entry into Confederation. Once it was clear that there was no going back, he tried to make the best of the new political reality and to play a role in building Canada.

## CELEBRATION AND MOURNING

### PARTIES AND FUNERALS MARKED NOVA SCOTIA'S FIRST DOMINION DAY.

**T**he citizens of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, woke on July 1, 1867 – the first Dominion Day – to a twenty-one-gun salute from the cannons mounted on Gallows Hill, the blasts echoing across a narrow harbour filled with sailing vessels rocking at anchor.

Church bells rang, and Union Jacks fluttered from buildings all over the south shore fishing port. At noon, the sheriff read the official proclamation of Canada's birth, and the large crowd in attendance responded with three cheers for Queen Victoria and three more for the new country.

“At sunset another salute of twenty-one guns was fired,” merchant Adolphus Gaetz wrote in his diary that night, “and all wished Peace, Happiness & Prosperity to the Dominion of Canada.”

Most Nova Scotians, however, saw little reason to celebrate; a majority of the population remained hostile to Confederation.

In Halifax the morning also began with artillery salutes, but the July 1 edition of the city's *Morning Chronicle*, a paper steadfastly opposed to union, marked Canada's birth by publishing a mock obituary.

“DIED,” it read, “Last night at twelve o'clock, the free and enlightened Province of Nova Scotia.” Death came at the hands of “some of her ungrateful sons,” who had “betrayed her to the enemy.”

The “funeral” – the official celebration – would be held that morning at Halifax's Grand Parade square, the item noted. Friends of the late province, however, were urged not to attend, as Confederation supporters intended “to insult the occasion with rejoicing.”

Journalist George Johnson, Howe's friend and biographer, insisted that a “passion for the people's rights was at the bottom of all Mr. Howe's opposition to the Union of the Provinces.” Canada's first separatist, the man who tried to break up Confederation at its birth, was a democrat at heart. 🐾



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# True or False

While celebrating Canada's birthday, Canadians might want to take some time to separate myth from fact.

**The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Confederation** this July 1 is an absolutely remarkable achievement. The Confederation of 1867 was the bedrock of modern Canada, as it gave us both the union of the colonies and federalism as a system of governance. The expansion of Canada from sea to sea made it the second-largest political entity in the world, and future generations inherited a wealth of geographic diversity and beauty, unique regions and peoples, and vast natural resources. This enormous achievement has been celebrated from day one, but along the way some great myths have also arisen. Here's a handy guide to sorting fact from fiction when it comes to Confederation.

— by Ed Whitcomb, author of *Rivals for Power*, a history of federalism

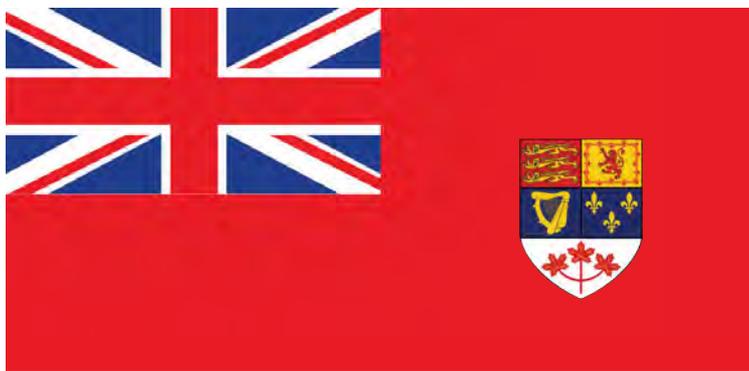
## 1 Canada's true age

It is often said that Canada was founded in 1867 and that we are celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. Actually, "Canada" was officially established on

December 26, 1791, when a constitutional act came into effect that divided Quebec into Lower Canada and Upper Canada. Thus, the original Canada turns 226 years old this year. When the United Province of Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia joined together in 1867, they took the name of the largest colony, "Canada," and called it a Dominion to avoid confusing it with the old Province of Canada. So it's only the Dominion that is 150 years old, Canada being much older and the confusion over its name much more recent.



ISTOCK



2

### A country and a nation, eh?

A favourite myth is that Canada became a country and a nation on July 1, 1867. However, a country is an area of land whose sovereignty or independence is recognized by other countries; Canada only became one when Britain finally recognized its independence in 1931. A nation is a group of people with a sense of identity based on things like common history, culture, values, language, and religion.

In 1867, French Canadians, Acadians, and dozens of First Nations met that definition, as did the Irish, English, and Scots. By the mid-twentieth century the three latter groups had homogenized sufficiently to be called Canadians; but Quebecers did not see themselves as part of the same nation, and the First Nations and Inuit were still on the outside looking in.

3

### The divine Sir John A.

Since United States President George Washington could walk on water — according to American mythology — so Sir John A. Macdonald had to be elevated to near godlike status in Canada. He was perhaps the greatest and most important of our prime ministers, but he was only one of the three main architects of Confederation. George Brown and George-Étienne Cartier led the largest parties, and it was their agreement that led to federalism, something Macdonald unsuccessfully opposed throughout his career. He favoured a unitary system, where power is held by the central government. Macdonald's outstanding contribution came later, when he made Confederation work, expanded it to the Pacific, and added the three provinces of Manitoba, B.C., and P.E.I.



John A. Macdonald, George-Étienne Cartier and George Brown.

4



### Quebec: a province like the others?

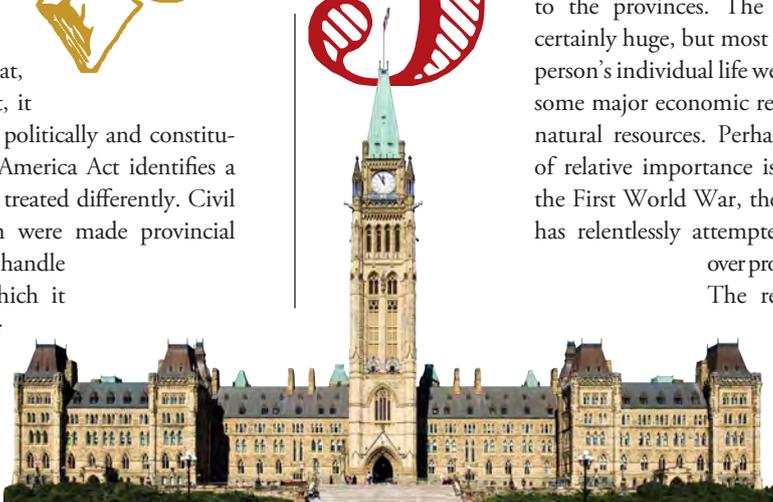
Really? After the Second World War, it became popular to say that, while Quebec was culturally distinct, it was the same as the other provinces politically and constitutionally. In fact, the British North America Act identifies a number of ways in which Quebec is treated differently. Civil law, health, welfare, and education were made provincial responsibilities so Quebec could handle those matters independently — which it has proudly and defiantly done for a hundred and fifty years. These measures gave Quebec control over its language and culture. And there are other differences, like having a National Assembly.

5

### Ottawa rules?

Perhaps the most important myth is that the central government was given, and still has, the most important jobs and is therefore superior to the provinces. The tasks it faced were certainly huge, but most things that affected a person's individual life were provincial, as were some major economic responsibilities such as natural resources. Perhaps the true measure of relative importance is the fact that, since the First World War, the federal government has relentlessly attempted to gain influence over provincial responsibilities.

The resulting struggle for power will likely continue for another century and a half as the saga of Confederation unfolds.



# FORGOTTEN FATHER

## SIR ÉTIENNE-PASCHAL TACHÉ WAS THE LITTLE-KNOWN GAME-CHANGER OF CONFEDERATION.

BY PETER BLACK

**T**HE BOOM OF FOUR MUSKET-FIRED VOLLEYS thundered over the farming settlement of Saint-Thomas, about ninety kilometres downriver from Quebec City. Commanding the gunfire was Charles Taché, local militia leader, struggling farmer, and the father of then three-year-old Étienne-Paschal Taché, who would grow up to play a key but forgotten role in Confederation.

Maybe little Étienne-Paschal was there, bundled up in his mother's arms, startled by the gunfire, eyes fixed on a bonfire flickering in the deep winter's darkness along the lower St. Lawrence River. Present or not on that evening of January 10, 1799, he would have known about the event to mark the Battle of the Nile — a British naval victory over France — because the triumph was celebrated in a popular song.

Thirteen years later, Étienne-Paschal and his older brother Charles were firing their own guns in the service of the British, defending Canada from the United States in the War of 1812. Soldiering would have a most profound effect on Étienne-Paschal Taché, one that would guide and propel him through a lengthy, varied, and action-packed life culminating in the chairmanship of the 1864 Confederation negotiations in Quebec City.

Despite his role as a senior statesman — he was twice premier of the United Province of Canada — Taché tends to get ignored or downplayed in the saga of the birth of Canada. With larger-than-life figures like John A. Macdonald, George-Étienne Cartier, George Brown, Charles Tupper, and Leonard Tilley crowding the spotlight, some general histories scarcely acknowledge Taché's role — or he is politely dismissed as nominal, symbolic, token, titular, or temporary.

For someone who was a player, in some cases a game-changer, in all the major events in Canada leading to Confederation, from the Rebellion

of Lower Canada, to the struggle for responsible government, to the musical chairs of party evolution, there has been a paucity of written reflection on Taché's record. It wasn't until 2006 that a biography emerged, dedicated exclusively to the life and times of Taché. It was commissioned by the town council of his native Montmagny, Quebec, formerly known as Saint-Thomas, where his stately house in the town's centre has been preserved as a tourist attraction and National Historic Site.

Yves Hébert, the author of *Étienne-Paschal Taché, le militaire, le médecin et l'homme politique*, says one reason Taché may have been relegated to relative obscurity is that he was not particularly outspoken or controversial. And yet, one of the rare famous quotes attributed to Taché packs a provocative punch.

In a speech to the Assembly of the United Province of Canada on April 24, 1846, Taché defended French Canada against accusations of disloyalty and championed the need to reorganize the militia in Canada East (present-day Quebec): "Our loyalty is not one of speculation, of pounds, shillings, and pence, we do not carry it on our lips, we do not make a traffic of it. But we are in our habits, by our laws, by our religion ... monarchists and conservatives." Recalling the service of French Canadians such as himself in the War of 1812, Taché said, "Be satisfied we will never forget our allegiance till the last cannon which is shot on this continent in defence of Great Britain is fired by the hand of a French Canadian."

Taken out of context, the declaration, according to Andrée Desilet, who wrote Taché's entry in the *Canadian Dictionary of Biography*, has "aroused doubts about Taché's attachment to his own people; the speech is, however, an excellent expression of French-Canadian nationalism of the time, which fought the dominance of the British in America without questioning the colonial tie."

Colonel Sir Étienne-Paschal  
Taché, as photographed by  
William Notman in Montreal in  
1865, the year of Taché's death.



The “last cannon” quip reveals the inherent contradictions of “the old colonel,” as he became known. Taché, a former Patriote rebellion leader, was made an honorary colonel of the British army in 1860 when he served as aide-de-camp for the Prince of Wales during his visit to Canada; Queen Victoria had knighted him two years earlier at Windsor Castle.

He was a practical, visionary politician who loathed the deviousness and corruption of politics, once reportedly telling a woman seeking his influence: “A politician is a man without compassion, I would say almost without conscience.” One might say it was Taché’s abundance of both those qualities that shaped his life as a soldier, doctor, and politician. His transcendent compassion and humanity appear to derive, in biographer Hebert’s view, from his edifying time as a soldier in the War of 1812.

Taché was just sixteen in May 1812 when he enlisted, following the lead of his older brother Charles. War broke out in June, and, having turned seventeen at a training camp near Montreal in September, Taché quickly became a junior officer with the Chasseurs Canadiens militia battalion.

The following year, he led his company in the Battle of Châteauguay alongside another future giant of Canadian history, Louis-Joseph Papineau. Though not a key exchange of the war, Châteauguay is notable for what historian George Stanley says was its impact on morale: “A relatively small group of Canadian militia, some of them only partially trained, resisted and turned back an attack by American regulars.”

Though his detachment did not fire a shot in the battle, Taché and his men were awarded a medal, which he thought deserving, since they endured the hardships of war just the same. “If my laurels of Châteauguay are not stained with blood, they are on the other hand drenched in sweat and covered with enormous quantities of mud and mire.”

There would be blood, much of it, a year later at the ill-fated Battle of Plattsburgh, on the shores of Lake Champlain. Thirteen of Taché’s company of seventy were killed or wounded in the land encounter, out of total Canadian casualties of thirty-seven dead and one hundred and fifty wounded. Legend has it that it was during that campaign that Taché, in the presence of carnage and other physical suffering, began his apprenticeship in medicine.

Taché was what writer and family friend Philippe-Joseph Aubert de Gaspé called a “self-made” man, meaning an autodidact. He had been denied access to extensive formal education due to the limited means of his parents. There being no medical school in Lower Canada at the time — a shortcoming that he would help to remedy later as a politician — after the war Taché was able to gain enough practical experience at the side of local doctors to be accepted in 1818 at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. His English was likely up to snuff, having gotten ample polishing under British army commanders.

He only studied in Philadelphia for a year but picked up adequate training to be certified by the medical board of Lower Canada in March 1819. Thus, at age twenty-four, began the future premier’s twenty-two-year career as a country doctor, and thus also began his domestic life. He married nineteen-year-old Sophie Baucher. Together, they had fifteen children, only nine of whom would survive infancy.

The 1830s were a time of economic hardship and political discontent in the British North American colonies, developments a country doctor could not help but observe and feel as he did his rounds. Taché was no stranger to politics; several members of his extended family had held elected office. As a prominent citizen in the region, and having built a grand house suiting his stature, he welcomed visitors, some of whom bore ideas that were then stirring up the land. He was well acquainted with Louis-Joseph Papineau, the fiery Patriote leader, since they served and suffered together in the War of 1812. He was also a friend of Augustin-Norbert Morin, who, with Papineau, penned the ninety-two resolutions that stated the grievances of the Canadiens against colonial authorities. Taché would later shelter Morin, a future

premier of the United Province of Canada, when he was a fugitive during the rebellion.

Taché’s credentials as a Patriote — a moderate one who did not take up arms — rested on his efforts to organize illegal rallies in his home village. One of them took place in June 1837 as political agitation was about to break out in violence. Papineau gave a long speech to a gathering of about six hundred people in Saint-Thomas. Sir Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine, then a member of the Assembly, also spoke. It

was with LaFontaine, Morin, and another moderate Patriote, George-Étienne Cartier, that Taché would later take up the post-rebellion fight for responsible government and the rights of French Canadians.

The aftermath of the rebellion gave rise to an event that belies the impression of Taché as a mild-mannered country doctor. In the spring of 1849 the new responsible government was put to the test with the passage of the Rebellion Losses Bill, which compensated people in French Canada for property damage sustained during the rebellion. Some English Canadians saw the bill as payment for disloyalty. An angry mob of liquored-up English Montrealers burned the Parliament building in Montreal to the ground, attacked Governor General Lord Elgin for upholding the bill, and invaded and damaged the home of LaFontaine, who, with Robert Baldwin, led the United Province of Canada.

**T**he situation calmed down for a while, but in mid-August a mob amassed to again besiege LaFontaine’s house. Taché, himself a member of the government, wrote to his wife a few days before the incident, “I have fortified and stocked LaFontaine’s house so as to sustain a siege; if the Tory loyalists present themselves, they will eat something indigestible.” He added, reassuringly, “I don’t, however, expect anything serious.”

## HE WAS A PRACTICAL, VISIONARY POLITICIAN WHO LOATHED THE DEVIUSNESS AND CORRUPTION OF POLITICS.



*The Battle of Châteauguay* by E.H. de Holmfield. This War of 1812 battle was Étienne-Paschal Taché's first taste of war.

When the mob began to scale the wall around the house, there was a volley of gunfire from men hidden by the windows. Those armed defenders of LaFontaine's home, in the premier's absence, were Taché, his nephew Joseph-Charles Taché, and his son-in-law, Charles-Joseph Coursol. One of the mob was killed by gunfire, and while Taché talked himself out of a homicide charge, doubts linger about his actions. (Hébert cites research that suggests Joseph-Charles was the shooter.)

Taché's role in this affair suggests his actions were guided by a sense of honour in the defence of rights that was born of his military experience. It may also reflect a darker side to his courtly reputation. His friend Aubert de Gaspé wrote this reflection on Taché in 1866: "His friends, knowing the inherent violence of his character, feared he might become embroiled in parliamentary battles, but with unbending will he succeeded in mastering his temper, as combustible as saltpetre, and showed himself to be consistently calm, cool, and deferential in his political dealings with fellow citizens and in parliamentary debate. To conquer one's own nature seems to me the greatest, noblest, and most difficult of triumphs."

The self-control Aubert de Gaspé ascribes to Taché seems to have lapsed somewhat in an 1845 incident in which he challenged Dominick Daly, a rival member of the Assembly, to a duel. As historian Jacques Monet describes in *The Last Cannon Shot*, at the appointed hour the two parliamentarians "stood on snowshoes watching their seconds try to count twenty paces in a field of deep snow. Both principals burst out laughing."

This ultimately comic showdown in the snow took place about a year before Taché's famous "last cannon" quip, which, curiously enough, prompted his appointment as head of the militia in Lower Canada. This meant he had to resign as an elected member. But he returned to Parliament in 1848, and from that point forward he was a minister in a variety of posts in successive governments until he stepped down in November 1857.

Taché's time in government, during a period of mind-boggling machinations and manoeuvring, is complex and eventful. The list of posts he held in that period includes commissioner of public works, receiver general, commissioner of Crown lands, speaker of the Legislative Council, and leader of the Canada East contingent in the Assembly. He became co-premier of Canada, with Allan Napier MacNab of Canada West, when his compatriot Morin stepped down for health reasons. When MacNab in turn withdrew from politics in 1856, Taché was called upon to form a government. He sought the assistance of Macdonald, then Attorney General of Canada West and the leading successor to MacNab. At this juncture begins a little-known relationship of personal affection and political convenience.

Taché admired Macdonald, even "loved [him] as a son," according to Joseph Pope, Macdonald's long-time confidant and biographer. "Far from entertaining any feeling of jealousy at the proofs that Macdonald was daily giving of his skill as a leader of men, Colonel Taché welcomed the success of his colleague as evidence that he could safely commit the leadership of the party to him and his brilliant Lower Canadian lieutenant, Mr. Cartier," wrote Pope.



A detail from *The Burning of the Parliament Building in Montreal* by Joseph Legare, circa, 1849.



As Pope suggests, Taché was not driven by ambition but by service to his country. In a letter to LaFontaine at the time, Taché confided, “all I’ve done was to follow from a distance the leaders the country has chosen.” With the younger and energetic Cartier waiting in the wings to lead Canada East, Taché prepared his exit from politics, a departure hastened in no small measure by the death at age twenty-four of his daughter Eulalie. He told the Assembly, “after a long and lengthened period in the service of my country, I wish to retire to the bosom of my family from the cares attendant on public life.”

Once back in his beloved Montmagny, though, Taché kept watch over Macdonald’s journey. In early 1858 Macdonald pondered quitting after facing a serious election setback and his own personal tragedy — the death of his wife. Taché wrote him a letter — in French, as a matter of principle for a veteran defender of language rights in the legislature — prefaced with a doctor’s tender condolences. Taché beseeched Macdonald to “not abandon ship ... the difficulties are great, but your resources are greater.”

Taché’s retirement was short-lived. It is this final political act of his life that rescues his unique legacy from obscurity. Macdonald called upon him in March 1864 to be the compromise choice for premier of Canada and the nominal leader of the Great Coalition of himself, Cartier, and George Brown.” Taché balked. Governor General Charles Stanley Monck had to twist his arm before he agreed, “if necessary, to make sacrifices for my country.”

With a stable coalition government now established thanks to Taché’s sacrifice, the Confederation project took wings. And, though the old colonel was not in Charlottetown for the champagne-soaked

September gathering of delegates from the British North American colonies, he was ready to serve, when called upon, to chair the subsequent Quebec Conference.

Taché, as it turned out, had especially intimate knowledge of the documentation being brought to the table; his nephew Joseph-Charles Taché — yes, he of the LaFontaine house siege — was the civil servant in charge of drafting the essential study papers of Confederation.

Taché, though making few interventions in the talks, served another, more profound, purpose. Historian Christopher Moore, in his brilliantly detailed analysis of the Quebec Conference, *Three Weeks in Quebec City*, writes: “Taché was not merely master of ceremonies. He was a living reminder of the political history that had made the conference possible.”

Macdonald biographer Donald Creighton describes him at Quebec as “the benevolent old chairman, with his round friendly countenance and his nimbus of white hair.” But Taché’s avuncular presence masked fierce vigilance. He wrote this to a friend about the Confederation talks: “Is this plan possible without sacrificing Lower Canada? That’s what we’ll have to see. For me, it’s a major point, and since I hold the key to the shop, I can always close it down, if I perceive we cannot do something good.” Here we have a Taché who decidedly does not see himself as a timid placeholder but as a wily Patriote lion ready to leap to the defence of his people.

The pact did pass Taché’s muster — and that of Cartier and the three other Lower Canada delegates. As premier of Canada, it was Taché’s duty to introduce the Confederation resolutions in the Assembly for debate, on February 3, 1865.



A white-haired Étienne-Paschal Taché sits front and centre at the 1864 Quebec Conference, which brought together delegates of the legislatures of the United Province of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. The meeting led to an agreement on Confederation.

This veteran of a bloody war against the United States began by saying that, if the deal failed, Canada risked being “forced into the American union by violence, and if not by violence, would be placed on an inclined plane which would carry us there insensibly.” He then went to the core of the French-Canadian argument for Confederation: “If a federal union were obtained it would be tantamount to the separation of the provinces, and Lower Canada would thereby preserve its autonomy together with its institutions it held so dear, and over which they could exercise the watchfulness and surveillance necessary to preserve them unimpaired.”

**M**acdonald seconded Taché’s motion. This unlikely partnership had been one of the crucial elements in the bewildering interaction of personalities that created Confederation. There’s something almost tragically noble in the fact that, as the sixty-nine-year-old Taché gave this most historic speech to the Assembly, with Macdonald at his side, he would soon suffer a mild stroke that signalled his approaching death. After the Confederation debate wrapped up in March, Taché returned home to Montmagny. He would, against doctor’s orders, make one last trip to Quebec in July, anxious to confer with the delegation that had just returned from England to polish the Confederation details. He was forced to return home as his health deteriorated.

On July 15, he wrote one of the last letters of his life to Macdonald. In it, the premier asked Macdonald to take on his duties as head of the militia during his “absence.” Then he added: “I would like to see you one more time before the long voyage I will soon take.”

Taché would not live to see the blueprint of the Confederation dream realized. He died on July 31, 1865. Macdonald was among the six thousand dignitaries, townspeople, and militia members who gathered for Taché’s funeral in the village that had so long ago saluted a momentous event in the history of the British Empire. Biographer Hébert wonders, given the importance accorded his funeral, why Taché “has nearly fallen into oblivion since his death.”

There has been, in recent years, a modest redress of whatever injustice such historical anonymity has dealt Taché. Besides Hébert’s biography packed with intriguing family lore, there were events in Montmagny in 2015 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of his death, his role in Confederation, and his good works in the region. In 2014, Quebec City unveiled a plaque in Taché’s honour on the shores of the St. Lawrence, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Quebec Conference.

Perhaps a particularly fitting legacy for this forgotten Father of Confederation — one whose “last cannon” quote may have called his allegiance to his people into question — might be the words of his son. Eugene-Étienne Taché was the architect chosen to build Quebec’s National Assembly in 1875. Above the building’s main entrance, under statues of James Wolfe and Louis-Joseph de Montcalm, Taché  *fils*  affixed: *Je Me Souviens*. These three meaning-laden words became the official motto of Quebec. 🇵🇶



**PETER BLACK** is a journalist based in Quebec City, where for many years he was a CBC radio producer. He writes a weekly column on Quebec affairs, as well as a regular column on Canadian issues.



Members of the Siksika Nation ride horses at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park, Alberta. Blackfoot Crossing, where Treaty 7 was signed in September 1877, is a National Historic Site.

# WHERE HISTORY WAS MADE

## Celebrating 100 years of National Historic Sites

**A** woman stands on a Winnipeg stage and, using humour as a weapon, strikes a blow against the patriarchy that is preventing her from voting. In Quebec, two armies meet on the Plains of Abraham to decide the fate of a continent. And near a river crossing in southern Alberta, leaders of the Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, Stoney Nakoda, and Tsuut'ina sign a treaty with the Crown that promises peace and prosperity — but the treaty will be reneged upon time and time again.

These seemingly disparate events all share a commonality: they are all key milestones in the history of Canada, and all formally recognized by National Historic Site designation.

A century ago, in January 1917, the federal government created the first National Historic Site — a fort in

the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia — in an effort to protect the site physically, as well as to preserve it in the historical memory of the country.

Since then, 981 sites have received National Historic Site designations and more than one thousand people and events have been formally recognized for their historical significance. In the following pages, you will find stories of triumph and loss, of progress and great achievement — but also moments of failure, and opportunities to learn from our past mistakes.

It's been said that Canada has too much geography and not enough history. In truth, Canada is a land where geography shapes — and is shaped by — its history. Our historic places, people, and events are the fabric that make up the tapestry of our country.



# HOLDING THE FORT

A CENTURY AGO, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PROTECTED A FORT IN NOVA SCOTIA – AND LAUNCHED CANADA’S NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES SYSTEM. *BY KATE JAIMET*

**B**y the late-nineteenth century, the Officers’ Quarters of Fort Anne — one of the oldest military structures in Canada — was falling into disrepair.

The garrison, built on the site of an old French fort near Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia, had been abandoned by the British army in 1854. Since that time, the care and upkeep of the buildings and grounds had fallen to a series of private tenants, whose efforts varied depending on the individual. In the year 1881, the tenant — seeing the decrepit condition of the fort’s blockhouse and thinking, perhaps, that the square timbers would make excellent firewood — tore down the wooden structure that had been built to defend British North America during the American War of Independence (1775–1782).

The incident shocked the community and led the citizens of Annapolis Royal to form a garrison commission to take charge of the site. In 1889 the town formally petitioned the Dominion government to restore the fort and turn the grounds into a park.

It would take another twenty-eight years before Ottawa acted on that request. But on January 24, 1917, the government passed an Order-in-Council, authorizing Fort Anne to be “set aside and maintained as a Dominion Historical Park.” It would become Canada’s first National Historic Site — a designation that today applies to more than 981 properties, including 171 places operated by Parks Canada.

“They finally got action, amazingly, in the middle of the First World War,” said Parks Canada historian Anne Marie Lane Jonah. “The extreme stress of wartime made people look for that hope, that these moments will be remembered, they will be important, and people won’t just forget what was sacrificed and what happened. They felt the need to save and memorialize places that spoke of earlier clashes, and there were lots of them at Fort Anne.”

The Annapolis River Valley had been inhabited by Mi’kmaq for more than three thousand years before the first French colonists arrived in 1605, naming their settlement Port-Royal. Beginning in 1702, French soldiers constructed a star-shaped fort surrounded by a moat. The earthenworks form the basis of the current historical site.

The British seized the fort in 1710, but the French and the Mi’kmaq staged raids in the decades that followed. The warfare culminated in the deportation of the Acadians, the confirmation in 1760–1761 of the Peace and Friendship Treaty between the British and the Mi’kmaq (first signed at Fort Anne in 1726), and finally the 1763 Treaty of Paris, where France ceded nearly all of its North American territories to Great Britain.

The fort next served to defend British North America against a new enemy — revolutionary Americans. It withstood an attack by American privateers in 1781 and stood as a military outpost in the War of 1812.

However, by the mid-nineteenth century, Fort Anne had outlived its military usefulness — as had many similar forts across the country. As the British army withdrew, upkeep of the sites fell on local communities, which lacked the resources to maintain them.

The advent of Canadian Confederation in 1867 prompted soul-searching about the importance of preserving places of cultural and historical significance to the new country. The first spaces to receive protection by the Dominion government were natural, not cultural.

The establishment of several parks and reserves in the Rocky Mountains led to the creation in 1911 of the Dominion Parks Branch, later to become Parks Canada. The commissioner of national parks, James Bernard Harkin, believed the parks service should expand into the protection of historical places, and Fort Anne found a champion in Loftus Morton Fortier, a senior Department of Immigration bureaucrat stationed in Annapolis Royal.

At Fortier’s prompting, Harkin sent a delegate in December 1916 to inspect Fort Anne. The following month, Fort Anne received official designation as Canada’s first historical park. In 1919, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada was established to seek out and designate worthy sites across the country. “Once Fort Anne was established, that opened the floodgates,” said Lane Jonah. “The board’s work in the first year: it was forts, forts, forts, fur trade sites, forts. There were so many places that communities felt strongly about and that were so integral [to Canada’s history].” 🐾

**Once Fort Anne was established, that opened the floodgates.**



Above: The Field Officers' Quarters at Fort Anne National Historic Site also houses a museum.

Below: A cannon at Fort Anne guards the approach from the Annapolis River.

Left: A re-enactor speaks with young visitors to the fort.



# FROM CHERT TO CHÂTEAUX

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIGS REVEAL  
A WEALTH OF TREASURES.

BY KATE JAIMET

**B**uried beneath present-day Quebec City lie the ruins of palaces and fortresses where colonial governors ruled for more than two hundred years.

Hidden for over a century, the ruins of the Saint-Louis Forts and Châteaux are now open to visitors after excavations by archaeologists revealed the remnants of buildings dating back to 1620 scattered with hundreds of thousands of historical artifacts.

Their fascinating findings included the ruins of the home of Quebec City founder Samuel de Champlain; wine bottles engraved with the personal insignia of New France Governor Marquis de Beauharnois; pipes and trading beads showing the presence of Indigenous people inside the fort; and a collection of cannonballs launched by the British during the siege of Quebec in 1759.

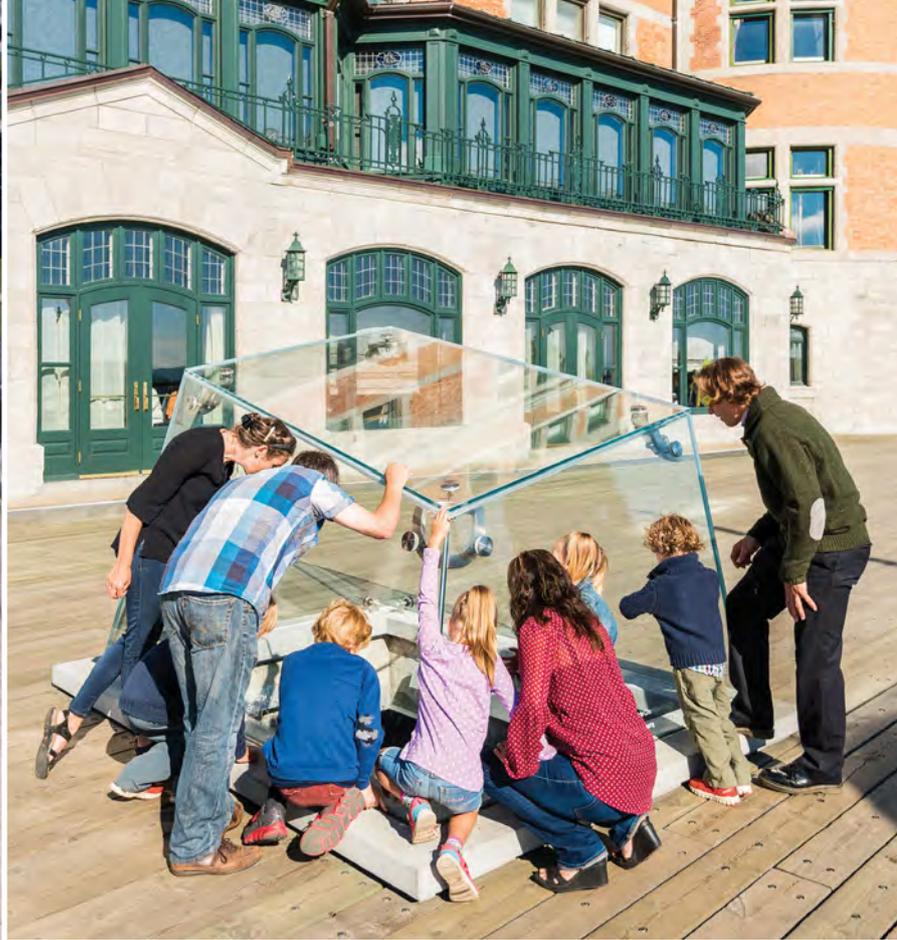
“It really is an extraordinarily rich site,” said archaeologist Pierre Cloutier. “We have elements of the presence of each successive occupant. We have, sometimes, thousands of objects that tell us about a given period.”

With guided tours and multimedia interpretation, the Saint-Louis Forts and Châteaux is one of the most prominent archaeological excavations in Canada’s network of National Historic Sites. But other sites across the country have their own importance.

Archaeologists are called in to make sure that historically important artifacts are not destroyed during repairs to historic sites. This was the case with the Saint-Louis Forts and Châteaux, where work was undertaken between 2005 and 2010 to stabilize the terrace that had been built overtop of the ruins in the nineteenth century.



PARKS CANADA



Left: With the Château Frontenac boardwalk removed, the remnants of buildings dating to the early 1600s are revealed at the Saint-Louis Forts and Châteaux National Historic Site. Above: Visitors peer through a glass viewing area. Below: Visitors examine artifacts recovered from the excavations at Saint-Louis Forts and Châteaux.







Top left: A caribou stands at Torngat Mountains National Park, home to kitjigattalik, the Ramah Chert Quarries National Historic Site. Top right: An aerial view of Torngat Mountains National Park, where archaeologists have discovered examples of chert, used by Indigenous peoples for thousands of years to make tools. Left: An aerial view of Prince of Wales Fort National Historic Site near Churchill, Manitoba. Above right: An archaeologist searches for artifacts at Prince of Wales Fort.

PARKS CANADA

Similarly, archaeologists have been excavating at Prince of Wales Fort near Churchill, Manitoba, since 1999 in conjunction with work to stabilize the fort's collapsing outer walls.

Excavations of the early eighteenth-century fur-trading fort have provided insights into the everyday life of the officers, tradesmen, labourers and Indigenous people who traded at the fort.

For example, "a large number of bones from the upper left wing of geese were uncovered," said Parks Canada archaeologist Donalee Deck. In fact, historical sleuthing revealed that the fort's inhabitants were making quill pens from the feathers of the goose's upper wings — specifically the left wings, where the feathers were thought to have a better curvature for right-handed people.

"The French confiscated over 17,000 goose quills when they captured the fort in 1782," Deck said. "Every artifact has a really interesting story."

In some cases, archaeologists can help to establish the exact location, extent, and importance of a site that is being considered for national historic designation. That was the case with kitjigattalik, the Ramah Chert Quarries National Historic Site, in Torngat Mountains National Park, Newfoundland and Labrador.

A forty-kilometre-long rock outcropping in the park is the only known source of a unique, translucent form of chert that Indigenous Peoples used for thousands of years to make stone tools.

Those tools have been found as far south as Maryland and as far west as Ontario, proving that they were widely traded in North America prior to European contact.

But before Parks Canada archaeologists and Inuit partners undertook fieldwork in 2009, the exact locations of the quarries and tool-making sites were not well documented.

"For this project, our goal was documentation: locating, photographing, and describing the sites," said archaeologist Jenneth Curtis. "We found thousands of pieces: large blades, small blades, partially finished arrowheads, and other kinds of stones that were used as hammer stones."

Displaying archaeological findings to the public is not always straightforward. At Prince of Wales Fort, the exhibits at the visitor centre in Churchill will soon be updated, giving people a glimpse of life in the fur-trading outpost three hundred years ago.

But at kitjigattalik, the decision was made for the 2009 field project not to remove artifacts from the chert quarries and tool-making sites. Parks Canada is struggling with the question of whether to put up interpretive signage, which would make the sites more visible but would possibly expose them to looting by treasure hunters.

"We need to talk about how we're going to balance interpretation, a chance for people to see it, with protecting it," Curtis said. 🐾



A fragment of a Pouhon Spa mineral water bottle from Belgium, found during excavations at Prince of Wales Fort.



Harriet Tubman as she escorts  
escaped slaves into Canada,  
by Jerry Pinkney.



# BUILDING A KINDER COUNTRY

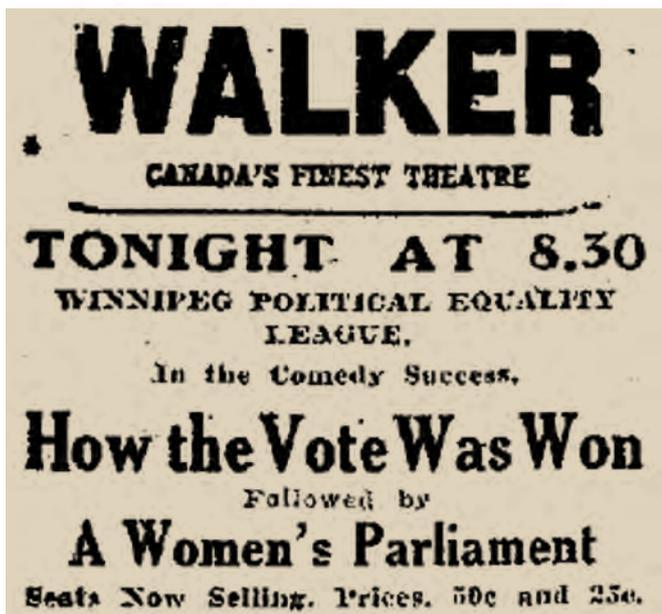
THESE HISTORIC SITES COMMEMORATE  
KEY MOMENTS IN CANADA'S SOCIAL  
JUSTICE HISTORY. *BY MARK COLLIN REID*

**C**anadians today enjoy many rights and freedoms. But it wasn't always this way.

For much of Canada's history, the country was split along social, racial, economic, and gender-based fault lines. Few women could hold property, and most couldn't vote. Indigenous people were marginalized in myriad ways, and laws that banned immigration from "non-white" nations, especially from Asia, remained in place until the middle of the twentieth century.

The social progress we take for granted today was achieved by average Canadians who stood up for what they believed in. Here are just a few places where Canadians demanded justice, welcomed the less fortunate, and took steps — and, sometimes, missteps — along the road to a greater, more caring country.

BRIDGEMAN



Above: A 1914 bulletin announces a mock parliament at Winnipeg's Walker Theatre. Below: Grosse Île's Celtic cross.



Louis Riel, standing at right, speaks in his defence before a packed Regina courtroom in July 1885.

## Walker Theatre

In Winnipeg, winter is always cold, but on January 28, 1914, Manitoba's premier certainly felt the heat — thanks to 1,800 people who gathered at the Walker Theatre to watch a “mock parliament.”

The “star” of the show was Premier Rodmond Roblin, as played by the prominent suffragist and writer Nellie McClung. Inspired by a similar mock parliament held earlier in British Columbia, the goal was to lampoon the province's unreasonable rationale for preventing women from voting. Roblin's Conservative government used all the typical arguments: voting would cause strife at home; women were too pure to be dragged into the muddy world of politics; etcetera. As Roblin infamously said, “Nice women don't want the vote.”

During the mock parliament, the women turned the tables on the men, questioning whether they were smart enough to understand politics. As a rebuke to the constant attacks by men on the appearance of suffragists, the women debated whether “ugly” men's clothing — such as “scarlet neckties, six-inch-collars, and squeaky shoes” — should be banned.

McClung stole the show with her send-up of the blowhard Roblin. Looking back, the mock parliament was a key moment in the long battle for gender equality in Canada. Two years later, to the day, Manitoban women became the first in Canada to win the right to vote in provincial elections.

## Grosse Île and the Irish Memorial

During the nineteenth century, waves of Irish left their homeland to start new lives in North America. Many were forced to move by the Irish famine of the mid-nineteenth century.

The journey by sea was long and arduous, and many passengers fell ill with cholera, typhus and other illnesses.



Arriving at the St. Lawrence River, if illness was discovered aboard, passengers disembarked at a lonely rock outcropping near Quebec City — Grosse Île. There, thousands of passengers, including many Irish, were quarantined, and many died. During the century the site was in operation, more than half a million immigrants were processed there.

Today, visitors can explore the many buildings and facilities that date back to the island's painful past. They can also view the cemeteries, the quarantine station, and the Celtic cross and memorial for the more than five thousand immigrants who died while in quarantine at Grosse Île, and to all the others who were buried on the island. This National Historic Site is a stark reminder of the price many people paid for their desire to settle in Canada.

## Batoche

For four days during May of 1885, the Métis resistance led by Louis Riel was able to hold off the military power of the Canadian government.

Three hundred Métis and First Nations fighters faced down eight hundred soldiers of the North West Field Force. But wars are not won with will-power alone. As their ammunition dwindled, so did the Métis's chances of achieving victory at the Battle of Batoche.

The fighting, which started on May 9, ended on May 12. Riel surrendered three days later.

The Battle of Batoche was the culmination of a much longer struggle for Métis and First Nations to secure their rights to both land and self governance.

In 1870, the intrusion of the Canadian government at the Red River Colony (in modern-day Winnipeg) compelled Riel to declare a provisional government.

That fight ultimately resulted in Manitoba entering



Above: A Japanese-Canadian family waits to be taken to an internment camp in British Columbia, 1942. Below: Salem Chapel British Methodist Episcopal Church, St. Catharines, Ontario.

Confederation as the fifth province of Canada. But Riel was forced into exile in the United States.

In November of 1885, Riel was hanged — the same month that CPR chief Donald A. Smith drove the last spike in the transcontinental railway. As the country was united by steel rails and wooden ties, it was also being driven apart by the execution of a man whom many today consider to be a Father of Confederation.

### Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre

Non-whites had always faced prejudice in early Canada. On the West Coast, people of Asian descent faced especially overt societal and legal discrimination, as both governments and average citizens feared a perceived “yellow peril.”

Despite these hurdles, immigrants from Asia persisted to build lives for themselves and their families. By the 1940s, thousands of Japanese newcomers were living in British Columbia, mostly along the coast.

In December 1941, prejudice turned to hostility in the wake of Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

Almost immediately, all Japanese Canadians were declared a potential security threat. Claiming they were acting in the national interest, authorities rounded up more than twenty-two thousand Japanese Canadians and forced them to move to internment camps in the interior of B.C. In many cases, authorities seized the property of Japanese Canadians and sold it off.

Today, this dark stain on Canada’s past can be explored at the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre, on the shores of Slocan Lake at New Denver, British Columbia. Declared a National Historic Site in 2007, the Nikkei camp was built by the British Columbia Security Commission in 1942. Today it is one of the few internment camps

that remain standing in Canada. The site is a reminder of the consequences of wartime fears and the need to remain vigilant in the defence of civil liberties for all Canadians.

### Salem Chapel British Methodist Episcopal Church

This modest church was the spiritual home to one of the Underground Railroad’s most famous personalities — Harriet Tubman.

Built in 1855, it was an important centre of nineteenth-century abolitionist and civil rights activity in Canada.

Most escaped slaves came to Canada via the Underground Railroad, a series of safe houses run by abolitionists. Many of the former slaves settled in southern Ontario. In 1788, a group of black settlers arrived in St. Catharines, and by 1814, they had established a chapel in the community.

In 1850, the U.S. Fugitive Slave Act demanded that escaped slaves be returned to their “rightful” owners. In response, more escaped slaves fled the northern states to Canada, where slavery had been banned since 1833.

At St. Catharines, the congregation decided that a larger church was needed to serve the growing black community. Construction began on the United Salem Chapel British Methodist Episcopal Church in 1853 and was completed in 1855. The church quickly became a central gathering place and base of operations for abolitionists, including Tubman, who lived in St. Catharines between 1851 and 1861. Many of the escaped slaves she assisted settled in the St. Catharines area.

The United Salem chapel, named a National Historic Site in 2000, remains a reminder of the generosity of the human spirit. 🐾



# 7

## HISTORIC OBJECTS

EVERY OBJECT TELLS A STORY.

BY CHARLES DAGNEAU,  
NANCY MCCARTHY, AND  
MIKE STEINHAUER

**F**rom everyday objects spring countless stories of Canada's past. For decades, Parks Canada has preserved and protected artifacts that together reflect the material heritage of our National Historic Sites, National Parks, and National Marine Conservation areas.

The collection consists of approximately thirty-one million objects — including seven hundred thousand historic items and thirty million archaeological artifacts — reflecting more than eleven thousand years of history. The objects, from fine art and furniture to industrial machinery, are occasionally loaned to museums across the country; many are on permanent display at Parks Canada places. A number of the objects will also be exhibited during the sesquicentennial at institutions such as the Canadian Museum of History and the National Gallery of Canada.

The following objects are just a small sampling of what is one of the largest and most significant collections of artifacts in Canada.



### PROPOSED FLAG

For nearly a century after Confederation, Canada had no official flag of its own. During that time, the Canadian Red Ensign, generally seen as the de facto flag, vied with the Royal Union flag (Union Jack) as the representative banner for the nation. In 1925, and again in 1946, Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King launched parliamentary committees to consider the creation of a national flag, but they both proved unsuccessful. Of the 2,409 designs submitted to the 1946 committee, sixty-seven per cent featured maple leaves, and sixteen per cent incorporated the Union Jack. Other popular features included stars, fleurs-de-lys, the crown, and (of course) beavers. Seen here is one of the proposed flags from the 1946 debate. It is one of four flags that are part of the extensive Mackenzie King collection at Laurier House National Historic Site. The designer is not known.



### MEN'S LEATHER SHOE

In 1760, during the Seven Years War (1756–63), a fleet of six French supply ships were attacked by the British Navy while sailing on the Restigouche River that divides New Brunswick and Quebec. Among the French ships' cargo were 5,500 pairs of shoes. During the battle, the British sank the French ships, including the frigate *Le Machault*. In the 1970s, Parks Canada divers discovered the wreck of *Le Machault* and recovered several artifacts, including the shoe shown above. The site of the clash was designated the Battle of the Restigouche National Historic Site. The Seven Years War was fought in Europe, India, and America, and at sea. In North America, Britain and France struggled for supremacy. In 1758, the British captured the Fortress of Louisbourg, followed by Quebec City in 1759 and Montreal in 1760. France formally ceded New France to Britain with the Treaty of Paris in 1763.



## TRANSFORMATION MASK

Transformation masks like the one depicted here are worn during ceremonies. The masks manifest transformation, often an animal changing into a mythical being or, in this case, the sun and the moon. This mask, from the late-nineteenth century, is part of the Yuquot Collection of artifacts. The collection was assembled from the late 1960s to the 1970s. The Yuquot Collection was the direct result of a co-development plan between Parks Canada and the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First

Nation to build an interpretation centre at Yuquot National Historic Site, on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Although the co-development plan was never realized, this exceptional collection remains within Parks Canada's care. The Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation continue to plan the development of an interpretive centre. Once the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation's interpretation centre is completed, the artifacts will be transferred back into their care at Yuquot.



## RIEL BUST

William Henry Jackson (1861–1952), who later adopted the name Honoré Joseph Jaxon, left behind what is perhaps one of the most evocative representations of Louis Riel. Jackson, a prominent labour organizer and best known for being Riel’s secretary during the 1885 resistance, saw himself as a “peacemaker between the Aboriginal and immigrant population of the North West.” Both Jackson and Riel were imprisoned following the Battle of Batoche in May 1885. At trial, Jackson had hoped to defend Riel’s actions. However, the trial lasted a mere hour, as both the Crown and defence declared Jackson insane. He was sent to the insane asylum at Lower Fort Garry, located just north of Winnipeg. Riel was held in Regina, where he was publicly executed on November 16, 1885. During his time at the asylum, Jackson carved a small wooden bust of Riel. Measuring some 21 centimetres in height, the bearded face depicts a gaunt-looking Riel — reminiscent of a Christ figure — with the letters DAVID (Riel’s middle name) carved below. Jackson presented the bust to Dr. David Young at the hospital on October 17, 1885, and fled shortly after. Lieutenant Colonel R.H. Young, the son of David Young, donated the bust to Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site in 1964, where it can still be seen today.



## PHARMACEUTICAL BOTTLE

In 1845, explorer Sir John Franklin set sail from England with two ships, HMS *Erebus* and HMS *Terror*, in search of a Northwest Passage. The ships and crews vanished. Almost 170 years would pass until an expedition led by Parks Canada in 2014 discovered the wreck of *Erebus*. This glass bottle is just one of the artifacts recovered from the site, recognized today as the Wrecks of the HMS *Erebus* and HMS *Terror* National Historic Site in Nunavut. This small glass medicine bottle is marked “Samuel Oxley” and “London.” Oxley was a London chemist who sold “Concentrated essence of Jamaican

ginger root,” a compound claiming to cure a variety of ailments from digestive complaints to hypochondria. On board HMS *Erebus*, it may have been a popular seasickness treatment. This bottle actually had nineteen lead birdshot pellets inside, suggesting that it was reused as a shot flask. Detailed content analysis also found traces of gum arabic and potassium bicarbonate, both of which were carried in every standard nineteenth-century Royal Navy medicine chest. Reuse of containers was frequent during that time period, but to find such clear evidence of multiple use of the same object is quite remarkable.

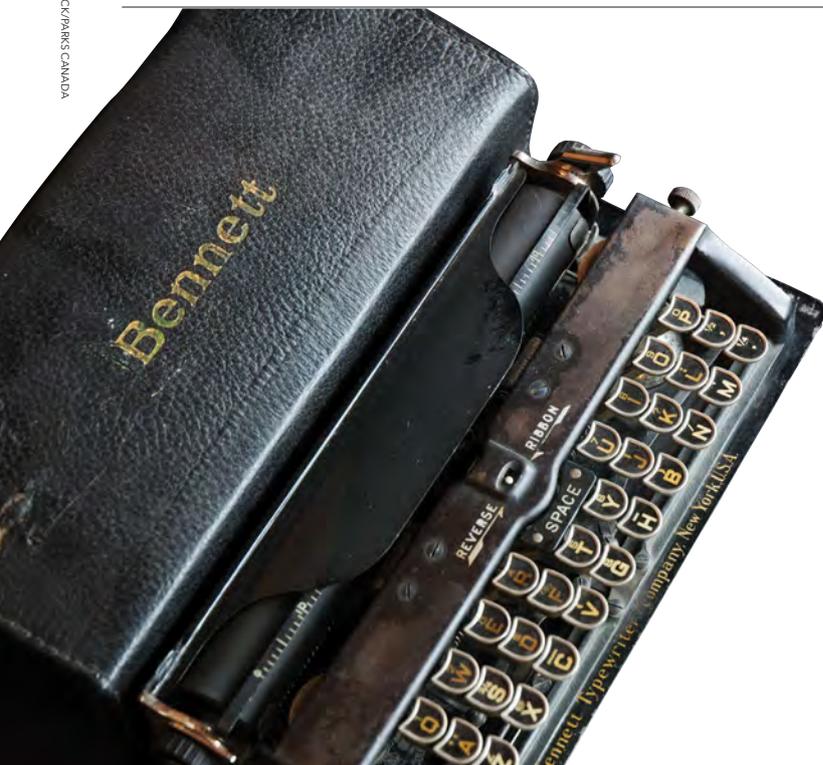


## PEACE TREATY WAMPUM BELT

Wampum are traditional shell beads of the eastern woodlands First Nations of North America. The white beads were made from whelk shells; dark purple beads came from quahog, a hard-shelled clam. Both were found along the shores of the Atlantic seacoast. Wampum were made into belts that functioned as mnemonic devices for communication. They were instruments of spiritual and political life. Each belt represented a particular event — a single talk, a council, or a treaty. The contrast between the dark and light shells made patterns that had meanings, and their interpretation was an important task. The wampum keeper kept the wampum of his people, bringing it out when required. Belts were also exchanged as a form of treaty. If a quarrel arose between two parties who had exchanged belts, the wampum

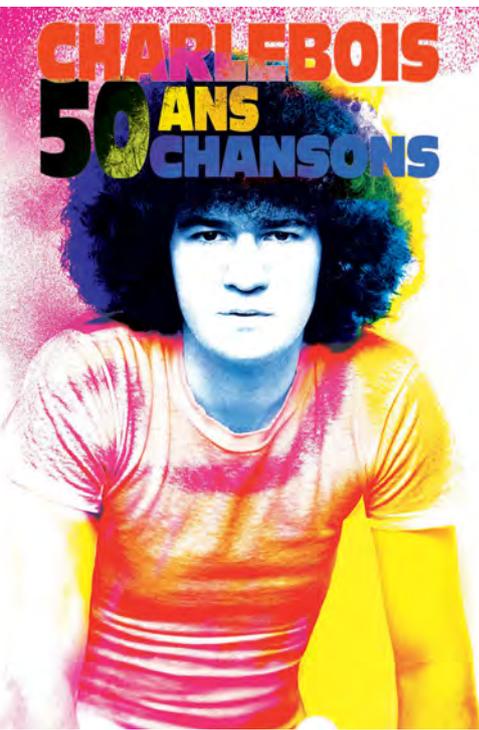
keeper would bring out the appropriate one and recite the terms of the original treaty. This wampum belt was acquired by Parks Canada in the early 1970s. It is thought to be associated with the 1701 Great Peace of Montreal between New France and nearly forty First Nations and is part of the collection of Fort Chambly National Historic Site in Quebec.

JENNA ROBEUR/PARKS CANADA



## ROBERT SERVICE'S TYPEWRITER

Robert Service (1874–1958), the “Bard of the Yukon,” was one of the most adored and commercially successful poets of the twentieth century. He was born in Preston, England, and arrived in Canada in 1896 at the age of twenty-two. He travelled extensively, principally along the west coasts of Canada and the United States. In 1903, he started working for the Canadian Bank of Commerce in British Columbia. In 1905, he was sent to Whitehorse in Yukon Territory. During his years in the Yukon he produced *The Spell of the Yukon*, *Ballads of a Cheechako*, *The Cremation of Sam McGee*, and other literary works. After moving to Dawson City, Service wrote some of his most memorable works on this 1901 Bennett typewriter in a tiny cabin on Eighth Avenue, where he lived from 1908 to 1912. His home, a part of Dawson Historical Complex National Historic Site, can be visited as he left it in 1912, and his typewriter is part of the cabin’s collection of historic objects. 🐾



# Artistic roots

For centuries, musicians and artists have shared their perspectives on people, places, and events. In so doing, they have helped to shape Canada's identity. *by Jessica Knapp & Andrew Workman.*

**W**hen we think of Canadian music, there is no shortage of talent that comes to mind: Be it the classical mastery of Glenn Gould, the innovative jazz of Oscar Peterson, the revolutionary folk of Buffy Sainte-Marie, or the iconic Canuck rock of The Tragically Hip, Canadians have a lot to celebrate.

But long before Canada became a country, this land was home to the rich variety of music created by Indigenous peoples and passed down through the generations.

When colonization began, Europeans brought with them their own musical styles and instruments. While the numerous societies in pre-Confederation Canada would struggle to maintain their cultural traditions, they also happened to influence each other, creating unique hybrid styles of music.

In the years just before and after 1867, many popular songs of the day dealt with the topic of Confederation — some championing the idea, some criticizing it — while other songs told the stories of events such as Métis leader Louis Riel's Red River resistance of 1869–70. A few songs from that era have endured, and many traditional styles can still be heard.

Canadian music has continued to evolve, while the quantity and variety of music has grown exponentially. Artists such as Robert Charlebois, La Bolduc, Leonard Cohen, Gordon Lightfoot, Oliver Jones, Joni Mitchell, Neil Young, Susan Aglukark, Natalie MacMaster, Charlie Panigoniak, Daniel Lanois, k.d. lang, Neko Case, Measha Brueggergosman, and many more have helped to place Canadian music in the spotlight on the world's stage.

Today, some of Canada's most exciting and acclaimed music is the result of musicians combining diverse musical traditions. Listen to an album by A Tribe Called Red, and you will hear a compelling fusion of First Nations drumming

and chanting interwoven with gritty rap vocals and electronic dance music. Attend a Tanya Tagaq performance, and you will experience a powerful convergence of Inuit throat singing and avant-garde improvisation with a punk rock spirit.

The sounds may have changed over the last 150 years, but the traditions of social commentary and storytelling through music can still be heard loud and clear.

Most major art galleries across Canada contain Indigenous art in their collections, but it hasn't always been this way. When

## CANADIAN MUSIC HAS CONTINUED TO EVOLVE, WHILE THE VARIETY OF MUSIC HAS GROWN EXPONENTIALLY.

Canada was formed 150 years ago, Indigenous art was largely misunderstood by European settlers — and it remained so over the next century.

In the nineteenth century, scenes of exploration, cross-cultural contact, and settlement were popularized by artists such as Paul Kane, Frances Anne Hopkins, and Cornelius Krieghoff. During this period, Europeans were largely unfamiliar with Indigenous cultures and viewed these scenes through a veil of exoticism.

After Confederation and the expansion of the railways, artists and photographers had easier access to remote regions. Their painting allowed people in urban areas to view Canada's natural splendour without leaving home. You can explore these

landscapes in the works of Emily Carr and Tom Thomson, both of whom had a profound influence on modern Canadian art.

In the early twentieth century, the Group of Seven continued the movement to connect Canadians with the country's boreal forests and endless lakes, creating a bold new style of Canadian art. Despite their disbanding in 1933, the Group of Seven produced works that continue to resonate with many Canadians.

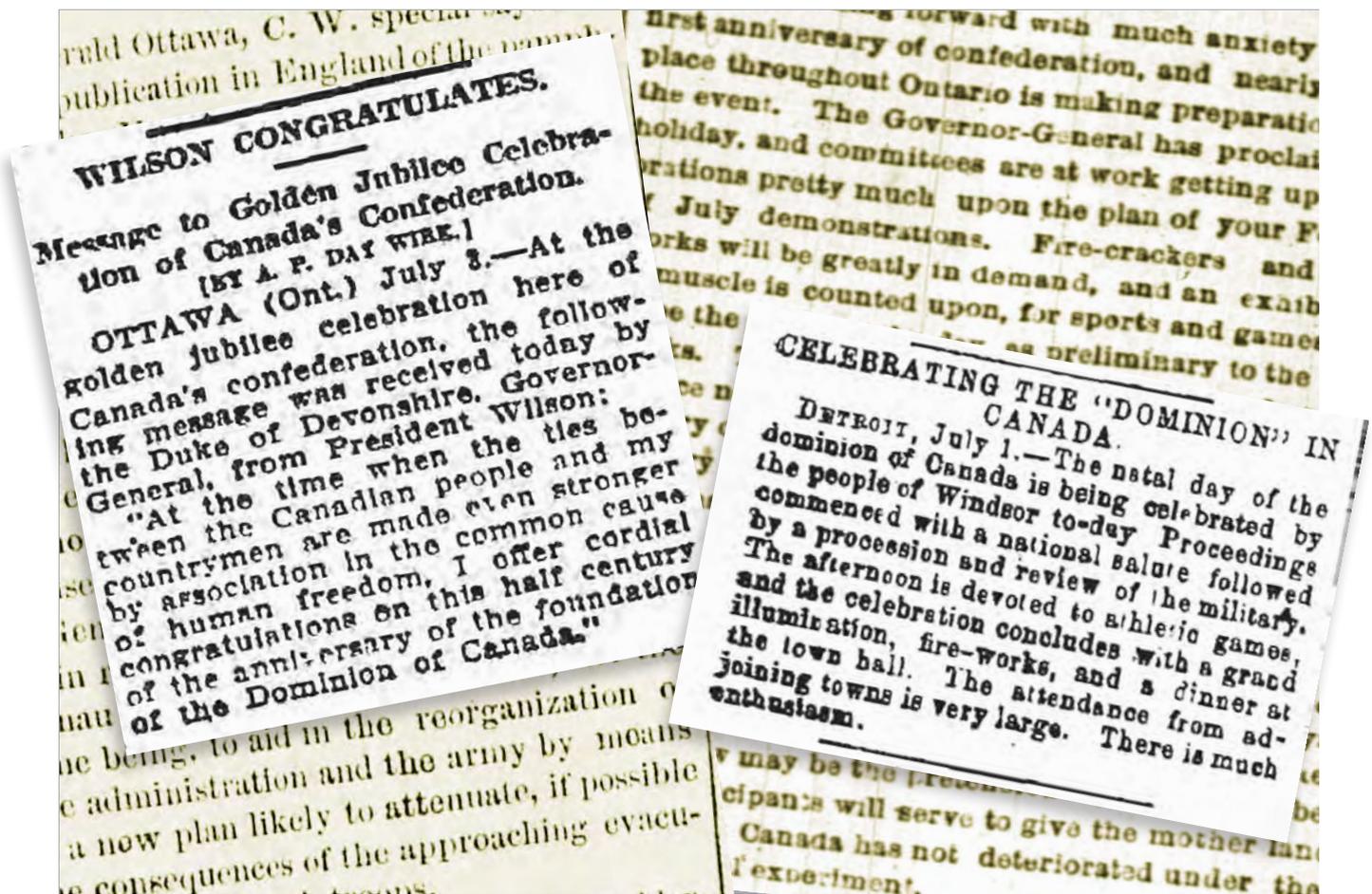
In the late twentieth century, the Professional National Indian Artists Incorporation was founded. The group's goal of empowering artists to express the Indigenous experience through multiple perspectives led to the broader recognition of Indigenous artists in Canada.

Today, Indigenous art and artists — from early innovators such as Kenojuak Ashevak, Bill Reid, and Norval Morrisseau to contemporary artists like Rebecca Belmore, Brian Jungen, and Kent Monkman — are celebrated across Canada.

Many Indigenous artists employ traditional techniques like Inuit sculpting and printmaking, Métis beadwork, and Haida designs and carving. Others use classical European techniques and contemporary practices to create works expressing contemporary subjects. Regardless of training or technique, artists continue to express concern for society, and they draw attention to social, political, racial, and environmental issues through their work.

Jessica Knapp is the Online Engagement Coordinator for Canada's History Society. Andrew Workman is the New Media Designer for Canada's History Society.

Top left: Tanya Tagaq. Top right: Alex Janvier, *Morning Star*, 1993. Centre left: A Robert Charlebois poster. Lower left: Measha Brueggergosman. Right: Lawren S. Harris, *Lake, Algonquin Park*, circa early 1900s.



News items from July 1917, left, and July 1867, right, offer American perspectives on Confederation.

## Points of view

How did the world react to Confederation?

A hundred and fifty years ago, George Brown, Toronto's fiery publisher and politician, had no doubt that the events of Canada's Confederation had been truly historic. "Great they are, and history will tell the tale," he predicted. "A hundred years hence people will fancy the men of their days were giants in imagination."

But would only Canadians salute Confederation? Or would Canada's achievement catch the interest of the world?

Last year, when scholars met at Toronto's York University to discuss Confederation, the Canadians mostly trod familiar ground, often emphasizing that the men who made Confederation were patriarchal, colonial-minded, and white. It was the foreign scholars at the conference who startled and sur-

prised with their evidence of how in 1867 observers in many places around the world had drawn inspiration from Canada's constitutional achievement.

A South American scholar reported on the Rio de Janeiro journalist of 1867 who was excited to see Canada assuming "the character of a great independent state" — just what he hoped for in Brazil. A student of Italian history described Vatican diplomats eagerly discussing how Canada's affirmation of the interests of Catholics in the new province of Quebec might become a beacon for Catholics in countries where they were in the minority. One Spanish scholar described how the progressive forces in 1860s Spain who advocated provincial autonomy for Catalonia and other regions were nick-

named "Canadians." Another academic examined the Cuban journalists and intellectuals who found inspiration in Canada's Confederation for their own campaign for self-government within Spain's empire.

One scholar considered the lessons that Canada's French-English accommodation could offer to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, then struggling to reconcile its German-speaking and Magyar-speaking communities, as well as its restive Slavic minorities. And historians of Australia and New Zealand quoted 1860s newspapers that noted Canada as a model their own societies should soon follow. Even in Britain, some statesmen dreamed of Canadian-style initiatives that might produce a future Ireland that was free and peaceful and loyal to the British Crown.

At the conference, all these scholars — whose work will soon be published in a book to be called *Globalizing Confederation: Canada and the World in 1867* — emphasized that in 1867 Canada's Confederation was far from being headline news in their countries. Indeed, dramatic stories about the Fenian raids often got more space in the world's newspapers than Canada's quiet constitutional negotiations. And the foreign statesmen and journalists who did take note of the Canadian achievement tended to cherry-pick whatever lessons seemed best-suited to their local conditions, often without much knowledge about the events in Canada.

Still, George Brown should have been proud. In 1867 observers in many countries were seeing signposts to a better world in Canada's Confederation.

Brown certainly wanted it known that the Confederation makers of 1867 — himself prominent among them — were doing something the world could learn from. "We are attempting to adjust harmoniously greater difficulties than have plunged other countries into all the horrors of war," he said proudly, pointing to Europe, where the struggle to forge one new nation had recently "deluged in blood the sunny plains of Italy."

For Brown, the great lesson of Confederation was the march from colonial status to self-government. Brown believed Canada had shown the world how a former colony could peacefully achieve its own national existence without a civil war or a war of liberation against its imperial masters. "Canada is setting the example of a new and better state of things," he proudly declared. "There is no instance on record of a colony peacefully remodelling its own constitution, such changes having been always the work of the parent state and not of the colonists themselves."

This was the lesson that fired enthusiasm in Cubans, Australians, Brazilians, and others. They saw happening in Canada the very thing they aspired to do themselves: progress peacefully toward self-government and toward an acknowledged place among the nations of the world. Even when their knowledge of Canada was scant, our country provided a kind of wish fulfillment for their national aspirations. Brown, who said he was "a Canadian, which I always expect



*Proclamation of Confederation*, by Jack Martin. From a 1946 issue of *Time* magazine.

and wish to be," would have understood.

Something slightly different about Canada's achievement was what really mattered to Brown's fellow Confederation statesman and Quebec City lawyer Hector Langevin. "French Canadians are a separate people," Langevin had said proudly during the debates over Confederation. He was convinced that Confederation would not lead to the

## OBSERVERS AROUND THE WORLD DREW INSPIRATION FROM CANADA'S CONSTITUTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT.

assimilation of his people; indeed, it would ensure the thriving of Quebec's language, its institutions, and its culture. Langevin hailed Confederation for enabling communities like his French-Canadian compatriots to share in a diverse federal state while also running their own local affairs and preserving their own language and culture.

This was the "Canadian" idea that was seized on by a sympathetic journalist in France who predicted that "one hundred years from

now a French national community [in Quebec] could play a considerable role in the civilization of the new world." The imaginative novelist Jules Verne even put a Canadian into *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, published in 1869–70, calling him a "hybrid" equally at home in French and English.

Confederation also caught on in, of all places, Vatican City, where Langevin personally advocated for it in 1866. In the 1860s the Roman Catholic Church was losing the once spacious territories of the Papal States of central Italy; the pope was becoming a "prisoner of the Vatican." Newly forced to coexist with a secular state, Pope Pius IX and his cardinals gained a new appreciation of the difficult position of Catholics in countries like France, Great Britain, and the United States, where governments were either secular or actively anti-Catholic.

Pius IX denounced progress, liberalism, and modernity wherever he saw it, but he decided to look benignly on Confederation if it was good for the Catholics. Perhaps its example would spread to England, to the United States, and even to Italy itself. This very conservative pope, oddly enough, became one of the first statesmen to appreciate that Canada was setting an example of respect for minority rights and for distinct cultures within a single nation. Already, in 1867, diverse cultures living harmoniously together had become Canada's image in the world.

But not all the ways overseas observers

seized upon Canada's Confederation as support for their own aspirations were as flattering to such Canadian values as self-government, national stature, and respect for minorities.

At the age of just thirty-five, the Earl of Carnarvon — known as “Titters” to his friends, for his nervous energy — was colonial minister in the British government early in 1867. He knew well that Confederation was really a Canadian initiative, not a British one, and he insisted that the British North American delegates must approve every step of the process as the British Parliament passed the British North America Act of 1867. Still, it was Carnarvon who introduced and urged passage of the act in a powerful speech in the British House of Lords.

As a result, Carnarvon gained a reputation, in British official circles at least, as the man who had confederated Canada. For the rest of his career in British politics, and long after, Carnarvon's name would be associated with plans for federal solutions to colonial problems. After all, had not Carnarvon's Confederation brought Canada peace and order, and kept it loyal to the Empire, too? Were Catholics and Protestants fighting in Ireland? What about a Canadian-style federation? Boers and British in conflict in South Africa? Federate them in a South African union. Unrest in India? Propose a federation that would give Indians some local authority while the British controlled what was important.

In many of the places where the Colonial Office proposed these federations, the plans had more to do with preserving British rule than with fostering autonomy or tolerance for minorities. Top-down plans in which colonial officials spoke of a confederation “like Canada's” mostly as a divide-and-rule tactic may actually have eroded the appeal of the Canadian example among those seeking national autonomy and reconciliation among diverse communities. No one would call Gandhi and Nehru and other leaders of the Indian national movement “Canadians.”

For twentieth-century Indians, Africans, and West Indians, Canada's Confederation might have been more inspirational if men like Brown and Langevin had extended the benefits of self-government and tolerance of diversity to the First Nations of Canada. Brown eagerly advocated open-



MOTHER BRITANNIA.—“ Take care, my child ! ”  
UNCLE SAM.—“ Oh ! never mind, if she falls I'll catch her ! ”

*The Birth and Torment of Miss Canada and Johnny Canuck, Or the Beginnings of the Federation, anonymous, 1870.*

ing up a new empire for Canada in the prairie West, without much concern for the Indigenous peoples whose homeland it was, and Langevin was an early advocate for the assimilationist possibilities of Indian residential schools. They were unable to imagine extending self-government and tolerance beyond their own communities to the Indigenous peoples of North America. As a result, the Canadian example of self-government and accommodation of minorities seemed mostly to inspire European settlers and European minorities — in Melbourne, Rio, Havana, Paris, or Vienna, perhaps, but less so among the colonized peoples of India or Africa.

In 1867, however, Canada and its Confederation did genuinely represent something new in the world.

Canadians had demonstrated that a former colony could move forward to independent national status by peaceful and democratic means. Canada had become one of the first places to demonstrate that parliamentary government — often linked to constitutional monarchy — was not just a quirk of British history but a system of government that could and would be adopted in nations all over the

world, including many without British roots. And, at a time when many romantic nationalists insisted that the only “real” nations were those with a single language, a shared heritage, and a common ancestry, Canada from the start included more than one language, different cultures, and diverse origins.

In 1867 Canada was a small country little known in a big world. Outside its borders, Confederation did not produce many headlines. But here and there — in colonial societies and across a European continent struggling with national rivalries and demands for self-government and for the rights of cultural and religious minorities — diplomats, intellectuals, and journalists did take note of the Canadian achievement and found inspiration there.

So young Canadians travelling the world with the Maple Leaf flag emblazoned on their backpacks are part of a long tradition. There is a Canadian example to the world that goes back 150 years. 🍁

*Canada's History* columnist Christopher Moore is the author of two works on Confederation: *Three Weeks in Quebec City: The Meeting that Made Canada*, and *1867: How the Fathers Made a Deal*.

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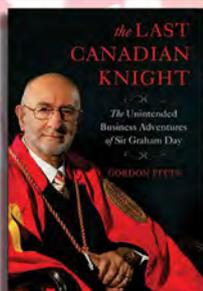


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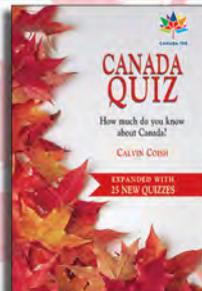


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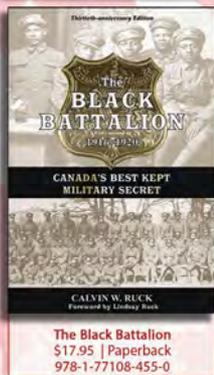
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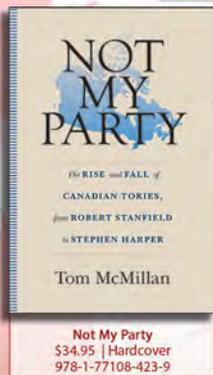
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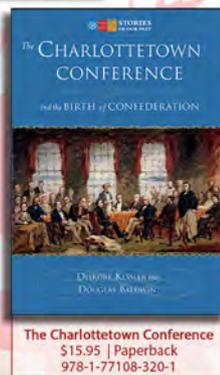
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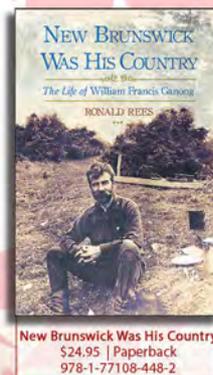
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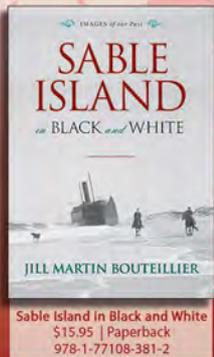
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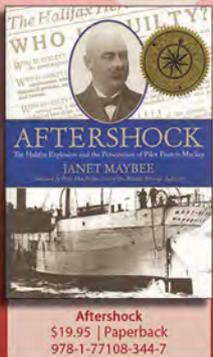
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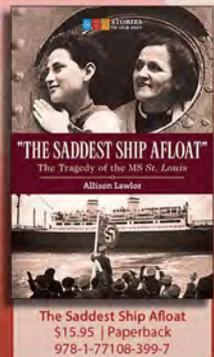
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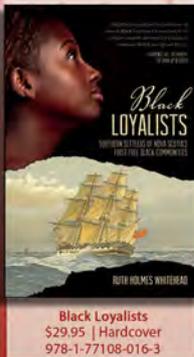
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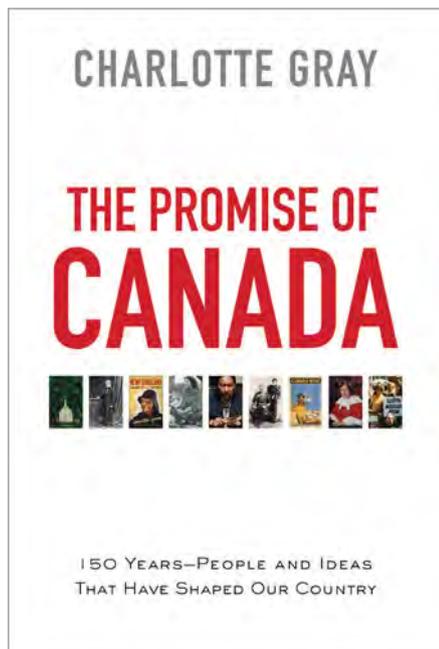


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### MODEL BIOGRAPHIES

## The Promise of Canada: 150 Years – People and Ideas That Have Shaped Our Country

by Charlotte Gray

Simon & Schuster, 430 pages, \$39.99

She hardly needs an introduction. Charlotte Gray is an eminent biographer and a participant in public cultural activities (including with Canada's History Society, the publisher of this magazine). Her latest book is in her vintage style — substantive but readable, presenting an innovative way to view our past and our present.

At the heart of this book are nine personalities who, in Gray's opinion, had an outsized impact on Canadian values and consciousness, though not all are at the top of our history who's who. She draws from published sources to create pithy narratives for these characters, connecting them to form a timely national portrait.

*The Promise of Canada* opens with the lesser-known member of the Macdonald-Cartier duo, Sir George-Étienne Cartier. Gray probes and pokes at the grand Confederation bargain, crediting him with entrenching regional and linguistic diversity as a core value in the Constitution. "What an incredible juggling act! Cartier ... ensured that the new country of Canada was a political unit in which different peoples could cohabit and protect their own culture."

Canadian social norms, notably the embrace of "peace and order," are viewed through a lively account of the career of Sam Steele, Mountie extraordinaire. And she selects Emily Carr, not Lawren Harris or any other Group of Seven icon, as the

visual artist who conveyed a new sensibility towards place, landscape, and Indigenous recognition.

The chapter on the political economist Harold Innis is a model of concise biography. Gray argues that his writings swayed later generations in their understanding that "Canada is the product of four centuries of intensive labour rather than a few years of constitutional negotiation."

In similar fashion, her chapter on Tommy Douglas describes how, through his lifetime of political service, he persuaded Canadians "to adopt a different vision of society, and to prefer co-operation to survival-of-the-fittest individualism."

This approach shows off her core method: Biography can illuminate the forces that shape the elusive thing we call identity. Gray positions her selected personalities within their contexts, emphasizing that people make history. Even though they do not choose their circumstances, they can choose how to act.

We can sense Gray's pleasure as she searched through archival and gallery collections, resulting in a well-illustrated volume with relevant colour plates and photographs. Her texts include a good dose of autobiography. She emerges from the authorial shadows, frankly sharing personal opinions and immigrant memories.

When the book's personalities are more contemporary, Gray shifts towards

magazine-style reportage. Her interview with Margaret Atwood feels like a documentary. Tough questions are raised: "Why was this country's artistic life so stunted" until the 1950s? Or, "What characterizes CanLit today?" But we don't get definitive answers. Our cultural voices are changing and expanding, thanks in part to Atwood, who "gave us confidence in our collective imagination."

Gray reports on the differing views of Phil Fontaine, Douglas Coupland, Shad Kabango, Lise Bissonnette, Preston Manning, and others. Clear conclusions don't emerge, with many issues still up in the air. While she is optimistic about "Canada's endless ability to adapt to changing realities," she is clear-eyed about the difficulties — notably including how to improve conditions and social attitudes affecting Indigenous peoples.

This is a daring book, not just a comfortable celebration. It echoes an innovative exhibition installed at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in 2008, which focused on historic personalities and their impacts. A similar exhibition was created at Calgary's Glenbow Museum, looking at "mavericks" in Alberta's growth.

Making selections inevitably raises questions. I am disappointed that no one from modern Quebec is featured: There's no René Lévesque, Jean Lesage, Jean Drapeau, or Maurice Duplessis, despite their profound influence. Do sensitive writers still view this country as "two solitudes"?

I also wonder if Manning was the best choice to explain Western regional interests and contemporary conservatism. Surely Peter Lougheed or Stephen Harper had greater impacts?

But these questions did not reduce my pleasure in reading the book, from cover to cover. It felt as if Charlotte Gray had dropped by for a good chat. She is personal, provocative, and so well-informed — and her latest book offers a first-class experience for this 150th-anniversary year.

Reviewed by **Victor Rabinovitch**, a senior fellow at Queen's University School of Policy Studies and past president of the Canadian Museum of Civilization (now the Canadian Museum of History).

## DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS

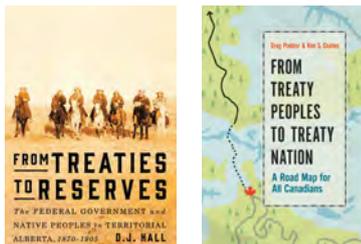
### From Treaties to Reserves: The Federal Government and Native Peoples in Territorial Alberta, 1870-1905

by D.J. Hall

McGill-Queen's University Press,  
499 pages, \$34.95

### From Treaty Peoples to Treaty Nation: A Road Map for All Canadians

by Greg Poelzer and Ken S. Coates  
UBC Press, 366 pages, \$32.95



Canada's history is integral to who we are as a nation and to our senses of self. We live in the present as a result, at least in part, of what came before. Nowhere is this more visible than in respect to the lives of Indigenous peoples. Two complementary volumes respecting Canada's Indigenous peoples are a welcome help to understanding ourselves as a nation and as individuals.

In *From Treaties to Reserves*, D.J. Hall focuses on Alberta and details the critical period during which the newly formed Canadian state transformed Indigenous peoples from their own selves into menials confined to reserves for the convenience of white newcomers who were determined to have their land. Moving forward in time, Greg Poelzer and Ken Coates offer an accessible primer to the many ways Canada's Indigenous peoples are retaking charge of their lives. Beyond the value in reading these books, both can also become active agents in our understanding of these important topics on our own terms.

Hall's book describes and explains a sequence of events occurring well over a century ago — from 1870 to 1905 — that, by means of treaty making, brought into being the Alberta and the Canada we know today. He usefully points out how Alberta's Indigenous peoples were already in an unequal position, set upon by introduced diseases

and by white people's overhunting the all-important buffalo, which functioned as a source of food and clothing.

His approach to describing treaty making gives readers a participatory lens into these events. Early in the book Hall alerts readers that, "when Native leaders wanted to communicate with government, their messages were subject to some loss of cultural meaning in translation, [and] more was lost when they were interpreted and contextualized." He forewarns us as to how, given different sets of assumptions about each other, "frequently neither really heard what the other was trying to communicate, especially at the level of wider purposes and ultimate goals."

Hall's detailed, straightforward narrative can be read rather like a detective story. Even though the end result is known, we are given the tools — including subheadings keeping us on track — to dissect, critique, and interpret for ourselves the process of getting there. We as readers become our own historians, reaching our own conclusions as to whether Indigenous peoples' displacement from lands they knew as their own was or was not justified, and on what basis. In the second half of the book, Hall narrates the aftermath of treaty making for Alberta's Indigenous peoples, which is cause for reflection.

*From Treaty Peoples to Treaty Nation* is a different proposition. Where Hall goes for depth on a single historical topic, Poelzer and Coates opt for breadth respecting events of the past several decades. As well as providing a useful primer, a principal reason for their broad approach is to enable those of us interested in one or the other aspect of their "road map" to acquire just enough information to be able to search other sources, including the Internet, for detail and depth.

Following a long introduction laying out the authors' perspectives on a wide variety of topics relating to Indigenous peoples in Canada, the first section narrates the views, one after the other, of a dozen each of Indigenous and non-Indigenous writers. This serves as a way of moving forward while respecting Indigenous-non-Indigenous relations. The former group is divided between traditionalists, supporters of "treaty federalism," and those "bridging the solitudes"; the latter writers are grouped by their emphasis on legal rights, moral rights, well-being, or politics.

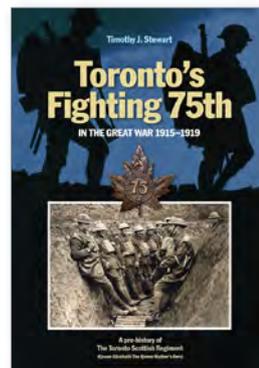
The book's second section turns to what



### Canada's Dream Shall Be of Them

Eric McGeer with photos by Steve Douglas  
Foreword by Terry Copp

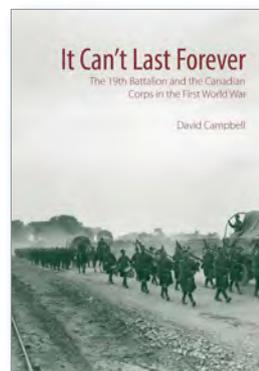
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are described as “Aboriginal success stories.” The authors’ long list ranges from events to persons, cultural settings, spiritual and community renewal, educational sites, business and entrepreneurship, and governance and civic engagement, including friendship centres, self-government, and land claims. The third and final section, entitled “Steps towards Social, Political, and Economic Equality,” describes a half dozen directions the authors propose for moving forward.

The excitement of these two books on Canada’s Indigenous peoples lies in interrogating their subjects alongside the authors. The goal in our doing so is not so much to agree or to disagree with what is on the page as it is to understand the topic in ways that make meaning for ourselves. We become active readers.

D.J. Hall makes this possible by virtue of his clearly written, detailed text; Poelzer and Coates allow readers to link the book with their own curiosity and research interests. Whichever the pathway, we need always to be mindful that Canada’s history belongs to all of us so long as we make it so.

Reviewed by **Jean Barman**, 2015 recipient of the Governor General’s History Award for Scholarly Research, organized by Canada’s History Society.

**SELECT QUEBECERS**

**Legacy: How French Canadians Shaped North America**

edited by André Pratte and Jonathan Kay  
McClelland & Stewart, 352 pages, \$35



This book invites dissent. Why were these thirteen individuals, and not others, chosen for a book of profiles of French Canadians who had “shaped North America”? Why did the editors eschew more prominent figures, such as Wilfrid Laurier or René Lévesque, whose legacies are more evident, and opt for lesser-known examples whose impacts are debatable? And what do they mean by “French Canadians”?

Only Margaret Atwood, in her essay on

Manitoba-born Gabrielle Roy, and an essay co-written by Jean Charest and Antoine Dionne-Charest, with a passing mention of Acadians, Métis, and others, acknowledge that Quebecer and French Canadian are not synonymous. Co-editors Jonathan Kay and André Pratte may use the term interchangeably, but this is really a book aimed at introducing readers to Quebecers who made a difference — a worthy goal, but one not accurately reflected in the title.

(A side note: For a book aimed at cross-cultural understanding, the lack of credit for the translations is a serious omission. Biographical notes on the writers of the essays are also lacking.)

While all thirteen subjects are important, how they shaped North America is not always argued persuasively. Ken Dryden makes a strong case for Jacques Plante, whose adoption of a goalie mask set dominoes toppling that eventually changed how hockey was played. And Deni Ellis Béchard demonstrates how Jack Kerouac’s idiom — so influential to generations of writers — was rooted in his French-Canadian heritage. But some of the others, while they rose to prominent roles in Quebec society and did remarkable things, did not clearly change their societies.

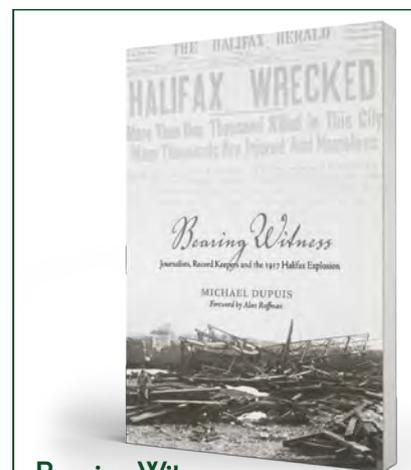
The anodyne nature of several of the essays may be explained by the book’s purpose, which, judging from Kay’s afterword, is to atone for his Anglo guilt at not immersing himself in French culture while growing up in Montreal. But this makes the collection feel anachronistic, an echo of when liberal-minded English Canadians, inspired by an earlier Trudeau prime minister, earnestly sought to “understand” their francophone fellow citizens. That was half a century ago.

The book is redeemed, however, by a pair of essays on George-Étienne Cartier and Henri Bourassa that form the heart of the collection — and make it a worthy read. Penned by Jean Charest and Lucien Bouchard, respectively, the pieces read like a politico-literary duel: Charest, writing with his son Antoine Dionne-Charest, praises Cartier, John A. Macdonald’s partner in Confederation, while Bouchard sketches the mercurial nationalist Bourassa. The deeper themes of the French-Canadian story — the eternal tension between accommodation and autonomy — play out here.

The two authors, both of whom joined Brian Mulroney’s cabinet in Ottawa, and who later became Quebec premiers on opposing sides of the national question, seem to be writing about themselves: Charest applauds Cartier’s “healthy pragmatism” and defends him against charges of “betrayal,” while Bouchard describes the “fiery” Bourassa’s collision with “the wall that nationalist Quebecers sooner or later confront in Ottawa,” remarking that any politician from the province seeking to promote its interests in a federalist party learns that “they will have to make concessions, through gritted teeth, or else resign.”

In both essays, the Manitoba schools question looms large (it appears in Atwood’s essay, too). One longs for an even better book in which Charest and Bouchard debate it and the other compromises and confrontations that have marked the French fact in Canada.

Reviewed by **Jacques Poitras**, author of *Irving vs. Irving* and a forthcoming book about the Energy East pipeline, both published by Penguin Random House Canada.



**Bearing Witness**

Journalists, Record Keepers and the 1917 Halifax Explosion

by **Michael Dupuis**  
Foreword by **Alan Ruffman**

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— Janet Maybee, author of *Aftershock*

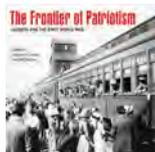


## MORE BOOKS

### The Frontier of Patriotism: Alberta and the First World War

edited by Adriana A. Davies  
and Jeff Keshen

University of Calgary Press,  
608 pages, \$49.95



The First World War affected Canada and Canadians in profound and lasting ways. However, much of the scholarship has focused on the war from a national perspective.

In *The Frontier of Patriotism: Alberta and the First World War*, co-editors Adriana A. Davies and Jeff Keshen have created a compelling collection of essays that provides a more regional view of the Great War, illustrating in great detail the many ways it changed Alberta and Albertans.

Davies, a researcher, writer, and former executive director of the Alberta Museums Association, and Keshen, the

dean of arts at Calgary's Mount Royal University, recruited forty academic and popular historians to write essays on topics such as conscientious objectors, "enemy aliens," First Nations, labour, women, and wartime chaplains. The experiences of Alberta soldiers are explored, as is the impact of Spanish flu, which infected thousands of Canadians at the tail end of the war.

The essays are accompanied by a wealth of archival photographs, wartime postcards, and other illustrations. A detailed timeline of the war from an Albertan context is a welcome addition, as is a map of the Western Front that helps to place the war in its geographical context.

While many of the essays are written in an academic tone, they are still easily accessible to lay readers. *The Frontier of Patriotism* is a terrific addition to scholarship on the Great War and a welcome companion to the many broader histories that have previously been written.

— Mark Collin Reid

### Visiting with the Ancestors: Blackfoot Shirts in Museum Spaces

by Laura Peers and Alison K. Brown  
AU Press, 232 pages, \$39.95



*Visiting with the Ancestors: Blackfoot Shirts in Museum Spaces*, by Laura Peers and Alison K. Brown, is a beautifully

illustrated book about the evolving relationship between Indigenous communities and cultural institutions. This is explored through the stories of five sacred shirts collected by Sir George Simpson, governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, and his secretary, Edward Hopkins, in 1841.

Nearly 150 years later, the shirts came home, visiting Blackfoot territory in the spring of 2010. The book provides fascinating glimpses into the process of collaboration between institutions and communities, as well as into what happens when institutions seriously engage with the contexts in which the objects they hold were produced.

Perhaps most importantly, *Visiting*

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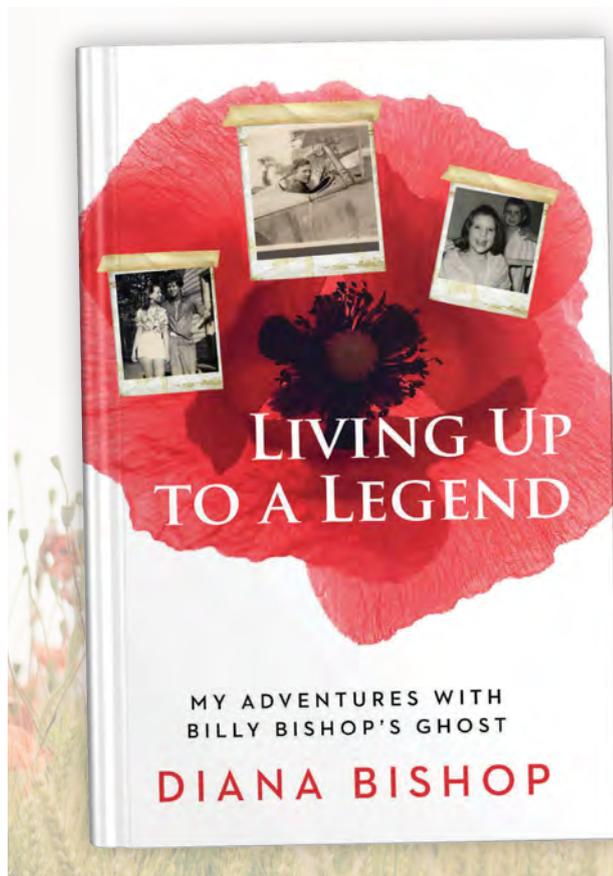
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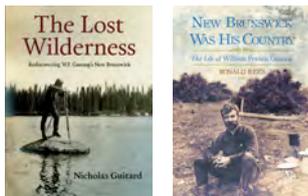
*with the Ancestors* provides a helpful commentary on current and, perhaps, future practices that may help to breathe new life into discussions about reconciliation and museums. — *Karine Duhamel*

**The Lost Wilderness: Rediscovering W.F. Ganong's New Brunswick**

by Nicholas Guitard  
Goose Lane Editions, 232 pages, \$24.95

**New Brunswick Was His Country: The Life of William Francis Ganong**

by Ronald Rees  
Nimbus Publishing, 260 pages, \$24.95



Like many people who have been officially designated “Persons of National Historic Significance,” William Francis Ganong is not exactly a celebrity. If Canadians outside of New Brunswick recognize his name at all, it’s likely because of its connection to chocolate. Ganong Bros. of St. Stephen, New Brunswick, is Canada’s oldest candy company.

But W.F. Ganong never entered the family business. He became a brilliant scholar, cartographer, scientist, and geographer and is recognized for those accomplishments. Given his relative obscurity — he died in 1941 — it’s intriguing that two authors recently chose to reintroduce him to the public.

Nicholas Guitard, an acclaimed photographer and naturalist, turned his fascination with Ganong into *The Lost Wilderness*, a visually appealing book with maps or photographs on almost every page. Most interestingly, it juxtaposes photos of the landscape taken more than a hundred years ago with contemporary pictures of the same scenes. Sometimes the alteration is dramatic; other times there is little evidence of change.

Guitard’s focus is on a handful of the many field trips Ganong undertook during his summer breaks from teaching botany at Smith College in Massachusetts. These forays into New Brunswick’s wilderness yielded a wealth of information about the province’s natural history. Included are many quotations from the notebooks of Ganong and his travelling companions.



**COUNTRY CROSSING** Photographer Joseph Heckman travelled widely on behalf of the Canadian Pacific Railway between 1898 and 1915 taking pictures of railways, bridges, stations, hotels, steamships, and people. Among thousands of his photos held in the company’s archives, 380 appear in *Heckman’s Canadian Pacific: A Photographic Journey* (328 pages, \$60) by author Ralph Beaumont. This photograph taken June 22, 1907, shows locomotive 56 at the New Brunswick Southern Railway Crossing, north of St. Andrews. An already abandoned station stands windowless and leans badly.

Ganong comes across as very focused and driven; his wilderness partners had a hard time keeping up with him. Mostly, this is an account of where Ganong went and what he did, and not so much of who he was as a person.

*New Brunswick Was His Country*, by Ronald Rees, a former professor of historical geography, is a more traditional biography. There are fewer illustrations but more details about Ganong’s life. For instance, as a child he was so “obsessively orderly” that he recorded agreements with his siblings and tracked responsibilities for household chores. As a young man, Ganong was philosophical and poetic: “What man, if he love beauty of form, could not be moved by the arrowy flight of the cuttlefish....” Later in life, less inclined to flights of fancy, he took pride in his intellectual rigour.

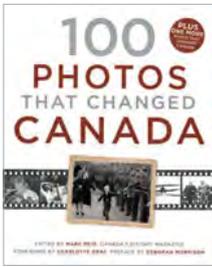
Ganong was good-natured but frank. After he insisted to the Anglican priest who

was to conduct his marriage to Muriel Carmen (poet Bliss Carmen’s sister) that he was an atheist and a believer in Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution, no Anglican church in the Dominion would marry them. They had to proclaim their vows at a more liberal-minded church across the American border.

A man who mastered many subjects — botany, geology, zoology, Indigenous languages, map-making, history — Ganong is considered a great scholar. But, while he received many honours, he was never a star. As Rees explains, Ganong had no interest in promoting himself. He wrote for non-professional audiences; he took care to balance his research with good teaching; he attended few conferences and belonged to few professional societies. “He was as unlike the modern networking, career-oriented academic as it is possible to be.” For that alone, Ganong deserves our attention today.

— *Nelle Oosterom* 🐾

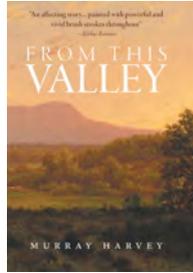
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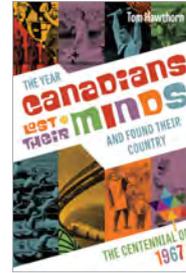
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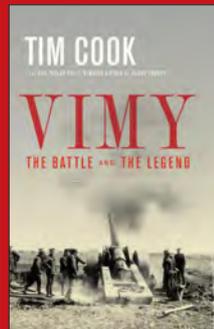
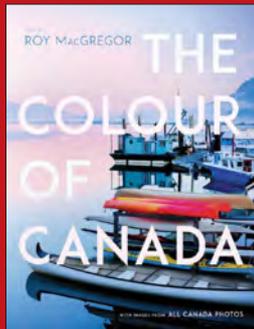
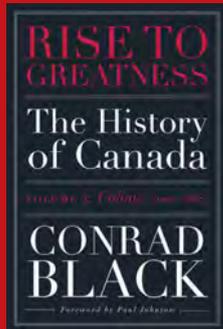
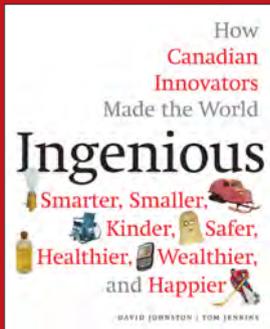
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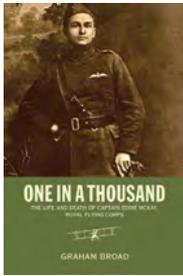
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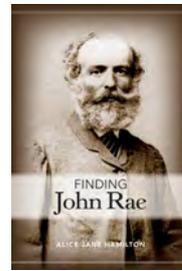


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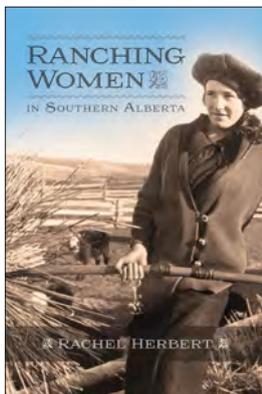
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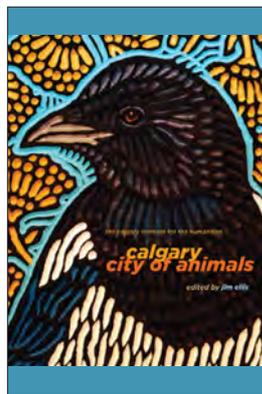


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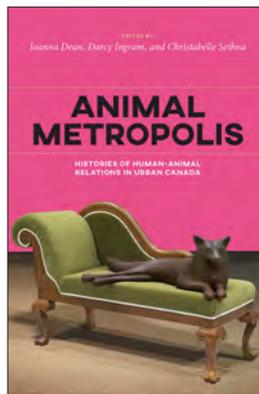


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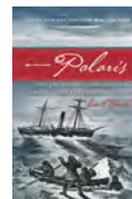


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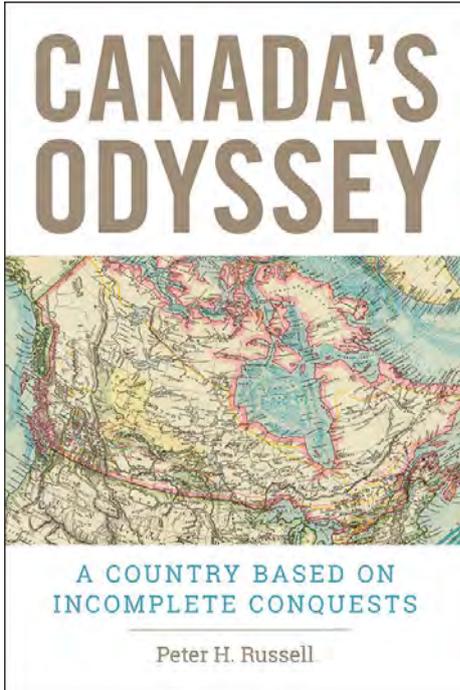
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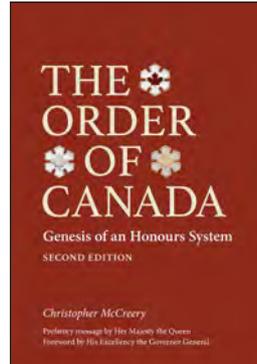
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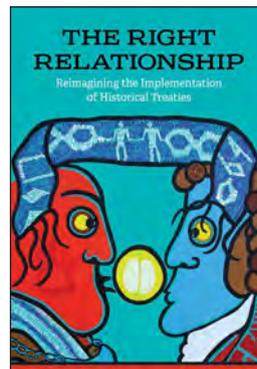


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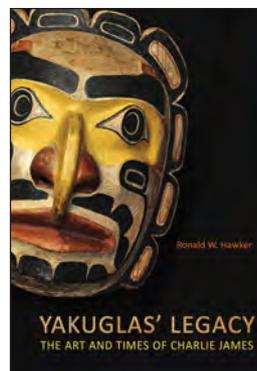


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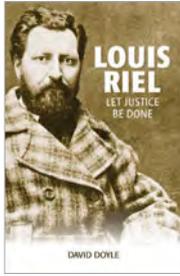
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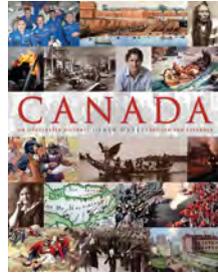


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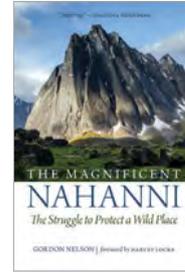


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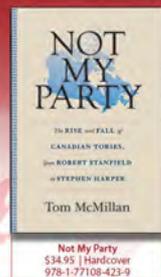
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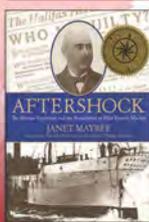
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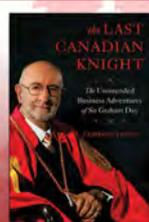
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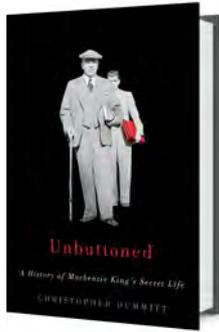
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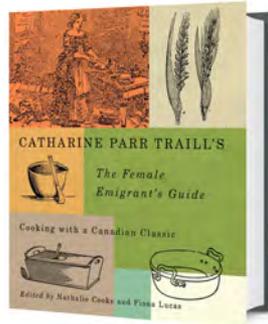




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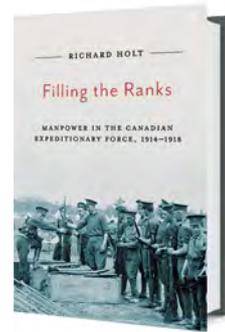
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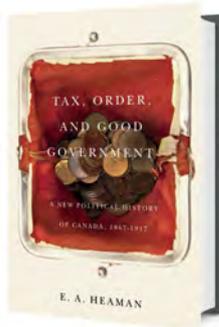
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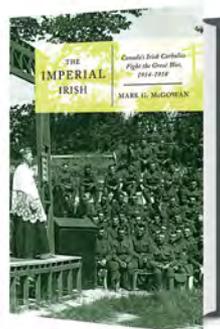
“Researchers had long puzzled over whether the descriptions in Scandinavian sagas of Viking voyages to Vinland were in fact true. Deeply fascinated by these accounts, Helge and Anne Stine Ingstad set out to solve the mystery. The author presents their superb detective work in a deft, engaging way. This book is a classic.”  
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**The Imperial Irish**  
*Canada's Irish Catholics Fight the Great War, 1914-1918*

MARK G. MCGOWAN  
Cloth, 416pp

A social and religious history of ethnic conflict and nationalism during the Great War.



People participate in a Canadian citizenship ceremony during Canada Day celebrations in London, Ontario, in 2016.

## Come together

The sesquicentennial of Confederation is the perfect time to reconnect with the country – and each other. *by Janet Walker*

**E**vents with extended family were seminal to my 1960s childhood. One of the reliable rituals after a meal was the gathering of women in the kitchen to wash and dry the dishes. My sisters and I were always welcome to join the caucus and dutifully took up fresh tea towels while waiting for the plates and cutlery to emerge from the basin of suds. I never considered the chore a hardship because the conversation that accompanied the clatter

of dishes was better than any book. The topics varied — birth and death, celebrations and injustices, economic hardship or a kindness offered from an old friend. Sometimes, we were told to take care with an heirloom platter or teacup, prompting a rich story about its “old country” origin and the genealogy of its keepers.

The men were doing the same thing in the front room. People had conversations back then, not just at family gatherings

but with random individuals: the tailor, the water meter reader, or the family who ran the corner store. All the children on my block went to the same school and played hide-and-seek together. Not only did we know each other, we knew about each other, anchoring the neighbourhood with a greater sense of community.

The irony of modern communication is that we can be connected twenty-four hours a day from any two points on the globe, yet we are less connected at a personal level than ever before. New planets are being discovered, but we don't know the names of our neighbours. Dinner conversation, once a time to share values, wisdom, and aspirations, is a rare occasion, too often replaced with fast food and a text or a tweet.

As technology changes our appetites for storytelling, how do we keep the ledger of our lives?

The mandate of Canada's History Society is to share the human story and bring our past to life.

That's why we help to gather the national history community together: teachers, popular historians, scholars, archivists, curators, and community groups. It's why future historians are encouraged and celebrated, why we bring great writers and big questions to our pages, and why we have recently refreshed our website to offer greater mobile access to history.

It is also why we are inviting readers and researchers to explore our new online digital index, coming this June. At [CanadasHistory.ca/Archive](http://CanadasHistory.ca/Archive), they can easily find past issues of *Canada's History* magazine, *The Beaver*, and *Kayak: Canada's History Magazine for Kids*.

Our history can be found in *Snapshots of Canada*, a new travelling exhibit developed in collaboration with the Canadian Museum of History, and through emerging collaborative partnerships with front-facing history organizations in Quebec.

But preserving and sharing our history shouldn't fall only on the shoulders of our history makers. It can begin with each of us.

As we mark Canada's sesquicentennial, communicating our story — and listening to the stories of others — is one of the best gifts we can give to our country, our community, our family, and ourselves. 🐾

Janet Walker is the President and CEO of Canada's History Society.



*The Molson Foundation*  
*Fondation Molson*

*“We are all members of a larger community which depends on everyone playing a part.”*

–John Molson addressing employees in 1825

**J**ohn Molson, the founder of Canada’s oldest beer brewery, came to Canada from Lincolnshire, England, in 1782. A visionary entrepreneur, he believed that service to the community was essential for the future of his newly adopted country. And so, throughout his life, he provided support to hospitals, schools, public facilities, churches, and universities as our country grew and developed.

This enduring belief in strengthening communities was passed on from generation to generation. Today, The Molson Foundation supports charitable organizations across Canada for the benefit, improvement, and development of our society, through initiatives in education, research, health care, the arts, culture, and community action.



John Molson – Founder, Molson Brewery

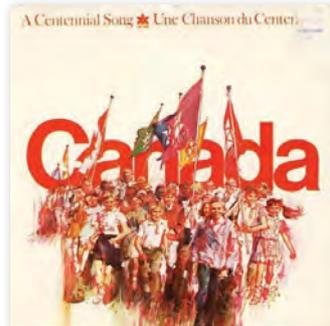


*in the company of*  
**ADVENTURERS**

*The Molson Foundation is a proud supporter of a bold new initiative with Canada’s History to ensure that our country’s remarkable past is shared and preserved and to help better our future. As a voyageur Adventurer, The Molson Foundation is promoting a greater interest in Canada’s history, helping to create a new generation of bilingual Canadian historians to communicate our collective identity and opening avenues to new thinking.*



The entertainer, musician, and singer-songwriter Bobby Gimby, seen on the far right and in the photo above, came to be known as “The Pied Piper of Canada.” His 1967 Canadian centennial song “Ca-na-da” was released as a single, right, and was hugely popular.



## Centennial parade

In 1967 I was a public school student in Ottawa and participated in the July 1 parade to celebrate Canada’s one hundredth birthday.

We were told to gather at the north end of Princess Street, where it joins the parkway by the river. Students from other public schools in Ottawa were also there, and two Grade 8 teachers from our school, Rockcliffe Park Public, were there to chaperone us.

Next we were told to walk up the hill and line the north side of Sussex Drive. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were driven out from Rideau Hall and passed us in a convertible limousine.

After the royal party passed, we formed up on the road behind

the performer Bobby Gimby and walked west. All we knew about Gimby was his “Ca-na-da” song, which had been on the radio for weeks. As we passed city hall, I broke ranks and took a colour photo (top left) with my new Kodak Instamatic camera.

A choir from one of the other public schools had been chosen to lead the parade behind Gimby, but we all knew the words to “Ca-na-da” and sang along.

I still know the words — but then, I was there in 1967 and have every reason to remember. 🐾

Submitted by David Raymont of Toronto.

Do you have a photograph that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in Canada’s history? If so, have it copied (please don’t send priceless originals) and mail it to Album, c/o Canada’s History, Bryce Hall, Main Floor, 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9. Or email your photo to [album@CanadasHistory.ca](mailto:album@CanadasHistory.ca). Please provide a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. Photos may be cropped or adjusted as necessary for presentation in the magazine. To have your posted submission returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.



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