

Arts and Ideas

Winter highlights Canada's stark beauty

Canada is a northern country, it's stark beauty never more apparent than in winter. For this reason I like to travel within Canada during the winter season. At other times, say in spring or early summer, I prefer to stay in my garden.

Once more, I boarded the train to Ottawa, recently. "Boarded" has the right ring to it, because a crew in smart uniforms hovers over you at Toronto Union Station and all through the trip, asking for your destination, helping you into the coach, making sure you find your seat, serving you with food and drink, and generally making you feel like a traveller from an earlier age.

A Canadian train never leaves on time and continues to linger at every stop.

Not for VIA the quick, efficient departures that are the rule in Europe's train stations.

A Canadian train ride is not a casual affair but something as solid and long-lasting as a good marriage.

Unfortunately, no money can be made that way. The federal government's steadfast refusal to jolt our trains into the modern age will eventually kill all long distance trains everywhere within our borders.

In the meantime, a train trip from Toronto to Ottawa, or elsewhere, is a grand and enjoyable undertaking and I suggest to you that you take one, as long as it is still possible.

You glide out of the city in between towers and crowded expressways. You pass through old lakeside communities with historical names like Bowmanville, Port Hope, Cobourg, Trenton, Belleville, Deseronto, Napanee and Kingston. The great lake to the right of the train vanishes and reappears. At Brockville the tracks turn inland and head for Smiths Falls and Ottawa. The closer the train came

to the capital, the more snow blanketed fields and villages.

When the train stopped in Ottawa's new station it was snowing outside and it kept snowing for most of my visit. The Victorian city looked unreal and fantastic in the half light of winter. The severe architectural outlines of the new National Gallery were softened by the dancing snowflakes, and the view from the glass-enclosed rotunda of the National Gallery towards the Houses of Parliament, was magical, to say the least.

I know most of the art works in the Gallery's collection from former visits, but I always return for another look. Great art has something new to offer with every additional viewing. This time it was Barnett Newman's painting "Voice of Fire" I wanted to see again. The painting was impressive in 1989, when I saw it last, before the nasty discussion about it started last spring, and it is impressive now.

The emotional impact of the painting is enormous, in particular now, that we are at war. "Voice of Fire" has biblical dimensions. The Old Testament reports how God destroyed Sodom by fire. When a great war starts the outcome is entirely in his hands. We might rue the day the bombers started flying towards Baghdad.

On the return trip I stayed for two days in Kingston, where I had never been before. This former capital of the united Canadas expresses the ruggedness of the tough settlers that came to the shores of Lake Ontario 200 years ago.

Mercifully the fine old town has lost little to modern development and presents itself as a well-cared-for relic of a former age. I looked at countless houses and churches, all built of grey stones, at a time when people had their children and grandchildren in



Ideas and The Arts
by
John Sommer

mind when they erected themselves a home.

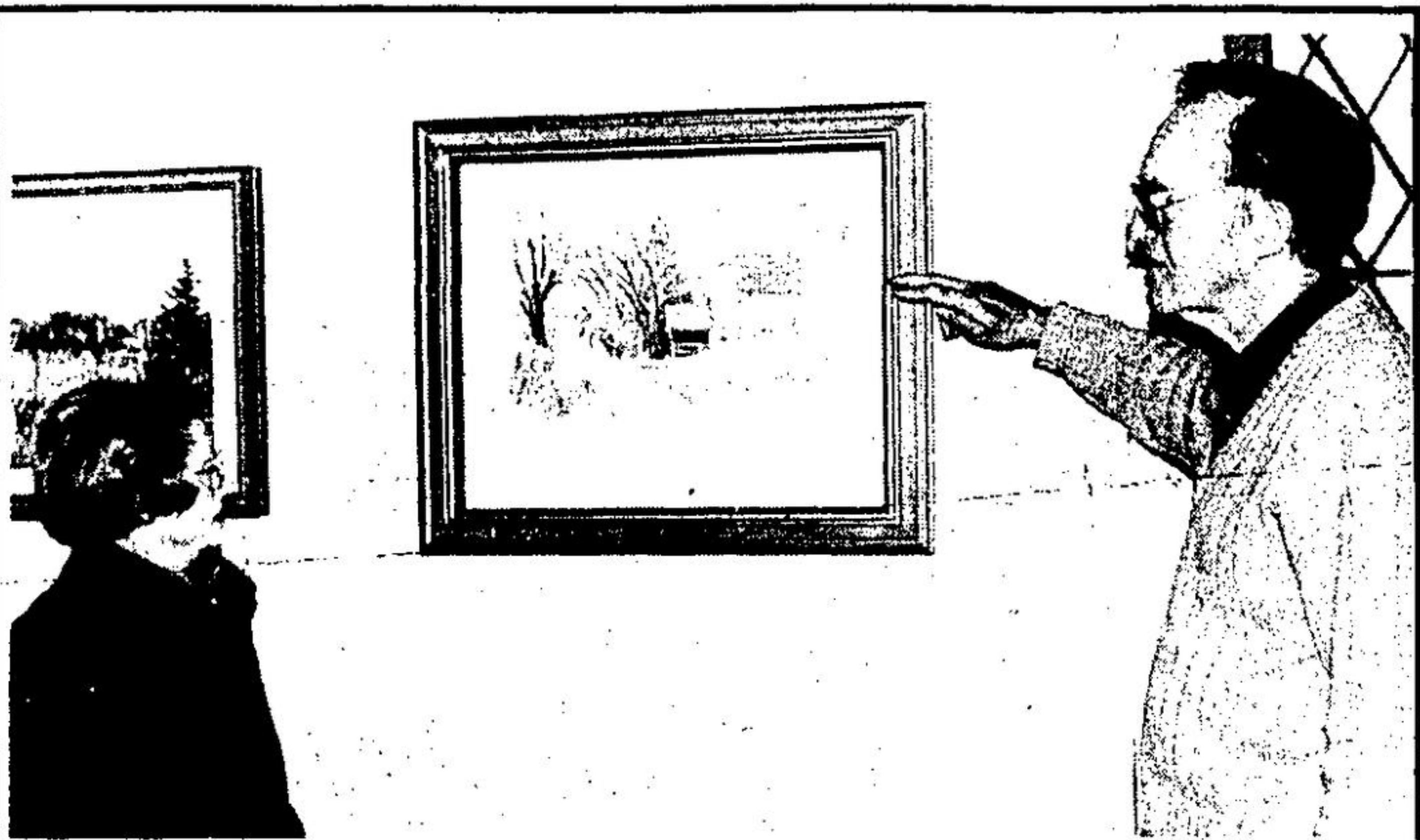
Here in Georgetown a well-designed invitation to an exhibition of artworks by students of the Georgetown District High School had come in the mail. I went and had an interesting time. The names of the students were Mark Bentley, Sophie Djuk, Heather Keane, David Porter, Emily Tabuchi, Katie Tucker, Sonja Wassermann, and Christine Wilson.

All these budding artists need a lot more training before they will be able to express their ideas effectively. With hard work Mark Bentley might be a good wood-

carver one day. Heather Keane has to study anatomy to give her nude bodies the expressive shapes needed for this kind of sculpture.

Sonja Wassermann's drawings have the "feel" of Venice and her exuberant ornamentations are quite lovely. Christine Wilson's idea to link the gun with male sexuality gone wrong, is just right for art making, but her technique, so far, is not.

The profession of the artist is the most difficult of all, and I hope that some of these students will battle their way to the top.



Art exhibition

Brockville artist Mel Ferguson (right) shows Georgetown resident, Hester Blaney, one of this 31 paintings on display at the Halton Hills Cultural Centre Saturday. The oil painting is entitled "Halleck's Road." All paintings on display are either oil or watercolors. The exhibition opened Jan. 8 and runs through to the end of January. (Herald photo)

Community

Surprise party

By KAY WILSON

A surprise party for Ken Ella of Hornby, was held at the Muddy Duck, Milton, on January 20. Ken's 70th birthday was coming up and a surprise family dinner was planned at noon. Following the dinner they walked into the banquet room to a chorus of Happy Birthday of some 200 guests, to the surprise again, for Ken.

The party was arranged by his wife Velma, his two sons, Keith and his wife Reva of Burford, Lorne and his wife Wilma, of Hornby, and daughter Valerie and her husband Chris Richardson of Caledonia. Grandchildren enjoying the party were Shawn, Leanne, Marvin, Christine and Ken.

Ken has been a prominent Jersey breeder for many years, and exhibited at all the outstanding Jersey shows in Ontario and the U.S. Many of his fellow Jersey breeders, friends, and relations came from a wide area, including Auiuburn, Princeton, Guelph, Thornhill, Barrie, Galt,

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Wasaga Beach, Milton, Georgetown and Brampton. Following the open house, Ken and Velma stayed on for dinner with close family members, while they visited and caught up on these "Times that wait for no Man."

Congratulations

Congratulations to Terry and Barbara Laidlaw, R.R.2 Norval, on the birth of their son Peter Gordon, 7 lbs., 11 oz., at Peel Memorial Hospital, Brampton. A little brother for Timothy and Matthew. Proud 8th time grandparents are Gordon and Rosie Laidlaw of Norval, and Ross and Joan Church of Timmins. Also 12th time great-grandparents are Cecil and Mary Williamson of Brampton, and John and Evelyn Robertson of Prescott.

Stained glass workshops

Ever wonder how pieces of glass are cut and held together in a piece of stained glass. Well, now is the time to find out.

The Credit Valley Artisans are offering a two day introductory workshop in stained glass on Saturday February 2nd and 9th. Ballinafad resident Valerie Kirten will be the instructor. Mrs. Kirten learned the art of stained glass three years ago at a course offered by the Credit Valley Artisans and now operates Val's Custom Stained Glass from her home. She has customized designed and made windows and

specializes in odd shaped windows.

Students will learn how to cut and grind the glass before assembling the pieces using copper foil techniques. Students can expect to complete two pieces of stained glass during the workshop. The course will be held at Cedarvale Cottage in Cedarvale Park from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For further information contact Frank Anthony, Registrar, at 877-5856 between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. Deadline for registration in this course is Saturday, January 26, 1991.

Prepare vehicles for frigid weather

As frigid temperatures prevail across the country, Canadian motorists should be taking the necessary steps for winter driving conditions.

The Canadian Tire Auto Club has prepared a checklist of recommendations for vehicle owners to help them get ready for winter:

1. Get a thorough engine tune-up. Before winter really sets in is the best time to give your car a tune-up. It's easier to start your car with new spark plugs.
2. Change the oil. Use a lightweight multi-grade motor oil. Heavy oil thickens in cold

weather, making it harder for the engine to turn over.

3. Check all water hoses and the exhaust system for leaks.

4. Check the battery, alternator and voltage regulator to make sure that they're charging well and that all connections are tight. Make sure terminals are cleaned and greased to guard against corrosion.

5. Use a waterproofing solution on all exposed ignition wires.

6. Check the brakes and examine the fluid level in the master cylinder.

7. Check the heater, defroster, and all lights to make sure

they're working well.

8. Change the regular windshield wipers for snow blades if necessary. These wipers usually have a rubber hood that prevents snow from sticking to the wiping part of the blade.

9. Install snow tires before the first snow. Never under-inflate snow tires. An underinflated tire will make the car handle poorly, cause the tire to wear out faster and be more likely to blow out on the highway. Studded snow tires are illegal in many areas.

10. Check to ensure you have ample windshield washer and anti-freeze and fuel-line anti-freeze.



Volunteers recognized

Acton Social Services and Information Centre staff hosted a party for their understanding and giving volunteers last Friday afternoon in the centre. Over 35 volunteers, who help operate Meals on Wheels,

transportation services and other activities, were at the party watching videos of some of their activities, drinking punch and having a good time. (Herald photo)