

Pensioners push pedal power

Some 90 'senior citizens' from Vancouver, British Columbia, ranging in age from 55 to 73 have completed a lengthy bicycle journey through Australia and are currently pedalling in New Zealand.

They are all members of the Cross Canada Cycle Touring Society, and are known as "Bert's Bikies", after Bert Robinson, the founder and executive director of the society.

Mr. Robinson, a retired aviation executive, said the society regards the journey as an important way of "keeping Canada aware of its senior citizens and their full potential as energetic and alert members of a society that has long underrated this vital segment of the population".

The bicycle trip was also made to enlist seniors from Australia and New Zealand to join the society in a cross-Canada cycle tour in 1986. The tour will end in Vancouver at Expo '86, the world exhibition with transportation as its theme.

The 3 200 kilometre Australian odyssey started in Cairns on August 28, continued along the east coast through Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne and ended in Adelaide 60 days later. The group



Lilian Emerson of Langley, British Columbia, one of the oldest members of the Canadian cyclists group, adjusts her crash helmet on New South Wales Minister of Tourism Michael Cleary.

covered an average of 50 to 105 kilometres a day, depending on whether they decided to stay in an area or they had Australian relatives in the towns they travelled through.

The Canadians travelled under the banner, "Silver Power", as their tour was co-sponsored by the Retired Persons Federation of Australia. They also assisted in raising funds for the Australian

Deafness Council Appeal.

The New Zealand segment of the journey, which started in late October, is expected to last 40 days. The group will cover 2 500 kilometres exploring both islands in New Zealand before returning to Canada for the Christmas season. Mr. Robinson, however, will remain behind to recruit the teams from Australia and New Zealand to tour Canada in 1986.

Bert Robinson organized the Australian and New Zealand tours after advertising on television in Vancouver. All members were subjected to 15 weeks of training before leaving Canada, and underwent special stress tests to ensure their fitness for the tour.

The venture followed a similar trip in 1982 when a team aged between 60 and 77 rode from Victoria in British Columbia across Canada to St. John's, Newfoundland, covering the 7 000 kilometres in 100 days.

RCAF anniversary marked by stamps

Canada Post Corporation has issued a new 32-cent domestic rate stamp to honour the sixtieth anniversary of the establishment of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) as a permanent part of the Canadian forces.

The stamp was designed by Toronto artists William Southern and Ralph Tibbles. It features pilot's dress from three important periods in the RCAF's colourful history — the First World War, the Second World War and the present.

The first Canadian air corps, consisting of one aircraft, two officers and one non-commissioned officer, was formed in 1914 following the outbreak of the First World War. Although it was disbanded a year later, some 23 000 Canadian airmen served in the British Royal Flying Corps, the Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Air Force during the war.

In 1920, the Canadian government authorized a non-permanent force and in 1923, King George V bestowed the title "Royal" on it. The RCAF became a permanent part of Canada's armed forces on April 1, 1924.

During the 1920s and early 1930s, the RCAF performed mostly non-military tasks such as forestry and fishing patrols, photographing the unmapped North and carrying out mercy flights.

During the Second World War, RCAF bomber and fighter squadrons served with great distinction in Europe, Africa and Asia. In Canada, the RCAF trained more than 130 000 allied airmen through the British Commonwealth air training plan.

Since the Second World War, the RCAF has served as part of NORAD, NATO and UN forces. In 1968, the RCAF merged with the Canadian army and navy to form the unified Canadian Armed Forces.

The stamp was issued in five-colour lithography.



Sale of fish to USSR

Canada recently signed a contract to supply up to 3 682 tonnes of fish to the Soviet Union. The potential total value of the sale is about \$3 million.

The fish, which will be of different species, will be supplied from 14 fish processing plants located in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

The contract was negotiated between the Canadian Commercial Corporation and the Foreign Trade Association, "Prodintorg", of the USSR. Negotiations were conducted under the terms of a fisheries agreement between the two countries and the contract represents the first major sale under the agreement.