

## Great whales attract tourists

The lower St. Lawrence River attracts summer visitors, each year to observe at close quarters the great whales, who are lured by the rich harvest of marine life that congregates where the cold waters of the Saguenay River meet the slightly warmer St. Lawrence waters.

The numerous whales to be seen are the smaller species, the white beluga and the pilot whale. But numbers of huge humpbacked whales appear regularly and, on occasion, the now rare blue whale, the largest animal on earth, has been spotted.

## Special excursions

Special excursions by various groups are operated from mid-July to mid-September for the benefit of those who wish to observe the huge mammals. The Montreal Zoological Society, one of the sponsors, transports its passengers by bus from Montreal to Rivière du Loup. There, they board the research ship *St. Barnabe* where they are told about the whales while the vessel seeks them out.

Once the whales are found, the vessel is brought as close as possible, and the engines are cut. The whales have become so accustomed to the ships that they often surface and swim near the vessel. The three-day trip, including two days on the river, costs about \$200.

## Nature lovers

Those who have taken these excursion so far have been mainly naturalists, conservationists and nature lovers, and they have enjoyed a bonus of sighting a wide variety of ocean life as well as whales. There are always large numbers of seals, porpoises and seabirds from the world famous nesting grounds of the lower St. Lawrence.

For further information regarding schedules, costs, etc., contact Gerald Iles at 2053 Vendome Avenue, Montreal H4A 3M4 and the Zoological Society of Montreal at 2055 Peel Street, Montreal H3A 1V4.

The National Museum of Natural Sciences, which has a major whale exhibit among its displays, is also considering operating three-day whale-watching excursions. For information regarding these, write: Whale-Watching Trips, National Museum of Natural Sciences, Ottawa K1A 0M8.

## Bravery decorations awarded

Fifteen Canadians have been awarded bravery decorations for their involvement in acts of heroism.

Nine recipients will receive the Star of Courage, two Stars of Courage were presented posthumously. Six other recipients will receive the Medal of Bravery.

The two Stars of Courage have been awarded posthumously to Euclide Prévost of Sudbury, Ontario and to Michael Fikis of Thunder Bay, Ontario.

The other recipients of the Star of Courage are: Gordon Teeft, Halifax, Nova Scotia; Constable Raymond Pitre, Vanier, Ontario; Jane Morrison, Owen Sound, Ontario; Brian Clegg and Robert Grant, Niagara Falls, Ontario; Franklin Hicks, Whitney, Ontario; and Martin Griffiths, Ship Harbour, Newfoundland.

The four recipients of the Medal of Bravery are: Paul Labbie, Kingston, Ontario; Constable Terrance DeGrood, Edmonton, Alberta; Henry Kanouse, Maple Ridge, British Columbia; and Murray Martin, Lantzville, British Columbia.

Governor-General Edward Schreyer will present the decorations to the recipients at a Bravery Investiture to be held at Rideau Hall at a time and date to be announced later.

There are three Canadian decorations for Bravery: the Cross of Valour, the Star of Courage and the Medal of Bravery. Since the decorations were first created in 1972, 424 have been awarded.



*Constable Raymond Pitre of Vanier, Ontario, who rescued five-year old Linda Jones from the Rideau River in March 1979, will receive a Star of Courage.*

## Handicaps turned to benefits

The Federal Government is hiring mentally retarded adults for jobs that turn their handicaps into positive features.

Mentally retarded adults at PublicArchives in Ottawa help to dispose of tons of secret documents. Because of the confidentiality of the papers, the handicapped adults are considered ideal candidates for the job.

"Ironically, you could say their handicap is a benefit to them in this case," says Roger Lovatt of ARC Industries, a workshop in Ottawa where retarded adults are trained for such jobs.

Under a grant from the Department of the Environment, adults at ARC are taught to recognize and sort paper into basic grades of quality before it is shredded and baled. The training project began when spokesmen in the paper industry complained of the difficulty of finding people to do the tedious work of grading for recycling.

Various other government offices employ people from ARC. A liaison officer in the Public Service Commission notifies the workshop when a government job suitable for one of its trainees comes up.

In Toronto, a trainee from the Association for the Mentally Retarded works for the Federal Government in the Income Tax Office.

## Satisfactory workers

"The employer is not doing us a favor in taking our people," says Sheila Graham who supervises training workshops in Toronto. "He's doing himself a favour." The association guarantees the employer a satisfactory worker and thus the employer is relieved of certain potential management hassles.

At the Map Office in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources in Ottawa, people from ARC assemble and bind the weekly updating of the Air Pilots' folder containing 250 pages of maps. The more capable workers progress to filing assignments and sorting invoices in the department.

"Their life is centred around their job," says Roger Lovatt. It is important to them to prove that they can contribute to society. After a history of failure, bringing home pay for work provides a tremendous feeling of success. Most trainees at ARC in Ottawa spend an average of one week a month on jobs outside the workshop.