



**RETIRES
ASSOCIATION
OF
MOHAWK
COLLEGE
NEWSLETTER**



Autumn, 2010

Deadline for next issue:
January 14, 2011

Please e-mail your contributions
to submissions@fodoweb.ca

Upcoming Events

OCRA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's annual meeting is sponsored by Mohawk College so we would like to see a great turnout on October 28th. See the OCRA website (<http://www.ocraretirees.ca>) for more information.

CARMEN'S

December 14th is the date for a great lunch and show featuring the Platters. There may still be a ticket or two left, so call Donna Dunlop if interested.

CHINESE NEW YEAR'S DINNER

Marie is again arranging for dinner (probably at a new location) to celebrate Chinese New Year in late January or early February.

ECO UPDATE:

Work proceeds on distributing news via e-mail. Expect to see some trial messages in your inbox very shortly.

Retirees Association of Mohawk College Newsletter

Website: www.mcretirees.com

Published four times a year.

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**Into the
Wilderness**
with
Jack Freiburger

**OUTPOST ITE: POWER
TO DEH PEEBLE**

It may be hard to imagine, but 150 years ago, all this was just rocks, water and trees. That's what John McLean, a blackfly-crazed Hudson Bay Company explorer, saw in August 1839. Only Screech, taken only internally as directed on the label, could ease his anguish as he contemplated crossing the raging Churchill River, 200 metres wide, searching for an overland route from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Hudson Bay. There wasn't birchbark canoe-making material in sight, and he hadn't read *Tom Sawyer*.

A.P. Low (editor's note: you'd use initials too if you had his name), a Canadian Government geologist clearly disliked by his boss, 55 years later, without benefit of GPS, figured out that Labrador has a huge central plateau of 26,700 square miles (about the same size as New Brunswick, which is why Danny wants our power to go through there) that drains into this one river, with the lip of it causing Hamilton Falls (named

after a justly famous Ontario city). The falls and other descents drop 1025 feet in less than 20 miles, six times the height of Niagara. (I'm staying in miles as that's what he used, he was such a primitive engineer). So, without a road from the nearest community 150 miles away, he urged the building of a hydro plant. That the closest major market for power, Montreal, is only 750 miles away, he saw as a minor inconvenience. Clearly, another "bright" idea like the ones that got him here. He probably needed help to set up his Theodolyte. Too many star sightings, yis b'y.

Anyway, it was the Canadian Government, so plans were laid. Only 60 years later (I did say it was the *Canadian* Government) they built a railway from the Gulf to iron mines in Quebec that still supply Hamilton steel mills, with a 80-mile spur road east to the Hamilton River. This allowed massive shipments of Screech to supply 3000 men to begin construction of the plant. Machinery doan run good widou' greez, yis, b'y.

Not satisfied with doing it the easy way, they decided to build the whole thing underground, er .. under rock. Solid, black granite. Makes sense: letting gravity do the job, they turned a rock plateau edge into an artificial waterfall – an indoor Niagara – by dyking up a river (so its bed is now bone dry for 10 miles), creat-

ing a reservoir with 88 dykes totaling 40 miles long to contain 11,000 billion cubic feet of water in existing but expanded lakes. The mosquito population loved it. To get the material for this, they turned the plant area into a swiss-cheese of 12 miles of tunnels, producing 2,300,000 cubic yards of rubble. At 10 cubic yards per truckload, that's a lot of trucking, yis b'y. Work was delayed three times, twice to scrape off pre-Lascaux cave paintings and once to destroy full-skeletal remains of hominus labradorensis (characterized by prehensile nasal drip), so anthropologists would let the project proceed. Other Pilt-down men have emerged since, but were non-unionized, so they were readily dismissed.

The water passes through the plant in a route resembling a short-handled hockey stick. From the reservoir it is diverted into 11 sloping tunnels, "penstocks," where it falls 1000 feet, arriving at 450 lb/sq. inch (more pressure than at Great Wolf Lodge's water slide) onto turbines to generate power, then passes through a surge chamber to slow it down, then escapes through two mile-long horizontal tunnels to the original river bed. By then it's likely very tired and needs its bed. It continues on its original course toward Goose Bay, where there is

Continued on page 7 ...

Recent Events

WINERY AND GREENHOUSE TOUR

(and Visit To The Village Of Jordan)

On Wednesday July 14, retirees and friends ventured on a tour of Niagara College Greenhouses and Teaching Winery at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Campus. The bus left the college at 9 a.m. for a trip down the QEW to the NOTL Campus



of Niagara College in the heart of Ontario's wine country. The campus is located in an ecological band of wetlands, vineyards and community gardens which provides a pleasant, relaxing setting.

Our first stop was at the Greenhouses where we were welcomed to the college by a knowledgeable secretary who took us through the state of the art greenhouses giving us an overview of the programs

taught by the division and expectations of the students. Small packages of wild flower seeds were passed out to us to try our hand at flower gardening. From just outside the greenhouses we were able to see our next destination, Niagara's Wine Education Centre, home of Canada's only Teaching Winery.

As we had a large group, we were divided into two groups at the winery – one group started with the winery tour and the other group enjoyed a wine tasting. Our tour was conducted by a Niagara College student in the Winery and Viticulture Technician program who took us on a tour of the vineyard, production area and barrel cellar. The Winery and Viticulture Technician program is the only one of its kind in Canada. In the wine tasting our guide overviewed the basics of wine appreciation as we sampled 3 VQA wines. We were impressed by the knowledge and enthusiasm of our winery tour guide and wine tasting guide.

Following the tour and tasting, we enjoyed a box lunch prepared on the patio outside the visitor's centre which overlooks the vineyards. The lunch was prepared by students at Niagara's Culinary Institute. The vegetables were from Niagara's Culinary Institute's Garden. After our leisurely

lunch we boarded the bus for Jordan.

At Jordan free time allowed us to go our own way to browse through the shops; or to enjoy a beverage and visit with other retirees in the cafes; or to check out Cave Springs Cellars; or to just stroll around Jordan enjoying the village. After a leisurely hour or so we once again boarded the bus for the final leg of the trip back to Mohawk.

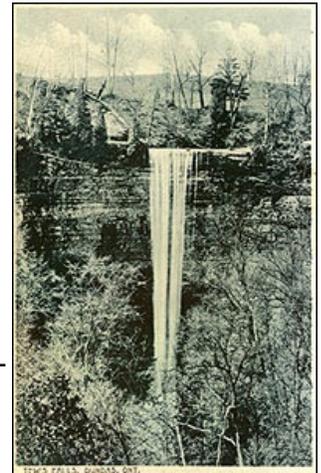
- Liz Aldrey

MOHAWK HIKERS

On a beautiful September day, twelve Mohawk retirees met at Greenville Optimist Club Park for a hike between Webster's & Tews Falls. Along the way we stopped to read the plaques describing the history of the area, take some photos and enjoy the scenery from the many lookouts.

Hamilton is blessed with many picturesque waterfalls. Spencer's Creek cascades over Webster's Falls

which is one of the largest waterfalls in this region. Tew's Falls tumbles over the escarpment and is only a few meters short of Niagara Falls. The distance between the two was easi-



ly covered at a leisurely pace following one of the Bruce Trails side trails. Bill Fulton explained the meaning of the blue blazes that direct the hikers along the trail.

At the end of the hike, we enjoyed a picnic and it was agreed that we would plan further hikes to view other waterfalls in this region.

For information on the Bruce Trail visit www.bruce-trail.org and the Hamilton waterfalls see www.cityofwaterfalls.ca

Let's do another hike on Monday January 17th, 2011. We could meet at the Tiffany Falls parking lot on Wilson St. just below the escarpment (not far from Harpers Garden Centre) at 10 a.m. and walk to Sherman Falls and back with lunch at a restaurant afterwards. Please contact Bill Fulton at fultons@sympatico.ca if you wish to go, for further instructions.

- Barb Hallam



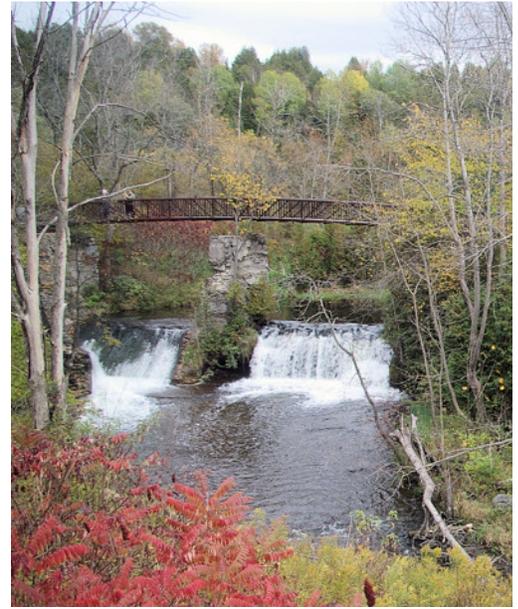
CREDIT VALLEY EXPLORER

It was a damp and cool morning in October when 44 hearty souls gathered at the front of Mohawk College to begin their journey into the scenic credit valley. Farr's bus and friendly female driver arrived on time to begin our venture through the Credit Valley and Hills of the Headwaters in the heart of Ontario's Greenbelt.

We arrived in Orangeville just prior to 11:00 a.m. Many of us found the few minutes convenient for stretching our legs and visiting the local train station's facilities before boarding the Credit Valley Explorer. We were then very comfortably seated on our classic rail car for the 74 km adventure. The train meandered through the rolling hills, deep valleys, and autumn colours along the edge of the Niagara escarpment on a rail route established 130 years ago. We enjoyed the added benefit of interpretive commentary and a souvenir mile-by-mile printed tour guide. Adding to our enjoyment was the luxury of spacious assigned seating and large picture windows.

The trip included complimentary refreshments and a meal served by our friendly onboard attendant.

Along the way we experienced such highlights as the 1,146 foot long railway trestle



bridge spanning the Credit Valley and the forks of the Credit River along with the Forks of the Credit Provincial Park at Cataract. We enjoyed a rest stop in the village of Inglewood to let passengers enjoy the charms of the quaint rural community and visit their local general store.

We then boarded our train to finish the last leg of our journey back to Orangeville. We returned to the College late mid-afternoon as scheduled. The comments re the journey and the experience were very positive and a good time was had by all. Thanks to Brad Berry for a well planned and enjoyable retirees event.

- Harold Best

THE BRUCE BECKONS!

September 2010

Gypsy (One who travels extensively seeking geographical, economic, environmental, cultural, and scenic experiences of interest)

Two years ago (2009), during our travels through Arizona, California, the north western states and western Canada, we needed to find a campground as a base when we returned to Ontario in mid July. Beth is a "computer sleuth" and found a small campground near Stokes Bay on the west shore of the Bruce Peninsula.

We had visited Tobermory (north end of the peninsula) years ago with our family on a summer vacation and more recently (three times) on our boat as we travelled from Parry Sound to Little Current and the north channel. We knew that the Bruce Peninsula was the northern terminus of the Niagara escarpment and had seen the cliffs, the lighthouses and some of the bays from the water. However, we had no idea of the spectacular scenery and amazing hiking trails that are available here.

Communities like Owen Sound, Shallow Lake, Wiarton (the home of Wiarton Willie..and yes "he" has his own accommodation) Lions Head and Tobermory were all established in valleys (literally at the bottom of the Niagara Escarpment) for easy access to Georgian Bay shipping. When you travel

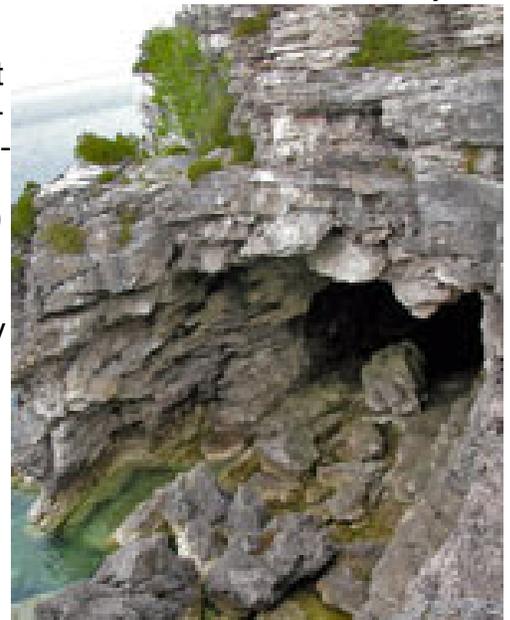
north on Highway #6 you can plan on going down some steep hills as you enter each community.

While each community is unique in its location and characteristics, it is the Bruce Trail and all of its side trails which we find most interesting and challenging. The Bruce Trail starts at Queenston Heights and generally follows the Niagara Escarpment (an UNESCO world biosphere reserve) all the way to Tobermory (782 km). We doubt if we will be able to hike it all in our lifetime so we are content to work on the Bruce Peninsula section. Here there are some 270 km. of trails within 70 km. of our campground. The trails range from a nice stroll through a forest to an extremely difficult climb up or down the escarpment. We always keep in mind that we will have to either retrace your steps or take an equally challenging side trail to return to our parking area.

Based on our experiences in the summer of 2009 the Bruce beckoned again so we decided to return here upon our return from California and Arizona (July 2010) and continue our explorations. Since then we have spent our time doing at least two major hikes(3 to 7 km) per week. The distance depends on that section of trail's degree of difficulty.

Our campground is about 8 km due west of Lions Head so we started near there as we planned each hike. To the north of Lions Head are the William's caves (a series of 3 caves

where the rock of the escarpment has collapsed). It is an easy hike along the trail, up to the caves and then along the shoreline of Georgian Bay, then up the escarpment and return to Lions Head (3.2 km). To the south of Lions Head the trail follows the top of the escarpment for a time to the Lion's Head overlook and past a series of glacial potholes. These are perfectly circular holes carved into the solid rock by



are spectacular lookouts from the top of the escarpment which bring back memories. I can remember how impressed I was with the view of Hamilton from the brow when my family first arrived in Hamilton in 1948. The view here is of Georgian Bay and especially the rock climbing cliffs on the south shore of Isthmus Bay at Lions Head. Even further up this section is the "devil's monument" (a section of the escarpment which split off years ago and still supports a variety of trees and bushes) also known as a "flowerpot". Here one can descend the es-

carpment partially by stairs and a steep descent along a rocky trail to the water's edge. After climbing back up to the 40+ metre high escarpment we continued north for 2.7 km by natural lookouts (those who experience vertigo...be cautious.) to a natural arch near Dyer's Bay. Sturdy hiking boots, a good hiking staff and a camera make every trail more enjoyable.

If birding is your interest, there are numerous side trails that traverse meadows and wetlands where many species of migrating birds stop. As well, red tail hawks (Mohawk's official bird) and other birds of prey can be sighted catching the up draughts along the edges of the cliffs. We both carry our cameras and in addition to the birds and the vistas Beth has photographed over 30 different varieties of fungus (posted on "flickr") and 20 varieties of flora that are specific to The Bruce. That includes at least 5 of the 43 species of orchids (peak time mid June) that thrive under the forest canopy and in the wetlands.

If you want a day off from hiking, there are lots of alternatives. A day trip drive can include following the shore road for 30km to Cabot Head, the Cape Hurd Lighthouse and Museum and then a short hike to Winfield Basin (one of our favourite anchorages when we crossed the bay by boat on our way to Little Current). The narrow channel in and the calm waters provide a very safe harbour (from the open bay) for the many pleasure boats. On any summer's day there can be as

many as 30 boats at anchor. After your picnic lunch drive back out the Dyers Bay road and head a little north on highway #6 (it has been repaved this year) to the Dorcas Bay Nature Reserve and Singing Sands. This reserve located on the west side of The Bruce (on Lake Huron) is completely different than the east side fronting on Georgian Bay. There are no cliffs here just flat tree covered fields, fens and fine sand beaches. If you want to swim, plan on a long wade out until you reach deep enough water to take your dip. After your swim, take a hike around the perimeter of Dorcas Bay and see if you can capture any of the orchids I talked about earlier.

Oh, did I mention that all of the hiking trails and the community beaches and western shore beaches are free? No parking fees! No entrance fees!

There is however one area that charges an entrance fee and it is well worth it. The Bruce National Park is located just South and East of Tobermory. There are a number of good reasons that it is worth paying the fee. The National Park is home to the Grotto, Boulder Beach, Cyprus Lake, Half Way Dump and High Dump. The easy hike around Cyprus Lake will take 1 to 2 hours. You can hike, picnic, wade, swim and canoe. The hike to Boulder Beach and the Grotto will take about 30 minutes depending on the time you arrive at the park. If you arrive by 9:30 AM you usually can park very near the trail head. If you arrive later, you

will be directed to available parking further away and you will have the advantage of hiking part way around Crystal Lake. On the way back, you can stop for a swim or a wade.

As you approach Boulder Beach along the forest trail a layered stone path leads down to the crystal clear waters of Georgian Bay. The beach is well named because it is covered with rounded boulders ranging in size from a golf ball to a foot ball. In the water, large flat rocks allow the swimmer to step down from one level to the next until the final step drops straight off to this the deepest part of Georgian Bay (over 250 metres). Just up the steep rock trail that requires climbing is the "Grotto". This geological formation consists of a large cave at the water level with a small lake inside and an underground channel that leads out into the bay. Access to the large cave entrance requires that you climb down the 40 metre cliff or swim around the promontory and "jumping" rocks from Boulder Beach. If you can hold your breath for two minutes, you can swim the underground channel into the grotto's lake. Once in the "Grotto" there is a short rocky path around the lake and another climb inside that exits at the top of the cliffs through a square metre separation in the rocks.

This is just a taste of The Bruce Peninsula. I will try and cover things like Half Dump, High Dump, picturesque Tobermory, Fathom Five Scuba Park, the Chi-Cheemaun, the Flowerpot

Islands, the west shores, trails south of Wiarton (spectacular), Inglis Falls and beautiful Owen Sound in a future article.

By the time you read this we will probably be on our 2011 "gypsy" excursion to Arizona and California again. In March we will head north through Oregon and Washington to British Columbia where we intend to spend the summer and possibly early fall.

- Vern and Beth Pich, with Nikki and Charlie (our two shelties that love the hikes too)

Continued from page 2 ...

talk of doing this all over again, as the "Lower Churchill" site. By then the water will be too tired to do it again before the Atlantic rescues it. The underground turbine hall is 972' long, 81' wide and 154' high, big enough for three CFL games at once – and no weather worries! Bring on the Grey Cup! (it's a wonder A.P. didn't suggest that too)

The gigantic machinery for this facility arrives on special transporters on a mile-long road from the surface, the first paved road in Labrador. It is also the escape route for the bus, permanently parked underground, that would rush workers, and visitors on tour, to the surface in case of emergency. There is also an underground airtight survival chamber with food and Screech for 30 people for 30 days, for those who miss the bus. Somehow, during safety drills, the bus usually leaves empty. The door can only be opened from inside. That's so complicated that it can take weeks, or until the Screech runs out. Rescuers at the surface can listen in to the chamber, but say delirious survivors often have slurred speech or are drowned out by Great Big Sea mu-

sic. Video images confirm that those trapped below are jumping and writhing in something resembling St. Vita's Dance. Luckily, they always come out exhausted but okay. It's an ordeal, yis b'y.

The construction began in 1953 by Brinco, a British engineering firm, in agreement with Joey Smallwood (famous for saying, "this project could no more lose money than I could have a baby," a comment borrowed 14 years later in Montreal, with equal outcome. Touché, Jean Drapeau.) Joey gave Brinco a 99-year lease, because three-digit numbers hadn't been invented yet in Canada's newest province. Maritime pride refuses "Mainlander" (a pejorative term) "bright" ideas (vis. "A.P. Low," above). After spending \$150 million in development and foreseeing (great time to get foresight) \$850 million more, Brinco was bankrupt and sold power to Quebec, with a cost-recovery clause in the contract, on May 12, 1969 for \$5 billion for 65 years. Quebec already had the world's largest power generation-transmission system in the world. So Quebec buys from us at fixed rate but can raise their rates to customers. This momentous event is "celebrated" annually in NL with "Kiss a Frog" festivals. And not on the lips. Frogs don't turn into handsome princes, as Danny loves to remind Jean Charest. They've hardly been "kissing cousins" especially since the Quebec attempt to buy New Brunswick Power, which would have prevented us from exporting new power without going through Quebec. Bad enough that three 735,000-volt lines go there now. With that deal in the dumpster, work on the Lower Churchill plant is warming up.

But, as Oi sayd in Outpost Tree, keeping de power a-cummin' to 3,500,000 Canadians is the reason fer uz been 'ere, which eez a gud wan, unlike Tronna's. An' we 'ave a 'ockey team too, yis b'y. Dis munt,

me duckies, practice yer double and triple negatives, as der ain't much good talkin' needer iffen youze can't not do dat dere.

An' now dat yer andlers shouldn't fraiz, cape yer flibbers waum.

- Chack b'y

OUTPOST NOIN – AT DER GOO'S BAY

Dis pasd weeg I been to der Goo's Bay (wun says dat wid grade care, fer as not to riffer to what dem udder types u' b'ys do [goose boys]), 290 gravel kms to the aist, near der Adlandik. Oim allowed dat in me contragt fer raytrait, study er wudhavyer.

Happy Valley-Goose Bay is a joined town at "the end of the road" as the Trans-Labrador Highway (TWH) 500 ends there in a T intersection with Hwy 510, Hamilton River Road. Happy Valley is by far the older community, dating near 1800, with about an equal mix of whites, Métis and Innu. Innu are southern and coastal fishers; Inuit are northern and more inland; they are traditional enemies. White Labrador-borns dislike both groups, so this is an uneasy alliance sometimes. Don't buy a kayak from the wrong group! I like Innu I have met; they are happy, friendly and make me feel tall.

North of the T intersection on Hwy 510 is Goose Bay, the newer community, built mostly during WWII as a NATO base to train pilots, as a marshalling area for troops, and for anti-Uboat convoy escort. It remains a NATO base, and has recently been given a new lease on life as a training centre for troops from many nations in winter survival. (Don't tell them about global warming – they run on "military intelligence.") Ironically, the German army maintains a presence here. Either they turned to port, not starboard, to go home, and so don't know the war is over, or they are keeping an eye on us in case we

need *lebenstraum*. Goose Bay is mostly Caucasian. The briefing room is now the town theatre on Saturdays. With 7600 people, this is a metropolis after Churchill Falls' 600.

Continuing on north out of Goose Bay for 32 km on *paved* road is an community (always the first to get pavement), Sheshatshiu (think "*sheh* shat shoo"), a town of about 1200. Recent government funding has built a stunning new school, best in the area, and many new homes. Happy children play everywhere and families are large. Last year, there were over 100 baptisms at the Catholic church, where, I'm told, the liturgy swings! Evidently, so do other things! It is a "wet" reserve, with the attendant problems. Recently, a more isolated Innu community, Nataushish (*Nat* -wa-sheesh), voted to remain dry and is really working on addictions. I gave an Innu man a ride to the Goose Bay airport, on the base, who was flying to Windsor ON to a native-oriented addiction centre.

All these towns are linked by Hamilton River Road (HRR), that runs near to the rectory in Happy Valley where I stayed. So the priest and I sat in the living room, sipping a fine vintage from pinwheel crystal, and he glanced across the street. "That's the local crack house," he sighed, glancing at the large white two-storey house. (Is he serious?) "And that's Patrick Notagalactik (name altered) buying the week's groceries. Too bad for the seven kids." "You know it's a crack house? You know who he is?" "Of course; I've been here 32 years. The dealer is a little fish; the RNC want the big fish. So I try to save the little fish." All this is a lot for my naïve mind. Note to self: reread Mt 4:19.

Now I understand why there is an addiction centre next to the hospital up HRR two kms. Of course, across the street from that is a caf-

feine and pastry addiction centre, Tim's. Just up the street from that is a CONA campus (Colleges Of the North Atlantic, spread through all the Maritime provinces as one system), with about 300 students. The campus in Labrador City at the other end of TLH focuses on deep mining, blasting and strip mining. This campus specializes in lumbering, slouching and drooping. At least, that's what I assume from people with CONA jackets in Tim's.

The town also has the first drug store (the legit kind) I've seen in five months, a real hardware store, lumber yard, a garden centre selling only indoor plants now – for good reason, as you'll see – four gas stations, several restaurants, and four very expensive craft stores of native and white carvers, weavers and painters, and lots of other stores. So the days there were a re-entry of sorts for the commercialism I will soon re-experience. Yay! Bring it on! Best of all: a real grocery store, bigger than the 7-11 size in Churchill Falls. I almost wept at the sight of a choice of fresh veggies and fruit; corn, only \$4 for 5 cobs. Green seedless grapes, only \$8.10/lb. That's why I almost wept. I can wait three weeks! Either that, or work on my native status: intermarriage works saves here.

On Friday it was time to head home. First, stop at Tim's for a ham-and-swiss for lunch on the road, and a mocha to start the day. Heading out, the first 30 km of TLH are paved, so there is time to get the mocha down. From then on, 20 km of road construction, compromised by the 6" of fresh snow that fell overnight. The "plan" is to pave another 40 km at each end this summer. Some year, the twain will meet at CF.

I pass the entrance to the new "road" south that was pushed through Mealy Mountains National Park during the winter down to Cart-

wright. Driving on frozen swamp is fine in the winter, but in April it was closed while they poured gravel into it. It is dubbed "the road to prosperity," because it links the TLH to the south coast, where a ferry crosses to de Auland. Thus, there will be a "grand circuit" from Quebec City, up through Quebec and along the TLH, down past Cartwright to the south coast, over to Newfoundland, along the Trans Canada Highway to St. John's and down to Argentia, by ferry to Halifax, back through Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to Quebec City. Quebec is also in a road-building and paving program (using profit from our hydro, no doubt). There is road from Quebec City to Baie-Comeau (home of King Brian), through Sept-Iles and on to Havre St.-Pierre. About another 550 km and it will link with the ferry port, creating an all-Labrador circuit of about 2000 km. Of course, Quebec hopes you will stay along the south coast in their towns to reach the ferry, skipping Labrador. Seems they always figure out how to shaft Labrador! Spend your tourist dollars in Labrador! Buy more paving!

Then I drove on gravel and hard mud for 240 km more. After the radio died, 115 km out, I drove in the silence of my thoughts about my Labrador experiences. I said a rosary for Bernadette and Larry, whose son was arrested for murder in Montreal. I'll see how they are doing when I get back to CF.

Oi bin axed wedder dair be a "no, b'y." Duh. Does an Ubber Canajan say "neh?" when dey doubts somethin'? Gives yerselves a wop on de noggin. Come May 24, the trout and camping seasons begin. Flies are involved in both. Dat be eet frum 'ere fer now.

- Chack b'y