



The Maple Leaf Rag



Friends of the Canadian Collections
Amis des collections canadiennes

Spring 2013

Keep your calendar open for these two "must attend" talks.



Attributed to Alicia Killaly
ROM Images

Brushing it in the Rough:

Women Artists in Canada in the 19th Century

You may have seen Susanna Moodie's delicate sketches of Canadian wildflowers. But are you familiar with the work of the explorer Anna Jameson? Or those of Alicia Killaly, one of Krieghoff's students?

Dr Arlene Gehmacher, ROM Curator of Canadian Paintings, Prints and Drawings, talks about early Canadian women artists. Learn what these works tell us about life in pioneer times.

Wednesday March 6, 2013

4 - 6 pm

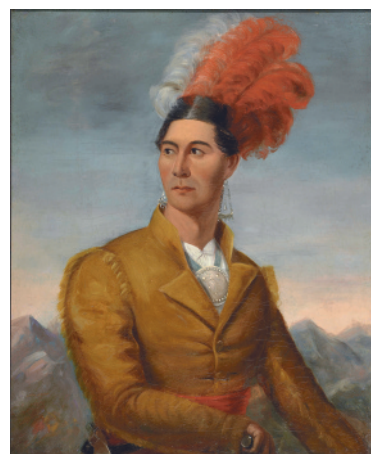
Education classrooms 3 & 4, Level 1, ROM
Brought to you by the Friends of Canadian Collections/Amis des collections canadiennes

FREE for FCC/ACC members

\$15.00 (not including ROM Admission)

Light refreshments

Registration required for all: 416.586.5797;
www.rom.on.ca/whatson and select by date.



John Brant (1794-1832)
Artist unknown, ROM Images

The First Nations' Role in the War of 1812-1814

It was a war between the British/Canadians and the Americans, but the First Nations played an important part.

Dr Trudy Nicks, Senior Curator, World Cultures Department at the ROM

explains this added dimension to the War of 1812-1814

Wednesday May 29, 2013

4 - 6 pm

Education Classrooms 3 & 4, Level 1, ROM
Brought to you by the Friends of The Canadian Collections/Amis des collections canadiennes

Following the Annual General Meeting

FREE for FCC/ACC members

\$10.00 (not including ROM Admission)

Light refreshments

Registration required for all: 416.586.5797;
www.rom.on.ca/whatson and select by date.

The Mackenzie Panels

by Chris Raible



Courtesy of City of Toronto,
Culture Division

The quiet garden of Toronto's Mackenzie House features two relief sculptures.

One portrays William Lyon Mackenzie – its gargantuan proportions proclaim its purpose: here is a Very Important Figure in Canadian History. The scene is the Upper Canada House of Assembly, April 10, 1835. The chairman of the "Select Committee on Grievances" is presenting a report, a 48-page catalogue of everything that is wrong with the government. It was Mackenzie's finest hour, the image declares – not his 1824 launch of an independent newspaper, not his 1832 re-election after being expelled from the Assembly, not his 1834 election as Toronto's first mayor, certainly not his 1837 failed march down Yonge Street with an ill-armed band of supporters. No "Little Mac" here – this Mackenzie stands tall, a statesman speaking with authority.

Confirming the importance of the scene are the names of the artisans who in 1937 created this massive image: C. W. Jefferys, whose textbook depictions of Canadian history were etched into the psyches of Canadian school children for half a century, and

Emanuel Hahn, whose sculpted

images of the Bluenose and of a caribou continue to grace our dimes and quarters.

This panel and its companion were originally a single panel, one face of a large archway that stood at Niagara Falls.

The text of the second panel was the caption underneath the Mackenzie image:

This memorial was erected to honour the memory of the men and women in this land throughout their generation who braved the wilderness, maintained the settlement, performed the common task without praise or glory and were the pioneers of political freedom and a system of responsible government which became the cornerstone of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

This something-less-than-deathless prose was composed by William Lyon Mackenzie King, then Prime Minister of Canada. In his private diary, King noted that the words came directly from his grandfather: "... How amazing ... an inscription dictated 'from the skies' – out of 'the Invisible' – after 100 years – It is all too marvellous for words."¹

Was this text truly ghost written? It is easy to scoff, but King clearly believed so. Throughout his life he often felt guided by his grandfather. These words hardly echo Mackenzie's often passionate prose, but "political freedom" and "responsible government" were at the core of the fiery editor's political purposes. Below the text are images of hanged Rebellion leaders Lount and Matthews, and the names of twenty-six executed rebels.

In 1937 a triumphal "Pioneer Memorial Arch" was erected near the Niagara Falls, the gateway to Canada for many American visitors. Its four panels summarized our history: early Europeans, La Salle and Hennepin, exploring the land; a Loyalist refugee family settling the land; a War of 1812 soldier with naval and native comrades, defending the land; and Mackenzie, with martyrs of the Rebellion, freeing the land. The erection of the Arch was a political act, an affirmation that the Rebellion was the pivotal point in the development of modern Canadian democracy.

Twenty-nine years after it went up, the Arch came down. A "traffic hazard" was the official justification. But the demolition of the Arch, like its erection, should be seen as a political act. The iconoclasts of 1967 did not see William Lyon Mackenzie as a personage to take patriotic pride in. A failed armed insurrection was not an act to celebrate in a nation of peacekeepers. The arch came down, and no one – no King's horses and no King's men – put the pieces together again. Only in 1984 were these panels salvaged and relocated in a quiet garden, a public but hardly prominent place.

Dr. Chris Raible spoke to the FCC/ACC about the boxes crafted by 1837 rebellion prisoners. He is the author of numerous articles and books on Mackenzie and his times, including A Colonial Advocate, The Power of the Press, and From Hands Striving to be Free. The ROM's collection of Mackenzie artifacts includes Mackenzie's own account of the rebellion and a portrait, likely by C.W. Jefferys.

¹WLM King - Diary 1937 March 27

WALTER DONATES WHALEBONE TO THE ROM

by Liz Muir, Chair, FCC/ACC

Elizabeth Walter thought that more attention should be paid to the ROM's Canadian collections.

"Nobody's talking about them," she told CEO William Thorsell.

"Then do something," he said.

And she did.



Elizabeth Walter
Courtesy of Malcolm Graham

In 2000, The Friends of the Canadian Collections/Amis des collections canadiennes began as a committee of the Department of Museum Volunteers. Elizabeth recruited former DMV president Pat Haug, and Elizabeth and Pat became the first two co-chairs.

The Friends' mandate is to "expand our [ROM] Members' awareness of the richness of Canadian culture and natural history," through developing programs and behind-the-scenes tours; contributing funds to curatorial purchases, projects and gallery displays; and to produce a newsletter.

Elizabeth, her husband and two young children, had emigrated from England to Toronto in 1964. In the early 80s she became a volunteer at the ROM, and was the first manager of the Reproductions Shop, a project of the DMV to sell items reproduced from the ROM's collections.

Elizabeth has been a ROM cheerleader ever since, and has made many donations.

Recently she stumbled across a carved whale bone in John Houston's Lunenburg art gallery, a name well-known in Inuit art. She was overwhelmed by its beauty, and immediately thought of the ROM's Canadian galleries. She approached curator Ken Lister, who was delighted to receive it. But when Elizabeth had it shipped as a gift to the ROM, they discovered there was no case available for its display, so she generously donated a special glass case as well!

The whale vertebra is carved on all sides, an incredible feat, given the porous quality of the bone. Carved by Labrador artist Jacko Jararuse, it tells the story of his grandfather's way of life. Scenes such as a dog pulling a sleigh and a hunter paddling a kayak mingle with metaphysical symbols such as the stylized image of Nuliajuk, "the mother of all sea beasts."

You can see this exceptional carving in The Daphne Cockwell Gallery of Canada: First Peoples, on the first floor of the ROM.



Courtesy of ROM Images

WHAT YOU TOLD US

FCC/ACC Member 2012 Survey Results

Thanks to all of you who found time to return our survey.

What did you tell us?

You're free to attend a programme most days, except Fridays, and you clearly prefer afternoons. You're interested in a variety of topics, but history is the winner. You're open to every kind of presentation, from behind-the-scenes to lectures.

You're over forty years old, mostly between fifty and sixty.

We'll take this advice as we develop future programmes which are not already firmed up.

- The FCC/ACC Board

"MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGY"

April Hawkins, technician and manager of new world archaeology collections, met with Eva Cunningham, member-at-large, FCC/ACC Board. They looked at some recently "rediscovered" objects.

Eva – How was it that you "rediscovered" some native objects? Had the museum lost track of them?

April – Well, these items were not actually lost. They've been a part of the curatorial collections since the early 1900's. They've spent the entire time since then tucked away in dark drawers. But they've never been displayed, studied or published.

Eva – How did you come upon them?

April – Over the summer, I was conducting some backlog inventory work with archeology student volunteers. I noticed a recurrent problem. Our database had the wrong identification for a series of redstone slabs. These flat slabs were called "bead" for some reason. They're sometimes called "catlinite," after George Catlin. He was a famous portrait painter of native life in the 1800's. The chemical composition of catlinite is problematic, so we use the term "redstone" instead. The beads made from redstone are long and rectangular.

After finding a drawer of grooved slabs called "beads" and one bead that was never fully finished, we realized the redstone beads were actually templates for making beads.

Of course, someone before us knew that. But we had never been aware of it. Now I have to go back and find all the others that I've seen through the collection and identify them.



Photo Credit: April Hawkins, ©ROM, 2013

Eva – Why is this so exciting?

April – Well, it illustrates the process and exhaustive efforts used to produce beads to exact specifications.

Eva – Didn't you also find some pipe stems?

April – Actually we found human effigy pipes – pipes with human faces on them, sometimes facing the smoker. At least two of the faces had an opening in the mouth. Smoke would emanate from that opening when the pipe was smoked. So the human effigy would appear to be smoking just as

the smoker was. I showed it to an effigy pipe scholar. He'd never seen or heard of it before. This is potential new knowledge that we have here. It's believed that the tobacco being smoked at that time (*Nicotiana rustica*) was quite potent and probably somewhat hallucinogenic. It would have added to the intensity of the experience for the smoker.

Eva – I imagine then that smoking the pipe would be very meaningful.

April – Absolutely! The tobacco was probably considered sacred, since it was so powerful. One would have used it carefully.

Eva – Who would have thought that one can still make such discoveries right here within the ROM?

April – Yes! It felt somewhat like being in the field. I call it "museum archaeology" when I uncover things like this in the collection drawers. I think there's a lot more to discover.

Eva – Speaking of being in the field, where did these objects originate?

April – They all come from Ontario – they're at least 500 years old, from "prehistory." The backbone of the ROM's collection comes from a massive trove of objects – around 75,000 of them, collected by David Boyle from around 1870 onward. He was the principal of the Normal School. He even had his students hunting for artifacts in the nearby gorge. Eventually the collection came to the ROM.

Eva – Our members have a real thirst for stories that delve into the history of the ROM and its collections. Thanks for talking to me and showing me these remarkable objects.



Photo Credit: April Hawkins, ©ROM, 2013

ADOPT-A-CANADIAN JOURNAL PROGRAM

by Velma Jones, Treasurer, FCC/ACC, and
1st Vice-president, DMV at the ROM.

Journals are vital for the support of the ROM collections and research by its curators and for use by students, but subscription costs are rapidly increasing every year. For that reason, the Adopt-A-Journal program was launched a couple of years ago to help defray these costs.

The subscriptions cover a broad range of topics – from Ontario birds and insects to Canadian decorative arts – in both scholarly and browsable formats. The journals are housed and displayed in the ROM Library's Sackler Reading Room, which is freely accessible each weekday.

Thanks to those FCC members who have supported the program since its inception. The Library has benefitted significantly from your support. The support of FCC contributors is acknowledged with a small plaque on the magazine rack in the Library.

If you have not already done so, please consider adopting a journal. A list of the subscriptions up for adoption is available by contacting the Treasurer, Friends of Canadian Collections, c/o Department of Museum Volunteers, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, ON M5S 2C6 or by telephoning 416 586-5551.

(See insert in this newsletter for details)

FROM THE CANADIAN COLLECTIONS - BULL HEAD'S ROBE

by Jean M Read¹, past Chair, FCC/ACC;
Hon. ROM Trustee; and Chair, Currelly Society

While welcoming special exhibitions to our galleries, we tend to overlook many of the treasures on view in the ROM's Canadian collections. One such treasure is Bull Head's Robe in the Daphne Cockwell Gallery of Canada: First Peoples.

Chief Bull Head was born around 1833 and was a member of the Tsuu T'ina tribe, formerly called the Sarcee. He became the leading warrior of his tribe during a time when inter-tribal warfare had reached high intensity and his war deeds are recorded on the painted buffalo hide displayed in the gallery. After his brother was killed in 1865, Bull Head became chief of the Tsuu T'ina and remained so until his death in 1911.

In 1877, Bull Head signed Treaty Seven on behalf of his people, who numbered 255 at that time. The tribe settled several years later on a reserve located 12 km. from the centre of present day Calgary. Despite several devastating social and health problems and great pressure to sell parts of their land, Bull Head ably led the Tsuu T'ina into the twentieth century, united as a people and with their reserve intact.

In 1908, Edmund Morris commissioned the Sarcee reserve interpreter, George Hodgson, to have Bull Head's war history painted onto a buffalo hide which had formerly been used as a carriage robe. Bull Head described his deeds in Sarcee to Two Guns, who executed the painting. Although Two Guns was born around 1861 and too young to have been a warrior, his painting vividly evokes the high drama of the warfare of Plains People.

He recorded six of Bull Head's exploits, along with a tally of the horses, weapons and scalps taken from the enemy. Unlike more traditional war exploit paintings, thick lines were drawn to distinguish the events and English names and numbers were inscribed to key into accompanying written explanations. He painted the enemy Cree in black and blue and the Tsuu T'ina in red and green.

Young Charlie Crow Chief, among the first graduates of the reserve school, probably translated Bull Head's words into English. Hodgson's daughter transcribed the text. A letter to Edmund Morris dated November 18th, 1908 from Katherine Hodgson reveals that he paid \$20 to have the robe painted, \$10 of which was given to Bull Head for providing the information.

Bull Head's robe was donated to the Royal Ontario Museum by Edmund Morris in 1913.

¹ Information provided by Ellen Gordon and Arni Brownstone.



Courtesy of ROM Images

WHAT YOUR DOLLARS FUNDED

by Sibilla Korulis, member-at-large, FCC/ACC Board

One aspect of the FCC/ACC's mandate has been to "contribute funds to curatorial purchases, research projects and gallery displays of Canadian material." The funds for these projects have come from Friends' memberships, other donations and ticketed programs.

To date the FCC/ACC has made monetary donations to acquire or support the following:



Netsilingmiut 'Musk-ox horn bow' (1879) of composite construction including musk-ox horn, antler, depilated skin, sinew, and copper, collected by Lt. Frederick Schwatka, commander of the American expedition to determine the fate of the Sir John Franklin expedition. It was used for hunting large game. (Photo: ROM Images)

'Cree-Métis panel bag' collected by Paul Kane in 1846, purchased with the support of the Louise Hawley Stone Trust and the Friends of the Canadian Collections. From Manitoba, it consists of wool with bead embroidery and a loom-woven panel. (Photo: ROM Images)



A slab of *Climactichnites wilsoni* from Upper Cambrian rocks in southern Quebec, to be housed in the Gallery of Earth and Early Life.



Krysalis sofa purchased with the support of the FCC/ACC (Photo: ROM Images)

"Fishing by Torch Light," an oil-on-paper sketch, the basis for a painting of the same name. This sketch is the only one painted with oil paint in the ROM's collection of Paul Kane's sketches. It was purchased with the support of a \$25,000 gift from the FCC/ACC.

FCC/ACC has also made the following donations:

- \$5,000 to Dr. Allan Baker's research on the Red Knot, an endangered migratory bird species. Dr. Baker is Senior Curator, Ornithology and Head of the Department of Natural History at the ROM.
- \$5,000 to Dr. David Evans, for dinosaur research. Dr. Evans is Curator, Vertebrate Palaeontology (Dinosaurs) at the ROM.
- \$15,000 toward the proposed publication of a ROM Press edition of Paul Kane's, *Wanderings of an Artist* (1859) to be illustrated with the ROM's oil painting collection.
- \$15,000 to Dr. Jean-Bernard Caron, Curator, Invertebrate Palaeontology at the ROM. toward a programme on the Burgess Shale.

Looking Ahead ...

March 6, 2013: Arlene Gehmacher, Curator, Canadian Paintings, Prints and Drawings, speaks at our winter meeting (see front cover).

May 29, 2013: FCC/ACC AGM with speaker Trudy Nicks, Senior Curator, Ethnology (see front cover).

Nous annonçons dès maintenant une conférence en français cet automne au ROM.

23 octobre 2013 de 14h à 16h. "Les Francophones pendant la Guerre de 1812," avec Danièle Caloz, historienne et productrice de documentaires à Toronto.

De la part des Amis des collections canadiennes/Friends of the Canadian Collections.