

Acton library looseleaf



Was Harvey Lee Oswald an imposter. The gunman who killed President Kennedy + was he in fact a Russian operator with the American identity of the 22-year-old ex-marine who went to Russia in 1959. Was a conspiracy responsible for the death of Kennedy. British solicitor, Michael Eddowes makes a strong case for the conspiracy theory, based on an investigation that took 14 years. Eddowes who wrote The Man on Your Conscience is the author of The Oswald File, "a book that will be talked about for years to come."

His "The Man On Your Conscience" deals with the case of young labourer Timothy Evans who was hanged for the murder of his wife and infant daughter in 1950. After mass murderer Reginald Christie confessed to one of these murders, Mr. Eddowes began his study. His book brought public pressure to review the case. A new investigation was called, and Evans was exonerated. The Queen posthumously pardoned him. Public outrage over the case led to the abolition of capital punishment in Britain.

The Oswald File, a recent arrival at the library documents Eddowes' only other investigation besides the Evans case. In some respects, this is a scary book as the reader learns of cover-ups in high places. It could happen in Canada.

Sometimes, the average reader wonders about best-seller lists. Novels ranked in the top ten columns often raise the question: How come. In other words, the ordinary browser does NOT always agree with the ex-

perts. A striking exception is Colleen McCullough's The Thorn Birds, a superbly crafted story set in the Australian outback. This is one of those rare books that demand reading at one sitting, even if it necessitates burning midnight oil until dawn. The Thorn Birds eminently merits its long-standing spot on the best-seller lists. It's still on reserve in our library.

Last week a regular reader returned Sheila Burnford's newest novel Bel Ria with a smiling: "One of the best books I've ever read." Library staffers did not challenge her claim. Whether you love animals or not, Bel Ria is a delight to read, and should rank with the author's unforgettable classic The Incredible Journey. It is the tale of little terrier who survives adventures and misadventures in wartime France and England.

For armchair travellers who long to - but cannot make it "Over Home" this summer, the library recommends Discover Unexpected London by Andrew Lawson. This beautifully illustrated book chronicles the sights and history of England's splendid port and capital. It will make ex-Londoners homesick.

If The Thorn Birds whets your interest in the Australian outback, why not reach for the May National Geographic which features a lavishly illustrated article by Robyn Davidson. Miss Davidson, beautiful and young travelled 1700 miles across Australia western wilderness. Her companions were four camels trained a year in advance and one dog Diggity.



SCOUTS, CUBS and Beavers from Acton took part in the Trees for Canada planting program on Saturday. For example: left to right, Jason Sharples, Chris Luxon, Eddie Robinson, Tim Height, Tim Garton, Robert Disano, Calvin Robinson, Bill Ingles.

Photographer Rick Smolan appeared from time to time to document the safari which took 195 days. Also in the May Geographic is an excellent article on Mexico: Mexico A Very Beautiful Challenge by Mike Edwards, and photographer Thomas Nebbia.

One of the features worth reading in the April June issue of Nature Canada is Bryce Lyons' Red-Shouldered hawk: an eye-to-eye confrontation. Lyons waited until the female hawk had finished incubating her eggs, before building a blind from which to photograph the pair of hawks and their young. Top-notch nature photography.

A colour shot of a robin feeding her nestlings graces the front cover of Ranger Rick's Nature Magazine, May issue. The kind of arresting nature picture all photographers dream of making! The April number of this same magazine has a camera story of a nesting robin from eggs to flytime. This particular redbreast built her nest under a bedroom window, and the owners of the house set up their cameras to record this beautiful spring-time scenario. Ranger Rick's magazine is available in the junior library.

Library nature notes: back again in the library creek is a menage a trois, little white Donald, his companion mallard duck and a mallard duck who delighted library goes last spring. Momma duck nested in some wild lilies, and despite many visits by dogs and other intruders, she managed to hatch three ducklings. The family made it safely to the pond. Donald and his pal hung about the creek until a day before their young hatched. Library staffers, because of Donald think this is the same house-keeping trio from last year.

Ladies preparing

The Acton ladies' softball team being formed by Ed Wood is looking stronger now with fifteen hopefuls still in the running after Sunday's practice. The first tryout had attracted only eight potential players.

The number of ladies trying out had gone from eight up to twenty when the first cuts were made.

The team will be known as the Acton Family Cleaners.

Red-headed woodpecker a rare but beautiful sight

by Jeff Harvey
Southwestern Ontario is a fine place in which several woodpeckers regularly breed, and amongst them is the beautiful Red-Headed Woodpecker. Several woodpecker species, notably the small Downy and the Hairy, (a larger version of the Downy Woodpecker) have small patches of red on the rear portions of the head. These red areas are found only on the males, and both are regularly seen at bird feeders.

However, the real Red-Headed Woodpecker is unquestionably one of the most attractive of all birds in North America. The entire head of both adult sexes is a deep scarlet red, while in flight this contrasts sharply with the clear white wing patches. Combined they are quite a sight. From bill tip to tail end it nips the nine inch mark.

Unfortunately the Red-Head is not seen very often. Its nesting habits have been considerably associated with man's activities, and it is conceivable that the two have not diffused with beneficial results to the both. When primeval, mature stands of timber existed, it must have been a scarce bird anyway, for it shuns these types of locales, but, as the land was cleared, the Red-Headed woodpecker became quite common, as they found "messy" orchards good spots to chisel their nests, and many of these orchards appeared in the early 1800's.

Like the bluebird, however, the advent of the European invaders, the House Sparrow and the Starling, sent numbers into a decline by the turn of twentieth century. Also as with the bluebird, the old orchards were cleaned, and numbers plummeted again. The red-head became susceptible to of all things, the automobile. Many are killed because of their peculiar habit of taking off from a perch at roadside and dipping low across the road. Thousands die in this manner (hit by cars), and yet this hazard has only recently been discovered.

However this tough, vigorous woodpecker is making a slight comeback. Also like the bluebird, it is taking advantage of the Dutch elm disease, which has left the skeletons of many dead trees scattered about in the countryside. Infected trees lure the woodpeckers, which hammer away at the insect laden trunks, by excavating cavities in them. In this manner the red-headed

woodpecker may be increasing once again. The bluebird, which nests in old woodpecker holes, may be increasing for similar reasons.

The red-head is found locally in Southern Ontario, and it is rare north of Lake Ontario. They are a bit more plentiful south of the Great Lakes, where they stay all year. In Ontario this woodpecker is best seen at Point Pelee, near Leamington, but they can frequently be seen in Halton, particularly in mid-May when they are arriving from the south. For any nature lover, a good view of this bird is a notable experience, and if we give it a chance by permitting it breeding sites, we may see them on many occasions, and only then will we realize that we have done good within nature's ranks.

Waples gets first

Rockwood's Ron Waples piloted Lime Time to the first sub two-minute mile of the Canadian harness racing season April 23 at Mohawk. Lime Time paced across the finish line of the seventh race feature in the time of 1:58.3fs.

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Parents claim song offensive

Bad, bad Leroy Brown, Baddest man in the whole damn town, Badder than old King Kong, Meaner than a junkyard dog.

The song Leroy Brown is a hit on the Health Hustle hit parade in schools in Wellington County but isn't as popular with some parents.

The health Hustle is the name of a program started in October, 1976 that has students exercising to popular music played over the public address system. While parents have expressed encouragement for the dance-your-way-to-health program, the first complaints have come to the board's attention about the selection of the music.

The criticism centres around the hit song by the late Jim Croce and the lyrics describing Leroy Brown. "The song is about a fairly nasty fellow who beats up on people and carries a razor blade in his shoe," board consultant Michael Hogg said Wednesday.

He said the criticism surrounds the words of the song, which the parents said was a bad influence on the students. They suggested the use of instrumental music. Hogg said he realizes the word damn is in the song, but it wasn't specifically mentioned as being a problem. It is the first time any school board in Ontario taking part in the program has received a complaint about the music selection, Hogg said.

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