

Vancouver to Halifax by CBC train

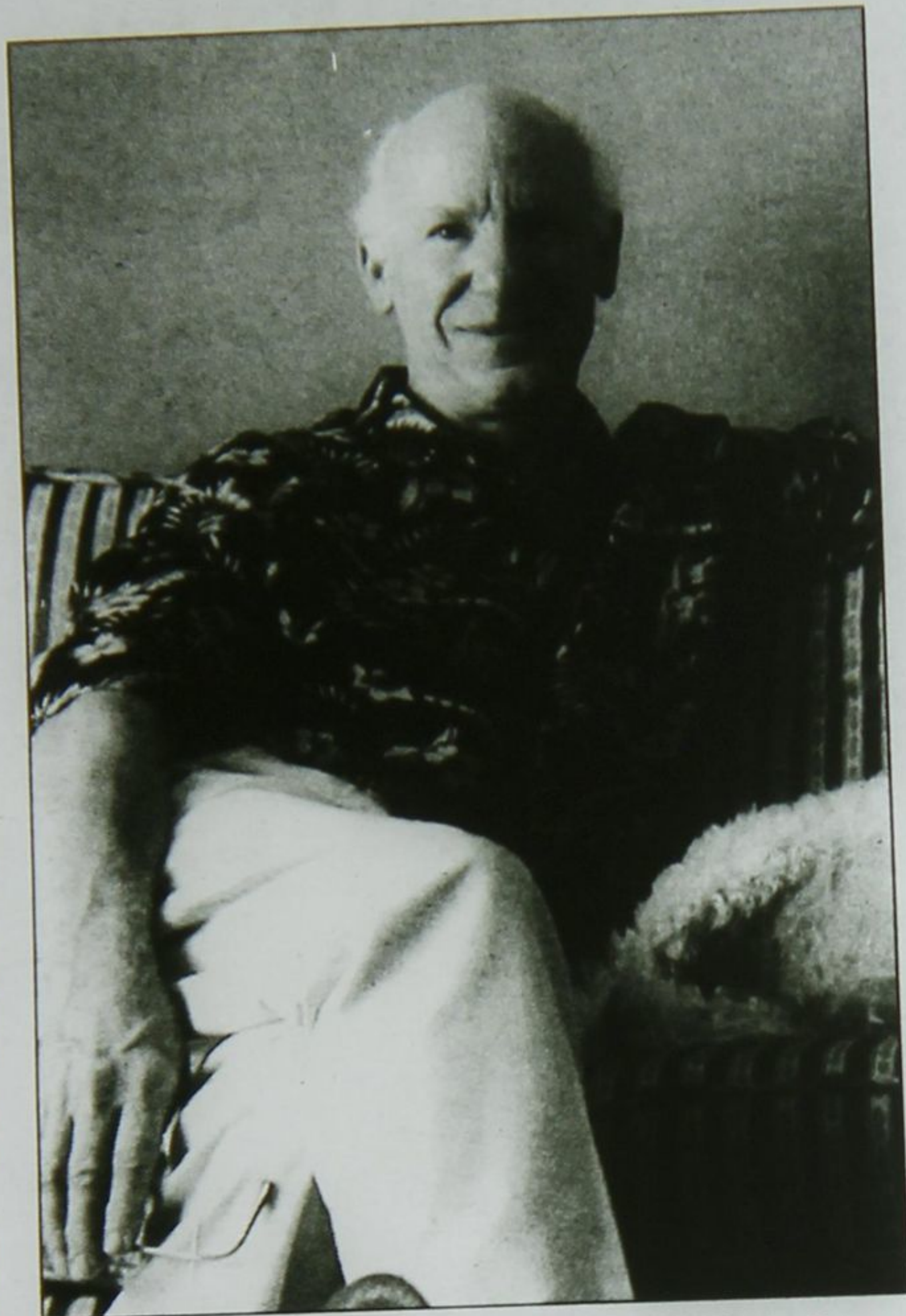
By Kate Gilderdale
Stouffville This Month

On Sept. 3, CBC Museum curator Ivan Harris hopped on a plane and headed for Vancouver to join fellow crew members in preparations for a cross-Canada trip on the public broadcaster's 50th Anniversary train.

Between Sept. 7 and Oct. 6 the VIA train, equipped with a museum, mobile production facility, broadcasting studio, interactive displays and exhibits, visited communities across the country in a travelling open house. "There were about 30 of us and we all had to work," Mr. Harris noted. "Each place we visited was like a circus; we had to set up all the tents and displays and tidy everything away before we left. Then we'd move on to the next town and start all over again."

What struck him most was the enthusiasm and affection they encountered wherever they went. "It was an absolute eye-opener to me, living in Ontario, used to the big production scene with lots of work and lots of shows, and you often wonder whether anybody out there is listening to this stuff. Then you visit places like Saskatchewan and New Brunswick and all these people are lining up, waiting for you to arrive. The dedication to CBC is incredible."

In Campbellton, N.B., he came across something that reminded him of home. In his diary entry for Oct. 1 he wrote, "I saw 'Restigouche Sam', a sculpture by Bill Lishman. It was



This fall Ivan Harris not only met Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, he was also a member of the crew who took the CBC train across Canada to celebrate the public broadcaster's 50th anniversary.

stored on the property of the Stouffville Library until Campbellton was ready for it."

The huge, leaping silver fish is a beautiful and eye-catching work which, years ago, was placed in front of the old library/gallery building for months and attracted many people to the Latham Gallery's Sculpture Walk. Some visitors to the train in Vancouver also had local connections, among them Chris Burkholder, son of

Stouffville's Howard and Ruth Burkholder and Ted Topping Jr., son of Ted and Peg Topping, who live in Ballantrae.

The sense of camaraderie and fun among the crew comes across in the diary kept by Mr. Harris during the trip. In his entry for Sept. 4, he wrote, "Bill Smith brought the Friendly Giant cow that was misplaced when we were installing the set in the baggage car. It was found in among the refuse left

over from the museum car setup. I think he should get a medal for recognizing this important item, prop, artifact, memory."

After groups started boarding the train in Vancouver, Mr. Harris found himself reflecting on the vintage props, some of which were constructed of extremely flimsy materials back in the early 1950s, with no thought of long-term preservation. "It's fascinating to think that after 28 years, that item became an artifact for the museum, and a few years later it became a memory for thousands of Canadians."

Keeping in constant touch with the outside world created a few headaches during the trip, because most cellular networks are linked to roads rather than railways. In some areas, particularly between Vancouver and Edmonton, as well as in parts of Northern Ontario, "Cellphones didn't work at all, and although people continued using their laptops, they couldn't send anything."

But despite the occasional glitch, what Mr. Harris will remember most is the overwhelmingly positive response of Canadians, who came out in their thousands to salute their old friend, the CBC. "It's been very rewarding," he said. "In bigger places like Saskatoon, a group of school teachers came through before 8 o'clock in the morning, then went home and organized a bunch of buses and brought the whole school out, even little toddlers."

Christmas decorating that makes scents

by Heather Jordan Engli
Special to Stouffville This Month

Conservation has taken on a whole new meaning in light of all the confusing discussion about electricity.

If you are like me, you may be giving a second thought as to how to decorate your home this holiday season. Is it possible to create a festive, welcoming home and be environmentally conscientious? Yes, and there are many alternatives to choose from.

Consider the host of natural, renewable greens. Traditional greens are perfect for building the foundation of your outdoor decoration. Cedar and pine ropes, wreaths of balsam, B.C. silver fir or pine, door swags and evergreen boughs of all sorts add a warm and welcoming feel to your entrance.

Enhance the greens with accents like large Ponderosa pine cones, fresh holly, dried fruit such as the brilliant orange bittersweet, nuts, and sprigs of variegated euonymus. Create winter containers with greens and interesting branches of deciduous shrubs such as red dogwood, bright green kerria and corkscrew willows, along with dried grasses, flowers and seed pods.

If you have not done so already, plan ahead for next Christmas by incorporating some of the spectacular ornamental grasses into your perennial beds and containers near your entrances in the spring. They are majestic in the winter garden.

Indoors, use nature's treasures to create your own living wreaths, centrepieces, railing swags, fireplace mantel decorations and Christmas containers. Away from the sharp eyes of marauding squirrels, slices of dried fruit and cinnamon sticks make great accents on greens.

And of course, the festive season would not be complete without traditional house plants such as poinsettia, cyclamen and Christmas cactus. Remember they all prefer bright, indirect light. Cooler locations, especially for cyclamen, improve their lasting quality.

Avoid over-watering and be sure to puncture foil wrappers in order to provide good drainage. And for all those other colourful flowering plants already in your home - bougainvillea, hibiscus, passion flower - add seasonal flare with sprigs of holly or evergreen to fill in the bare area at the pot surface.

Let your imagination go wild with nature's supply of great Christmas decorations. Save cents on the utility bill and get in touch with the undeniable Christmas scent of fresh greens.

Heather Jordan Engli is a certified horticulturist at Goodwood Gardens

To Our Loyal Readers At Christmas

As we wrap up another holiday edition,
we'd like to deliver an extra measure of thanks
and best wishes to all of you.

Here's hoping all your news is good news this season!

Local News Views Happenings
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Thanks Again

Kate

Bruce

Sarah

MaryAnn

B.G. Loretta

