

News of the arts

Film series honours settlers

Seven hour-long motion pictures under the title: *The Newcomers: Inhabiting a New Land*, commissioned by Imperial Oil to commemorate its centennial in 1980, have recently begun production (see *Canada Weekly*, Vol. 5, No. 12, March 23).



Cameraman René Verzière prepares a scene with members of the 1847 crew.

Nielsen-Ferns Inc. of Toronto and Montreal are producing the films. Haygood Hardy has composed the music for *The Newcomers*, and André Gagnon has prepared the score for 1740. Script writers include Timothy Findley, Guy Fournier, Alice Munro, Al Purdy, George Ryga, and Charles Israel, who is also ex-



Neighbours unwind after completion of an immigrant's cabin in the film 1827.



In the film 1847, an Irish immigrant, en route to Montreal, hopes to meet her husband. She learns that he died of cholera while waiting for her.

ecutive story editor. The scripts, or "documentary-dramas," were prepared in collaboration with an advisory board of 11 scholars, to ensure historical accuracy and authenticity of props and settings.

The series begins with a prologue that portrays lives of the original peoples in Canada before the white man arrived. This is followed by films devoted to the

two founding peoples and four other principal immigrant streams, spanning the period from the 1740s to the present.

Isolation, back-breaking labour, harsh weather, and homesickness confronted many of the characters whose stories are related, but from the newcomers' struggles emerged a courage and resilience from which Canada has benefited.

Canada Council brings publishers and readers together

The Canada Council has distributed more than 115,000 Canadian books worth \$620,000 in its fifth annual book purchase and donation program for 1976-77.

The book purchase and donation program, which this year attracted more applications than ever, is designed both as an encouragement to Canadian writers and publishers and to help organizations that have limited budgets for book purchases.

The books for 1976-77 were bought from 120 Canadian publishing houses, 76 publishers in English, 44 in French. The volumes were made up in kits of 200 titles each, 214 kits in English, 159 in French, and 67 bilingual (100 books in each language). Organizations in the

Atlantic provinces received 78 kits, Quebec 122, Ontario 99, Prairies and Northwest Territories 95, British Columbia and the Yukon 45.

Among the recipients are libraries in rural communities, community groups, senior citizens' clubs, hospitals, prisons, drop-in centres, primary schools in remote areas, and high schools that provide library service to the community.

Capital's new newspaper

Ottawa Today, Ottawa's new morning tabloid appeared in street corner boxes on September 1. With a print run of 55,000 for its 128-page first edition, editor Charles King says he hopes it will settle down to a regular 30,000.