
News prizes

Nine journalists and one newspaper have won National Newspaper Awards for excellence in their field.

Three of the ten awards went to the *Montreal Gazette*. The *Toronto Star* won two, with the others going to the *Vancouver Sun*, *Edmonton Sun*, *Hamilton Spectator*, *Southam News* and the *Ottawa Citizen*.

The winners were: spot news reporting, Chris Young, *Southam News*; enterprise reporting, the *Vancouver Sun*; editorial writing, Joan Frazer, *Montreal Gazette*; critical writing, Peter Goddard, *Toronto Star*; column writing, John Slinger, *Toronto Star*; sports writing, Michael Farber, *Montreal Gazette*; cartooning, Blaine, *Hamilton Spectator*; spot news photography, Robert Taylor, *Edmonton Sun*; and feature photography, Bruno Schlumberger, *Ottawa Citizen*.

Citations for merit were awarded in feature writing to Judy Steed of *The Globe and Mail* and in editorial writing to John Dafoe of the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

The National Newspaper Awards were established in 1949 and are administered by a committee of the Toronto Press Club. They are made possible by a self-sustaining fund to which a number of newspapers and groups have contributed.

Maps track Canada's history

To the uninitiated, maps can be a dry subject indeed. In the hands of discovery map collector Joe C.W. Armstrong, author of a new book on the subject, maps become not only objects of historical significance but art objects as well, reports Margo Roston in *The Citizen*.

In *From Sea Unto Sea* he has set out to describe the discovery of the outline of the northern part of the American continent from sea unto sea through the reproduction of authentic and original printed maps.

"The purpose of the book is to communicate the early boundary history and the geography of Canada," said Mr. Armstrong, who lives in Toronto. Four years ago he began to purchase the 38 rare and original exploration maps of Canada that make up his personal Canadiana collection and his book.

The author has achieved a lightness of written commentary that makes his historical account enjoyable. An amusing group of anecdotes about some of

Canada's earliest discoverers spice up the straight geographical facts of his story.

Anecdotal tales aside, Mr. Armstrong has carefully scouted out and collected his treasury of maps from sources across the world. He has tracked down maps from 60 dealers across the world, including such places as Texas, London, Paris, Amsterdam and California. Some of them are valued as high as \$30 000.

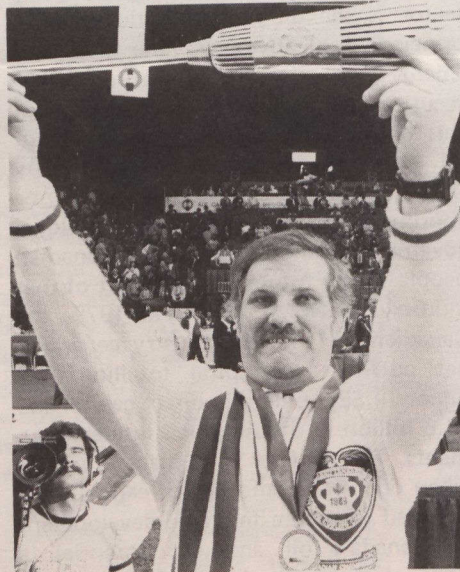
The author spent 3 000 hours researching, collecting and organizing his private display collection and book, using his vacation time and evening hours to fulfill his goal.

The book includes reproductions of rare maps of Canada, including Gastaldi's 1556 woodcut map in which monsters roam the sea. Samuel de Champlain's 1612 collage map of Canada's boundary and elegantly engraved French explorer maps.

Curlers sweep to title

The Canadian curling team took the world title at the Air Canada Silver Broom at the world championships held in Regina, Saskatchewan. It was the second consecutive time a Canadian team had won the championships.

In the final game, the Canadian team skipped by Ed Werenich of Toronto defeated Keith Wendorf of West Germany 7-4. Since starting playoffs at his own Toronto Avonlea Club in January, Werenich and his rink of vice Paul Savage, second John Kawaja and lead Neil Harrison had compiled a 40-4 record.



Ed Werenich holds Silver Broom following the Canadian victory in the world championships.

Major research contract to help boost Canadian crop yields

McGill University of Montreal has signed a \$2.2-million, five-year contract with a Toronto-based biotechnology company to work on a research project that will ultimately increase Canada's agricultural productivity.

Genetic research

The contract with Allelix Incorporated is for work in genetic engineering research applied to microbes. The objective of the research is to develop a commercially available active soil organism which will improve the ability to fix nitrogen in plants, increasing crop yields and decreasing the dependence on fertilizers. Further developments are foreseen, such as better tolerance to frost, salty soils and drought.

Alan Bates, president of Allelix, explained that "this joint program with McGill, one of Canada's leading academic centres for biotechnology research and education, provides the new company with a base on which to build a strong in-house capability. McGill is widely recognized as being at the frontier of molecular biology related to soil organisms and plants".

Special lab

Dr. Desh Pal Verma, who heads a team of McGill plant biologists and geneticists, said the contract will allow the team to double its research activities and open a special laboratory to study the bacteria which fix nitrogen in legumes such as alfalfa, peas, beans and soybeans.

Legumes have a symbiotic relationship with the bacteria rhizobium: their roots provide the bacteria with a home, while the bacteria takes nitrogen which has filtered from the air down into the soil, and combines it with hydrogen to form ammonia which the plant can use to make proteins.

Until now Dr. Verma has been looking for a way to transfer the plant genes that make this relationship possible into other plant types, such as wheat and corn. He said he has succeeded in identifying the genes in the soybean plant that make this relationship with the rhizobium possible.

The contract is the first major one signed by Allelix, a new biotechnology company owned jointly by the Ontario government, John Labatt Limited and the Canada Development Corporation (see *Canada Weekly* dated February 9, 1983).

Michael Burns