Canada's History for Kids
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Canada's History Magazine for Kids

Kayak

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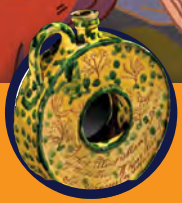
CRAFTS IN CANADA



USEFUL AND BEAUTIFUL

BACK TO HANDMADE

CONTENTS

ᑭᐊᔪᒃ Psst! These symbols spell Kayak in Inuktitut.

Cover Illustration: Arden Taylor

THERE'S MORE!

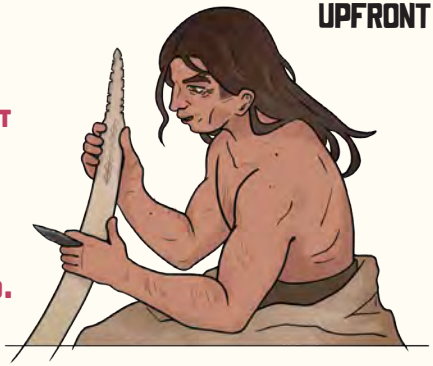
FROM-THE-EDITOR

No matter when they lived, people in what is now Canada have always needed certain things. These items have helped keep us warm and get comfortable, allowed us to carry and store things, and much more. Their creators didn't have to make them beautiful, but they did, which makes these crafts even more special. (There are so many to show off that we're not even going to get into clothes, jewellery or footwear.) Maybe you'll be inspired to try some crafts yourself!

Nancy

Everything creative in *Kayak* is done by a real person, not AI.

A SPEAR PART FOUND IN THE SOUTHERN YUKON MAY BE THE OLDEST EXAMPLE OF CRAFT IN CANADA. AN INDIGENOUS CARVER DECORATED A CARIBOU ANTLER WITH WAVE-LIKE SHAPES MORE THAN 8,100 YEARS AGO.



YOUNG WOMEN IN THE 1800S EXPECTING TO BE ENGAGED SOON WOULD WORK ON A MARRIAGE QUILT (ALSO CALLED A WEDDING QUILT).

LA CONFRÉRIE DES MENUISIERS DE MADAME SAINTE-ANNE WAS A GROUP OF CARPENTERS FORMED IN QUEBEC IN 1658. THAT MAKES IT THE FIRST ORGANIZED CRAFT ASSOCIATION WE KNOW OF IN CANADA.

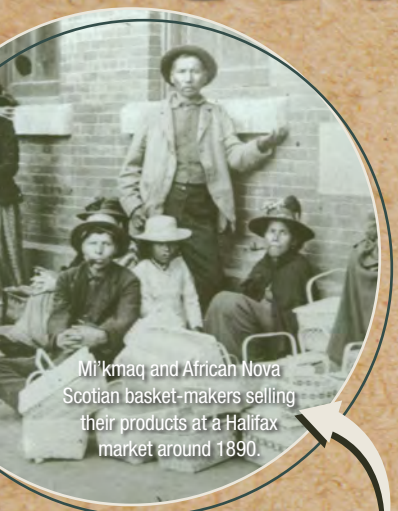
NOBODY REALLY KNOWS FOR SURE WHY MANY BARNS (MOSTLY IN EASTERN ONTARIO) ARE DECORATED WITH WHAT'S CALLED A DIAMOND CROSS.

IN RURAL CANADA IN THE 1700S AND 1800S, THE LOCAL BLACKSMITH MADE ATTRACTIVE AND USEFUL IRON TOOLS FOR THE HOUSE AND FARM, AS WELL AS HORSESHOES. IN MANY PLACES, HE WAS ALSO THE LOCAL VET.

JAMES FOLEY STARTED FOLEY POTTERY IN SAINT JOHN, N.B., IN THE 1890S. IN 1938, HIS GRANDSONS SET UP A FACTORY A FEW KILOMETRES AWAY AND GAVE IT A VERY CANADIAN NAME: CANUCK POTTERY.

Nickia McIvor

Useful and Special



Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian basket-makers selling their products at a Halifax market around 1890.

People are pretty creative. If they don't have something, they'll invent it. And for thousands of years, they've been making their inventions attractive as well as practical. Here are just some of the things you'll find throughout our history that have made life a little more beautiful as they serve their purpose.

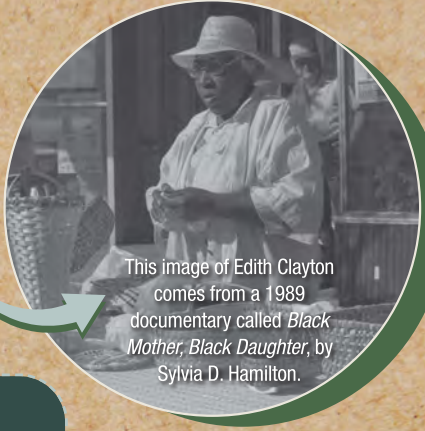
Carry and Store

It's a whole lot easier to move things around and keep them in one place if you have a container of some kind. What people used depended on what materials they had and their creativity. For thousands of years, Indigenous people have woven baskets out of dried grasses, tree roots, thin pieces of wood and more. These talented crafters could weave baskets so tightly they could carry water. (An easier option: Smear them with sticky pitch from trees.) Anywhere there were trees, someone used them to make wooden boxes. These might be rough and simple, with a lid that lifted off, or smooth and intricate, with a hinged lid. It takes amazing skill to cut, steam and shape a single piece of wood into the sides of a special container made by First Nations of the Pacific coast. These bentwood boxes are often left plain but can be painted, carved or decorated with shells, depending on their use.

This beautiful storage item known as a wall pocket dates from about 1820 in the Mackenzie River area of what is now the Yukon. A very skilled Dene craftsperson dyed and sewed porcupine quills onto elk hide.

Nova Scotia Archives, McCord Stewart Museum

The scene on the cover of this issue is inspired by Nova Scotia's Edith Clayton. Born in 1920, she learned her traditional African craft from her mother and often used dyes her Mi'kmaq neighbours taught her to make. She made hundreds of splintwood baskets, platters, cradles and more every year.



This image of Edith Clayton comes from a 1989 documentary called *Black Mother, Black Daughter*, by Sylvia D. Hamilton.

This crock was made in Medicine Hat, Alta., around 1920 by Medalta Stoneware (later Medalta Potteries). It could have been used for storing almost any kind of food or for making pickles.

A Medalta worker carries jugs, sometime between 1938 and 1954.

Settlers' early houses didn't have cupboards or closets. When they needed to store a lot of things, someone made a wooden armoire or sideboard like the one at right or other furniture for storage. The immigrants who created Canada's first Polish settlement — Wilno in eastern Ontario — brought their traditions when making furniture for their homes. Wilno furniture became well-known for its solid craftsmanship and decorative touches like carved arches and fan shapes.

Courtesy of Sylvia D. Hamilton, Friends of Medalta Society, Nancy Payne

Many different Indigenous people created cradleboards, made of cloth attached to wood, to carry their babies. Cradleboards were often decorated with beading, patterned cloth, pieces of metal and other things.

Women from Flying Post First Nation in Ontario with a baby in a cradleboard, 1906.

Macramé (mack-ruh-MAY) is a centuries-old craft where you tie knots in long strands of something. It was most popular in Canada for a short time in the 1960s through the 1980s to make plant holders, curtains and other household items. If you've ever made a friendship bracelet, you've done macramé.

In 2009, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada asked Coast Salish artist Luke Marston to create this special bentwood box. He carved it with symbols of First Nations, Inuit and Métis. From 2010 to 2014, it travelled all over Canada with commissioners as they listened to people's experiences at residential schools. Guests put items into the Bentwood Box as gestures of reconciliation.

Eugene Arcand and Madeleine Basile place a donation into the Bentwood Box, Saskatoon, 2012.

Library and Archives Canada, istockphoto, Luke Marston, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

Most quilts are made of **blocks.** These are sections pieced together from smaller bits of fabric to make patterns. Cut-out pieces of cloth sewn onto a quilt top are known as **appliqué**. If you don't have quilts in your family, look for them at shows, fairs or in museums.

Keep Warm

You don't need us to tell you that it can get cold in Canada. Just imagine what it was like before good insulation and furnaces. When European settlers started arriving here in the 1600s, they soon realized their craft know-how was essential in winter. Without a lot of money or stores around, people used old clothes until they wore out and then cut them up to help keep their families cozy. All over what is now Canada, people — mostly women and girls — used fabric scraps to make quilts. Quilt tops often have a detailed pattern. There's a layer of wool or cotton called the batting in the middle, and a simpler backing with a border around the outside. The name comes from the tiny stitches used to hold the layers in place — that's the "quilting" part. Of course, if you were in a hurry, you could just pull pieces of yarn through the layers and knot them on top to secure the quilt. Bare wood or stone floors in settler homes were cold on the feet. Different kinds of rugs, also called mats, helped provide a little bit of warmth and colour. Old clothes and sheets were cut into strips, which were sewn together. If crafters had the time and tools, they could dye the strips. The long joined strips were wound into balls. They could be braided together into ropes that were then made into big oval rugs by coiling the ropes around and around. Or if there was a weaver nearby, the customer could take the strips to be professionally woven into small carpets. Women could also use much smaller strips cut from worn-out clothes to make patterned rugs. They stretched a piece of burlap — maybe an old feed sack — on a frame. Using a dull metal hook, they pulled a thin strip of fabric up through the holes to make a loop. When the loops were nice and even and tight, they formed a cloth rug in whatever pattern the creator had in mind. Hooked rugs are still made in many parts of Canada.

Holly Clarke, Glenbow Museum

Quilting — the tiny, even stitches going through all three layers — takes a *long* time and you have to be *very* careful. Groups of women would get together to work on one project. These gatherings were called quilting bees (or frolics in New Brunswick). Some quilters today do the quilting part with a special machine.

Killer Whale Rug, about 1929.

Although she's one of Canada's most admired artists now, British Columbia's Emily Carr hooked rugs in the 1920s to earn some extra money.

Read more about Newfoundland's famous mats in this issue's comic, starting on p. 22

Sit or Sleep

The First Peoples in what is now Canada might have moved around to hunt or fish, or might have shared a large living space with many others. It didn't make sense in either case to have heavy furniture. Beds, chairs and tables were too big and expensive to ship from Europe, so settlers had to make their own simple versions out of wood. Gradually, some specialists opened shops where they made more attractive furniture with decorative carvings and patterns made from different kinds of wood, as well as fabric chair seats and fancy knobs and handles on desks.

Furniture makers in Montreal, 1953.

This carefully carved and shaped armchair with a woven leather seat is from the late 1700s. This style, known as "à la capucine", originated in Quebec.

National Gallery, David Ramsay, Canadian Museum of History

You can see this fancy jug known as a harvest ring at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, Quebec. An eastern Ontario potter named John Elliot made it in 1846.

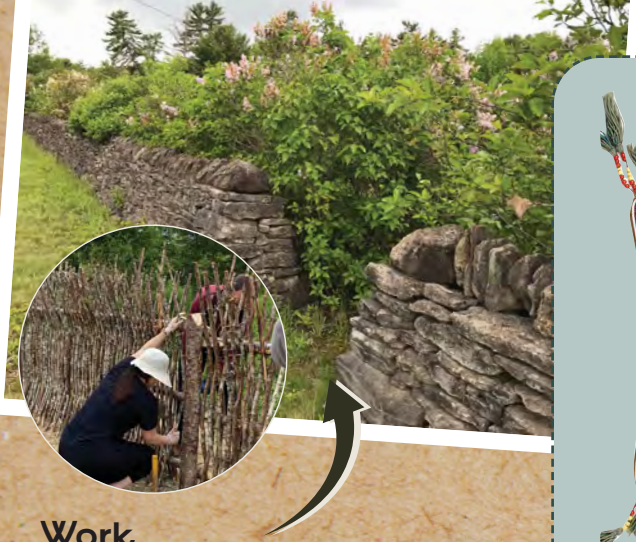
Eat and Drink

Indigenous people had long made what they needed for mealtime from the trees, animal parts, clay and plants that nature provided. The first settlers brought familiar items from back in Europe — things like plates, jugs, cups, cutlery and teapots. Eventually individual artisans started making ceramic, metal and later glass items that were usually fairly plain but could get quite fancy, too. In the 1800s, factories started adding carved and pressed decorative glass items to the mass-produced jars and bottles they'd been making. For a short time in the mid-1900s, workers at companies like Altaglass in Medicine Hat, Alta., crafted things that were both useful and attractive, like glass bowls, platters, lamp bases and ashtrays (containers for cigarette butts) by hand or using a skill called glass-blowing.

Pewter is a mixture of mostly tin with other metals. To make a spoon like these ones, the craftsperson melted pewter and poured it into a wooden mould. After learning the craft in France, Thomas Menut settled in Montreal in 1856. He often marked the items he made with his initials and a decorative stamp.

Although the Prince Edward Island Pottery Company only lasted from 1880 to 1898, many of the pieces its craftspeople made have survived. Guess what this dish was used for?

Canadian Museum of History, Prince Edward Island Museum



Work

Just because you have to do something doesn't mean your tools can't look nice. Take fences, for instance. Farmers have to have them to keep animals out of their crops, but they've often used things from the farm to create something that's a pleasure to look at. There's a true art to making a neatly stacked dry stone fence (above, top) or a traditional Newfoundland and Labrador wriggle fence (above, circle). An ordinary broom becomes a lovely object when it has a carefully shaped and polished wooden handle. Bright woven sashes were more than just a snappy thing to wear. Voyageurs tucked knives and other tools into them, and wrapped them around their middle when they had a sore back. In battle, soldiers could use these long sashes to carry a wounded person to safety.

Saddles are ordinary tools that can get very fancy. People decorate them with silver or pretty stones, and work detailed designs into them. Métis women were known for their skill in making pad saddles — beautifully beaded pads made of hide and stuffed with grasses or horsehair like the one shown above. The one below shows a man named Bill Herron with a fancy saddle in Calgary in 1965.

Nancy Payne, Manitoba Museum, University of Calgary Special Collections, Heritage NL

Dene creators spent a lot of time decorating this moose hide gun case with porcupine quills and beading. It was made around 1974.

Light Up

Before electricity, candles and oil lamps were essential, especially in the dark of winter. Candles stood in holders made from iron, glass or pottery, and like most household items, were usually pretty basic. Some featured fancy curlicues, or painted designs, or were multi-branched creations that were almost like sculptures. The traditional Inuit lamp or qulliq, was carved from stone and had many little flames dancing in a pool of seal oil. Some settlers were able to afford lamps with painted ceramic bases that held the oil. Electric lamps also needed bases to sit on. Sometimes they were carved from wood and polished. Popular ones from the 1930s to the 1970s were made at places like Ontario's Blue Mountain Pottery or Medalta Potteries in Alberta. In the 1950s and 1960s, skilled craftspeople working with glass also made beautiful lamp bases.

Preparing a qulliq (seal oil lamp), Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet), Nunavut, 1950.

Chalet Vintage Art Glass, Alamy, ChanticleerVintage

Trained and gifted Italian glass blowers who came to Canada from Italy in the early 1950s set up shop in Montreal under the name Murano Glass. They moved the operation to Cornwall, Ont., in 1962 and renamed it Chalet Artistic Glass. Although Chalet's individually blown and shaped items, like the bowl at left, were beautiful and hugely popular for a while, eventually people's preferences changed. Cheaper factory-made glass products eventually pushed Chalet out of business in 1975.

SKILLED HANDS

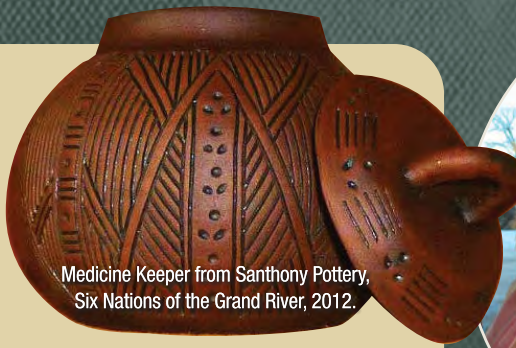
We don't always know who made the creative objects that are still with us from Canada's past. These items were crafted to meet a need, often by a person on their own. Businesses did spring up, employing people to produce more things. Many crafters continued to work away at home, combining practical purpose and a special flair. Here are just a few people, past and present, keeping craft traditions alive.

Craft-y Training

A tinsmithing workshop at the New Brunswick College of Craft and Design, 1960.

There are many schools in Canada, big and small, where people can learn traditional crafts. Fredericton's New Brunswick College of Craft and Design grew out of a government program in the 1930s to encourage handicrafts from leatherwork and tinsmithing to weaving and woodworking. Husband and wife potters Erica and Kjeld Deichmann used their own success to support the college's creation.

Six Nations Pottery



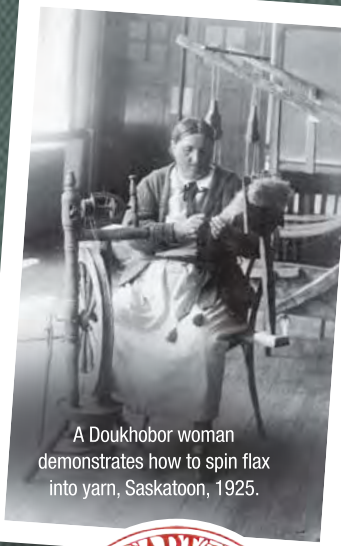
Medicine Keeper from Santhony Pottery, Six Nations of the Grand River, 2012.

New Brunswick College of Craft and Design. Courtesy Santhony Pottery

For thousands of years, the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) in what is now the Six Nations of the Grand River territory in southwestern Ontario made clay pipes, pots and containers. When settlers brought metal bowls, cups and more, traditional methods almost disappeared. But there were still bits of broken pottery all over Six Nations land. A woman named Elda "Bun" Smith started picking them up. She and several other women decided to bring back this special craft. They dug up their own clay and created pots, jugs and more under the name Mohawk Pottery. By the 1960s, their work was very highly prized. She passed on her knowledge to her son Steve, who started when he was 12. He and members of his family operated Talking Earth Pottery, one of several Six Nations ceramics studios.

Shining a Spotlight

The Women's Art Association of Canada started in Toronto in 1887. Eventually members of its branch in Montreal decided they should include crafts, just like similar groups in the United States and United Kingdom that were working to keep traditional skills alive. In 1906, Alice Peck and Martha Phillips formed the Canadian Handicrafts Guild. (A guild is a group of craftspeople. The organization has changed many times. It is now known as the Canadian Crafts Federation.) They organized conferences, competitions and training classes, and helped bring higher prices for ordinary people's crafts. Their efforts helped many crafts survive and allowed many craftspeople to make a living. The well-off women of the Guild supported and promoted the work of newcomers like the Doukhobors in western Canada. Unusually for the time, they also recognized the beauty and skill of Indigenous artists and craftspeople. They may have seen this support as part of their duty to help people who had less money. While they valued the talent of immigrants and Indigenous people, they weren't necessarily interested in learning about Indigenous ways of understanding and living.



A Doukhobor woman demonstrates how to spin flax into yarn, Saskatoon, 1925.

Library and Archives Canada, Carol James, Public Domain

Winnipeg's Carol James is one of the world's best-known finger weavers. A sash she created hangs in the St. Boniface Hospital as a special welcome for those who are French Canadian, Métis and First Nations.

Special Sashes

There are different patterns of woven sashes in different places. The distinctly North American arrowhead and lightning designs in woven sashes likely started around the Great Lakes in the 1700s. The technique is known as finger weaving, although it's really more like a kind of flat braiding. The ceinture fléchée is an important symbol of Métis culture. It was a very useful tool in the fur trade. It could be used as rope or like a pocket to hold things. Maybe most important, it provided support to people carrying heavy loads. It also has a long history in Quebec — just ask Bonhomme Carnaval!

New Life

As items made in factories became cheaper, many people came to see handmade things as old-fashioned or a mark of being poor. When a lot of identical things are made in a factory, it's known as mass production. And after the Second World War, it seemed like being modern meant having lots of mass-produced things made from plastic and vinyl. By the 1970s, some people had started to turn back to natural materials and uniquely crafted items for their homes. From quilts to carvings, hand-crafted things have never completely gone away.

Workers in an Eaton's sewing room, early 1900s.

Heritage Newfoundland and Labrador tracks crafts that are in danger of disappearing and finds people to pass on their skills to eager apprentices through its Craft at Risk program. In this photo, a participant scrapes or "rinds" bark.

CARVING STORIES

Text and illustrations by Saelym Degrandpre

As a young teenager, I wanted to connect with my culture more. I found that through art. I've seen my grandmother do beautiful sewing work, making kamiiks and parkas with intricate embroidery, and she spoke of the bone needles used traditionally to make these, which sparked my desire to try carving.

Alamy, courtesy of Susan Purneaux

In a studio I watched Elders and other youth work on carving, with the smell of soapstone in the air, the grimy feel of the dust coming off the rocks, and the beautiful carving in multiple stages.

After speaking with the Elder, I took the time to examine the bucket of soapstone. I spent my time looking at the different coloured rocks. I found one particular rock, which was a bluish-green, and it looked almost like ice that had frozen over.

As I started to carve, at first it didn't look like much. It was a big rectangle, but as I began to chip away at the stone with the files, chisels and the mallet, I could see the curved shape of the oil lamp begin to appear.

The process reminded me of the Elder reminding me to pay attention to details. The wide basin was to hold the oil; the flat edge was a gradual slope so that it could hold the Arctic cotton. Once I had the general shape completed, I used a power tool and a sander to refine it to a smooth finish. My design was finished. It reminded me of the beautiful embroidery my grandmother sewed on our parkas. Even though it served a purpose to keep us warm and protected, it was still beautiful, and I felt this way about my design of the qulliq.

I saw how the craft connected us to our survival and each other. Carving gave me a way to understand how our ancestors made the necessary things beautiful.

-Saelym Degrandpre is an Inuk artist and writer who lives in Ottawa.
She has a special interest in Inuit storytelling, culture and history.

DO IT YOURSELF!

UNTIL PRETTY RECENTLY, WHEN KIDS DID CRAFTS, THEY WERE USUALLY PRACTISING SKILLS THEY'D NEED AS AN ADULT. NOW YOU GET TO DO THEM JUST BECAUSE YOU WANT TO.

Inuit children, Chesterfield Inlet, Nunavut, around 1937.

From the earliest people to live in this territory through to the mid-1900s, kids did a lot of work around the home. Whether they were making things from leather, twine or tin, weaving, carving or sewing, it was to help the family. (Okay, they did make toys, too.)

Kids watching television in Guysborough, N.S., 1950.

By the 1920s, governments made it illegal for younger kids to work for money. More kids and teens went to school, so they spent less time making things their family needed. After the Second World War, crafts for kids were mainly for fun. They were sort of useful but not really necessary.

Library and Archives Canada, iStockphoto

WHAT CRAFTS DO YOU LIKE TO DO? HAVE YOU EVER MADE SOMETHING YOU ALSO USED?

Ask your parents or grandparents about crafts they did. They may have made apple-head dolls like this one, cardboard bird feeders, clay pinch pots or a candleholder out of a can with holes punched in it. Prepare to discover things like cork knitting, macramé and wood burning!

Alamy, Chinese Canadian Museum

We've talked a lot about crafts that keep you warm, but at the Chinese Canadian Museum last summer, visitors were more focused on making something to stay cool (and stylish). They took inspiration from a display of costumes to make traditional Hanfu-style paper fans. This fan builds on an embroidered cheongsam created by Teresa Teng for an imaginary pop star.

TRY THIS ONE YOURSELF. ALL YOU NEED IS TWO POPSICLE STICKS AND SOME CARDBOARD. CUT THE CARDBOARD INTO THE SHAPE YOU WANT FOR YOUR FAN AND DECORATE IT. GLUE IT BETWEEN THE POPSICLE STICKS AND VOILÀ — YOUR FAN!

BETTER, WORSE, DIFFERENT?

Written by Allyson Gulliver • Illustrated by Teddy Kang

LEBRET FAMILY FARM NEAR
FORT QU'APPELLE, SASK., FEBRUARY 1910

Anna couldn't decide. "I'd choose . . ." Her finger wavered back and forth on the page of the Eaton's catalogue. The set of miniature flowered dishes, or "This one! The doll with eyes that close!"

Her brother already had his mind made up. Leo smacked his finger lower down the page. "The toy aeroplane for me!"

Their parents exchanged a look. "Maybe when I get the baby's bed finished, we can try building our own flying machine," their dad said.

"And we can use some scraps from these curtains to sew some new clothes for the doll Papa made you," their mother said to Anna.

"Bundle up now," she added, "and bring in that wheat straw from the shed. It's time you learned how to weave your own baskets."

The children put on their coats and boots and headed out into the weak sunshine of late afternoon.

Leo was careful to keep his voice down. "I wish we could have new things, from the store."

Anna blinked back tears. "I know there's not much money for extras, but why do we have to make everything ourselves? The doll in the catalogue is so much prettier. And just imagine having a soft rug from a store instead of a tough one made out of our old shirts."

"There's a sled in the catalogue with real metal runners," Leo said dreamily. "But the toboggan Papa made us is fun, too," he quickly added.

"Maybe if I learn how to make lace doilies or weave straw hats, I can earn enough money to buy us whatever we want!" Cheered at her idea, Anna grabbed an armload of wheat stalks.

Their father was waiting for them in the house with a big smile and outstretched palms. In each was a tiny cloth bag pulled tight with a drawstring. "Pick a hand!"

The children each chose a bag to open. In Leo's was a little wooden horse; in Anna's, a little cow. "I carved them and your mama made the bags. They're just for you!"

LEBRET FAMILY FARM NEAR
FORT QU'APPELLE, SASK., FEBRUARY 1960

"They're here!" Leo opened the door to greet his daughter and her three kids, letting in a swirl of snow at the same time.

"Grandpa!" little Lili shouted, grabbing his knees in a hug. Paul and Eddie stood back, a bit more shy, until Anna sneaked up behind to tickle them both.

"Aunt Anna! I didn't know you were going to be here today!

Anna hugged her niece and nodded toward the living room. "I brought Grandmama out from town for a visit."

The kids tumbled ahead, each wanting to be the first to show off what they'd brought. "We bought you a puzzle, Grandpa. I picked it out!" Lili exclaimed.

"See how good I am with my yo-yo?" said Eddie.

Leo almost tripped over the little metal cars Paul was already arranging on the floor.

"Where's the cradle, Grandpa?" Lili asked, cuddling her stuffed rabbit. "Floppy needs a nap."

Seeing Leo looking a bit worried, Anna jumped in. "I told your grandpa to get rid of that old thing. It's not safe anymore."

"But I really liked it!" Lili wailed, about to cry.

Paul looked up from the floor. "What about the straw basket you made when you were little? Can I put my cars in it?"

Leo shrugged. "It was falling apart. I'll get you a plastic container. And Lili, we have a nice new crib that folds up. Perfect for Floppy."

"All we wanted when we were their age was something bought instead of homemade," Anna said to her brother. "Good riddance to all that old stuff!"

From her rocking chair, Anna and Leo's mother called out, "Come here, little ones. I managed to save a few things when your grandpa and great-aunt were clearing out the old things. They're not fancy, but your Grandpapa and I put a lot of love into them."

Anna rolled her eyes. "Mama! Is that bag made from a flour sack?"

"Who cares if it is?" her mother replied. She pulled out a carved wooden horse and a carved wooden cow and held them out to the children. "They're just for you."

LEBRET FAMILY FARM NEAR
FORT QU'APPELLE, SASK., FEBRUARY 2010

"Screen time is over, kids," Paul called from the kitchen. "Shut down the computer."

"But it's educational!" Sarah said, her eyes still glued to the screen.

Her twin brother Jacob yelped. "No! Hit the up arrow! The up arrow!!" The tiny dinosaur on the screen keeled over.

Sarah quickly turned the computer off, only to hear her dad sigh. "I was going to order a new bookshelf for the living room," Paul said. "Maybe a new rug, too. The cat's been pretty hard on the old one."

"Mrs. Reinhart next door says you can make stuff like that, you know," Jacob said.

Paul raised his eyebrows. "Maybe *she* can, but I haven't got a clue. Unless you two want to try?"

Sarah pulled out a ball of yarn and a stick with a dull hook on the end. "Maybe not a rug, but she's teaching me how to crochet."

"I'm going to work on my whittling badge at Cubs," Jacob said. "Don't worry — I'll be careful!"

"Wouldn't you rather have nice new things?" Paul asked them.

The twins looked at each other. "I kind of like the old stuff," Sarah said.

"It's more . . . interesting," Jacob said.

Paul jumped up from the computer. "Well then, it's time I gave you something." He opened the hall closet and rummaged around in a cardboard box.

"I knew they were here somewhere!" he said as the kids gathered around. He held out a dusty bag so Jacob and Sarah could pull out what was inside: a small carved wooden horse and a little carved wooden cow.

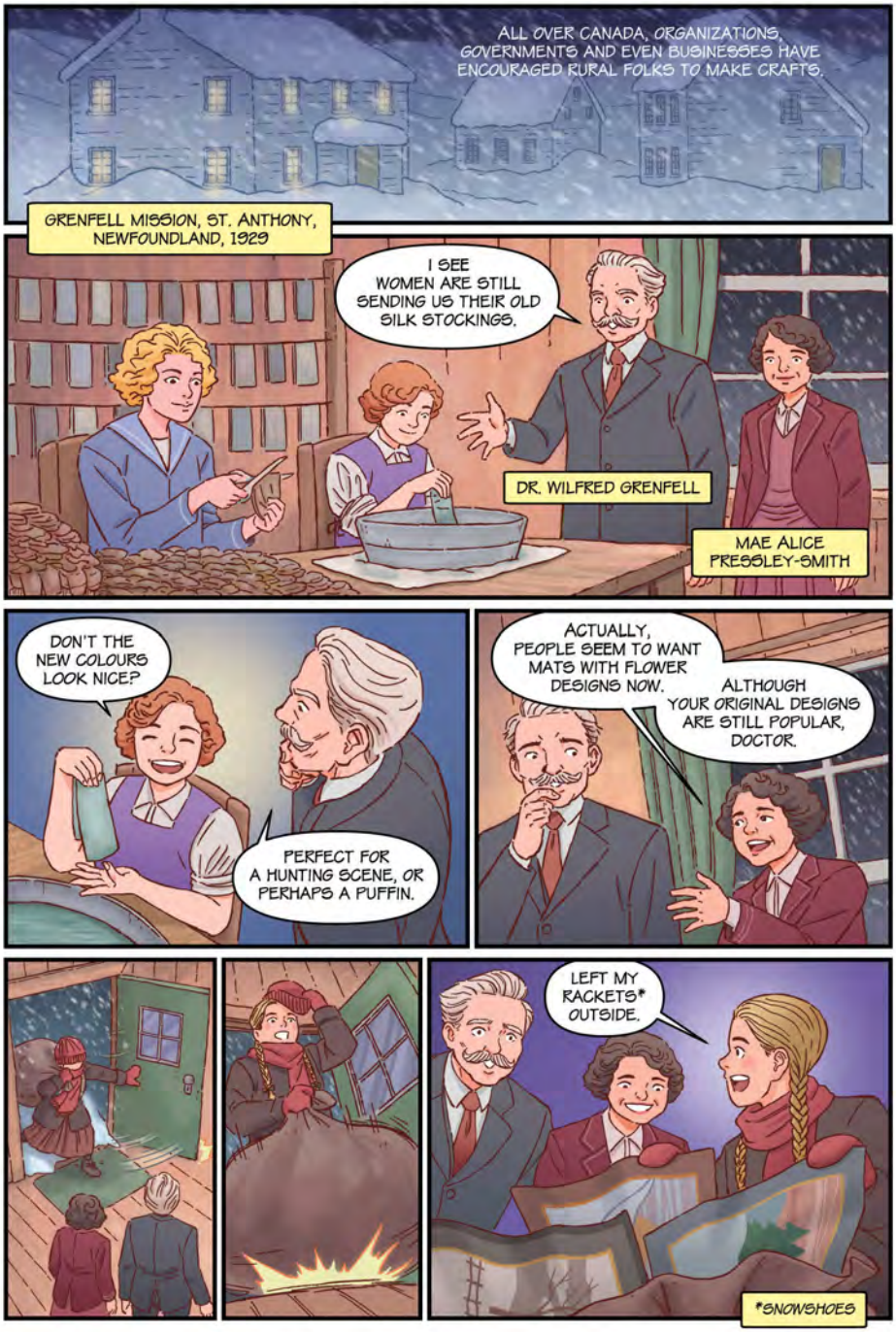
"They're just for you." ***K***

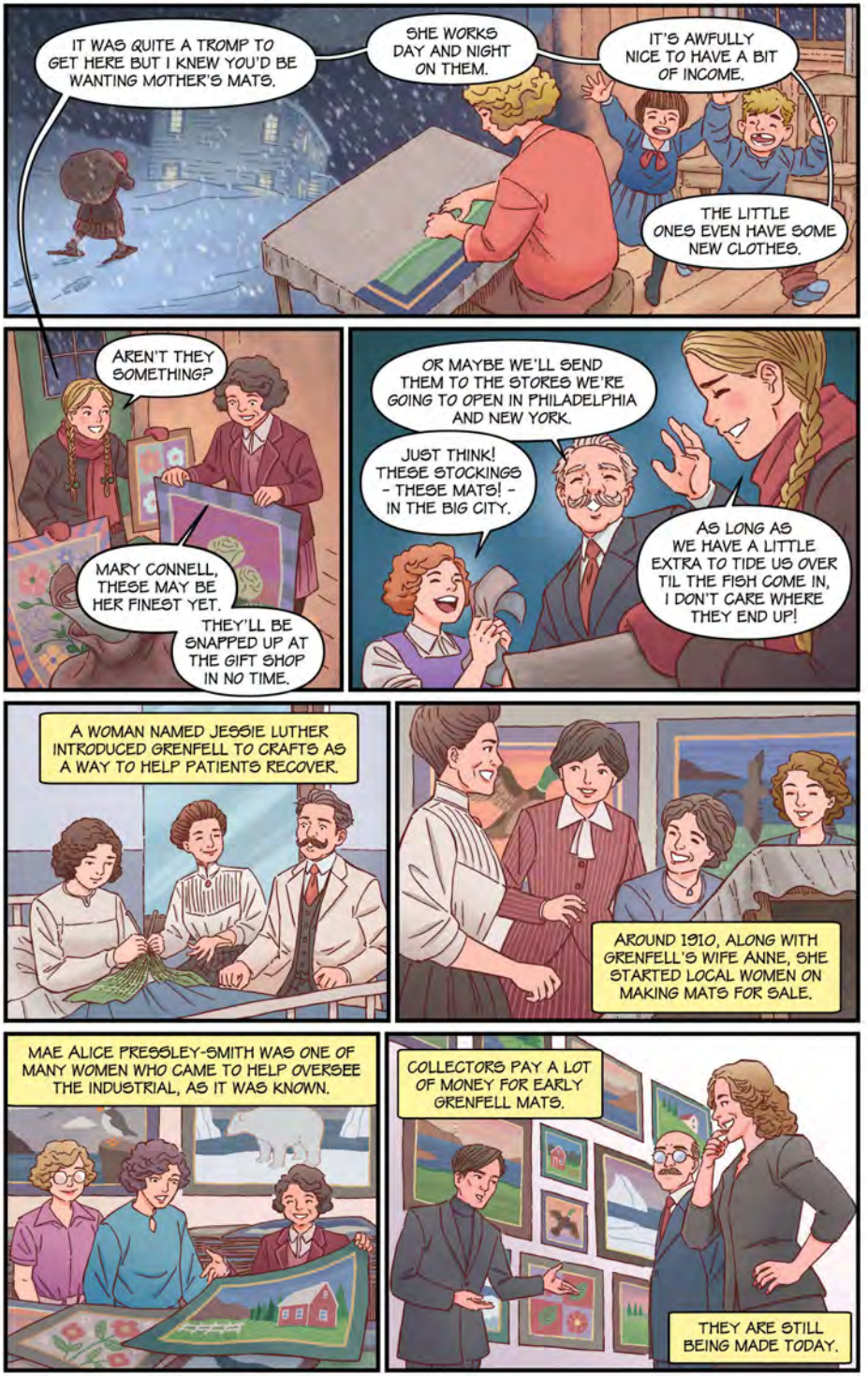
McCord Stewart Museum, Alamy

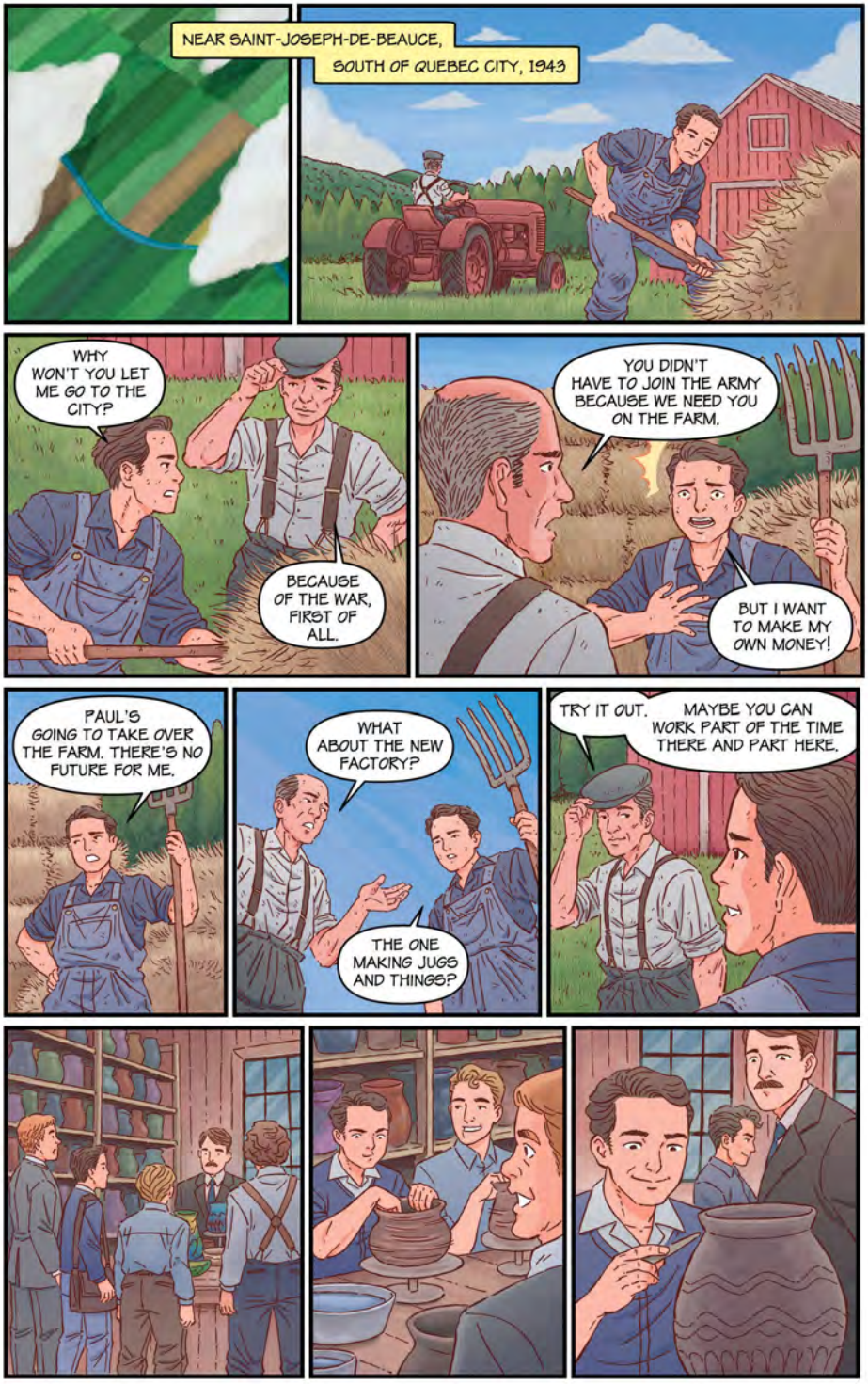
The Toronto-based department store Eaton's sent out its first catalogue in 1884 and its last in 1976. People all over Canada ordered items from Eaton's if they couldn't buy them nearby. Mostly, though, many settler families, especially on farms and in rural areas, made as many things as possible themselves. The crafts you've read about in this issue were very important at a time when it was hard to get to stores and families didn't have much money for anything other than essentials. Everyone had to be good at doing lots of things, from sewing and knitting to making things with wood and weaving with whatever material was around. Maybe the Lebret family would have traded their crafts for those the Dakota First Nation people of the area had been making for thousands of years. For everyone, winter, with little farming, hunting and gardening to do, was a good time for crafts. Have any handmade items been passed down in your family?

CREATIONS WITH A PURPOSE

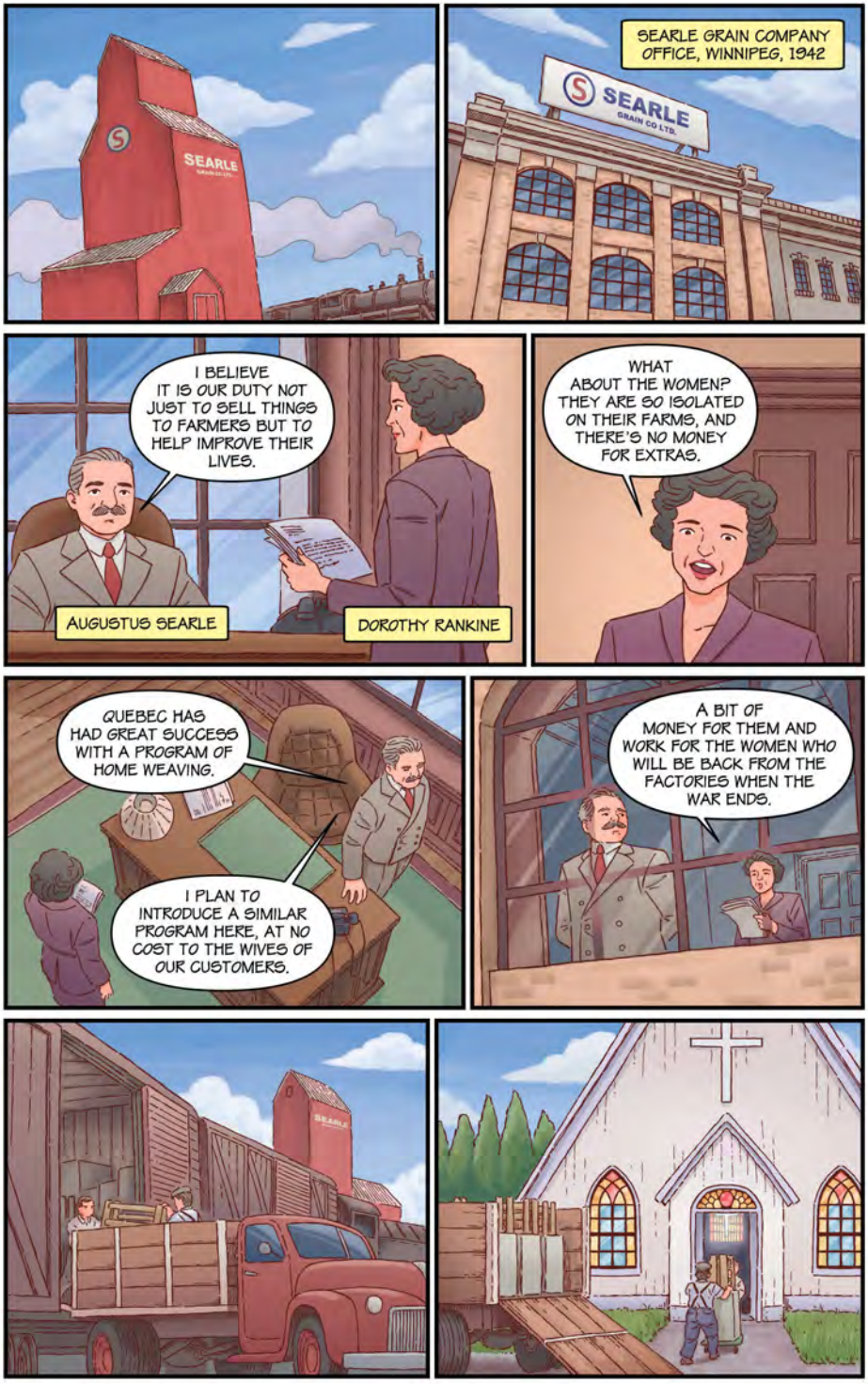
TEXT BY NANCY PAYNE • ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID NAMISATO

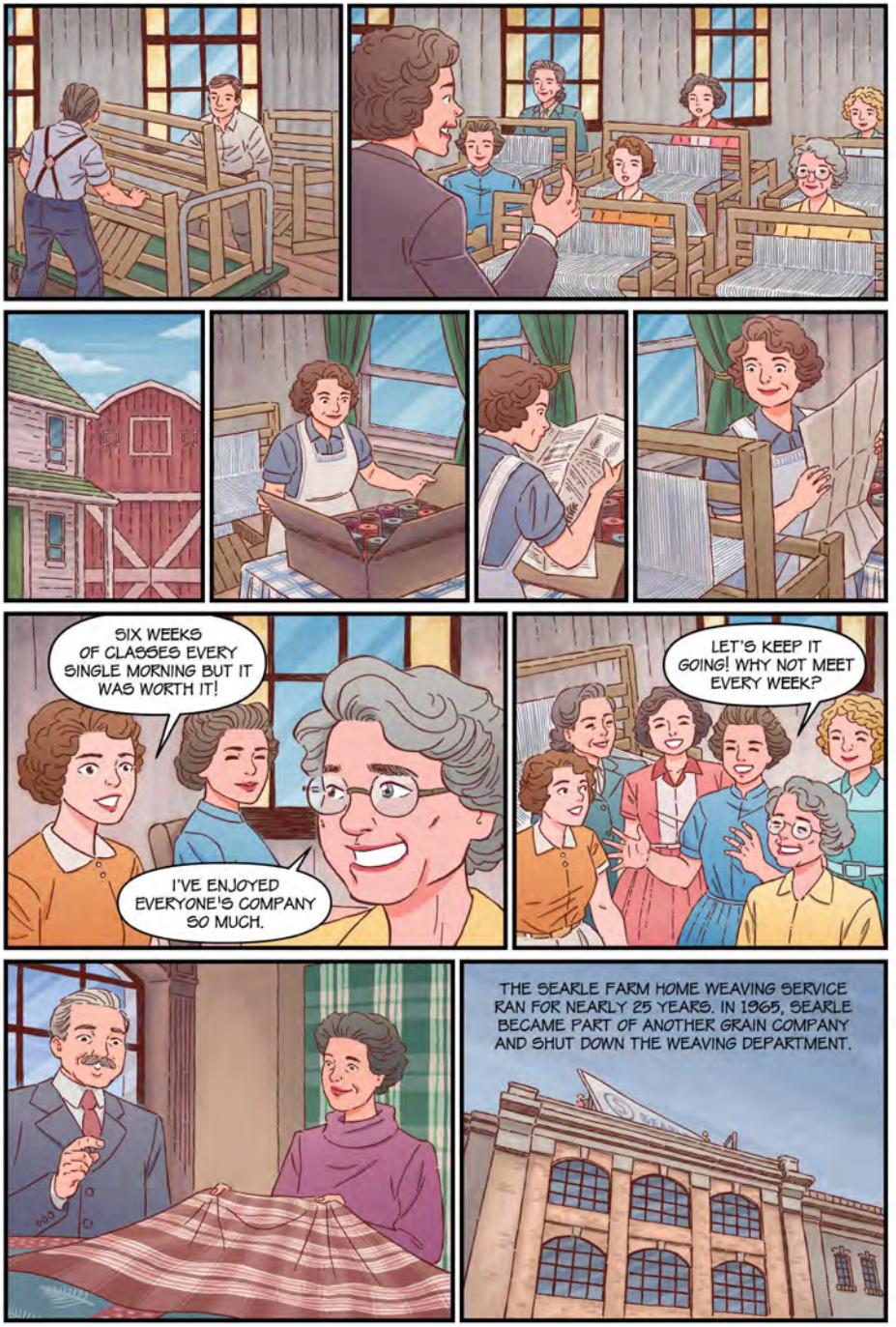



IT WAS QUITE A TROMP TO GET HERE BUT I KNEW YOU'D BE WANTING MOTHER'S MATS.
SHE WORKS DAY AND NIGHT ON THEM.
IT'S AWFULLY NICE TO HAVE A BIT OF INCOME.
THE LITTLE ONES EVEN HAVE SOME NEW CLOTHES.
AREN'T THEY SOMETHING?
MARY CONNELL, THESE MAY BE HER FINEST YET.
THEY'LL BE SNAPPED UP AT THE GIFT SHOP IN NO TIME.
OR MAYBE WE'LL SEND THEM TO THE STORES WE'RE GOING TO OPEN IN PHILADELPHIA AND NEW YORK.
JUST THINK! THESE STOCKINGS - THESE MATS! - IN THE BIG CITY.
AS LONG AS WE HAVE A LITTLE EXTRA TO TIDE US OVER TIL THE FISH COME IN, I DON'T CARE WHERE THEY END UP!
A WOMAN NAMED JESSIE LUTHER INTRODUCED GRENFELL TO CRAFTS AS A WAY TO HELP PATIENTS RECOVER.
AROUND 1910, ALONG WITH GRENFELL'S WIFE ANNE, SHE STARTED LOCAL WOMEN ON MAKING MATS FOR SALE.
MAE ALICE PRESSLEY-SMITH WAS ONE OF MANY WOMEN WHO CAME TO HELP OVERSEE THE INDUSTRIAL, AS IT WAS KNOWN.
COLLECTORS PAY A LOT OF MONEY FOR EARLY GRENFELL MATS.
THEY ARE STILL BEING MADE TODAY.


NEAR SAINT-JOSEPH-DE-BEAUCE,
SOUTH OF QUEBEC CITY, 1943
WHY WON'T YOU LET ME GO TO THE CITY?
BECAUSE OF THE WAR, FIRST OF ALL.
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO JOIN THE ARMY BECAUSE WE NEED YOU ON THE FARM.
BUT I WANT TO MAKE MY OWN MONEY!
PAUL'S GOING TO TAKE OVER THE FARM. THERE'S NO FUTURE FOR ME.
WHAT ABOUT THE NEW FACTORY?
THE ONE MAKING JUGS AND THINGS?
TRY IT OUT.
MAYBE YOU CAN WORK PART OF THE TIME THERE AND PART HERE.


1970
WE NEED TO SHAKE THINGS UP.
MAKE THEM... GROOVIER.
MORE MODERN.
COOLER.
MONTREAL, 2002. FLEA MARKET.
LOOK, HONEY. GENUINE BEAUCEWARE!
WOW! THAT BRINGS BACK A LOT OF MEMORIES FROM MY GRANDMA'S HOUSE...
I DON'T CARE IF IT'S COOL OR TACKY. I LOVE IT!
QUEBEC'S AGRICULTURE MINISTRY STARTED THE POTTERY PROGRAM IN THE BEAUCE REGION IN 1940.
THE GOAL WAS TO HELP KEEP YOUNG RURAL MEN FROM LEAVING THE AREA BY GIVING THEM JOBS.
CÉRAMIQUE DE BEAUCE ALSO MARKETED ITS PRODUCTS UNDER THE NAME BEAUCEWARE, MOSTLY IN ONTARIO.
IN THE EARLY 1970S, IT HAD 80 EMPLOYEES MAKING THOUSANDS OF ITEMS A DAY.
BY 1989, CHEAPER PRODUCTS FROM OVERSEAS AND PEOPLE'S CHANGING TASTES PUT THE PROGRAM OUT OF BUSINESS.


SEARLE
SEARLE GRAIN COMPANY OFFICE, WINNIPEG, 1942
SEARLE GRAIN CO. LTD.
I BELIEVE IT IS OUR DUTY NOT JUST TO SELL THINGS TO FARMERS BUT TO HELP IMPROVE THEIR LIVES.
AUGUSTUS SEARLE
DOROTHY RANKINE
WHAT ABOUT THE WOMEN? THEY ARE SO ISOLATED ON THEIR FARMS, AND THERE'S NO MONEY FOR EXTRAS.
QUEBEC HAS HAD GREAT SUCCESS WITH A PROGRAM OF HOME WEAVING.
I PLAN TO INTRODUCE A SIMILAR PROGRAM HERE, AT NO COST TO THE WIVES OF OUR CUSTOMERS.
A BIT OF MONEY FOR THEM AND WORK FOR THE WOMEN WHO WILL BE BACK FROM THE FACTORIES WHEN THE WAR ENDS.


SIX WEEKS OF CLASSES EVERY SINGLE MORNING BUT IT WAS WORTH IT!
I'VE ENJOYED EVERYONE'S COMPANY SO MUCH.
LET'S KEEP IT GOING! WHY NOT MEET EVERY WEEK?
THE SEARLE FARM HOME WEAVING SERVICE RAN FOR NEARLY 25 YEARS. IN 1965, SEARLE BECAME PART OF ANOTHER GRAIN COMPANY AND SHUT DOWN THE WEAVING DEPARTMENT.
THESE THREE PROGRAMS AND ANYONE WE'VE NAMED ARE ALL REAL. WE IMAGINED THE CONVERSATIONS AND THE OTHER CHARACTERS.

See How it's Done

From garage sales to galleries and museums, you'll find Canadian crafts on display all over.

Hooked Rug and Homelife Museum, Chéticamp, N.S.

Learn about Élizabeth LeFort and others who made this little village world famous for its hooked rugs.

Swept Away

If you visit Vancouver's funky Granville Island, be sure to check out the Granville Island Broom Company. Two sisters handmake unusual brooms from tiny to huge. In St. Jacobs, Ont., you can watch people making traditional corn brooms at Hamel Brooms. It started in nearby Waterloo in 1908.

Keep an eye out at yard sales and flea markets. You never know when you might discover some Beauce pottery, Chalet Art glass or a perfect little wooden box someone crafted decades ago.

Granville Island Broom Company, Alamy, Studio Ceramics Canada, Hooked Rug and Homelife Museum

Listen and Learn

First Nations, Inuit and Métis cultural centres are ideal places to find out crafts that people have been making here for thousands of years. Many Indigenous-run museums highlight amazing collections of crafts from the past right up to now. In Lennox Island First Nation near Bideford, P.E.I., visitors can try quillwork at a workshop.

From The Rooms in St. John's, NL, the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife, N.W.T., the Haida Heritage Centre in Skidegate on Haida Gwaii, B.C., above, to all the little community museums in between, you'll find incredible examples of useful objects made beautiful by their creators.

From June to September, visit the tidy Polish Kashub Heritage Museum in Wilno, Ont., in the Ottawa Valley to see its famous furniture and embroidery like what you see at right.

Try it Out

Summer camps are always a good place to learn crafts. At the Maison des métiers d'art de Québec in Quebec City, you can make a pencil case, a wooden toolbox, a ceramic cup or (wait for it) a bow and arrow. It also hosts workshops with experts in a wide range of crafts.

Medalta, Medicine Hat, Alta.

This former factory now houses a museum, potters' studios and an art gallery. It's part of the larger Medalta Potteries National Historic Site of Canada, which commemorates the largest producer of pottery west of Toronto from the 1920s to the 1940s.

Haida Heritage Centre, Nancy Payne, Friends of Medalta Society

Istockphoto

CRAFTED CONNECTIONS

Throughout this issue, you've discovered the many ways that crafts have always been a part of life in what is now Canada. What are some traditional crafts from your culture or community? Ask a family member, friend, or Elder about one. What was it used for? How was it made? What has changed or stayed the same over time? Share what you learned and what it tells you about the people who made it at *CanadasHistory.ca/CraftedConnections* to be entered into the *Kayak* contest!

ANSWERS

HIDDEN PICTURES P. 32

TEACHER'S CORNER

You can find classroom material in both English and French to go with this issue of Kayak. Just visit *CanadasHistory.ca/KayakCrafts or HistoireCanada.ca/Kayakartisanat.*

English

Français

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HIDDEN PICTURES

How sharp-eyed are you? See if you can find each of these objects or images in the comic Creations With a Purpose that starts on p. 22.