

Events

1994 Commonwealth Games to be held in Victoria

Canada is rapidly becoming a favourite venue for international sports events. After the successful Calgary Winter Olympics last year, Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, has been chosen to host the Commonwealth Games of 1994.

BC residents expect the British team to feel particularly at home, since Victoria is regarded as the most English of Canada's cities. Afternoon tea is still served at the stately Empress Hotel, and in summer the lamp posts are bedecked with flower baskets, a tradition dating back to Victoria's 75th anniversary in 1937.

'To realise Victoria, you must take all that the eye admires most in Bournemouth, Torquay, the Isle of Wight, the Happy Valley at Hong Kong, the Doon, Sorrento, and Camps Bay; add reminiscences of the Thousand Islands and arrange the whole around the Bay of Naples, with some Himalayas for the background.' Such was Rudyard Kipling's impression of the city.

The 1990s could also see the return of the Olympics to Canada. Toronto is still one of the main contenders to host the 1996 summer Olympics.

Technology

Canadian technology will help cut UK immigration queues

British passports will never again be the same – thanks, in part, to Canadian technology. On August 15 last year, the Home Office started to issue machine-readable passports in the new European Community format. The new passports – designed to reduce the time spent at customs and immigration – are produced with equipment that is manufactured by AIT

Corporation of Nepean, Ontario.

AIT has supplied the UK government with passport printers, spot-check and quality-assurance readers, laminators and back-up work stations that are capable of producing documents of the highest quality. In addition, the Canadian firm has provided consulting services, and has helped introduce evaluation, training and maintenance systems.

The passport office in Glasgow was the first to issue the new passports; the other five UK offices will soon follow suit. Eventually, the Home Office will be able to produce some 30 000 passports per day, with the larger offices handling 6500 each.

For the time being, British Embassies and High Commissions will continue to issue the traditional passports. However, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has commissioned AIT to design and implement a pilot scheme for issuing machine-readable passports overseas. The traditional UK passport is clearly on its way out.

Education

Vancouver to become distance-learning centre

Distance learning throughout the Commonwealth is likely to receive a significant boost with the establishment of the Commonwealth of Learning in Vancouver.

The proposals for a new learning centre were put together by a Commonwealth Working Group chaired by Dr John Daniel, president of Canada's Laurentian University. The aim of the centre is to help Commonwealth countries apply the techniques of distance education to improve their human resource development.

Among the centre's priorities are the sharing of open-learning courses between Commonwealth universities and colleges;

promoting co-operation in distance education to meet regional needs; training staff in distance-education techniques; and using advanced communication technology to run joint seminars between universities.

Some 15 Commonwealth governments, including Canada's, have pledged funds to establish the centre. On the basis of present commitments, there should be at least £15 million available for the first five years of the centre's work.

Health

Canadians win W.H.O. health awards

The Canadian government has been honoured several times over by the World Health Organisation. Jake Epp, Canada's Minister of Health and Welfare, was recently presented with the WHO 'Health for All' medal for his efforts in promoting health in general, as well as the WHO 'No Tobacco Award' for his leadership of a campaign to reduce smoking.

At a ceremony in Ottawa, Dr Carlyle Guerra de Macedo, Director of the Pan American Health Organisation and WHO's Regional Director, also presented awards to a former Minister of Health and Welfare, Marc Lalonde – the author of 'New Perspectives on the Health of Canadians' – and to Maureen Law, Deputy Minister of Health and Welfare.

In addition, two other individuals received medals for promoting a tobacco-free society. Garfield Mahood, has for 14 years been spokesman, strategist, administrator and leader of the Non-Smokers' Rights Association, and has played a leading role in the struggle to reduce tobacco-related diseases. The other winner, Dr David Nostrakken, is Co-Chairman of the International Union against

Cancer, and has campaigned on smoking and health issues in Africa.

The Organizing Committee of the Calgary Winter Olympics was also honoured for its efforts to provide a smoke-free environment for Olympic events. In addition, two Canadian newspapers received awards: the Kingston Whig Standard, for being the first daily newspaper in Canada to close its pages to tobacco advertising; and the Toronto Globe and Mail, for being the first metropolitan newspaper to take the same action.

Culture

Ottawa's Museum of Civilization takes shape



Opening this summer will be Ottawa's exciting new Museum of Civilization featuring reconstructions of scenes from Canada's past.

Recent visitors to Ottawa's parliament buildings cannot have failed to notice a striking new architectural creation that has been taking shape just across the Ottawa River. It is the new Museum of Civilization which will be opening its doors later this year.

One of the most important features of the new museum will be a display of northwest-coast Indian art, including totem poles, house posts and mortuary carvings that will be erected along the 90-metre length of the museum's Grand Hall. One of the best-known poles on display will be the 13-metre-high Wakas Pole on loan from the Vancouver Museum.

The largest the most dramatic of the building's

exhibition spaces will be the three-storey History Hall. Visitors will be able to wander through full-scale reconstructions of scenes from Canada's past, dating back 1000 years to the arrival of the first Norse ships.

The opening presentation in the Cultural Traditions Hall will highlight the contribution that Chinese-Canadians have made to Canadian society. The history of the Chinese in Canada will be featured, including the hardships suffered by the early immigrants, many of whom were involved in the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The exhibition will also feature the festivals, dances, religion, foods and medicines that are part of Chinese life today.



Exciting new Museum of Civilization featuring reconstructions of scenes from Canada's past.

Future exhibitions in this series will be devoted to the rich diversity of Canada's Jewish community.

Heritage

World Heritage Trust heads for Toronto

The University of Toronto will host the fourth World Congress of the World Heritage Trust from May 23-27 this year. The theme of the Toronto conference is 'Conservation and Industrial Development'.

The aim of the Trust, founded by the late Lord Duncan-Sandys in 1979, is 'to promote among the peoples of the world a greater appreciation of their irreplaceable heritage of architecture and natural

beauty and thereby encourage effective action for its conservation'.

The week-long conference is expected to attract 600 delegates from around the world. Under the chairmanship of Alexander Leman, a former president of the Ontario Association of Architects, the congress will look closely at three major issues: the siting of industry and its effects on the environment, the conservation of the 'built-environment' in industrial areas, and water pollution and the protection of the natural environment.

According to Princess Chulabhorn Mahidol, the Trust's Honorary President, 'the Heritage Trust's fourth World Congress will provide an ideal forum for the exchange of information and experiences on priority industrial environmental problems, on how some of these can be resolved, and on what needs to be done on those still defying solution'.

Sport

New invention will help tennis umpires and players

Canadian John Van Auken – once the guru of the photocopying industry – has turned his attention to what has hitherto been a distinctly low-tech business, namely, the tennis court.

Aware that disputed line decisions are all too often a major bone of contention among tournament players, he decided to find a way of eliminating human error in making the calls. His solution, Accu-Call Line Calling, should ensure that the relationship between players and umpires will be considerably sweeter from now on.

Accu-Call relies on circuitised panels set into the court surface on and outside the boundary lines, as well as on tennis balls that have electrically conducted fibres woven into them. Any ball that

lands in disputed territory triggers a signal to a display panel which shows whether it should be called 'in' or 'out'. If the system catches on, there will soon be fewer tantrums in major tournaments, because unlike the human eye, Accu-Call claims to be infallible.

Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia, where Van Auken operates, has now become what might be called the tennis-technology centre of the world with virtually every conceivable kind of operational tennis court on a 40 000 square-foot site. Side by side with Accu-Call is Practice Mat, another hi-tech system which enables players to make a precise and instant evaluation of their performance.

Canadian wins UK ultramarathon

Michel Careau from Quebec may be one of the slowest Canadians ever to run on Tyneside but he had the resilience to win the recent NALGO Six-Day Race at Gateshead International Stadium. In coming first he completed 501 miles, or 2015 laps of this stadium which is famous for its ultramarathons. The achievement eclipses his own national masters record and is not far short of the all time record set 100 years ago in New York's Madison

Square Garden. Michel Careau had only six hours sleep in as many days when he beat Londoner Richard Brown into second place, 49 miles behind him.

Award

Canada receives British Award

For the second year running the British Cartographic Society Award for Design in Cartography has been awarded outside of Britain.

This year the Award was given to Brock University, St Catharines, Ontario and Environment Canada in association with the US Environmental Protection Agency which published The Great Lakes – An Environmental Atlas and Resource Book.

Alan Hughes of Brock University was responsible for preparing the maps and at a recent ceremony at Canada House the trophy of the British Cartographic Society was received by Tom Boehm, Minister (Political and Public Affairs), from the President of the Society, Ralph Robbins.

For the next year this handsome trophy, which is engraved with all the previous winners, will be on display at Canada House, Trafalgar Square.



Mr Tom Boehm, Minister (Political and Public Affairs), recently accepted the British Cartographic Society Award from the President of the Society, Ralph Robbins, on behalf of Brock University.