

# Canada Weekly

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- The Great CPR Exposition, 1
- Oil sands project takes off, 3
- Zimbabwe Prime Minister Robert Mugabe visits Canada, 3
- US upgrades Canadian links, 3
- Pope to visit Canada, 3
- Anti-explosion system blasts into world markets, 4
- Auto trade surplus with US jumps, 4
- Population hits 24.9 million, 4
- Major electronic breakthrough for the severely deaf, 5
- Canadarm reaches out, 5
- Twins top triathlon in New York state, 6
- Museum a source of learning and a rollicking world for kids, 6
- System tracks brain pressure, 6
- News of the arts — exhibition, new orchestra, arts briefs, 7
- News briefs, 8
- Canadian trucks shipped to Colombia, 8



Glenbow Museum

The dramatic story of Canada's "national dream" — a railway stretching from sea to sea — is retold in vivid detail at *The Great CPR Exposition*, which opened this summer at Glenbow Museum in Calgary and continues until May 13, 1984.

The show, the largest exhibition ever mounted by Glenbow Museum, traces the arrival and impact of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) on western Canada from the 1870s to 1930. The opening of the exhibition in August 1983 marked the one-hundredth anniversary of the arrival of the CPR in Calgary in August 1883. Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, whose ancestor Donald Smith drove the CPR's historic last spike, was on hand to officially open the show.

No other company has played as major a role in the shaping of modern Canadian history as the Canadian Pacific Railway. With the driving of the last spike in 1885, the young nation of Canada was linked to

the West for the first time. The CPR was to have a lasting effect on virtually every aspect of western Canadian life: industries, settlement and immigration, the Indian and Métis peoples, tourism, irrigation and shipping.

Many details surrounding the building of the railway are vividly recalled in the exhibition: the first arduous survey parties in search of an easy passage through the Rockies; the explosive controversy of the "Pacific scandal" (when the Macdonald government was accused of awarding the contract for building the CPR to Sir Hugh Allen in return for party contributions); and the back-breaking construction of a railway link across the prairies through the mountains and down to the sea.

Five large model dioramas illustrate scenes from building the railway across the prairies and through the mountains, including the towering Stoney Creek bridge and the popular spiral tunnels. Railway construction on the prairies is shown in one large diorama and the arrival of the CPR in Calgary in another.

The show includes about 150 photographs displayed in reproductions of the old wooden frames that once graced the walls of CPR stations and offices. There is a three-quarter-scale model of an avalanche shed and a model railway station complete with a clicking telegraph key. There are stage settings of a 1929 dining car and a sleeping car from the First World War period, model ships and old furniture from the Chateau Lake Louise and Banff Springs Hotel. Patrons may rest between attractions on wooden benches from the Winnipeg train station.

The historic last spike is on view, along



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