Modern Canada

TRADE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Postwar Canada enjoyed record prosperity and material progress. The world's restrictive trading policies in the Depression era were opened up by such treaties as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), now the World Trade Organization (WTO). The discovery of oil in Alberta in 1947 began Canada's modern energy industry. In 1951, for the first time, a majority of Canadians were able to afford adequate food, shelter and clothing. Between 1945 and 1970, as Canada drew closer to the United States and other trading partners, the country enjoyed one of the strongest economies among industrialized nations. Today, Canadians enjoy one of the world's highest standards of living—maintained by the hard work of Canadians and by trade with other nations, in particular the United States.

As prosperity grew, so did the ability to support social assistance programs. The *Canada Health Act* ensures common elements and a basic standard of coverage. Unemployment insurance (now called "employment insurance") was introduced by the federal government in 1940. Old Age Security was devised as early as 1927, and the Canada and Quebec Pension Plans in 1965. Publicly funded education is provided by the provinces and territories.

INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Like Australia, New Zealand and other countries, Canada developed its autonomy gradually with a capacity to make significant contributions internationally.

The Cold War began when several liberated countries of eastern Europe became part of a Communist bloc controlled by the Soviet Union under the dictator Josef Stalin. Canada joined with other democratic countries of the West to form the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a military alliance, and with the United States in the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD).

A medical researcher

Toronto's business district: Canada's financial capital

Canada joined international organizations such as the United Nations (UN). It participated in the UN operation defending South Korea in the Korean War (1950–53), with 500 dead and 1,000 wounded. Canada has taken part in numerous UN peacekeeping missions in places as varied as Egypt, Cyprus and Haiti, as well as in other international security operations such as those in the former Yugoslavia and Afghanistan.

CANADA AND QUEBEC

French-Canadian society and culture flourished in the postwar years. Quebec experienced an era of rapid change in the 1960s known as the Quiet Revolution. Many Quebecers sought to separate from Canada. In 1963 Parliament established the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. This led to the *Official Languages Act* (1969), which guarantees French and English services in the federal government across Canada. In 1970, Canada helped found *La Francophonie*, an international association of French-speaking countries.

The movement for Quebec sovereignty gained strength but was defeated in a referendum in the province in 1980. After much negotiation, in 1982 the Constitution was amended without the agreement of Quebec. Though sovereignty was again defeated in a second referendum in 1995, the autonomy of Quebec within Canada remains a lively topic—part of the dynamic that continues to shape our country.

(From Left to Right)
Vietnamese Canadian parade
F-86 Sabre, Royal Canadian Air Force
Cirque du Soleil

A CHANGING SOCIETY

As social values changed over more than 50 years, Canada became a more flexible and open society. Many took advantage of expanding secondary and postsecondary educational opportunities and a growing number of women entered the professional work force.

The Jack Pine, Tom Thomson

Most Canadians of Asian descent had in the past been denied the vote in federal and provincial elections. In 1948 the last of these, the Japanese-Canadians, gained the right to vote. Aboriginal people were granted the vote in 1960. Today every citizen over the age of 18 may vote.

Canada welcomed thousands of refugees from Communist oppression, including about 37,000 who escaped Soviet tyranny in Hungary in 1956. With the Communist victory in the Vietnam War in 1975, many Vietnamese fled, including over 50,000 who sought refuge in Canada.

The idea of multiculturalism, as a result of 19th- and 20th-century immigration, gained a new impetus. By the 1960s, one-third of Canadians had origins that were neither British nor French, and took pride in preserving their distinct culture in the Canadian fabric. Today, diversity enriches Canadians' lives, particularly in our cities.

ARTS AND CULTURE IN CANADA

Canadian artists have a long history of achievement in which Canadians take pride. Artists from all regions reflect and define our culture and forms of creative expression and have achieved greatness both at home and abroad.

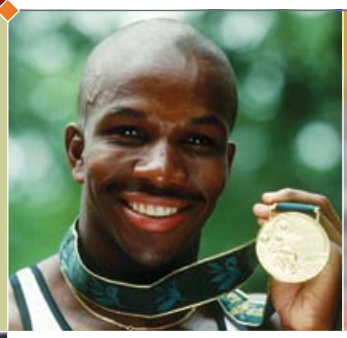
Canadians have made significant contributions to literature in English and in French. Novelists, poets, historians, educators and musicians have had a significant cultural impact. Men and women of letters included Stephen Leacock, Louis Hémon, Sir Charles G.D. Roberts, Pauline Johnson, Émile Nelligan, Robertson Davies, Margaret Laurence and Mordecai Richler. Musicians such as Sir Ernest MacMillan and Healey Willan won renown in Canada and abroad. Writers such as Joy Kogawa, Michael Ondaatje and Rohinton Mistry have diversified Canada's literary experience.

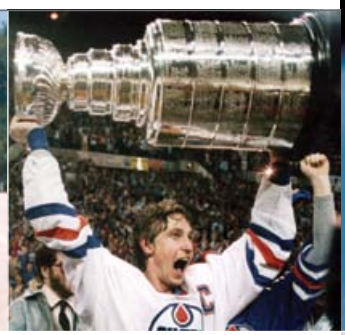
In the visual arts, Canada is historically perhaps best known for the Group of Seven, founded in 1920, who developed a style of painting to capture the rugged wilderness landscapes. Emily Carr painted the forests and Aboriginal artifacts of the West Coast. *Les Automatistes* of Quebec were pioneers of modern abstract art in the 1950s, most notably Jean-Paul Riopelle. Quebec's Louis-Philippe Hébert was a celebrated sculptor of historical figures. Kenojuak Ashevak pioneered modern Inuit art with etchings, prints and soapstone sculptures.

Canada has a long and respected performing arts history, with a network of regional theatres and world-renowned performing arts companies.

The films of Denys Arcand have been popular in Quebec and across the country, and have won international awards. Other noteworthy Canadian filmmakers include Norman Jewison and Atom Egoyan. Canadian television has had a popular following.

(From Left to Right)
Donovan Bailey
Chantal Petitclerc
Terry Fox
Wayne Gretzky





Mark Tewksbury, Olympic gold medallist and prominent activist for gay and lesbian Canadians

Sports have flourished as all provinces and territories have produced amateur and professional star athletes and Olympic medal winners. Basketball was invented by Canadian James Naismith in 1891. Many major league sports boast Canadian talent and in the national sport of ice hockey, Canadian teams have dominated the world. In 1996 at the Olympic Summer Games, Donovan Bailey became a world record sprinter and double Olympic gold medallist. Chantal Petitclerc became a world champion wheelchair racer and Paralympic gold medalist. One of the greatest hockey players of all time, Wayne Gretzky, played for the Edmonton Oilers from 1979 to 1988.

In 1980, Terry Fox, a British Columbian who lost his right leg to cancer at the age of 18, began a cross-country run, the "Marathon of Hope," to raise money for cancer research. He became a hero to Canadians. While he did not finish the run and ultimately lost his battle with cancer, his legacy continues through yearly fundraising events in his name. In 1985, fellow British Columbian Rick Hansen circled the globe in a wheelchair to raise funds for spinal cord research.

Canadian advances in science and technology are world renowned and have changed the way the world communicates and does business. Marshall McLuhan and Harold Innis were pioneer thinkers. Science and research in Canada have won international recognition and attracted world-class students, academics and entrepreneurs engaged in medical research, telecommunications and other fields. Since 1989, the Canadian Space Agency and Canadian astronauts have participated in space exploration, often using the Canadian-designed and built Canadarm. Gerhard Herzberg, a refugee from Nazi Germany, John Polanyi, Sidney Altman, Richard E. Taylor, Michael Smith and Bertram Brockhouse were Nobel Prize-winning scientists.

In 1972, Paul Henderson scored the winning goal for Canada in the Canada-Soviet Summit Series. This goal is often referred to as "the goal heard around the world" and is still remembered today as an important event in both sports and cultural history

(From Left to Right)

Catriona Le May Doan carries the flag after winning a gold medal in speed skating at the 2002 Olympic Winter Games

Canadian football is a popular game that differs in a number of ways from American football. Professional teams in the Canadian Football League (CFL) compete for the championship Grey Cup, donated by Lord Grey, the Governor General, in 1909

Scientific innovation at work: Canadarm2

GREAT CANADIAN DISCOVERIES AND INVENTIONS

Canadians have made various discoveries and inventions. Some of the most famous are listed below.

- **Alexander Graham Bell** — hit on the idea of the telephone at his summer house in Canada.
- **Joseph-Armand Bombardier** — invented the snowmobile, a light-weight winter vehicle.
- **Sir Sandford Fleming** — invented the worldwide system of standard time zones.
- **Matthew Evans and Henry Woodward** — together invented the first electric light bulb and later sold the patent to Thomas Edison who, more famously, commercialized the light bulb.
- **Reginald Fessenden** — contributed to the invention of radio, sending the first wireless voice message in the world.
- **Dr. Wilder Penfield** — was a pioneering brain surgeon at McGill University in Montreal, and was known as "the greatest living Canadian."
- **Dr. John A. Hopps** — invented the first cardiac pacemaker, used today to save the lives of people with heart disorders.
- **SPAR Aerospace / National Research Council** — invented the Canadarm, a robotic arm used in outer space.
- **Mike Lazaridis and Jim Balsillie** — of Research in Motion (RIM) — a wireless communications company known for its most famous invention: the BlackBerry.

Sir Frederick Banting of Toronto and Charles Best discovered insulin, a hormone to treat diabetes that has saved 16 million lives worldwide

Want to learn more about Canada's history? Visit a museum or national historic site! Through artifacts, works of art, stories, images and documents, museums explore the diverse events and accomplishments that formed Canada's history. Museums can be found in almost every city and town across Canada. National historic sites are located in all provinces and territories and include such diverse places as battlefields, archaeological sites, buildings and sacred spaces. To find a museum or national historic site in your community or region, visit the websites of the Virtual Museum of Canada and Parks Canada listed at the end of this guide.

The prosperity and diversity of our country depend on all Canadians working together to face challenges of the future. In seeking to become a citizen, you are joining a country that, with your active participation, will continue to grow and thrive.

How will you make your contribution to Canada?