

News of the arts

Museum stuffed with birds

The National Museum of Natural Sciences in Ottawa recently acquired an important collection of more than 200 stuffed birds, the property of the late A. Bourignon, a member of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club until his death in 1968.

Commenting on the collection, *Le Droit* journalist Pierre Ouimet, wrote:

"The specimens of the Bourignon collection are preserved and stuffed with astonishing accuracy.... Indisputably, the taxidermists...have reproduced the colours, poses and attitudes of these birds in a very lifelike manner.



Le Droit photo by Paul Chiasson

Bittern and infant.

"The collection includes a wide variety of volatiles, from the tiny ruby-throated hummingbird weighing barely two ounces (56 g) to the majestic 12-pound (5.40 kg) whistling swan. There are also magnificent specimens of eagles, owls, and a loon dubbed the "diver" in Europe because of its ability to spend relatively long periods under water.

"In addition to the most common birds of this area, such as the American robin, the blue jay and the black-capped chickadee, the collection includes rarer birds such as the black common raven and the turkey vulture....

"...the rarest bird in the collection is undoubtedly a summer tanager, a small, entirely red bird which must have wandered thousands of kilometres from its natural habitat."

School population changes shape

Fluctuations in the school-age population, which have plagued education planners throughout the 1970s, are going to get worse, not better. This is the conclusion of a new study based on 1976 census data which has just become available.

Statistics Canada's, *The Class of 2001* projects the size of Canada's three school-age population groups to the turn of the century. The report studies the implications for enrolment, teacher hirings, finance, and employment opportunities for young people.

Demographic factors

Fertility and migration have changed the shape of the school population. The decline in fertility (average number of babies *per* woman of childbearing age), which began about the early 1960s, was sharper than expected. The resultant drop in births, immediately after the postwar baby boom, produced waves in the young population.

The number of elementary children in the country is likely to continue to drop until the early 1980s from 3.69 million in 1976 to 3.29 million. Numbers will level off for a few years, rise about 10 per cent to the mid-1990s, and then fall again.

The secondary age group is now decreasing. The low point is projected to be 1.46 million in 1990, about 24 percent fewer than present figures.

As the younger age groups mature, the same fluctuations will affect the post-secondary population, although there will not necessarily be a corresponding rise and fall in post-secondary enrolment, as many social and economic conditions influence students' decisions to continue their education. The group should peak at 3.36 million in 1982. It will fall to a low about 2.65 million by the middle of the 1990s.

Migration impact

Migration has counterbalanced or exaggerated the impact of fewer births. Over-all, during 1977-78 Canada gained an average 1.5 residents *per* 1,000 population, a total of 34,700. But migrants were not distributed equally among the provinces. Alberta's net migration of 34,000 gave a rate of increase of 17.9 *per* 1,000 — nearly triple what it had been only four years earlier. Quebec had a net loss of

Research on aging

The Ontario government is setting up a research agency on aging to be given \$1.5 million over the next three years.

Provincial Health Minister Dennis Timbrell made the announcement in a speech to a medical symposium on aging, in Ottawa last month.

"While our interests are primarily health-related, like increasing knowledge of the nutritional requirements of the aged, research will not be limited to medical concerns.

"This group will support research into a broad range of issues, including ways of enabling older people to live independently in their communities."

In his speech, Mr. Timbrell noted there were 140,000 more senior citizens in Ontario today than there were ten years ago. And population projections show that by the year 2000, Ontario will have more than 1.3 million senior citizens.

45,000 or minus 7.2 residents *per* 1,000, in contrast to its 1973-74 loss of 2,000 or minus 0.3 *per* 1,000.

Projections of the three school-age populations in the Atlantic provinces, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan suggest that the next increase will fall far short of the baby-boom peak, and the subsequent decline will be steeper than any yet experienced. On the other hand, the age groups in Alberta and British Columbia are expected to rise to the baby-boom level or higher before the turn of the century.

Posthumous award

The Cross of Valour, Canada's highest decoration for bravery, was awarded posthumously to Thomas Hynes by Governor-General Edward Schreyer at an investiture at Government House March 9. It was accepted by his mother.

Mr. Hynes, 19, of Fortune Bay, Newfoundland, died on December 29, 1977, when he dived through a frozen pond and saved the life of his eight-year-old cousin.

During the ceremony, Mr. Schreyer presented one Cross of Valour, nine Stars of Courage and 18 Medals of Bravery.