

World Exhibitions Program

World Exposition on the Environment

The 1974 World Exposition on the Environment at Spokane, Washington, was the first Canadian participation in world expositions under the responsibility of the Department of External Affairs. In April an island in the Spokane River which served as Canada's exhibit site was converted into a permanent park. Some 45 species of trees and shrubs common to Canada were landscaped into the area. These, along with numerous annuals, a waterfall and a children's playground resulted in an effective parkland setting to which the Expo 74 organizers and the audience reacted enthusiastically.



Haida Indian sculpture, B.C.'s contribution to Expo 74, Spokane.

The island won three distinct awards for its environmental artistry and for translating the environmental theme of the Expo into a lasting reality. The Grand Award presented to the Department of External Affairs by the Associated Landscape Contractors of America Inc. was inscribed: "In recognition of your efforts in improving the environment for the benefit of mankind. This Award commends you for promoting, protecting and preserving the heritage of beauty for all future generations".

The other two awards were First Place in Community Enrichment, presented by the Washington State Nurserymen's Association, and the Certificate of Merit of the American Association of Nurserymen Inc.

The site was renamed Canada Island by resolution of the City of Spokane and a dedication ceremony took place on the island on April 30 when the Mayor of Spokane, the Canadian Consul General in Seattle, and Patrick Reid, Canada's Commissioner General for Expo 74 exchanged greetings and unveiled a temporary plaque. The Exposition was opened by President Nixon on May 4.

On August 28, designated "Canada Day", Ambassador Cadieux and Mayor Rodgers unveiled a permanent bronze plaque set in local stone. The flags of Canada and the United States are to fly over the park in perpetuity. Attendance at Expo 74 totalled over 5 million, of which it is estimated approximately 3.5 million visited Canada Island.

"Canada Week" celebrations, August 28 to 31, included "British Columbia and Alberta Days". A daily "Canada Show" spectacular featured the RCMP Musical Ride, the City of Winnipeg massed pipes and drums, the Feux Follets, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry band and the Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps guard and band from HMCS *Quadra*. Angèle Arsenault was hostess and vocalist. The show was produced by Jack McAndrew of the Charlottetown Festival.