PERLEY ALMA CULTURE LECTURE III

ART PHOTOGRAPHY. FILM

The Francais Theatre was located on the west side of Dalhousie Street, and opened in 1914. R. E. Maynard owned the Francais Theatre, which had 999 seats. It closed in 1961 as the Francais Cinema

Ottawa Openings up to 1920

In 1920, the year Loew's Ottawa theatre opened, thirteen Ottawa theatres were advertising motion picture entertainment. These were: the Dominion, the Russell, the Regent the Imperial, the Family, the Centre, the Strand, the Français, the Nationale, the Casino, the Princess, the Fern and the Rex. At the time, three of these, the Dominion, the Russell and the Family, featured combined movies and vaudeville.

The Dominion, which opened as Bennett's vaudeville theatre in 1906, has already been described (see Fig. 12). It was the only theatre of the three that presented vaudeville for most of its life. It came to a fiery end in 1921, and was not replaced.

The 1,733-seat Russell theatre had opened in October 1897, adjoining the Russell Hotel at the corner of Queen and Elgin (Fig. 127). When it opened, Ottawa already possessed a "legitimate" theatre, the Grand Opera House, erected in 1874 at 134 Albert Street at a cost of $40,000. The Russell replaced the Grand as the hub of Ottawa's cultural life, and soon the latter was offering its red plush seats and royal box to patrons of popular price melodramas.1 By 1909, the Grand had turned to vaudeville and movies. It burned down, together with a "nickel" theatre beside it in 1913.

Then the Russell became the only large legitimate theatre in Ottawa. Though it had burned in 1901, it

was immediately rebuilt. This theatre hosted classic stage presentations, road shows, concerts and soloists (including a portion of the Tremblay Concert Series), vaudeville, and, almost reluctantly, motion pictures. It closed in 1927 and was demolished in 1928 to make way for Confederation Square.2

The 1,142-seat Family theatre was built as a vaudeville house in 1910 on Queen east of Bank Street (Fig. 128). It was a fine theatre by contemporary standards: it offered a seven-piece orchestra, and its interior was decorated in "marble and tile with old rose, old ivory and Moorish tints." Its balcony was cantilevered: thus there were no obstructing pillars in the auditorium. In about 1912 vaudeville lost its pre-eminent place in the Family and, apparently, it was one of the first Ottawa theatres in which long movies were screened. But the Family had a checkered career, and at various stages of its existence offered plays and burlesque and, in addition, revived vaudeville as its premier attraction. It also acquired more names than any other Ottawa theatre, subsequently being named the Franklin, the

Capital, the Galvin, and the Embassy before closing in 1932.3

128 Façade of the Finlay theatre, Queen Street, Ottawa. (Public Archives of Canada.)

The 1,352-seat Français theatre, opened in June 1913 on Dalhousie Street, was also built as a deluxe "combination" house, though it was soon converted to an all-picture programme accompanied by a nine-piece orchestra. It was built of reinforced concrete and was supposedly fireproof. Its interior decorations were similar to those of the Family. Both theatres were managed in 1914 by Kenneth Finlay and belonged to United Motion Pictures Theatres Limited, a consolidation of the eastern Canadian theatre interests of Mark-Brock Theatrical Enterprises, the builders of New York's Mark Strand.4

The Casino, Ottawa's only burlesque theatre at the time, had opened on Little Sussex Street (behind

Union Station) in 1909. It mixed vaudeville and pictures with its girlie shows, and was remembered by Bill Gladish as an Ottawa "hot spot." The owner tried to change its name to the Majestic in 1925, but its patrons refused to recognize this innovation, and it reverted to the Casino. It was successfully renamed the Capital in 1928 when it changed its policy to an all-picture show, but (like many small theatres that did not earn large profits) it was not converted for sound movies and closed in about 1929.5

The Nationale (previously the Monument Nationale) was another early theatre that seems to have presented movies and stage shows. Near the Français on the corner of George and Dalhousie, this theatre seated over 700, catered to French-Canadian audiences, and was operated under the auspices of La Société du Monument Nationale. It occupied the second and third floors of a building and was surmounted by a fourth-floor billiard hall. The building was reported to have been in existence as early as 1904, but may not have contained a theatre at the time. According to Eric

Minton, the Monument Nationale opened in October 1906 with a "Capitaloscope" (a fancy word for a projector) offering moving pictures and illustrated songs.6

It seems that about 16 store theatres were opened in Ottawa between 1906 and 1912. Because many of these were short-lived enterprises, or changed their names and ownership frequently, and often did not advertise in the newspaper, it is difficult to discover exactly how many of them were opened or their opening dates.

Similarly, it is difficult to pin down the first store theatre in Ottawa. Moving Picture World in 1914 and 1915 gave Ken Finlay the distinction of being Ottawa's pioneering exhibitor with his People's Theatre on Rideau Street. The Canadian Moving Picture Digest believed in 1919 that George C. Talbot had opened the city's first store show in 1905, but neglected to give its name or address. Eric Minton culled from the Ottawa Journal of September 1915 the following description of what was believed to be Ottawa's first nickel theatre.

The Unique Theatre was on Rideau Street, in a store, with little or no ventilation. It was furnished inside with wood. Its roof was all wood. The seats and everything in fact was wooden. In front were a lot of slot machines where pictures could be seen for a penny. In back the pictures on the screen were the "wild-west" kind. The better class of people would not go to a show.7

Among notable Ottawa store theatres were the Orpheum at Somerset and Preston, formerly a skating rink which legend had it, could not be operated in the spring because of interruptions from flood waters: the Albert Street Nickel, whose owner (Ken Finlay) delivered sensational "Daylight Pictures" by leaving some lights on during the show: and the Star at Arthur and Somerset and St. George's on Bank between Somerset and MacLaren, both second-floor establishments distinctly dangerous in the event of panic or fire.8

Between 1913 and 1915, several theatres primarily dedicated to movies were constructed in Ottawa. These were for the most part considerably larger and more elaborate than their converted predecessors, and included the Flower and Centre theatres on Sparks Street, the Princess on Rideau, the Clarey and Imperial on Bank, and the Rex on Lorne Avenue. They were supplemented in January 1916 by the Regent on the corner of Bank and Sparks.

The Flower (later named the Strand) (Fig. 129) tried to maintain a "garden atmosphere," and was

a narrow elongated picture house running between Sparks and Queen [whose] walls and ceilings [were] constructed entirely of cement with a moveable roof operated on a sliding scale to expose sections of the auditorium to the sky during warm summer months.9

129 Entrance and lobby display of the Flower theatre, Sparks Street, Ottawa, in April 1916. (Public Archives of Canada.)

In June 1920, the theatre's summer atmosphere was reinforced by "breezy chintzes" which decorated its interior, and the "Strand Cascades," two "scenic waterfalls" in close proximity to the screen.10

The Flower was "next door" to the Centre theatre, latterly in business as the Mall and demolished in 1974 to make way for a squash club. The Centre accommodated a theatre organ and was built with carpet-covered rampways leading to the balcony which were held to be safer than steps.

The Princess and the Clarey were among the smallest houses of those listed. Both are still operating: the former was enlarged and substantially altered to become the Rideau theatre in 1931. The latter's name was changed in 1919 to the Fern, and in 1931 to the Rialto.

The Imperial was built of steel and reinforced concrete and had a cantilevered balcony. It tendered a women's lounge, mezzanine and balcony boxes, the latter furnished with "artistic candelabra," and a carpeted floor at the rear of the auditorium. A black-and-gold general colour scheme harmonized with "polished gumwood" woodwork. Artistic bas-relief panels decorated the side walls, and the stage area was adorned with eight "Greek" columns and a royal purple curtain. The plaster-decorated proscenium arch was topped by a Canadian coat-of-arms surmounted by the royal crown.11

The Imperial, which was also controlled by United Motion Picture Theatres Limited, subscribed for most of its life to a "straight pictures" policy, and was customarily advertised in its youth as "the house with the organ." (This was reportedly a "$20,000" instrument made in Ottawa.) The theatre still stands, though substantially altered and renovated (with the help of some of the old Capitol's equipment) and is now a strip joint.

The Rex on Lorne Avenue seems to have lacked any distinction until 1927 when it was transformed into the "New Rex." The remodelled theatre was meant to resemble a "Spanish bungalow," with "Spanish interior decorations in the colour scheme and investiture." Its stage was enlarged to accommodate vaudeville or plays, and its seating capacity was increased to about 1,000.12

The 1,036-seat Regent was built by local businessmen, though it was early acquired by the Allen chain. It was later sold to Famous Players Canadian, and survived until 1972. The theatre had an organ, a large orchestra, and a small stage, as it was primarily intended as a movie house. Like the Imperial it boasted boxes, balcony (but one of the steepest in Ottawa), fancy plaster decorations and a proscenium arch (Figs. 130-131). Publicity before its opening judged that it was "obvious" that "in drafting the plans...the style of the Strand theatre in New York [had] been brought into many advantages."13

130, 131 Foyer and auditorium of the Regent theatre, February 1918. (Public Archives of Canada.) At this time, the theatre was involved in the war effort, showing patriotic dramas and displaying Allied flags. (Strangely, there does not seem to be a Union Jack among them.)

All these theatres were eclipsed when Loew's Ottawa opened on 8 November 1920. unrivalled in its seating capacity, lavish decor, chandeliered domes and its vistas of sweeping balcony, mezzanine and marble staircase. The first week of its life was one of the most exciting in the theatre's history. Plenty of advance publicity led to a sensational splatter on opening day (Fig. 132). Thirteen pages of the Ottawa Citizen were devoted to descriptions of the theatre and the upcoming opening ceremonies, advertisements from contractors, sub-contractors and hangers-on, together with articles relating to the movies scheduled to run in the theatre and to Marcus Loew and his works. Thomas Lamb (who was in Ottawa for the opening) notified the public in a

large advertisement that he had been afforded greater pleasure in designing Loew's Theatre in Ottawa than many which had come under his supervision in larger cities because of "the tremendous scope for designing and engineering ability."

132 One of eighteen Citizen pages devoted to the opening. (Citizen, Ottawa, 8 November 1920.)

To open "Canada's $1,000,000 theatre," Marcus Loew came by train from New York with a "galaxy of movie stars." The list of stars changed with virtually every advertisement and newspaper report, both before and after their arrival, but seems to have comprised Will Morrissey, and Grace Valentine, Betty Bond, Muriel Ostriche, Lillian Walker, Gladys Leslie, "Texas" Guinan, Neysa McMein, Helen "Smiles" Davis, Maude and Marguerite Marsh, Ruth Hargrave, Margaret Beecher and Winnifred Westover. In heralding this group as "the greatest gathering of motion picture stars ever assembled at one time on the North American continent," Loew's publicity man, Terry

Turner, admitted "we got away with murder."14 Three of these stars were noteworthy chiefly because they were related to someone more famous: Marguerite and Maude Marsh were sisters of Mae Marsh (one of D. W. Griffith's leading ladies), and Margaret Beecher was the granddaughter of Henry Ward Beecher and the grandniece of Harriet Beecher Stowe.

The celebrities were met at Central Station by two Metro cameramen who filmed the event, by delegations from the Rotary and Kiwanis clubs, and by crowds so enthusiastic that police were needed to hold them in check. Led by the Governor General's Foot Guards' Band and mounted police, Marcus Loew and his movie stars rode in state to City Hall where, evening newspapers of 8 November reported, they were welcomed by three members of Board of Control, and the crush of spectators "exceeded anything since the reception of the Prince of Wales." The procession then travelled to the House of Commons and was greeted by Sir James Lougheed, acting Prime Minister and owner of Calgary's Grand Theatre.15 Eight years later, a Citizen

reporter remembered that "Texas" Guinan took the opportunity to "write a new chapter in the history of Parliament Hill" by tossing pennies to assembled youngsters,16 The Rotary Club hosted a luncheon for the party at the Chateau Laurier, at which Marcus Loew was introduced as representing an industry "with vast potentialities for good." The cigarettes provided for the luncheon were instead donated to 80 convalescing soldiers in hospital in Ottawa.

Marcus Loew and his stars appeared on the theatre's stage at each performance. They gave little speeches expressing pleasure at the reception they had been given, sang songs and told stories and jokes. Will Morrissey performed "stunts," Neysa McMein brought one of her paintings to be auctioned for "a charity to be named," and "Texas" Guinan led the stars in singing an adaptation of "Avalon," substituting "Ottawa" where appropriate. Between each appearance by the celebrities, the patrons were entertained by D. W. Griffith's movie "The Love Flower," short subjects and a comedy picture, and five vaudeville acts: Fox Benson, the McNaughtons, the Texas Comedy

Four, Jimmy Rosen, and Norton and Noble and a "Bevy of Girls." Even on this gala occasion, a balcony seat for a matinee cost 15 cents, orchestra seats 25 cents, and boxes and loges 35 cents. In the evenings boxes and loge seats cost 55 cents and all other seats were 40 cents.

In keeping with Mr. Loew's policy of "giving all a chance," no reserved seats were offered, except for those provided for invited guests. These included a party from Government House in which were Lady Rachel Cavendish, Captain Lloyd and Lord Richard Neville. (The latter had arranged for the Governor-General's Foot Guards' Band, and he was especially accommodated by the temporary removal of the seat in front of him, as he was suffering from a game leg.17)

Invitations had been also sent to the mayors of Ottawa and Hull, Sir James Lougheed, and various government and service club officials. Hundreds of people were turned away at the door as there were line-ups at the theatre all day, which sometimes stretched as far as Kent Street on

Queen.

The next day, the stars made well-advertised visits to various commercial establishments in Ottawa, made a tour of the city, and were received by the mayor of Hull. Marcus Loew delivered a speech in English, but noticed that the assembly did not laugh on cue. Later he chided Terry Turner for not informing him that his audience would be largely French-speaking.18

The celebrities returned to the theatre to appear on stage at each performance, and on the tenth departed by train for Montreal. There they did not open a theatre but were met by enthusiastic crowds, were given a civic reception and the key to the city by Mayor Martin,19 attended a Kiwanis Club luncheon, and were led by Professor Goulet's Famous Military Band in triumphal procession to Loew's Theatre, where they again appeared on stage.

In Ottawa the opening of the theatre was continuing to make headlines, as it had almost immediately become a subject of controversy. On 9 November the Evening Journal wrote that Alderman McKinley had introduced a motion of censure against Mayor Fisher and Board of Control for greeting "the motion picture people" at City Hall. The alderman was strongly supported by an anonymous Ottawan whose editorial letter was featured on the Journal's front page.

Of course it was not really a civic reception, but it was meant to, and did to some convey that impression. I hope that it is not true that when these people went up to Parliament Hill they were "received" by the acting Prime Minister, Sir James Lougheed, or any member of the Dominion Government ...If it is true, is there any sufficient reason why every circus which comes to the City of Ottawa should not be given a similar reception? ...I would not be surprised if Mr. Marcus Loew and his friends return to New York in the belief that they have visited the "original boob town."

The editor's reply to this letter contradicted the previous Journal report. According to his revision, Ottawa's official reaction was far more restrained than that of Montreal.

Visiting celebrities were not welcomed officially or otherwise, by any member of the Dominion Government when the parade found its way to Parliament Hill on Monday. Autos formed up on the sidewalk, paraders waited there for some few minutes, but no one appeared to receive them. After the delay the visitors withdrew and proceeded to the Chateau Laurier for lunch. The parade, incidentally, barely hesitated in front of the City Hall for the so-called civic reception.

On November 10, the newspapers reported that, in response to Alderman McKinley's pointed inquiries, Mayor Fisher informed the council that Board of Control did not give Marcus Loew a civic reception, that he did not know who paid for the band, and that no expenses were incurred by the city. "A gentleman" who had approached the mayor on behalf of the party had been told that the

occasion did not call for a civic reception. Marcus Loew had merely "called at the City Hall with some other visitors" as anyone was at liberty to do.

A letter to the Citizen published on 11 November censured Alderman McKinley for questioning so promptly and publicly the propriety of "the reception," "a mere act of courtesy extended to strangers within our city." The writer praised Marcus Loew who,

unlike some of our armchair celebrities, has earned his laurels as a potent factor in bringing happiness to millions of commonplace people, making low price entertainment practical across North America.

Apart from philanthropy, this man should always command commendation for his commercial enterprises which not only instructs and educates but affords employment to many thousands, by the erection and maintaining of numerous theatres,

when same abounds to the general welfare of the masses.

Another writer whose letter was published the same day was enraged by the misuse of the Governor-General's Foot Guards' Band, in that "the uniform that Drake, Nelson and Wellington swore by, and the flag they fought for [had been] used as a vaudeville advertisement!"

The theatre was the subject of two Journal editorials within a week of its opening. The first on 9 November was restrained in its approval of the theatre's existence.

Can anyone say that the city and its population are the worse for it? This much is certain, that men who now go with their families to the "show" several times a week are tremendously happier and better able to attend to their work and meet the worries of every day life than they and their families would be if they spent as much time and

money in the drinking bars as was spent in the old days.

And after all [the low-priced theatre] is an excellent substitute. The surroundings are clean and artistic, the music is good and in some cases ceates a taste for high class compositions and talent, much of the entertainment is educative in one way or another, and there is comparatively little of the objectionable because producers have found that that sort of thing does not pay. People who deplore the frivolous and urge that the time of men, women and children could be better occupied than in attending theatres are apt to lose sight of the fact that the theatres merely provide an opportunity for frivolity that would exist anyway and, but for them without many of the meritorious and orderly features which mark their entertainments. It is too early yet to say whether the low priced theatre is a blessing or a curse: and apparently it does not matter whether we pronounce the one [or] the other for Ottawa people have evidently made up their minds to patronize the theater whether it is a curse or a blessing.20

Possibly influenced by the near scandal surrounding the theatre's opening, the second Journal editorial on 15 November questioned the value of the theatre as well as the "public sense of values." The people of Ottawa were willing eventually to pay up to $700,000 for a "place of cheap amusement" they would never own, an extravagance that Ottawa could get along without for a while," yet they were protesting against investing $3 million in general hospital buildings that would end up being owned outright by the city and would fill a need "far more important to the well being of the community than a daily bill of vaudeville and photoplay."

The editorial was more or less a variation on a letter the Journal had published on 12 November,

What happened to the project for a Memorial Hall? Who is to blame if Ottawa is without an auditorium where the best in music and drama could and would be interpreted by real artists?

Who, indeed, is to blame, if we mistake straws for sunbeams? Could not the Ottawa money invested in the new theatre have been invested in an auditorium with more lasting results.

The opening ceremonies were again featured in both Ottawa newspapers on 16 November, following "a lively exchange over movie actresses" during a council meeting. To charges that "the motion picture places" were responsible for much juvenile crime and the Board "fell for the painted ladies and made Ottawa the laughing stock of North America," an alderman countered that the theatre was "an admirable thing for Ottawa" and provided entertainment for the poor. Mayor Fisher remarked, "If I had seen the ladies and had known in advance what I have since heard I might not have agreed to what I did." However, he still did not concede that he had agreed to anything: he had merely informed Marcus Loew's publicity agent that "anyone was privileged to come to the City Hall."21

The debate seems to have withered away. But on 1

December the Journal published Marcus Loew's letter thanking the "wonderful gentlemen" of the Rotary and Kiwanis clubs for making the visit of the party one they would never forget. This letter could hardly have served to pour oil on troubled waters, but it did not reignite the controversy. However, the service clubs remained sufficiently embarrassed to stage their annual Christmas benefits for underprivileged children at the Russell and Dominion theatres, though, no doubt, they had planned to use the big new theatre.

According to the Canadian Moving Picture Digest reporter, all the public comments and criticisms were too much for the newly appointed manager, William H. Stanley, and he suffered a nervous breakdown.22 He was replaced in December by J. D. Elms.

Nevertheless, perhaps all the fuss was worthwhile. On 9 November 1920, a Journal reporter commented, "the ceremonies in connection with the dedication of the house were of a character that will long be remembered by those who gained

admission." Mrs. George Payne, 71 years old, told a Citizen reporter in May 1970, "We thought it was beautiful—glittering sequins and everything. And Hollywood actors and actresses were there for the opening."23

Capitol Cinema

The Capitol Cinema (constructed 1920, demolished 1970) was the largest movie theatre ever built in Ottawaand was the city's only true movie palace. Opened in 1920, the 2530-seat cinema was regarded as one of the best cinemas designed by famed theatre-architect Thomas W. Lamb. The Capitol was located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Queen Street and Bank Street, and was opened by the Loews chain on November 8, 1920. In honour of the new theatre, a special train

from New York City arrived at Ottawa's Union Station, carrying Marcus Loew, Thomas Lamb, and more than a dozen silent film stars of the day, including Matt Moore and Texas Guinan. The train was greeted by the Governor General's Foot Guards band and thousands of movie fans. A motorcade took the visitors to the City Hall on Elgin Street, where the Mayor, Harold Fisher, was on hand for an official greeting. After a short tour of the city, the visitors were greeted by James Alexander Lougheed on Parliament Hill, and then taken to their accommodations in the Château Laurier. The crowds that greeted the motorcade at each stage of its procession through the city were described by the Ottawa Citizen as "throngs" with "unrivalled scenes of enthusiasm".

The opening performance that evening consisted of two films, D.W. Griffith's "The Love Flower" and a comedy entitled "Cheer Up", and four vaudeville acts. Crowds of people who were unable to obtain tickets for the sold-out show lingered on the sidewalks outside the theatre throughout the evening. After the performance, the revelry continued at City Hall, where the visiting celebrities and local notables celebrated until

dawn, with the actress Texas Guinan reportedly orchestrating the celebrations from the Mayor's chair. News of the party erupted into a scandal over the following weeks, with many questioning the appropriateness of hosting the alleged debauchery at the seat of local government and whether city funds had been used to purchase alcohol for the event. One city councillor, Napoléon Champagne, later defended his attendance at the party in the Ottawa Citizen by claiming that he had been "looking after the married men". Ottawa's Loews theater occupied the entirety of a prime downtown corner site. This enabled Lamb to design a grander lobby for the theater, with a majestic marble staircase and balustrade, a colonnaded mezzanine, and a domed ceiling with a great crystal chandelier. The auditorium was equally impressive, with its ornate proscenium arch, hand-painted ceiling dome, box seats, and balcony. The Capitol was considered to be among the finest movie palaces in North America.

Loews main competitor in Canada, Famous Players, promised an even larger flagship theatre on Sparks Street to trump the Loews cinema on

Queen Street. With a population of 150,000 at that time, however, Ottawa was likely unable to support two 2500-seat theatres, despite Famous Players' pronouncements. In 1924, Loews sold off its Canadian theatres, and the American Keith theatre circuit (which went on to become RKO Pictures) was able to outbid Famous Players for the Ottawa Loews. The cinema was renamed "Keith's Vaudeville", and shortly thereafter the marquee was changed again to the "RKO Capitol". For five years, Famous Players continued to announce on an annual basis that it would be building a competing cinema on Sparks Street. In 1929, however, Famous Players merged with RKO's Canadian operations, and Ottawa's largest theatre finally became part of the Famous Players chain. The name of the theatre was ultimately changed to simply "the Capitol". Despite the end of the vaudeville era, the Capitol continued to host musical concerts, plays and other events, along with its main film programming, throughout its history. The Capitol was the most prestigious auditorium in the National Capital Region, and it was at the centre of the city's cultural and social life. Its stage hosted, among others, Nelson Eddy, Ethel Barrymore, John Gielgud, Maurice Chevalier,

Michael Redgrave, Victor Borge, Pearl Bailey, Nat King Cole, Vladimir Horowitz, Glenn Gould, the Metropolitan Opera Company, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. In later years, The Who, Jimi Hendrix, Cream and Ravi Shankar all performed at the Capitol. Recordings of Hendrix's 1968 concert and The Who's 1969 concert at the Capitol circulating for years as two of the most sought-after bootleg recordings of the respective performers (in 2001, Hendrix's 1968 bootleg was finally released as a legitimate recording under the name "Live in Ottawa") In 1964, Famous Players announced that the Capitol would be divided into two theatres, to replicate the success of the nearby two-screen Elgin Theatre. The chain never acted on this announcement, however, perhaps in deference to the Capitol's role as Ottawa's main stage.

When the plans for the National Arts Centre were announced, the end of the Capitol was near. By the end of the 1960s, it was impossible to fill the Capitol's 2530 seats with the showing of a film. The president of the Famous Players chain, George Destounis, was quoted in the Ottawa Journal in

July 1969 as saying: "It's a beautiful theatre, but it has outlived its purpose". Deemed to be superfluous once the National Arts Centre was completed and an anachronism in the age of the multiplex, the Capitol was closed on May 1, 1970 and subsequently demolished. The last regularly scheduled film was M*A*S*H, but the actual last show was a sold-out benefit performance that included a stage show and a special screening of the Mary Pickford film, Pollyanna. The event was emceed by Alex Trebek, and the audience ended the show with a sad rendition of "Auld Lang Syne". There was little the residents of Ottawa could do to stop the demolition; the provincial government of Ontario would not enact heritage protection legislation for another five years. The Capitol was replaced by an office building that contained the three-screen "Capitol Square" multiplex. The Capitol Square was itself closed and converted to office space in 1999.

MAYFAIR CINEMA

Built in 1932 in the depths of the Great Depression, the Mayfair Theatre is one of Ottawa's last two

neighborhood cinemas, and one of the oldest surviving independent movie houses in all of Canada. It has the distinction of never having been owned by, or affiliated with, any of the major cinema chains. The Mayfair is notable for the fact that it contains a number of architectural features that make it unique in Ottawa, and possibly in Canada. It is one of the few surviving examples of an "atmospheric cinema", built with a particular theme to enhance the movie-going experience and draw the movie-goer into the world of the imagination. The same architectural features that were incorporated into its interior design in 1932 – the detailing that suggests a Spanish-style villa – have been virtually untouched over these past seventy-six years.

ARTISTS

Franklin Peleg Brownell (July 27, 1857 – March 13, 1946)

born in New Bedford, Massachusetts was a

landscape painter, draughtsman and teacher active in Canada.Brownell studied at the Boston Tufts School of the Museum of Fine Arts in 1879 and at the Académie Julian in Paris from 1880 to 1883 under Adolphe William Bouguereau, Tony Robert-Fleury and Léon Bonnat. There he met fellow expatriate and Canadian painter William Brymner. After spending some time in Montreal, Brownell moved to Ottawa in 1886 to take up the position of Headmaster of the Ottawa School of Art until 1900. He accepted the same position as headmaster between 1900 and 1937 with the Women's Art Association in Ottawa, later renamed the Art Association of Ottawa.Among his students Pegi Nicol MacLeod, Henri Masson and Robert Tait McKenzie. Brownell was elected a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts in 1895, and Ontario Society of Artists (1899–1907).Brownell had painted in the Antilles around 1913 and undertook a number of painting trips to the Gaspé and Gatineau regions of Quebec, to the Algonquin Park and other areas around Ottawa in Ontario. Brownell was a founding member of the Canadian Art Club in Toronto in 1907. Besides landscapes, he also

produced portraits, flower studies, marine and genre scenes in oil, watercolour and pastel.

Pegi Nicol MacLeod, (17 January 1904–12 February 1949),

Born at Listowell, Ontario, the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. William W. Nichol. Her father was a teacher at Glebe Collegiate and later principal at the Ottawa Technical High School. She attended Cartier Street Public School and Lisgar Collegiate in Ottawa and studied painting three years under Franklin Brownell at the Ottawa Art Association. She continued her studies at L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Montreal, around 1922, for one year and during that period won five medals for her outstanding work. At the Beaux-Arts she studied alongside of Marian Scott and Lillian Freiman.

From 1910 until 1934 she lived at home in Ottawa where she continued to work at her painting. In 1927

she travelled west to Alberta where she painted among the Stoney Indians. In 1928 she went further afield to the Skeena River, B.C., with Dr. Marius Barbeau, where she was able to paint the West Coast Indians. She did many paintings along the Gatineau River and hills and one of her scenes entitled "The Log Run" was awarded the Willingdon Prize in 1931. This same year she held a solo show at the Lysle Courtenay Studios on Sparks Street where she exhibited mostly landscapes and a few portraits including one of Marian Scott. In 1932 she held her first Montreal solo show at Eaton's. She did illustrations for French Canadian stories adapted by Dr. Barbeau which appeared in La Presse during the early months of 1933. Thirty of her paintings were shown at the Ottawa Art Association covering a wide range of subject matter also in 1933. She often visited the home of Maud and Eric Brown. Eric Brown was Director of the National Gallery of Canada from 1913 until his death in 1939. In her book Breaking Barriers F. Maud Brown describes those evenings as follows, It was a happy day when we first met Peggy Nichol. She was then about eighteen and was studying at the Beaux-Arts in Montreal. Peggy was an astonishing person. She was short and sturdy, with an intelligent, pretty face.

Bursting with vitality and ideas she was always ready for a discussion. She could act, dance, and ski, and was fear-less in the water. She was like a very much younger sister, and our house was her second home. We had special fun when Arthur Lismer was in Ottawa. Usually Harry and Dorothy McCurry, Kathleen Fenwick, Peggy, and often one or two others, would come in the evening. As Arthur's pencil simply could not stay in his pocket, he would begin to sketch, perhaps Eric with the cats or Peggy with locks of her hair getting into her eyes. Then more pencils and paper would appear, and we would all sit round sketching each other while Eric read from 1066 and All That or The Young Visiters. We laughed and chatted all evening till it was time for a late snack in the kitchen. One of Peggy's sketches of Eric Brown appears in Breaking Barriers opposite a sketch of Peggy by Arthur Lismer, Her departure from Ottawa opened new horizons for her in Toronto. There she was employed at window display under René Cera at the T. Eaton Company. In both cities she was active in the theatre. She had been actress and dramatist in Ottawa and in Toronto designed scenery for the Hart House Theatre.

In 1937 she married Norman MacLeod (originally from Fredericton, N.B.) who became Vice-President of the Balaban-Gordon Company, Inc., of New York City, a firm of contractors and engineers. The MacLeods moved into their New York apartment soon after their marriage. In the years that followed they had one daughter, Jane, and Pegi MacLeod began filling her sketch book with studies of Jane and her friends at play. Many of her paintings done in Ottawa had been of children at work at the Ottawa Public School Gardens on Second Avenue next to her own home. But the streets of New York City held a new challenge for her with their vigorous colour and action. Writing of her New York period, Donald W. Buchanan noted, . . . there in New York, the actions and events she watched were so multitudinous, the sensations she obtained from colour and motion so fluid and changing, that her own extreme sensitivity to all these stimuli proved at times almost her own undoing. She tried to put down on canvas and paper every aspect of the chaotic bustle that met her eyes from her windows on Eighty-Eighth Street; she wished to leave nothing out. As a result, in many of those pictures, the surface overflows with figures in motion, it is packed with now sinuous and graceful,

now wavering and erratic, lines and shapes. She tackled, one would think, the impos-sible in trying to depict so much within the necessarily restricted limitations of easel painting. Some of her conceptions demanded rather the vast space of murals. Yet, remarkably enough, one sometimes comes across single water colours - for instance, her impression she did of jostling crowds before the giant Christmas tree in Rockefeller Plaza - which in a small space, manage through subtle and brilliant colours and flowing line to give adequately to the spectator all she wanted to express of humanity, in its variety, rising vigorous and triumphant over the mechanism of the metropolis. During the summers from 1940 until just before her death she conducted art classes at summer school of the University of New Brunswick in the Fiddlehead Observatory (Brydone Jack Observatory), originally built in 1826. Barbara E.S. Fisher described her school as follows, You can't help feeling when you talk to Pegi MacLeod that it would be great fun to let her 'uncork' your talents at Fiddlehead, or anywhere else. You could feel quite secure in her hands, because primarily she would encourage you in your own individual way of self-expression. In teaching,

she devotes two weeks to formal drawing, using the great elms on the campus, the terrace, and the colorful Fredericton market as subjects. A 15-minute lecture each morning, and the students are on their own. The theory of color as expressed by the impressionists comes next, and they go right into the use of oils, using one primary color at a time, with white, then one primary and one secondary, till when the six weeks have gone by, they are using the full range of colors. The Daily Gleaner, Fredericton, recalled Mrs. MacLeod and her young daughter were familiar figures in our community and many will recall seeing Pegi MacLeod painting from the steps of the City Hall, the colorful scene of the market. In 1944 she was commissioned by the National Gallery of Canada to paint the activities of the three women's services and produced 110 oil and water colour paintings, now in the war collection of the Gallery. Following the war years she returned to depicting the scenes of New York City and in 1947 exhibited her oil and water colour paintings in Toronto and Ottawa under the title Manhattan Cycle. In 1949 she died in New York City after an eight month illness at the age of forty-five. Writing of her passing the late Graham McInnes paid her the following tribute, Her painting was

simple, gay and direct. It caught life on the wing, arresting for a moment in vivid pattern its shifting kaleidoscope. Those figures that she set down so freely remain as light as the touch of a snow-flake, and as deft as a weaver's shuttle. She found people - plain people - fasci-nating, and in painting them in a thousand gay and accidental groupings she poured out her almost inexhaustible vitality. It is a cruel irony that she who, for so many of those who knew her, personified the ageless spirit of enthusiasm and enquiry, should herself have been cut down in her prime. All one can say is that her paintings - of Ottawa, Toronto, the Gatineau, the North Shore, Manhattan - with their extraordinary brightness, their unforced gaiety and their often undisciplined exuberance, remain behind her to lighten a world shadowed by her passing, and to add to the achievement of Canadian painting.

John Grierson,
film producer (b at Deanston, Scot 25 Apr 1898; d at Bath, Eng 19 Feb 1972). His ancestors were lighthouse keepers and his father was a school teacher. He served as an ordinary seaman in WWI

and completed a brilliant academic career after the war, graduating with distinction in moral philosophy. On a Rockefeller scholarship to the University of Chicago, Grierson began his lifelong study of the influence of media on public opinion. In Hollywood to study film, he befriended the American filmmaker Robert Flaherty, whose haunting film *Nanook of the North* celebrated the daily survival of an Inuit hunter. In a 1926 review of one of Flaherty's films, he coined the term "documentary" to describe the dramatization of the everyday life of ordinary people. Grierson returned to England in 1927, intrigued with the idea of applying Flaherty's technique to the common people of Scotland. In his first film, *Drifters* (1929), the silent depiction of the harsh life of herring fishermen in the North Sea revolutionized the portrayal of working people in the cinema. Grierson decided to devote his energies to the building of a movement dedicated to the documentary aesthetic and directed only one more film. In 1938 the Canadian government invited Grierson to come to Canada to counsel on the use of film. Grierson prepared a report and on his recommendation King created the National Film Board (NFB) in May 1939 and appointed Grierson its first commissioner in October

1939, operating out of an old lumber mill on John Street near the Rideau Falls. It later expanded to 10 locations scattered across the city before shifting most of its work to Montreal.

With the outbreak of war, Grierson would use film to instill confidence and pride in Canadians. He was at the same time general manager of Canada's Wartime Information Board and thus had extraordinary control over how Canadians perceived the war. He imported talented filmmakers such as Norman McLaren. In film series such as *Canada Carries On* and *The World in Action*, he reached an audience of millions in Canadian and American cinemas. By 1945 the NFB had grown into one of the world's largest film studios and was a model for similar institutions around the world. Grierson's emphasis on realism had a profound long-term influence on Canadian film. "Art is not a mirror," he said, "but a hammer. It is a weapon in our hands to see and say what is good and right and beautiful." Nevertheless, Grierson did not believe that documentary film is a mere public report of the activities of daily life but a visual art that can convey a sense of beauty about the ordinary world. As the

war came to a close, Grierson grew weary of Canadian bureaucrats and resigned. In the panic of suspicion surrounding the infamous Gouzenko spy case in Canada, Grierson was brought before a secret tribunal and questioned about his one-time secretary who was connected to the spy ring. The investigators then threw doubt on Grierson himself for his alleged "communist" sympathies. He moved to UNESCO in Paris, where rising directors such as Rossellini paid him homage. He was soon almost forgotten in Canada. He returned to his native Scotland in the mid-1950s, where he hosted a public affairs program, *This Wonderful World*, for 10 years. Grierson was nearly broke when McGill University invited him to lecture in 1968. He began as a curiosity but soon was attracting up to 800 students to his lectures. Indira Gandhi called him to India to find ways to spread the principles of birth control to the villages. Sick with cancer, he returned home to England, where he died at Bath. Grierson was a firebrand whose single-minded devotion to the principle that "all things are beautiful, as long as you have them in the right order" had a profound influence on the history of film, and on the cultural life of Canada in particular.

NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

The creation of the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) is the central event in the history of Canadian cinema. The NFB has pioneered developments in social documentary, animation, documentary drama and direct cinema; and it has been a continuing initiator of new technology. Its films have won hundreds of international awards. The NFB was founded 2 May 1939 under the terms of the National Film Act and following a report on government film activities by John GRIERSON, who was appointed the first film commissioner in October 1939. The act was revised in 1950, primarily to separate the NFB from direct government control; this revised act included the NFB's mandate to interpret Canada to Canadians and other nations. The NFB was originally designed as a modestly staffed advisory board, but the demands of wartime production, together with John Grierson's personality, led to a shift into active production by absorbing (1941) the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau (formerly the Exhibits and Publicity Bureau, established in 1919). By 1945 the NFB had grown into one of the world's largest film studios with a staff of 787. More than 500 films had been released

(including 2 propaganda series, The World in Action and Canada Carries On, shown monthly in Canadian and foreign theatres), an animation unit had been set up under the supervision of Scottish-born animator Norman MCLAREN, non-theatrical distribution circuits were established and many young Canadian filmmakers trained.

John Grierson resigned in 1945 and was replaced by his deputy, Ross McLean, who faced considerable difficulties in the postwar years. Budgets and staff were reduced and the NFB came under attack for allegedly harbouring left-wing subversives and as holding a monopoly that threatened the livelihoods of commercial producers. McLean's replacement (1950), Arthur IRWIN, calmed the storm, initiated a new National Film Act, restructured the NFB along modern bureaucratic lines and planned to move the NFB from Ottawa to Montréal (completed 1956 under Irwin's successor, Albert TRUEMAN).

NORMAN MCLAREN

YOU TUBE A SUMMER'S DAY IN OTTAWA

Film maker, b Stirling, Scotland, 11 Apr 1914, d Montreal 26 Jan 1987; honorary LL D (McMaster) 1966, honorary D LITT (York, Toronto) 1972. He became interested in cinematic techniques while studying 1932-7 at the Glasgow School of Art and spent his spare time making films and playing the organ. His gifts attracted the attention of John Grierson, who offered him a position in the British General Post Office Film Unit when he left the school. McLaren remained with the unit until 1939. About this time he began to experiment with synthetic sound and developed a considerable range of semi-musical effects, mostly percussive. After working independently 1939-41 in New York, he joined the National Film Board of Canada (of which Grierson had become the director) and began to develop the innovative animated film techniques that eliminated the camera and required the artist to draw directly on the film. At the invitation of Grierson, he moved to Canada in 1941 to work for the National Film Board, to open an animation studio and to train Canadian animators. Upon McLaren's arrival in Canada, Grierson asked him to direct a promotional film reminding Canadians to

mail their Christmas cards early, Mail Early (1941). He then worked on animated shorts as well as maps for Allied propaganda documentary films, followed by his War Bonds campaign films: V for Victory (1941), 5 for 4 (1942), Hen Hop (1942) and Dollar Dance (1943).

As of 1942, McLaren could no longer keep up with the demands for animation at the fast-growing NFB, and he was asked by Grierson to recruit art students and create a small animation team—a task made more difficult because many young students had gone off to fight in the war. McLaren found recruits for his fledgling animation unit at the École des beaux-arts de Montréal and the Ontario College of Art, including René Jodoin, George Dunning, Jim McKay, Grant Munro and his future collaborator, Evelyn Lambart. McLaren trained these emerging animators, who would all work on cartoons, animated cards and propaganda documentaries before going on to make their own films. Studio A, the NFB's first animation studio, formally came into existence as of January 1943, with McLaren as its head.

During his work for the NFB, McLaren created his most famous film, Neighbours (1952), which has won various awards around the world, including the Canadian Film Award and the Academy Award. Besides the brilliant combination of visuals and sound, the film has a very strong social message against violence and war. In his early period in Canada, McLaren spent considerable time developing the animation department of the board. McLaren also created 'animated sound,' a form of 'visible' or synthetic sound made by hand-drawings on the sound-track of the film. He explains his method in the short film Pen Point Percussion. The implications of the method have been of considerable interest to electronic composers and have earned McLaren high regard as a sound pioneer. In addition to his synthetic sound-tracks, he has integrated a wide variety of musical forms into his films. The Trio lyrique of Montreal sings a folksong in Le Merle; Ravi Shankar and Chatur Lal perform in A Chairy Tale; Glenn Gould plays Bach for Spheres; a calliope is used in Hoppity Pop and panpipes in Pas de Deux; jazz by Eldon Rathburn is featured in Short and Suite and jazz by the Oscar Peterson Trio in Begone Dull Care. In Lines Horizontal and Lines Vertical pure animation, in

patterns of straight lines etched directly on the film interprets music by Pete Seeger and Maurice Blackburn respectively. McLaren has earned an international reputation for his imaginative and skilled contribution to the art of film. He has received honours from many countries. Those from his own include the first medal of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts in 1963, the Canada Council Medal in 1966, the Molson Prize in 1971, and the Diplôme d'honneur of the CCA in 1978. In 1973 he was made a Companion of the Order of Canada. In 1982 he was awarded the Albert-Tessier prize for cinema from the MACQ and in 1985 he was made Chevalier of the Ordre national du Québec A general list of his films and of his numerous awards (to 1975) is given in Maynard Collins' Norman McLaren'.

YOUSUF KARSH

Yousuf Karsh, photographer (b at Mardin, Armenian Turkey 23 Dec 1908; d at Boston, 13 July 2002). Karsh immigrated to Canada in 1924 as an Armenian refugee. He lived and studied with his

uncle George Nakashian, a portrait photographer in Sherbrooke, Quebec, before apprenticing in Boston with the celebrity portrait photographer John H. Garo from 1928 to 1931. The strategic contrast of light and dark that marked Karsh's imagery is rooted in his work with Garo.

In 1932, Karsh moved to Ottawa, where he opened a portrait studio with the intent of photographing what he calls "people of consequence." His stated goal, expressed in his 1962 autobiography In Search of Greatness: Reflections of Yousuf Karsh, was to distill "the essence of the extraordinary person." In 1972, he moved his studio to the Chateau Laurier Hotel, near Parliament Hill. Yousuf Karsh's photographic portraits have come to represent the public images of major international figures of politics, science, and culture in the twentieth century. The portraits have been displayed in public galleries and circulated widely in magazines. Karsh's 1941 portrait of Winston Churchill, for example, which appeared on the cover of Life magazine, stands as the definitive portrayal of Churchill's character. Karsh, in turn, established his own international reputation with this image. Other well-known Karsh portraits include those of Georgia

O'Keeffe, W. Somerset Maugham, Martha Graham, Ernest Hemingway, Charles de Gaulle, Peter Lorre, Grey Owl, Albert Einstein, Robert Borden, Yuri Gagarin, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, and Marshall McLuhan. Karsh also published numerous books as portfolios of his portrait photographs in the belief that a collective display gives the images a visual momentum that a single portrait alone cannot attain. The first of these was Faces of Destiny of 1946. In each collection the portraits are accompanied by texts written by Karsh based upon his encounter with the sitter.

In 1987, the National Archives of Canada acquired the complete collection of negatives, prints and transparencies produced and retained by Karsh between 1933 and 1987. Karsh also donated nearly 100 photographs to the National Gallery of Canada, which in 1960 had given him his first solo exhibition in a public gallery. In 1989, to mark the 150th anniversary of photography, these two institutions jointly produced a retrospective exhibition of Karsh's career in portrait photography. In 1965 Yousuf Karsh was awarded the Canada Council Medal and in 1968 the Medal of Service of the Order of Canada. He was invested as a Companion in the

Order of Canada in 1990.

Karsh closed his Ottawa studio in June 1992 at the age of 83. Later that year he published Karsh, American Legends, 73 portraits of famous American men and women in their homes. Leonard Bernstein, Bill and Hillary Clinton, and Norman Schwarzkopf are among those photographed. The book was complemented by a touring exhibition organized by the International Center of Photography in New York.

In 1997, Karsh moved to Boston. As a parting gift, he left a small collection of classic portraits to the Chateau Laurier Hotel, where his former studio is now known as the Karsh suite.

LITERATURE

Arthur Stanley Bourinot,

Son of Sir John George and Lady Isabelle Bourinot, was born in Ottawa, Ontario in 1893. He served in the Canadian army and Royal Air Force during the First World War (from 1915 to 1919), the last two

years as a prisoner of war. He completed his legal training at Osgoode Hall, Toronto and was called to the bar in 1920. He practised law in Ottawa until he retired in 1959. Bourinot began publishing his poems while still an undergraduate and continued to write and publish poetry throughout his life. He received the Governor General's Literary award in 1939 for *Under the Sun* (1939), poems about the Depression and the coming of the Second World War. He edited the *Canadian Poetry Magazine* from 1948 to 1954 and from 1966 to 1968; also he was associate editor of *Canadian Author and Bookman* (1953-60). His carefully researched historical and biographical books and articles on Canadian poets, such as Duncan Campbell Scott, Archibald Lampman, George Frederick Cameron, William E. Marshall and Charles Sangster, have made a valuable contribution to the field of literary criticism in Canada.

A FLOWER IN THE CITY STREET

I FOUND a flower in the city street,
Crumpled and crushed it lay,
Trodden down by the careless feet
Of all who passed that way.

Its colour was not o' the fairy green,
Grey was its gypsy face,
But still it wore a wisp o' sheen
The world could not efface.

It fell like a gem from a woman's breast,
Loosed like a frightened thing,
And I recalled the haunting rest
Of meadows in the spring.

I found a flower in the city street,
With red heart crushed to grey,
And life to me seemed sweet, so sweet,
Bright as the break of day.

MARGARET ATWOOD

born 1939 on First Avenue. Left in 1945, wrote poem later about making poison as a little girl.

"When I was five my brother and I made poison.
We were living in a city then, but we probably would have made the poison anyway. We kept it in

a paint can under somebody else's house and we put all the poisonous things into it that we could think of; toadstools, dead mice, mountain ash berries which may not have been poisonous but looked it, piss which we saved up in order to add it to the paint can. By the time the can was full everything in it was very poisonous.

The problem was that having made the poison we just couldn't leave it there. We had to do somethng with it. We didn't want to put it into anyone's food, but we wanted an object, a completion. There was no one we hated enough, that was the difficulty.

I can't remember what we did with the poison in the end. Did we leve it under the corner of the house, which was made of wood and yellowish brown? Did we throw it at someone some innocuous child? We wouldn't have dared an adult. Is this a true image I have, a small face streaming with tears and red berries, the sudden knowledge that the poison was really poisonous after all. Or did we throw it out, do I remember those red berries floating down a gutter, into a

culvet, am I innocent? Why did we make the poison in the first place? I can remember a sense of magic and accomplishment. Making poison is as much fun as making a cake. People like to make poison. If you don't understand this you wil never understand anything.

NORMAN LEVINE.

Norman Levine, short story writer, novelist (b at Ottawa, Ont 22 Oct 1923; d at Darlington, England 14 June 2005). The author of 8 short story collections and 2 novels, Levine was raised in Ottawa's Lower Town, served overseas in the RCAF during WWII, and attended McGill University (BA, 1948; MA 1949). In 1949 he returned to England, where he lived until 1980.

Like much of his subsequent work, his first novel, *The Angled Road* (1952), contains autobiographical material; the book's protagonist is a young man who breaks from his parents' world, joining the RCAF and later entering university. In 1956 Levine returned to Canada for 3 months, making a cross-

country journey that furnished the material for his controversial *Canada Made Me* (1958), which is part autobiography and part observation of contemporary Canadian life. The work, harshly critical of his native land, did not appear in a Canadian edition until 1979. His volumes of short stories include *One Way Ticket* (1961), *I Don't Want to Know Anyone Too Well* (1971), *Thin Ice* (1979) and *Something Happened Here* (1991).

From *Canada Made Me*. 1956

I walked towards the market. An old man in a shabby grey coat, unshaven, was standing on Dalhousie Street asking for a dime. But he was having no luck. A schoolgirl in a new blue woollen outfir and a red chook was going intio every outside telephone booth, tilting back the return slot. But she was having no luck either.

The market was one end of Lower Town. A square block of stores: cheap clothing, pawnshops, fruits and vegetables, fish and meat, joke stores with the false teeth, the itching powder, the signs burnt in

wood, signs like: 'She wears mink all day and fox all night."

P. K. Page

Came from Montreal to Ottawa in 1946 from Montreal, to work as scriptwriter for the National Film Board. Lived in Sandy Hill on Daly. 1950 married Commissioner of the NFB, Irwin, and moved to Kingsmere, where she completed *The Metal and the Flower* and won Governor-General's. Also painted under name of p. k. Irwin.

"If we'll but give it time," she insists, "a work of art/ 'can rap and knock and enter in all our souls'/ and re-align us - all our molecules -/ to make us whole again." We must reconnect with nature, she tells us, but time is running out. The poem concludes with a warning: "Art and the planet tell us. Change your life."

Short Spring Poem for the Short Sighted.

Arabis
Clotted cream in the Rockery

Framed by shrubs' differing greens
the daffodils:
softgolden stars on stilts

Jonquils
red-eyed as vireos peer out

And all the trees are clouds
pink clouds or white
anchored by rusty hawsers

clouds of green
busy and airy as a swarm of grass

Soon now the squeaky tulips
will cry 'O'
and 'O'

<u>Nicholas John Turney Monsarrat,</u>

son of a distinguished surgeon, was born in

Liverpool in 1910. Although he was a pacifist, Monsarrat decided to join the Royal Naval Voluntary Reserve. He experienced constant exposure to danger aboard the "Compass Rose' Corvette vessel escorting convoys, described so graphically in *The Cruel Sea* and his other war books. On leaving the RNVR in 1946 he joined Britain's diplomatic service and was sent to Johannesburg in South Africa as an information officer. It was during his stay in South Africa that he wrote *The Cruel Sea*, the book that made him immediately famous. The book was filmed in 1953, the year in which he was transferred to Ottawa in Canada as British Information Officer. His sojourn in Africa was to provide the material for two books, the bestseller *The Tribe that Lost its Head* (1956)

He wrote the first of these two books during his three years in Ottawa; another well-known book of this period being *The Story of Esther Costello* (1953) a novel about the manipulation of an Irish blind deaf-mute by her American guardian, and the girl's tragic end.

ROBERT FONTAINE

When the subject of Lowertown writers comes up on the figurative Jeopardy! board, Brian Doyle's and Norman Levine's names routinely top the list. Nearly forgotten is Robert Fontaine, a U.S.-born humourist whose experiences growing up in Ottawa in the 1910s and '20s formed the basis of his bestselling 1945 novel, The Happy Time, and a later sequel, Hello to Springtime.

A noted critic of the day, William Arthur Deacon described the first collection of stories as "the kind of book Mark Twain would have written if he had shared a drop of French blood," It went on to greater fame as a weekly CBC radio production, and then a successful Rodgers and Hammerstein play, which ran for two years, written by Samuel L. Taylor and starring Eva Gabor in her Broadway debut.

In 1952, Hollywood took its turn, with award-

winning director Richard Fleischer teaming up with actors Charles Boyer, Louis Jourdan, Marsha Hunt and Bobby Driscoll. In 1968, it became a Broadway musical starring Robert Goulet.

“I play the CD every Sunday and think about Robert,” says Fontaine’s daughter, Jo Powell, from her home in Concord, Massachusetts.

Many of the 24 stories, or chapters, in The Happy Time first appeared as magazine stories in such publications as The Atlantic Monthly, The Yale Review, Collier’s and Esquire. Together, they recount the coming-of-age of The Boy, a.k.a. Bibi, surrounded on Friel Street by his moral Maman, understanding Papa, and his “mad and lusty” grandfather and uncles

Robert Fontaine in the early 1950s. Fontaine grew up

in Ottawa in the 1910s and ’20s and wrote of his experiences in The Happy Time. Courtesy of Jo Powell

Born in Marlborough, Mass. in 1908 to a French-Canadian father and Scots-Irish mother, Fontaine came to Ottawa with his family when he was three. His father, Lewis, was a violinist and conductor who played in Ottawa’s burlesque and movie theatres before joining the Château Laurier Hotel Orchestra and Ottawa Symphony Orchestra. And while Fontaine lived in the nation’s capital for only about a dozen years, Powell says he held his roots in high regard.

“Oh, yes. His parents were Canadian, and it was a part of him that he was extremely proud.”

He returned to the U.S. following his graduation

from Ottawa (later Lisgar) Collegiate. As his writing career carried him to New York, he found himself running in a literary crowd that included Tom Wolfe and James Thurber, the latter occasionally inviting him to the famed Round Table in New York's Algonquin Hotel for a drink or two.

Has career had its up and downs, including being blacklisted by senator Joseph McCarthy. "We were going to move to California," recalls Powell. "Robert was going to write for Walt Disney, I believe. But he was blackballed by Joe McCarthy and so we couldn't go. He couldn't work in Hollywood, and Robert was really scarred by that.

"My parents were very political. My mother (Stelle) ran for public office, as a Democrat. If she could have run as a socialist, she probably would have."

And although over 70 years old, The Happy Time maintains some currency and displays Fontaine's liberalism. In a touching story titled That Syrian Kid, Bibi tells of a new school chum, Tony, with whom Maman doesn't want her son associating. "Because he is — well, let us say, he isn't nice. He's a foreigner," she explains ("That would just be like his mother," notes Powell). The maligned Tony, however, ultimately saves Bibi's hockey team from embarrassment, and perhaps teaches the frowning Presbyterians a lesson about tolerance with his rendition at a church sociable of I'm the Sheik of Araby.

"In the end," wrote Fontaine, "the women agreed that while The Sheik was not exactly the best choice for a Sunday-school festival, there was, on the other hand, nothing openly sinful about it, especially since the church organist had known how to accompany Tony."

“That,” laughs Powell, “sounds just like Robert.”

Throughout the book, Ottawa and Hull play strong supporting roles. Fontaine wrote of sneaking into the Centre Theatre, which was on Sparks Street between Metcalfe and O’Connor streets. He described the Casino Burlesque, the 800-seat vaudeville theatre behind Union Station, where his father performed.

(The movie version, while certainly mentioning Ottawa frequently, is scrubbed of any real local patina.)

Fontaine also indicted Ottawa’s puritanical soul when he wrote: “There was, by the way, nothing else to do in Ottawa on a Sunday in those days but to dust religious signs and plates on the mantel or to read the papers. All stores were closed. All theaters were closed. There was prohibition, too, as I recall,

so there was not even a bar where one could sit and dream. True, one could go across the Interprovincial Bridge to Hull, in Quebec province, and return with a secret bottle of wine, but it could not be served in public.

“No,” Fontaine concluded, “Sunday was the Sad Day in Ottawa.”

In his youthful imagination, Bibi became Ottawa Senator forward Frank Nighbor, scoring the Stanley Cup-winning goal. He described the Central Canada Exhibition with its rides, corn-on-the-cob, candy apples, speeding motorcycles, fireworks and displays of “Canada’s industrial and agricultural might,” with “free samples for little boys.”

He described, too, a Château Laurier dinner of salmon trout, stuffed quail, baked truffles and

pineapple mousse and glacé cakes.

A lost watch at Major Hill Park, the opening of Parliament, a Pointe Gatineau wedding ruined by spring flooding, soccer games at Cartier Square, stolen kisses at Nepean Point, and a maid, Elsie, so poor and lonely that she considered casting herself into the Rideau Canal, are among the book's area motifs. Even the Ottawa Citizen bore a mention, when one of Bibi's exploits garnered the newspaper headline "Unknown Boy Climbs Church Steeple. On Way to Heaven, He Tells Minister."

Robert Fontaine died just over 50 years ago, in 1965, three years before the Broadway musical of The Happy Time opened. Curiously, little of whatever fame he acquired in his lifetime spread to Ottawa. In a story in the Citizen a handful of years after the book's publication, he confessed, "I often wondered myself why Ottawa had shown so little interest in

The Happy Time." Unfortunately, neither he nor columnist Austin F. Cross offered an answer. But in an article he wrote for the Ottawa Journal in 1956, prior to the Ottawa Little Theatre's opening of The Happy Time, Fontaine did explain why growing up in Ottawa was so special:

"Yes, everything in Ottawa was lovelier and louder and brighter than it was anywhere else," he concluded, "or is anywhere today (except, just possibly, for a young boy in Ottawa today).

"The bands played louder then, the picnics at Britannia had more lemonade, the Ex had more free maple sugar, the trees get redder in the Fall, I got called into the Post Office more often in the game of the same name and, in spinning the bottle, the bottle stopped much more often at me.

“The streets were wider then, the automobiles more ferocious, the overhead telephone wires more bewildering, the funny papers funnier, the roast beef rarer…

“Oh, yes, everything was much different then.

“Or was it I?”

LESLIE MCFARLANE

Leslie McFarlane was born on October 25, 1902, at Carleton Place, Ontario, one of 4 sons of the local school principal. His father, John McFarlane, decided to accept the position of principal at Haileybury Public School in 1910 and off they went. Leslie’s growing up years were not unusual. He loved hockey and sledding down the big hill of Browning Street with his friends. He was a voracious reader who, when he finished his copy of Chums or The Boy’s Own Annual, would dive into

his father's extensive collection of books. At the age of 14, McFarlane entered high school. He held a series of part-time jobs over the next few years that would put him on the path toward fame and fortune (well at least fame!). At various times he delivered the Saturday Evening Post, ran errands as a junior bank clerk, operated the projector at the Grand Theatre and set type at The Haileyburian newspaper. In 1915 he won an I.O.D.E award for historical writing. At the age of 19, he was awarded second place in a provincial writing contest for his work entitled "Afraid".

After graduation McFarlane took a job as a reporter for the Cobalt Daily Nugget for $8/per week. He lasted about one year and moved on to the Sudbury Star where he worked for a whopping $25/week. It took him another year to realize that the demanding life of a newspaper reporter was not his bag of cookies. He quit. McFarlane moved outside of

Sudbury to a cottage on Ramsay Lake to begin his life as a freelance writer. His big break came out of tragedy in his home town of Haileybury. On October 4, 1922, a great fire engulfed much of the Temiskaming District and virtually obliterated Haileybury. His mother fled to North Bay, as did many of the residents of the town. He joined her there and listened with great interest to the stories of the fire and the destruction it wrought. The story he wrote, based on these descriptions, was submitted to the Sudbury Star and ran as the headline story.

In 1926, after have published a few articles and features for the Toronto Star Weekly, he headed south of the border to work for the Springfield Republican newspaper in Springfield, Massachusetts. While reporting the city beat for the Republican, he responded to an advertisement from Edward Stratemeyer, an author and publisher of children's books. Stratemeyer sent McFarlane a copy of one of his Dave Fearless Series, a series of mystery novel he had penned under the name Roy Rockwood. McFarlane was, at first, shocked that

Stratemeyer would write under a pen name but slowly he came to understand the logic. It allowed more than one writer to pen novels in a series without disturbing the series. Roy Rockwood was the nom de plum used by a syndicate of writers. McFarlane was soon ghostwriting under the name of Roy Rockwood. His first book was entitled "Dave Fearless under the Ocean", for which he was paid the princely sum of $100. McFarlane wrote a total of seven Dave Fearless novels before he informed Stratemeyer that he was tired of the character.

Stratemeyer wrote him back with an idea for a new mystery series specifically written to appeal to young teenagers. "How about writing the Hardy Boys Mysteries?" That was beginning of the most famous young boys mystery series ever written. Its 58 volumes were written by a cast of ghostwriters who all used the pen name Franklin W. Dixon, and all of whom were sworn to secrecy. The series debuted in 1927, and McFarlane wrote books 1 to 16

and 22 to 24, regarded as the best of the series. Millions of copies have been read by tens of millions of kids in over 20 different languages around the world. He continued to write about Frank and Joe until 1946, when he penned his last in the series entitled “The Phantom Freighter“.In fact, The Phantom Freighter was written by McFarlane’s wife, Amy McFarlane. According to letters from sources, when the assignment to write The Phantom Freighter came in from the Syndicate, Leslie was away fishing. Amy wrote and submitted the book. The Syndicate were aware of this and not concerned. However The Phantom Freighter was the last book written by Leslie McFarlane (and his wife, Amy) for the Syndicate.

In 1943, while writing the Hardy Boys, McFarlane was employed by the National Film Board of Canada. Ten years later, in 1953, he was nominated for an Academy Award for his documentary Herring Hunt. Shortly thereafter, following the

death of his wife, he moved with his three children, Patricia, Brian and Noah, to Toronto to work on documentaries and comedies at the CBC. He had a short stint in Hollywood as a writer on the famous western TV show, Bonanza, which starred fellow Canadian, Lorne Green. But his heart lay in Canada, where he returned to write even more novels, but now under his own name. Novels such as, A kid of Haileybury and, in 1976, his autobiography, The Ghost of the Hardy Boys. On September 6, 1977, after a lengthy illness at the Oshawa General Hospital, 74-year-old Charles Leslie McFarlane passed away. His son Brian, the same Brian McFarlane of CBC's Hockey Night in Canada, remembers the day, at the age of 10, that he learned that his father was Franklin W. Dixon, the writer of the Hardy Boys. "It was like finding out your dad was Santa Claus".

MUSIC

DANCEsz HALLS

Britannia Park 1200 people, nickel streetcar ride. First vaudville, then movie, then 1920s on Dance. July 24 1946 800 veterans and family Homecoming reception. Charlie Quails Orchestra, Berkley Kids Orchestra, the Alex Dawson Band, Larry Carrigan and Mel Johnston and his brother Orville; Orville was the crooner and his big hit was 'Blue Moon' . Watch moonlight on Britannia Bay from the patio doors.

Golf Clubs; Chaudiere, Gatineau.
Chaudiere fire, 1949, replaced by Rose Room.

Gatineau old barn behind Golf Club. Show Place of the Stars.
In 1939, the business was bought by three partners: Joe Saxe, owner of Saxe Shoes on Sparks Street; Hymie Kurt, of Evans and Kurt, stationers in Ottawa; and Harold Copeland, of Hull Iron and Steel. Saxe bought out his partners ten years later. In its heyday, the night club claimed to have "the second best show to Broadway". In fact, the stars couldn't have been bigger: Louis Armstrong, Cab

Calloway, Oscar Peterson, the Mills Brothers, the Inkspots, Josephine Baker, Duke Ellington, Lionel Hampton and Dizzy Gillespie among them. During the '40's and '50s, "The Gatineau" was a top supper club drawing patrons from miles around to eat, enjoy the entertainment, and dance to band music. In a spectacular blaze that could be seen for miles, the club burned to the ground on September 241960.

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Francis Conroy Sullivan,

The only Canadian pupil of Frank Lloyd Wright, Sullivan worked in the Oak Park studio in 1907 but returned to Ottawa in 1908. Sullivan brought the modernist Prairie School style to Canada, building a number of prominent structures, often in the Prairie Style.

He was an architect for the Canadian Department of Public Works from 1908 to 1911, after which he had an independent practice in Ottawa until 1916. In this capacity he frequently designed schools for the Ottawa Catholic School Board; in 1920 he moved to Chicago and became the chief architect for the Chicago Public School Board.

The O'Connor Street Bridge in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada – 1907

108 Acacia Ave., Ottawa - 1908

No 7 Fire Station Arthur St., Ottawa – 1912

Apartment House 204 Laurier Ave. E., Ottawa – 1913

Ecole du Sacré Coeur (now School House Lofts), 19 Melrose Ave., Ottawa – 1912[1]

Horticulture Building, Lansdowne Park, Ottawa – 1914

Francis C. Sullivan House, 346 Somerset St. E., Ottawa – 1914

Patrick J. Powers House, 178 James St., Ottawa – 1915

Edward P. Connors House, 166 Huron Ave. N., Ottawa – 1915

Ransome W. Dunning Residence 99 Acacia Ave., Ottawa

6 Allan Pl., Ottawa

The Lindenlea Housing Project, Ottawa – 1919-21

Bartholomew Armstrong Residence, 8 McLeod St., Ottawa – 1924

Sullivan moved to the Wright home at Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Arizona, at Wright's invitation, and died there on April 4, 1929.

After 1911, Sullivan became a private developer. He designed a collection of now-designated houses and estates that cover the city. Of his more prominent residences are at least three of the gems that reside in the Sandy Hill Heritage district of Ottawa. Many of these homes are standalone as there are no other similar ones around them. They are, however, key architectural and historical pieces that have kept old Ottawa alive. Sullivan would finally become embroiled in the near-failed Lindenlea Housing development in co-operation with the Scotsman Thomas Adams. He would dedicate the final years of his young life to wanting to establish homes for families, but almost ultimately failing.Though Sullivan's Lindenlea Project would fail, the individual houses in Ottawa are well-known as important residences and a view into Ottawa's familial past. Each one of the individual residences to Sullivan's credit is built on individual plans, standing unique in their neighbourhoods. They are well structured examples upon which many of the other buildings established shortly afterwards were based. The houses provide the basis and structure for quite a few Sandy Hill houses that still stand.

Sullivan's work would lead to the creation of others.

Werner Ernst Noffke

was a Canadian Architect of German Descent. In 1884 his parents relocated the family to Canada including the 5 year old Noffke. He apprenticed with Adam Harvey and studied at the Fine Arts Association of Ottawa. Later he partnered with George W. Northwood. Mr Northwood worked principally in the West while Noffke worked principally in Ottawa. Approx 200 buildings were constructed, at least 60 remain. Ottawa Heritage produced a booklet called Werner Ernst Noffke: Ottawa's Architect

Noffke is known mostly for his grand houses, these are eclectic in style with a Mediterranean influence, or various other architectural styles popular at the beginning of the 20th century. Noffke also designed 3 larger quite celebrated building. The post office at the corner of Elgin and Sparks, the Medical Arts building on Metcalfe, and the Ogilvie store at the

corner of Rideau and Nicholas.