Updike and Tennessee Williams. Davies is the first Canadian ever to achieve this recognition, which follows seven years after his election to the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.

Davies was born 73 years ago in Thamesville, Ontario, and worked as editor and later publisher of the *Peterborough Examiner* from 1940 to 1965. Among his best known works are *A Mixture of Frailties, Leaven of Malice* and *Fifth Business.*

His latest novel *What's Bred in the Bone,* the hero of which is an eccentric art collector, is currently enjoying a major success. According to Penguin Books, it has sold 165 000 copies in the United States, and the hard cover edition was on the *New York* Times Best Seller List for ten weeks.

At the Award ceremony, Davies noted that 'Canada has come into the larger world of literature rather suddenly.' He felt that he stood as a representative of a generation of Canadian writers who are now earning a reputation for themselves throughout the world.

Dare-devil skier decides to call it a day

After shattering his left knee on the great downhill course at Kitzbühel, Canada's Todd Brooker has decided to retire from the sport in which he made his name.

The 27-year-old Brooker was one of a group of Canadians known as the 'Crazy Canucks' because they took tremendous chances and thrilled the skiing world with their fearless style.

Brooker's skills and nerve won him first place at Kitzbühel and Aspen in 1983, and Furano, Japan, in 1985. During his skiing career, he came second in three events and was placed in the top ten in eight others.

But the gung-ho approach resulted in three knee injuries and then the spectacular crash in January which knocked him unconscious.

'There really is no choice,' says Brooker. 'I can't compete 100% on the World Cup circuit, and if you can't compete 100%, you shouldn't be there.'

***Toronto Star* rewards Scottish islander for a fishy find**

Crofter Peter McSween found treasure recently while walking his dog along the shores of the Isle of Skye. The item in question was a metal tag from a Canadian newspaper offering the finder a reward of five dollars. No great catch you might feel – except that the tag was dated September, 1937.

When the *Toronto Star* heard of the discovery, it tracked down 84-year-old Ralph Cowan who had been their circulation manager half a century ago. Cowan recalled a promotion gimmick from that year whereby a number of trout in Toronto's Grenadier Pond were tagged. Anglers who landed a tagged fish also reaped a five dollar reward from the *Star.*

But how did the tag get out of the pond and find its way to Skye? Grenadier Pond is linked to Lake Ontario by a mile-long pipe, and Cowan can only assume that one of the trout swam into the lake and was swallowed by a saltwater fish in the St Lawrence River. The bigger fish would then have crossed the Atlantic.

As for the tag, the *Toronto Star* has no intention of reneging on its commitment. So it has sent Peter McSween a cheque, not for $5, but for $43 to allow for inflation over the past 50 years.

Technology

Canadian satellite TV corporation beams in on Europe

Canadian-based Norsat International Inc has signed an agreement with Vista (Satellite) Ltd whereby the British company has exclusive distribution rights and will provide technical support for its satellite receiving equipment throughout Europe.

Norsat, whose home is in Vancouver, is a leading manufacturer of systems for accessing entertainment and information from communications satellites. Its range of products commands a market share of 10% in the US and 25% in Canada. Norsat's commercial systems are currently enjoying considerable success in entertainment, information and business data communication.

Canada has long been a pioneer in satellite systems. The first ever domestic communications satellite, ANIK, was Canadian, and so was the world's first private earth station.

With over 100 million television households, Europe offers ample opportunity for Norsat. According to the company's Executive Vice-President, Gordon Skene: 'Norsat is bringing a full featured range specially designed to meet the diverse need of the European market. The range is fully compatible with all the new services being offered in Europe.

One of these new services is DBS (direct broadcasting by satellite) from the UK's own highpowered satellite due to be launched in 1989 or 1990.

Vista's managing director, Bob Denton, formerly an executive with Granada, believes that the Canadian company has brought satellite within the reach of most pockets. 'Their smart modular design allows them to offer a wide range of systems for both consumer and commercial applications and still retain the economies of scale,' he says.

Canadian scientists participate in superconductor breakthrough

Yvon LePage and Ross McKinnon of the National Research Council in Ottawa have helped to isolate and identify a new compound which will lead to cheaper imaging equipment that is used to detect cancer and other diseases.

'At present this equipment requires superconducting magnets,' says LePage. 'Now with the magnets that will become available from our new material, the price will go from millions of dollars to a fraction of a million.'

The compound, which comprises yttrium, barium, copper and nitrogen, is a shiny black substance with absolutely no electrical resistance. It differs from other superconductive materials in that it superconducts at the temperature of liquid nitrogen, or – 182C.

The superconductors currently in use are only effective at the temperature of liquid helium, which is -250C. This means that hospitals, such as the Montreal Neurological Institute, need to spend £13 000 a year on liquid helium for their imaging machine. Using liquid nitrogen, the annual cost would probably drop to £2500, according to Dr Terry Peters, a medical physicist.

The compound was mixed at Bell Communications Research laboratories in New Jersey where McKinnon is on sabbatical. Its molecular makeup was pinpointed precisely by crystallographer LePage at the National Research Council in Ottawa. As a result of their efforts, scientists will be able to duplicate the compound exactly.

Norsat receiving dish recently installed on the roof of Canada House in London.