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Branching out with Canada's Christmas tree industry

'Tis the Season.... The brightly-decorated Christmas tree — a silent but super star performer in the jollity surrounding the festive season — is also the basis of a fairly lucrative industry. This is true particularly in Atlantic Canada where some of the finest trees are cultivated and harvested for export to markets throughout North America and the Caribbean.

If the North Pole personifies St. Nick and his herd of high-flying reindeer, Atlantic Canada with its cool moist climate conjures up the image of the beautifully shaped aromatic Christmas tree.

Canada's Christmas tree industry, although limited to a brief, bright moment near the end of December, is a booming business that keeps tree growers on the hop most of the year. It brings in an annual \$8 million in exports.

As with everything else in life, the Christmas tree industry has its good news and its bad.

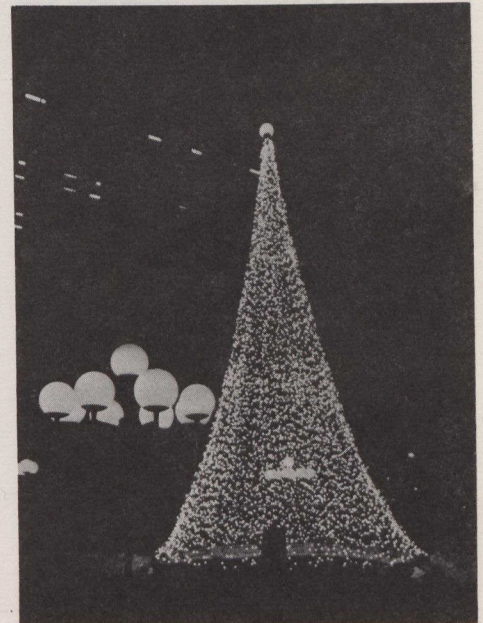
The United States is the top consumer of Canadian-produced trees — a fact that adds a challenge for Canadian tree growers. With the encouragement of US apartment by-laws, about 30 per cent of all US Christmas trees are now artificial, cutting a large slice out of the annual Canadian Christmas tree profits.

On the bright side there is a growing trend among young marrieds in their Twenties and Thirties to return to crafts and nature. When their thoughts turn to Yuletide, they gravitate to a tree that looks and smells like a Christmas tree should.

The trees are planted in the fall and spring. They come in various shapes, sizes and species — among them, white spruce, scotch, virginia and white pine, and from the fir family, fraser, white, noble and balsam.

Ecologists who might worry about forest regeneration need not give a thought to the felling of Christmas trees. They are planted for one purpose — to yield a harvest that can be sold like any other crop.

Atlantic Canada's Christmas tree crop covers less than 40 470 hectares — about



To millions, the Christmas tree, real or artificial, is a symbol of Christmas.

one-tenth of 1 per cent of the forested land in the Atlantic provinces, not including Labrador. Much of the land is made up of abandoned fields or cut-over forests that were often a jumble of weeds. Cultivation of continuous crops of trees help to improve the quality of the soil, and man-made ponds add protection against fire.

From late October to early December, the Christmas tree grower is fully occupied with the harvest. Before the cutting, trees are selected and marked. After they are felled, they are baled, loaded and delivered to buyers. For ease and speed of handling, protection against breakage and for saving space in transit, trees are usually compressed by some type of baling operation before being shipped long distances.

Nova Scotia is justifiably proud of its



SEASON'S GREETINGS



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long history of excellence in the Christmas tree industry. Its trees are shipped to the New England and middle Atlantic regions including such large cities as Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. Areas in the US form the prime market for Nova Scotia's Christmas trees — especially its high quality balsam fir. Some trees travel as far south as Miami, west to Chicago and southwest to Texas; others are destined for the Caribbean and South America.

Competition, though, is fierce.

British Columbia exports to the mid and southwest United States and Mexico, bringing in about half a million dollars annually in export sales.

Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick, Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire produce the popular balsam fir — first choice for many Christmas tree buyers. Nova Scotia must compete with the eastern United States market.

Despite the competition, Nova Scotia producers receive about \$5 million a year in export sales.

Quality controlled

The production of quality Christmas trees in the Atlantic region is a serious business. Producer-formed associations work on improving production methods and tree quality. These associations also provide a forum to discuss the most recent developments in Christmas tree operation and act as co-operative marketing agencies. As well, they make a valuable contribution to ongoing federal and provincial government research programs aimed at developing better production techniques.

The quality of a Christmas tree is its biggest selling feature and determines the seller's profit. Atlantic Canada's tree farmers, with their specialized skills, crop management techniques and ability, have no trouble providing high quality trees that meet the exacting requirements of the US market.

Trees are classified according to density, taper, balance, condition of foliage and presence or absence of defects. Foliage density is based on the amount of visible stem between the lowest and uppermost branches.

After being separated into foliage density classifications, general appearance is most important to the grading. Cone spikes and lichens may be present as they are natural characteristics.

The Maritime Lumber Bureau, a non-profit organization, acts as the grading agency for the industry and is responsible for its administration. The Atlantic



Christmas trees are compressed into bales for shipment to domestic and US markets.

Canada grade has been adopted by the Christmas tree industry and is supported by each of the Atlantic provincial governments.

After the grading, the trees are marked with coloured Atlantic Canada grade tags denoting density and tree symmetry. Besides providing a standard for tree quality, it is descriptive, giving the dealer and the consumer a good idea of the appearance of the tree once it has been hauled home from the lot.

Like a Miss Canada bathing beauty, the Atlantic Canada grade select (centre) tree has to look good from every angle but since most buyers prefer to place the tree in a corner, the Atlantic Canada grade select (corner) tree need only look great from three angles and sport not more than two blemishes on its corner side. Centre and corner selects are of the

highest quality heavy density; fancy and choice are medium density.

Roadside sales bring in another \$1.5 million to Atlantic Canada. Provincial residents receive the bulk of this money as direct income in the form of wages and salaries and net income for producers. With consumer re-spending, more than \$2 million in direct income is created for provincial residents.

The remainder of the revenue from Christmas tree sales — about \$200 000 — is spent on basic inputs such as fertilizers and saws, thus creating income indirectly for other industries.

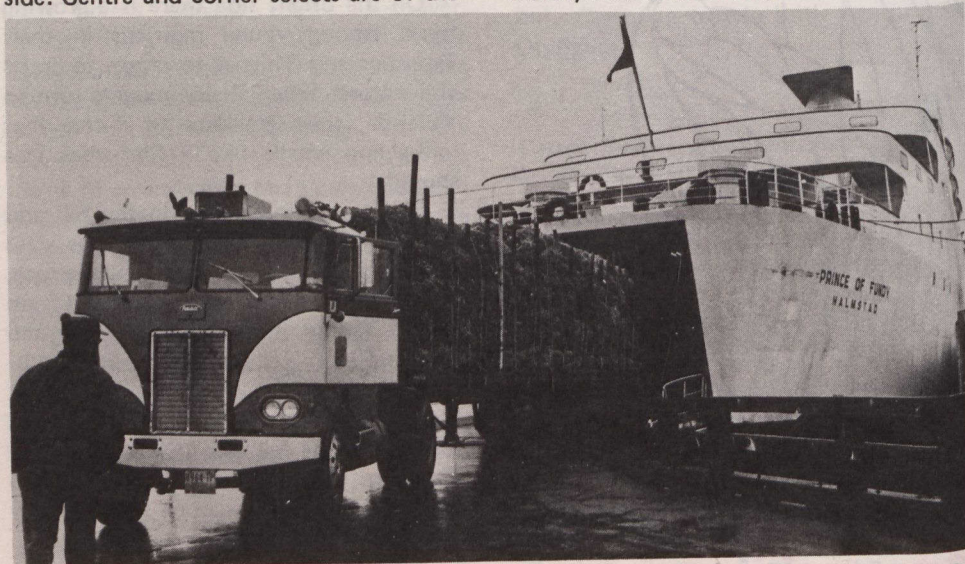
Select your own

There is scarcely an industry that has not been affected by rising energy costs and the Christmas tree industry is no exception. Especially the "choose and cut" operational arm of the industry. Excursions into the country "to bring home the tree" started about 15 years ago, when oil and gasoline were cheap and plentiful.

Says G. Myron Gwinner, a Hermann, Missouri retailer: "For all Christmas tree growers, the next few years may well be critical and only those who are well prepared and adjustable in their operations may be able to ride out these years. The energy situation is not likely to go away and it has the potential to become critical upon very short notice."

And yet, despite good times or bad, the Christmas tree and the Christmas tree industry will survive — as a symbol of warmth, love and goodwill. It will endure as long as there is roast turkey, plum pudding and tiny tots whose eyes light up to match a brightly baubled tree.

(By Shirley Plowman in Canada Commerce, December 1981.)



Nova Scotia's Christmas trees en route to points south. Some travel as far as Miami, US.

Season's greetings from the Prime Minister



Mr. Trudeau's Christmas card this year shows the Prime Minister surrounded by his three sons, Michel, Justin and Sacha.

Canada chairs GATT meeting

Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs Allan J. MacEachen chaired the thirty-eighth session of the contracting parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which met in Geneva, November 24-27. Minister of State (International Trade) Gerald A. Regan was the Canadian spokesman at the ministerial meeting.

Protectionism

Mr. MacEachen, in his opening remarks to the 88 trade ministers, warned of the detrimental effects of trade protection. "Protectionist policies, by obstructing international trade, are ultimately destructive of employment and, by undermining efficiency, they exacerbate inflation," he said.

Most trade ministers agree that the key to curbing the protectionist tide lies in whether they can agree on the critical issue of emergency protective measures for domestic industries, known as "safeguards".

Mr. Regan explained Canada's position: "Safeguard action has to occur in some circumstances to protect domestic employment against a great surge of imports from a particular country," he said. "When it occurs it should be temporary and done after consultation with exporting nations sending the harmful goods, and that action should be subject to an element of compensation."

Contribution to food fund

Agriculture Minister Eugene Whelan has announced that Canada will contribute \$6.5 million to the International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR) for the 1982-83 fiscal year.

The donation will be used to purchase and transport Canadian grains and other foods to help deal with emergency food situations in developing countries.

Since the IEFR was created in 1975 by the General Assembly of the United Nations, Canada has contributed \$19.5 million for the purchase and transport of Canadian-grown foods. Future commitments of \$6.5 million for 1983-84 and \$7 million for 1984-85 were announced at the joint World Food Program and IEFR Pledging Conference in New York in March.

PM to tour Asia

The Prime Minister will visit member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Japan from January 4 to 19, 1983. Countries included in the trip are Thailand (January 4-7); Singapore (January 7-9); Malaysia (January 9-11); Indonesia (January 11-13); and the Philippines (January 14-16). The Prime Minister will also visit Brunei (January 13-14), due to achieve full independence in 1984. In Japan (January 16-19) Prime Minister Trudeau will have discussions with the new Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone.

The visit to Southeast Asia and Japan, originally planned to take place last September, will provide an opportunity for consultations on international and regional issues as well as on Canadian political and economic relations with individual countries and with ASEAN as a regional organization. In each country the Prime Minister will also meet Canadian businessmen.

Canada's relations with ASEAN have increased broadly in recent years and, in addition to growing political consultations, include expanding commercial and

economic relations as well as a common interest in multilateral economic co-operation and shared Commonwealth membership in the case of Malaysia and Singapore.

ASEAN has become an important factor in the process for peace and stability in Southeast Asia and Canada has supported the efforts of its members in seeking a settlement of the problem of Cambodia. Canada continues to play a major role in international action to deal with the Indochina refugee problem.

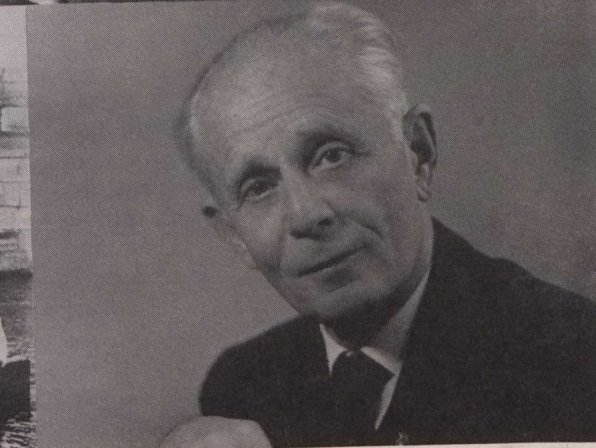
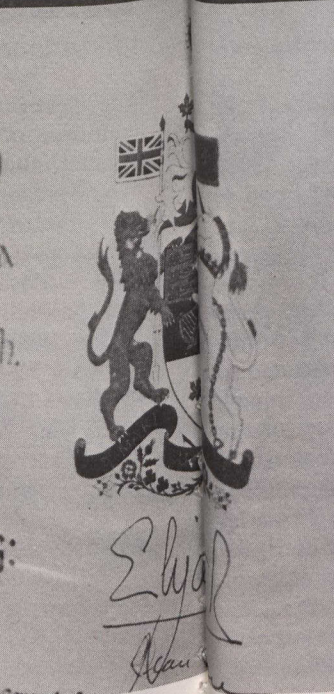
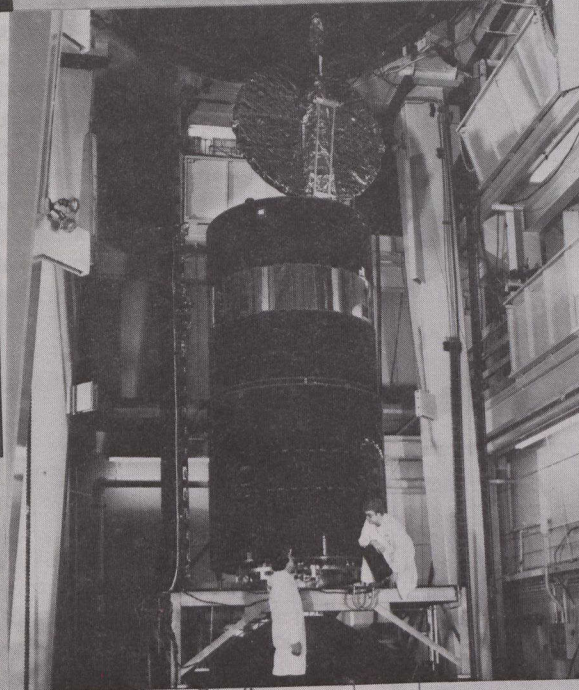
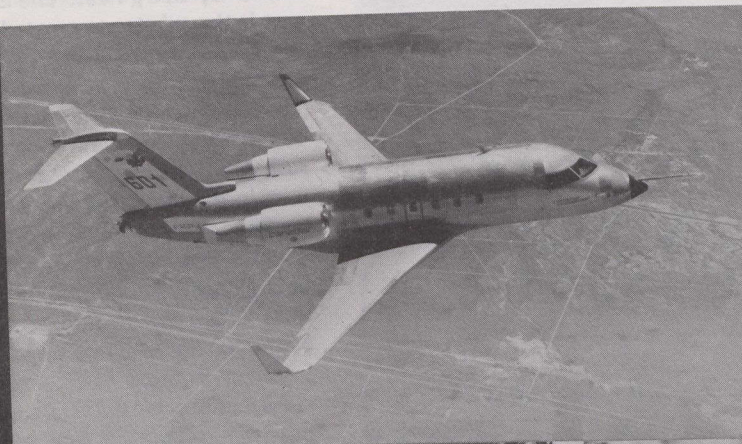
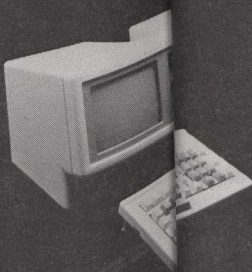
Canada's commitment to the development of a mutually beneficial partnership with ASEAN was recently reaffirmed in the Canada-ASEAN economic co-operation agreement which came into force in June 1982.

Not only will the Prime Minister's visit to Japan enable him to meet the new Japanese Prime Minister, but he will also continue his consultations with an important Summit partner as well as review the extensive Canada-Japan relationship. With two-way trade at approximately \$8.5 billion, Japan is Canada's second largest trading partner, a valued market and a potential source of investment and technology.

Bob Cooper

News of the arts

1982 pictorial — a few of the memorable that occurred in Canada during the year



(Top row, left to right): ■Canadarm, Canada's arm in space, claimed more accolades lifting and moving large packages in space. ■Allan MacEachen (centre) re-appointed Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs during 1982 (he was in the same portfolio from 1974-1976), met with NATO ministers in Val-Deserres, Quebec. ■This portable computer is one of the innovations of the high tech industry in Canada. ■The Challenger 601, Canadair's highly successful new plane, the third in a series. ■Canadian mother who gave birth March 25 to the first twins in North America born by artificial insemination. (Centre row, left to right): ■Sculpture given by a group of artists to the Canada Council on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary. ■Laurie Skreslet, who became the first Canadian to scale Mount Everest. ■Queen Elizabeth signed the proclamation which brought home Canada's new Constitution and proclaimed it into law on April 17,

1982 and (below) part of the historic document showing her signature and that of Justice Minister Jean Chrétien. ■Telesat Canada's Anik C-3, the world's most advanced communications satellite, was ejected into space from the US space shuttle Columbia. ■Mavis Gallant, winner of the Governor General's literary award. ■Governor General Edward Schreyer cut the ribbon inaugurating the Terry Fox Centre for Canadian Youth in Ottawa, flanked by the parents of the late Terry Fox. (Bottom row, left to right): ■Pianist Glenn Gould, internationally-renowned artist, died. ■Bombardier Incorporated sold \$100-million worth of locomotives to Mexico, just one order in several international sales this year. ■This photo of canoers taken in 1910 was part of an exhibit commemorating the one-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the Rideau Canal. ■Hans Selye, scientist known for his theory of the relationship of stress to disease, died.

Lasers speed up conversion of vitamin D

A breakthrough in laser technology by the National Research Council (NRC) could revolutionize the production of vitamin D, one of the key ingredients in animal feed.

The development promises to reduce vitamin D production costs dramatically and could make Canada the first country to use laser technology in a chemical factory.

In the latest issue of *Science Dimension*,

NRC says the discovery "may herald the introduction of a whole range of laser applications in industrial chemistry". NRC has applied for patents on the process in both the United States and Canada.

Vitamin D is required by all animals, including humans, for healthy formation of bones. Rickets, a severe malformation of bone structures, results from a deficiency. Under normal circumstances, sunlight converts matter in the skin into a

substance that is later turned into vitamin D by body heat. The key to the process is the substance created by the action of the sun on the skin. It is known as previtamin D.

The conversion rate to previtamin D is 100 per cent in the human body but the rate drops to a maximum of about 30 per cent in the industrial process.

The breakthrough for the research council was discovering that lasers could be substituted for a mercury lamp to produce a conversion rate of nearly 100 per cent, using a two-stage process. A krypton fluoride laser, used in the first stage, converts the starting material to previtamin D at a rate of 26 per cent. This is lower than the current industrial process but it paves the way for the second stage by creating, at a rate of about 70 per cent, a byproduct known as tachysterol. This can then be converted completely to previtamin D.

Christmas stamps

Canada's Christmas stamps for 1982 feature nativity scenes assembled with figurines from a Christmas crèche. The first such crèche is attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, who is alleged to have created a manger scene with animals in a cave at Greccio, Italy, where he celebrated Christmas in 1223. This year marks the eight-hundredth anniversary of the birth of this saint.

St. Francis was born in Assisi, Italy, in 1182, the son of a wealthy textile merchant. He devoted his youth to riotous living; however, a period as a prisoner of war and a serious illness changed him. He eventually gave up his possessions and lived a life of poverty and service to God. He soon began to attract a group of followers. Indeed, by the time he died at Assisi in 1226, Franciscan missions had reached England, France, Germany, Hungary, Spain, Morocco, Turkey, and the Holy Land; and less than 20 years after his death, two Franciscans arrived at the Mongol court.

A group of Franciscans known as Récollets were the first missionaries in the St. Lawrence River area. Four arrived there with Champlain in the spring of 1615 and built a house with a chapel at what is now Quebec City.

One of their members, Father Le Caron, quickly visited the Huron territory to be the first to proclaim the name of God in those parts. In 1616, with a view to converting the Indians, the Récollets proposed a threefold policy of settling Europeans in Canada, recruiting missionaries, and informing authorities in France of developments in Canada. These policies influenced New France for many years.

Against a backdrop of traditional Christmas colours, these three stamps tell part of the nativity story — the shepherds tending their sheep the night of the birth; the wise men bringing gifts from afar; and Mary and Joseph and the infant Jesus in the manger.

Mrs. Hella Braun of Kitchener, Ontario, created these figurines over 30 years ago for a single crèche. They were photographed by Bert Bell of Toronto. Jonathan Eby, also of Toronto, designed the stamps.



Canada-Brazil study to locate mineral resources

An important geophysical and geochemical study, carried out jointly by the Geological Service of Canada and by the National Department of Mineral Production of Brazil, was recently completed in Brazil.

The project, supported by the Canadian International Development Agency, was financed with the help of a \$4.4-million loan from the Canadian Fund of the International Development Bank.

According to Brazil's National Department of Mineral Production, it was the most important geophysical and geochemical study ever carried out in Brazil. It provided basic data that is expected to be of great value in locating mining resources in the west-central part of the country, including parts of the states of Goiás, Pará, Mato Grosso and Maranhão.

Activities carried out included aerial surveys, geophysical, geological and geochemical analysis, and the preparation of maps and reports. In addition, a Brazilian aircraft was equipped with the latest geophysical mapping resources and technicians were trained in their use.

Work on the project started in 1975 and the first data results were obtained two years later. In the ensuing five years the region has become the section of the country where the greatest number of mineral prospecting concessions have been extended.

News of the arts

Treasures to University of Toronto

The Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies of the University of Toronto will house a large collection of ancient, Christian and medieval artifacts bequeathed by New York psychiatrist Lillian Malcove Ormos.

Sheila Campbell, a professor of fine art and archaeology, who specializes in early Christian and Byzantine art, has been appointed curator of the collection and the works will be tended by the Royal Ontario Museum.

Lillian Malcove Ormos, who died in 1982, collected the works over 40 years. Included are some 500 paintings, drawings, textiles, manuscripts, liturgical vessels, sculptures and architectural elements from prehistoric to modern times.

Christian and medieval collection

While a few pagan fragments from the Roman Empire and some works from the European Renaissance and later are part



Bronze oil lamp in form of foot in sandal. Cover is decorated with man's head wearing head-dress (circa 4th-5th century A.D.)

of the collection, it is primarily Christian and medieval in nature. Among the chief attractions are 50 pieces of Coptic textiles, 72 icons and 14 pieces of gothic furniture. There are limewood carvings from medieval Germany, a Lucas Cranach painting of Eve giving Adam the apple, a van Dyke painting of the Duke of Bavaria, as well as a bronze oil lamp in the form of a foot in a sandal, dated about the fourth or fifth century. Drawings by twentieth century artists Paul Klee, Henri Matisse, Picasso and Henry Moore are also included.

As the University of Toronto does not have an associated museum or gallery, a public showing is not expected for at least four years, during which the objects will be catalogued and studied. When it is finished, the Malcove collection will have a special showing on the St. George



Sketches by Picasso (signed and dated 1905).

campus.

According to *The Graduate*, September/October 1982 issue, published by the University of Toronto, Lillian Malcove Ormos began searching for a suitable recipient of her collection about seven years ago when she discovered she had a terminal illness.

"Anxious that the pieces not just form a 'pretty display' but be a 'hands-on' resource for scholars, she investigated the credentials of various centres for medieval studies. She was told the University of Toronto was among the foremost.

"Then there was the added advantage of the University's association with the Royal Ontario Museum, whose planned renovations would result in superb, climate-controlled facilities where the works could be both exhibited and carefully conserved.

"Though Lillian Malcove lived in New York as an adult, her adolescence was spent in Manitoba.... After putting herself through medical school, Malcove went to New York for her specialized training. There she married Laszlo Ormos, a Hungarian director of documentary films....

"Most of the pieces were purchased on her travels, before so many countries began imposing export restrictions to stop the outflow of their antiquities. Among the places she visited on her annual trips were Greece, Turkey, Japan,

Russia, Scandinavia and the Middle East...."

Further information about the collection may be obtained from Professor Sheila Campbell, Curator, Malcove Collection, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, University of Toronto, 59 Queen's Park Crescent, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2C4, Canada.

UNICEF Christmas card



Canadian artist Ken Danby presents Lily Schreyer, wife of the Governor General, with a copy of Danby's UNICEF Christmas card painting for this year. The card's model is Danby's son.

Malcove Collection University of Toronto

Chris Mikula, The Citizen

Track star dies

Harry Jerome, Canadian track star who shared the world's record for the 100-metre sprint for eight years, died in hospital on December 7. He was 42.

Jerome, who was born in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, ran the 100 metres in 10 seconds at the 1960 Canadian Track and Field Championships after running competitively for only one year, tying the world record. The record he shared with West German Armin Hary stood until the 1968 Olympics.

Jerome also briefly held the world record for the 100-yard sprint after running the distance in 9.1 seconds in 1966.

After he retired from running in 1968, Harry Jerome devoted himself to fostering a love for sports in young people.

News briefs

Petro-Canada, the Crown-owned oil company, has reorganized itself in an effort to streamline some of its operations. The company is now divided into two main business groups — Petro-Canada Resources, for exploration and development-related activity, and Petro-Canada Products, for refining and marketing. Previously, the company had been set up in four divisions — offshore and international, mainland Canada, refining, and special projects.

Canada will increase its aid for developing countries by 40 per cent a year in the 1980s, Agriculture Minister Eugene Whelan said at the UN's World Food Day ceremonies, October 16. About one-quarter of the government's \$1.5-billion development budget now is spent on agricultural development in the Third World. While Canada will keep providing food aid where needed, it will put more emphasis on development assistance — "in research, education and technical skills. And that's where we shine", Mr. Whelan said.

The Canadian Wheat Board has signed a one-year agreement to sell Japan 1.3 million tonnes of wheat and 900 000 tonnes of barley — the same quantity Canada supplied to Japan in 1982. Based on current prices the sale could be worth about \$400 million.

Two Vancouver firms have won contracts from the federal government worth about \$11 million to supply highly

sophisticated satellite data-processing and communication systems. Microtel Pacific Research Limited won a \$1.4-million contract to develop the first part of an improved voice and data telephone system for the *Anik C* satellite. The project will eventually be worth \$8 million. MacDonald Dettwiler and Associates Limited won three contracts — a \$5.5-million project to improve the ability of special airborne radar to make pictures of the ground.

Northern Telecom International announced recently it had signed a \$3.1-million contract to provide an SL-10 data packet switching network in Portugal. The contract, with Empresa Publica Correios Telecomunicacoes de Portugal, marked Northern Telecom's first product sale in the Portuguese market. It calls for an initial four SL-10 switches to form the backbone of a large-capacity public service packet switching network. The first two switches are to be installed in Lisbon by mid-1983.

Canada is granting \$50 000 to the League of Red Cross Societies for its program of medical and relief assistance to Chad, and \$20 000 for relief work in Zimbabwe. The funds will be provided through the International Humanitarian Assistance program of the Canadian International Development Agency. Continuing drought and civil wars have plagued Chad for 16 years. While the political situation is now somewhat stabilized, the worsening drought has resulted in severe food shortages. Canada's contribution will be used to support a Canadian medical team composed of a doctor and a nurse and to supply required medical supplies. In Zimbabwe, drought has resulted in crop failures leading to food shortages particularly in rural areas. Canada's contribution will go toward a feeding program for 20 000-30 000 preschool children in severely affected areas until the new harvest comes in next February.

Preliminary estimates for the third quarter of 1982 show that Canada recorded an estimated surplus of \$474 million on the international travel account, up from \$463 million in the year-earlier period. The rise in the total surplus was the result of a decrease of \$74 million in the spending of Canadians returning from trips abroad, while receipts from visitors to Canada dropped by only \$63 million.

Export financing transactions totalling \$258.6 million, involving loans of \$248.6 million and insurance of \$10 million to



Please can I have this for Christmas?

nine countries, have been approved by the Export Development Corporation (EDC). Export sales that will result if deals are finalized will create or maintain 8 470 person-years of employment in Canada and will involve 89 exporters and major suppliers. An additional 275 person-years of employment would result if two lines of credit are fully utilized. While details of the transactions or the names of Canadian companies could not be disclosed at this time for reasons of commercial confidentiality, they involve oil and gas well test equipment; gas processing and transmission complexes; reconditioning locomotives; an aircraft; goods and services for a pulp mill; electrical equipment and services; and mining vehicles.

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