

The Travel Society

Magazine

Vol. 25, No. 4 May 2007

**The Underground Railroad
Essex and Chatham-Kent
The Rideau Canal
In Search Of Grizzlies
Saint-Pierre et Miquelon**

www.thetravelsociety.com

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Uncle Tom's Cabin,
Dresden, Ontario
(Wallace)

editor's letter ...

By the time you receive this issue, May will be here and with it, I hope, Spring at last. It certainly has been slow arriving here in southern Ontario. Speaking of Ontario, there are several stories from that province in this edition as I've been out and about on a few short excursions this winter: London, Waterloo, Windsor and Ottawa and places in between. And my colleague Isobel Warren has reminded us of this year's big birthday, when the Rideau Canal celebrates its 175th birthday and awaits UNESCO'S decision as to whether it is to become a World Heritage Site. I actually know the Rideau region quite well, too, and agree with Isobel that it's a gem of an area, with the added advantage of having lovely Kingston and interesting Ottawa at each end. This issue also has a story from British Columbia and lots of readers' letters with recommendations from all over Canada. And there's also a tale of how you can visit France without going too far from our shores! Hope you enjoy.

Looking ahead, we've some exotic stories on file from Australia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zanzibar, India, Vietnam and more ... all ready for your summer reading and planning!

This is as good a place as any to say that Foreign Affairs Canada has available the new, 2007-2008 edition of their travel booklet *Bon Voyage, But...* This pocket-sized booklet offers guidelines to Canadians for safe and successful journeys. It also provides vital information on consular services and Canadian government offices worldwide. Copies of this and other smart-travel publications, such as *Her Own Way*, *Dual Citizenship* and *Tips for Travelling with Children*, may be ordered, free of charge, online at www.voyage.gc.ca, by e-mailing enqserv@international.gc.ca or by calling 1 800 267 8376 or 613 944 4000. The publications may also be downloaded from www.voyage.gc.ca.

Happy spring and *bon voyage!*





Newton House, Peak District

More on Hiking Holidays

As one who has enjoyed walking holidays each year for many years, I was interested to read the letter from Vivien Feirson on Comfortable Hiking Holidays (January 2007 edition).

The company I walk with is British-based HF Holidays. Abroad they are similar to Comfortable Hiking Holidays in that they use small hotels, but in the UK it is different. There they have their own country houses or lease properties from the National Trust. Most rooms are en suite and there is emphasis on singles, with no supplement for single rooms. The meals are excellent and their packed lunches could not be better. They have small bars serving wine, spirits and beer in the evening. Coaches take and fetch participants from their daily walks, which are rated 'short', 'medium' or 'long' for between 5 and 15 miles, while in Scotland the ascents are rated 'low' or 'high'. I have found that the groups vary between 3 and 18 walkers. Any more and the group is split. Their volunteer guides are very well trained and orientated and from all walks of life. The trips are the best value for money I have found, and an excellent way to see Britain and explore the countryside in depth. If you are without a car, HF will make initial transportation arrangements for you.

We walked the South Downs in West Sussex out of Abingworth, formerly a 5-star hotel set in its own grounds, last year. This year we are

staying at Newton House in Dove Dale in the Peak District of Derbyshire (*the subject of an article in our last issue – Ed.*) and flying back to Canada from Manchester.

For those who would like to explore the countryside, but whose walking abilities are limited, the company also offers Rover Tours

in the UK and Explorer Tours in Europe. These tours use mini buses, which take participants to different places of interest each day.

And for those with more global interests, there are walking tours in many other countries, including India, China, Hawaii, Cuba and even here at home in the Canadian Rockies. We have friends who have walked with HF for many years and they report one of the best was in New Zealand.

If participants decide not to walk they will find golf, dancing, painting, garden visits, bridge or Scrabble games, photography, music, yoga or T'ai Chi and more. In fact there's something for almost everybody! It's an organization that has grown greatly over the years and one which we are so grateful to have found.

For more information their excellent website is www.hfholidays.co.uk or call [011 44] 208 905 9388 for a brochure or write HF Holidays Ltd., Imperial House, The Hyde, Edgware Road, London NW9 5AL, England. Happy walking!

Ralph Carder
West Vancouver, BC

and we will stay again when we travel to this wonderful wine area of British Columbia.

Sylvia and Nol Griffioen purchased this house a few years ago and have worked tirelessly at renovating it ever since. The result is an inviting and comfortable home, approved by both Canada Select and B.C. Tourism. Each of the two guest rooms and one suite offers a private entrance and balcony, is 'theme' decorated and furnished and has a TV and mini fridge. There's tasteful original art throughout the house. On both of our stays we have enjoyed the Safari Room.

The beds are wonderful. Sylvia explains, "I don't want any of our guests longing to get home for a good night's sleep. In fact, when many get home they e-mail me asking for details so they can order a mattress like they had here!"

Excellent breakfasts are served in the dining room or on the balcony. Maybe French toast, scrambled eggs with turkey sausage, mini-frittata with fresh fruit, yogurts and plenty of interesting home-baked breads. Sylvia has a diploma in commercial cooking and her kitchen is loaded with cookbooks.

The Griffioens are knowledgeable and helpful in recommending restaurants, wineries to visit and sights to see in their area. The Naramata Bench boasts about 15 wineries and all can be found a short distance from Paradise Cove (just follow the signs posted along the roadway). Some of these wineries are among the best in the Okanagan. The village of Naramata itself is picturesque and interesting, with historic sites, fine beaches, a boat ramp and yacht club. One attraction is the Naramata Centre, a retreat and conference center affiliated with the United Church of Canada operating year round to fulfill its mission as "... a place of healing, learning and retreat ..." And for those wishing to explore farther, Penticton and other south Okanagan towns are just short driving distances

Paradise Cove Guest House

Last summer we enjoyed a stay at the Paradise Cove Guest House in Naramata, BC, overlooking Okanagan Lake. This was our second visit there

away.

The details: Paradise Cove Guest House, 3129 Hayman Road, Naramata, BC V0H 1N0, tel: 250 496 5896, e-mail: paradisecove@shaw.ca www.paradisecove.ca. Rates \$105 - \$165 per night depending upon the room and season. Naramata Bench and its wineries can be viewed at www.naramatabench.com, the Naramata Centre at www.naramata-centre.net, Penticton information at www.pentictoninfo.com and for the whole area: www.totabc.com (the site of the Thompson Okanagan Tourist Association).

*Hugh & Pat Gaudet
Calgary, AB*

Plan a Visit to Longland B&B

Last August, our married daughter was in Toronto from Bellingham, WA, and we drove down to Port Dover with the fish dinners at the Erie Beach Hotel on our minds!

As we wanted to stay overnight in the area, I had looked at B&Bs on the internet and found one in the area that was built around 1830, only about 15 minutes away from Port Dover. There were two twin rooms with a shared bath, which was fine for our family, at \$70 per room. This included a great breakfast with lots of

delicious Ontario tomatoes and fruits in season. There is also a charming two-bedroom cottage on the grounds.

We had not expected what we found – a treasure trove of antiques. We have stayed in private homes and B&Bs all over Canada, England, Wales, Scotland and France, and many of them have had fine antique articles and furniture, but we have never found one with anything resembling a 1740 painting of an ancestor by a known 18th century English artist, Joseph Highmore (1692 – 1780). There are also portraits by itinerant artists of two 19th century Ontario doctor ancestors on the walls.

The house was saved by the present owner's mother, who had it moved to its present location when it was about to be demolished. The façade of the house is Georgian and the roof is slate. Apart from any consideration of cost, just think of the difficulty of finding an experienced slater these days. Of course, the fate of historic old buildings like this depends on hard-to-come-by grants from cash-strapped governments or on owners with very deep pockets. Not a pleasant prospect for many Ontario heritage buildings.

As mentioned, our initial reason for going to Port Dover was the wonderful fish dinners at the Erie Beach Hotel, which we try to visit at least once a year. After our lunch of Lake Erie perch, pickerel and whitefish

(\$60 for three, including one beer, tax and tip), we wandered around the coastal road to Port Rowan and Long Point. It was all so good we returned to the hotel in the evening, for more fish platters (\$70 inclusive this time). Everything about our trip is highly recommended ... enjoy!

Longland B&B: host Mrs Mary Thurgood, listed on www.southcoast-bb.com under 'Simcoe'. E-mail thurgood@kwic.com, tel: 519 426 7471. Be sure to use MapQuest or something similar to find your way.

Erie Beach Hotel: www.eriebeachhotel.com, tel: 519 583 1391.

*Ed Lyons
Toronto, ON*

A St. Andrews-by-the-Sea B&B

Before leaving on our motor trip through the Maritimes last year we searched the internet for a B&B in famous St. Andrews, New Brunswick. We came across Harris Hatch House and, liking the look of it, we made a reservation. Upon arrival we were even more impressed.

The historic house was built in 1840 of bricks baked on the site. Extensive restorations have been done and the house now has every modern convenience but with great attention to historical design. The elegant sitting

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room on the main floor is for the use of guests and is furnished with lovely antique furniture. A flight of gentle, carpeted stairs lead up to the bedroom levels. We had a king-size bed in a very large room with a fireplace and several windows. This, too, was beautifully decorated with period wallpaper and draperies. We wished we had planned a longer stay than one night as the room contained such an array of comforts: deep chairs with good reading lights, abundant closet and drawer space and luxurious bedding. The enormous en suite bathroom had copious fluffy towels, terry robes and a plentiful supply of toiletries.

A gourmet breakfast was served by our pleasant hosts in the sunny dining room, where we enjoyed meeting two couples from the U.S. who were all return guests. They told us that they had stayed at the property several times before.

The house is located at 142 Queen Street – a quiet residential area, though the main street of St. Andrews, with its plethora of boutiques, good restaurants and the wharf, is just a very short walk away.

The website for the property is www.harrishatchinn.ca, tel: 506 529 4995. The property is open year round, with rates from \$75 to \$125 depending upon the room and season. There's off-street parking on site.

*Vera Howard
Brooklin, ON*

Touring the Gaspé? Don't miss Reford Gardens

Whether you are a keen gardener, or merely someone who enjoys the beauty of flowers, give yourself a treat and plan a visit to Reford Gardens if you are planning a tour of the Gaspé. Located in Grand-Métis, 355 km from Québec City, on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River north of Rimouski, these beautiful gardens (also known as Jardins de Métis) are a bit off the track of many travellers' itineraries but are a

lovely addition to a tour of the Gaspé Peninsula.

The unique quality of Reford Gardens is the remarkable number and variety of plants that grow here in spite of all the problems the extreme climate presents. The Gardens cover 200 acres containing some unique micro-climates and are home to about 3,000 species and varieties of native and exotic plants.

In the 1870's, the estate known as Estevan was the summer fishing lodge of one of Montréal's most important businessmen, Sir George Stephen. Many men of wealth and power such as William Van Horne who built the CPR Railway, Lord Strathmore and Percy Rockefeller were entertained there. Lord Lansdowne was the First Governor-General of many to visit the lodge. But one of the most constant visitors was Sir George's niece, Elsie Reford, and it was she who inherited the property from her uncle.

In 1926, when she was already 54 years old, Elsie began work on the barely-tamed acreage that surrounded the fishing lodge. It is said she did not know the difference between a daisy and a dandelion! But as all gardeners soon learn, the right soil is the answer to success in a garden. To cope with the inadequate quantity and quality of soil in the area she began "creating" soil for each of the species she wanted to grow: bringing peat and sand from her farm, adding gravel from the river's edge and bartering salmon from the river on the property for leaves from neighbours. The stories about this indomitable woman make wonderful reading.

Today's visitors are the beneficiaries of everything she laboured for. The Gardens have many special areas such as a primrose garden and crabapple orchard, shady forest walks and a stream garden with rustic wooden bridges, an azalea walk and a moss garden plus a blue poppy glade whose rare blooms have become the symbol of the Gardens. A favourite feature is the Long Walk – two 300 ft. flower beds modeled on the herbaceous borders of some of England's most famous gardens. We saw them resplendent with

every colour imaginable: tall white trumpet lilies, brilliant roses of every hue, soaring delphiniums in every shade of blue and so much more, all flowing down the slanted beds to the edge of the walkway. The beauty of Reford Gardens provide wonderful memories to be conjured up on the snowy winter days that follow.

Information on the gardens and the Garden Festival held there can be found at www.jardinsmetis.com/english. Admission is \$16 or less. Plants are well labeled and there's a lovely shop selling gardening books, tools, seeds and gifts. Villa Reford has a restaurant and a terrace for lighter meals and there are picnic spots in the gardens. The gardens are open June through September and the renowned blue poppies usually bloom from mid June until the end of July. The website has links to Gaspésie Tourist sites, area accommodation lists etc.

*Vera Howard
Brooklin, ON*

Members are rewarded for sharing!

The TravelSociety rewards members with subscription extensions of varying lengths for all submissions published. So whether you have a letter with a travel tip or a destination to share, please write to us!

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Note: If it is possible to include wheelchair-accessible information in your letters and stories I know that would be appreciated by many. Thanks! - Ed.

There's a richly-endowed and fascinating area lying to the southwest of Toronto. It's a region of significant towns and tiny hamlets; of prosperous farms and vineyards and glorious lakeside beaches, of farmers' markets, of museums large and small and of famous theatre festivals. The region also offers many fine country inns, B&B's and well-known-brand hotels. Over the past few months, for a variety of reasons – a tourism conference, a trip to explore the Underground Railroad, a family visit – I have had the opportunity to discover more of this part of Canada. So, I now have two connected stories for you covering the region between Chatham and Windsor, home of so many sites associated with the Underground Railroad as well as many other interesting attractions. And next month I will tell you a little about two of Ontario's major towns in southwester Ontario: London and Waterloo. Together I hope the articles will both inspire and help you to discover a part of Canada that you may not have yet visited. Bon voyage!

THE ROAD THAT LED TO FREEDOM: DISCOVERING THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD IN SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

story and photos by Ann Wallace

*“George and his wife stood arm in arm, as the boat neared the small town of Amherstburg, in Canada ... a mist gathered before his eyes ... The boat stopped ... [and] the little company were landed on the shore. They stood still till the boat had cleared; and then, with tears and embracings, they knelt down and lifted up their hearts to God!”
Harriet Beecher Stowe, Uncle Tom's Cabin, chapter xxxvii – ‘Liberty’*



As I sit writing this on a dull rainy Saturday in Toronto, a large march is taking place in London, England, to commemorate 200 years since the passing of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in the British Empire. I have also brought to my office a cutting from yesterday's *The Globe and Mail*. It's a moving column written by our Governor-General – Michaëlle Jean – entitled *The end of slavery: why we stay vigilant*. All this is fitting for my task today, because this is the day I have set aside to write about my own explorations of some of the many sites and museums in southwestern Ontario where we can pause and remember Canada's role in the Underground Railroad.

Of course as slaves escaped from the United States into freedom in Canada, there was no convenient train ticket and railroad to carry them here. The 'Underground Railroad' was neither underground, nor railroad. It was a network of escape routes that originated in the southern States and stretched to Canada, where Black slaves could live as free citizens. It was so called because railroad terminology was used as a secret code, thus 'stations' were safe houses, 'conductors' were guides, refugees in general were 'packages', while, more specifically, men were 'hardware', women 'dry goods' and children 'baggage'. And as anyone familiar with the 'spiritual' music of the times will know, Canada was 'Caanan', the Ohio, Niagara and Detroit Rivers were the 'River Jordan', the Underground Railroad itself was 'sweet

chariot' and the call 'take me to freedom' was sung as 'carry me home'.

Few facts were ever recorded of this secret conduit of people, which commenced after Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe introduced a precedent-setting bill in 1793 to prevent the further importation of slaves into Upper Canada (Ontario). However, historians estimate that some 40,000-60,000 freedom seekers reached Canada via the Underground Railroad. Many returned to the States after Abolition, but many remained and their descendants are dedicated protectors of the artifacts that reveal their history.

Today a total of 29 official sites commemorate Canada's role in the Underground Railroad. The routes serving these sites extend from Windsor and the Niagara region in the south to Owen Sound in the north, reflecting the travel and settlement patterns of the refugees in Upper Canada circa 1800. The sites include churches, schools, cabins, memorials, museums, cultural centers and more. Some fall under the Ontario Heritage Trust or National Historic Site umbrellas, while others are independently maintained by their communities, but all are listed together in an Ontario Canada publication titled *A Visitor's Guide to Ontario's Underground Railroad*.

Some of the Railroad sites are not open in the winter, but in this special year marking 200 years since that day – 25 March 1807 – on which trading and enslaving human beings was no longer legal on Canadian soil, a group of journalists was invited to see some of the sites in February and I was fortunate enough to be included. Our journey took us from Windsor and Amherstburg to Chatham-Kent, Buxton and Dresden. We visited a total of five Underground Railroad sites and spoke to curators in each, all of whom were descendants of slaves. We heard many stories of suffering and courage, saw many fascinating artifacts, documents and photographs and learned how the 'new Canadians' adapted to their new home and heard of the many outstanding contributions they made to their communities.

We'll start our journey where it ended for so many ... at Amhurstburg, just south of Windsor on the Detroit River. The town was a major terminus of the Underground Railroad. In Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* it is the dream of Canada, rather than Canada itself, that is the focus of much of the book. However, Amhurstburg gets star billing as the place where 'George

Harris', with his wife and child, first set foot on Canadian soil.

Two sites in this pretty, quiet town celebrate its history: Fort Malden National Historic Site and the North American Black Historical Museum and Cultural Centre. Fort Malden stands in lovely grounds on the banks of the Detroit River. Here the River narrows and islands dot the waterway, making it an ideal point-to-point navigation route for the escaping slaves, although the river's treacherous currents often posed a heart-pounding final risk. I stared out over the river and then lowered my gaze to look at the ground beneath my feet. It is moving indeed to stand on the shore here trying to imagine what this stretch of water and its Canadian shore meant to so many.

Today the strategic military post known as Fort Malden covers 4.5 hectares and comprises an orientation centre and

gift shop, restored brick barracks, and an interpretation centre. The centre is rich with exhibits and artifacts that help the visitor discover the history of this outpost of the British Empire where struggles which helped forge a new nation out of the North American wilderness took place. The former slaves who settled in this area played a part in history here, volunteering to protect Amherstburg when it was threatened with attack during the Rebellion of 1837. The Government issued arms, uniforms and pay to these volunteers; all tangible and important symbols for the new Black communities of official recognition of their contribution to the safety of the district.

Not far from the Fort, visitors on the Underground Railroad trail will find the North American Black Historical Museum and Cultural Centre on King Street, dedicated to the "educational ben-

efit of all people who constitute Canadian society." Here staff and volunteers love to show visitors the Taylor Log Cabin, the Black heritage exhibits, video presentations and genealogical library and to talk about Black achievement from the days of slavery to the present. Especially interesting are clippings from the region's Black newspaper *The Voice of the Fugitive*.

There was so much to read in the above museum, but it was getting late and other appointments on the morrow beckoned. So, too soon, we were on highway 401, heading east to the towns of Chatham-Kent, North Buxton and Dresden. In Chatham, Black history is celebrated in the Heritage Room at the W.I.S.H. Centre. Here we watched a 22-minute video and enjoyed talking with curator



Bondy House B&B, Amherstburg

Gwendolyn Robinson. Charming Gwen is the great-great niece of Mary Ann Shadd, who founded an anti-slavery newspaper – *The Provincial Freeman* – which was published in Chatham from 1853 to 1860 in response to a falling-out with Henry Bibb who owned *The Voice of the Fugitive*. This made her the first woman newspaper owner in Canada. We were so interested to learn a little about Mary Ann, who grew up free in Delaware but was aware of the plight of fleeing slaves because her father’s shoemaking store was part of the Underground Railroad. When older, memories of the frightened slaves who played a part in her childhood spurred her to move to Upper Canada where she became not only a newspaper owner and an activist in the abolitionist movement but also a teacher and owner of a private integrated school and eventually (at age 60) the first Black female attorney in North America. The *Visitor’s Guide* states, “Many believe that Mary Ann Shadd’s model of tolerance and her passion for a fair and just society paved the way for the Canadian mosaic as we know it today.”

On display in this Heritage Centre are many other tributes to former slaves. The pride here is palpable as photographs and stories tell of doctors, lawyers, teachers, writers and musicians. “Former slaves settled in communities for safety,” Gwen explained, “and remember, most would have yearned for the education that had been denied them. After the Civil War many Canadian-educated Blacks returned to the U.S, where many continued practising as doctors and lawyers, some became congressmen and judges and some started schools. We have an inspiring history of people helping each other, educating and employing each other. And don’t let’s forget that, in fact, some Blacks returned to recruit soldiers to fight in the Civil War. They couldn’t do it here because it was illegal to recruit soldiers on British Colonial soil to fight in foreign wars.”

Just south of Chatham stands the town of Buxton, home to Buxton National History Site and Museum. Buxton is another town that stands proud in the history of escaped slaves. It was 1849 when Reverend

William King brought 15 slaves from Louisiana to Canada and established the Elgin Settlement at Buxton, a self-sufficient Black community that, in six years, grew to 300. At that time this new community voted to successfully defeat their incumbent provincial member of parliament who, just two years previously, had won his seat on an anti-Negro immigration platform. The years passed and Buxton continued to grow, eventually home to some 2,000 Black land owners and business people.

Shannon Prince, curator of the Museum, was waiting to greet us, along with assistant curator Spencer Alexander. Both Shannon and Spencer are 6th generation descendents from slaves and Shannon’s husband – Bryan Prince – is the holder of the Queen’s Golden Jubilee Medal for his contribution to Black history and the author of *I Came as a Stranger*. This book tells some of the dramatic stories of the perilous journey to Canada and, as the cover states, “... is a powerful history and a valuable guide to the sites and communities that commemorate the courage and suffering of a time not so very long ago.”

Shannon and Spencer took us around the museum pointing out the most important artifacts, telling us of Buxton’s success and inviting us to experience the horrendous slave neck harness and foot shackles for a few minutes. Hard to imagine what longer than a few minutes must have been like.

Back in our bus later, we headed for Dresden (less than half an hour’s drive north of Chatham) to visit the Black history site whose name is familiar the world over: Uncle Tom’s Cabin. Its official name is Uncle Tom’s Cabin

Historic Site and Josiah Henson House. Josiah Henson and his autobiography, written when he was 60, were the inspiration for Harriet Beecher Stowe’s anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* which sold over 300,000 in its first year of publication and which President Lincoln credited with being the catalyst that started the American Civil War. In his early 40’s Josiah Henson escaped from Kentucky with his wife and four children and followed the north star to Canada. Settling near Dresden, he quickly attained leadership status with the Underground Railroad community. Together with several other abolitionists he purchased 200 acres of land upon which they founded a vocational school for refugees. Called the British American Institute, it was one of the first schools in Canada to emphasize vocational training and over the years its graduates settled in the area and plied their trades in local farms, mills and industries.

But in fact Josiah Henson did more than that. He helped defend his new land



Shannon Prince demonstrates the terrible neck brace and lets us try on an ankle shackle



as captain of a Black militia group stationed at Fort Malden during the 1837 Rebellion, he travelled overseas to promote Canada as a place of refuge and he went back – back to the southern United States, taking the Underground Railroad in reverse – risking his work, his freedom and his life – to help more slaves escape.

Today the five-acre Historic Site, which sits on a portion of the originally-purchased acreage, celebrates the accomplishments of Josiah Henson and Harriet Beecher Stowe through a fine audio-visual presentation and a collection of 19th century artifacts and rare books pertinent to the abolitionist era. There's also a gift shop here offering books and a selection of unique African and Canadian souvenirs. Outside the Interpretive Centre stands a restored period church, a sawmill, two cemeteries and the original Henson dwelling, commonly referred to as Uncle Tom's cabin. The site welcomes about 7,700 visitors a year: Canadians, Americans and Europeans, especially Dutch people who read *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in school. Curator here is Steven Cook. What enthusiasm he brings to his job and his history! Public thanks for a great visit Steven!

All the sites I've described here stand in the fine counties of Essex or Chatham-Kent. It's a flat part of the province, but lovely nonetheless with its prosperous farms, vast skies and beautiful sunsets. Why don't you bring your children and/or grandchildren on a voyage of discovery along Ontario's Underground Railroad where there's much revealed about man's inhumanity to man, but also revelations of courage and many reasons to be proud of Canada? Bryan Prince's book contains the following quote from slave and subsequent Underground Railroad 'conductor' Harriet Tubman (referred to in the Underground code as 'Moses') as told to her biographer, Sarah H. Bradford, author of *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*. On remembering her arrival in Canada, Tubman said, "When I found I had crossed that line I looked at my hands to see if I was the same person. There was such a glory over everything; the sun came like gold through the trees, and over the fields, and I felt like I was in Heaven."

Here are some details to help you plan your visit and a story follows covering some other interesting things to see and places to go in Essex and Chatham-Kent. Drive carefully and *bon voyage!*

For your copy of the above-mentioned *Visitor's Guide* call 519 354 7383 or visit www.africanhertour.org The guide gives details of all the Underground Railroad sites in

Ontario, including brief histories and websites etc. so I will not give the latter here. Most sites are closed in the winter.

The easiest way to the **Fort Malden** website is to enter it your search engine as its official link is long.

Amhurstburg is just a short drive from **Windsor**, but if you would like a B&B in Amhurstburg itself, the **Bondy House** was recommended to me. It was not open when I tried to pop in, but it looks to be a fine property. Rates from \$85, tel: 519 736 9433, www.bbcanada.com/bondy-housebnb

There's a great – and historic – restaurant in the heart of Amhurstburg. **Caldwell's Grant Tavern** is atmospheric and our group loved our delicious lunch there between our sightseeing and were sorry we could not return for the \$35 *prix fixe* dinners offered. Tel: 519 736 2100, www.caldwellsgrant.com. Highly recommended.

Chatham city is home to a really fabulous new boutique hotel – **RetroSuites** – downtown on Jahnke Street. When I was there back in February it was only half completed, but what a half! If you're interested in architecture, restoration and renovation and/or design this is the place for you. Each of the differently-configured rooms is decorated in a unique style and while some make a nod to tradition and history, most can only be described as 'trendy'. No detail has been overlooked here, from unique towel racks to themed beds and gorgeous light fixtures and original art. Log on to the website and you'll see a little of what I mean. A great place to show older children or teenagers (there are family suites) just how 'cool' a hotel can be! Rates from \$99. Call 1 866 61RETRO or visit www.retrosuites.com where many rooms are illustrated and there's information on all there is to see and do in Chatham-Kent.

If you like to read before your travels, *Uncle Tom's*

Cabin is, of course, widely available. *I Came as a Stranger* by Bryan Prince is published by Tundra Books, www.tundra-books.com for \$22.99. The 'documented novel' *The Road that Led to Somewhere* by Bryan E. Walls seems to be out-of-print, but second-hand copies can be found on line. Recently published by Thomas Allen (\$36.95) was *I've Got a Home in Glory Lane: A Lost Tale of the Underground Railroad* by Karolyn Smardz Frost. *The Life of Josiah Henson, Formerly a Slave* (Harriet Beecher Stowe's inspiration) and Curator Gwendolyn Robinson's book *Seek the Truth: A Story of Chatham's Black Community* are available at the sites. 📖



Retro Suites Hotel, Chatham

Detroit skyline across the river from Windsor



... DON'T LEAVE ESSEX AND CHATHAM-KENT COUNTIES BEFORE YOU'VE VISITED ...

story and photos by Ann Wallace

... WINDSOR

Just a few miles from Amhurstburg, which featured so prominently in our previous story, stands one of Ontario's major cities – Windsor (referred to as 'Glory to God' in the Underground Railroad code!). Although from time to time Windsor gets bad press because of auto-factory closures and unemployment issues, these unfortunate things do not affect the tourist as the city largely remains prosperous and vibrant. And it's certainly worth a visit. First thing the visitor usually notices is not, in fact, Windsor but the impressive skyline of Detroit, lying north (yes north!) across the Detroit River. Stay at the Radisson Riverfront Hotel, as we did, and enjoy the lights of this notorious American city sparkling across the water.

If the main purpose of my recent visit to Essex County had not been to explore the Underground Railroad, I would most certainly have spun a story entitled "The Whisky Trail". That's not because it was a tipling trip, but because part of our tour included an exploration of Windsor's whisky heritage. And what a fascinating history it is.

When Hiram Walker came to Windsor from Michigan in 1855, after prohibition was intro-

duced in the US, he no doubt had ambitions, but probably even he did not anticipate the success he was going to achieve. In time, Hiram did indeed 'own the town' of Walkerville, which was amalgamated with adjacent Windsor in 1935, but is still known as Old Walkerville and is today a handsome residential area of luxurious homes interspersed with now-trendy row houses where once the distillery workers lived. Hiram also built and owned the fine Italian Renaissance style Hiram Walker Building on the river bank – distillery and offices – now known as the Canadian Club Brand Center, which is open to visitors. Don't miss the tour here! Not only does it contain all you ever need to know about prohibition and Hiram Walker's whisky, but it also is home to a fine collection of Inuit carvings and works by the Group of Seven and other Canadian artists.

But let's go back to the whisky story for a minute as I'd love to tell you a little of what I saw and learned on the tour of this building. The Center contains displays of the different bottles that have contained Canadian Club through the years, including counterfeit ones and how to identify them. Then there are the desks Hiram and his sons used, with open ledgers lying upon them and, on the walls, fascinating photos and stories. These tell of the creative ways used to get the whisky across the river, prohibition details and legends. Although Hiram owned the Canadian-shore town and worked there for 50 years, he remained a U.S. citizen and resident, travelling from his home on the American side of the river by boat or sled. A long hallway in the offices contains royal warrants from European kings and queens, including one from Victoria, who had been advised to drink a mix of two parts water with one part CC with meals to aid her dodgy digestion. In fact, Hiram Walker was the first company in Canada to receive a warrant from Victoria, who obviously had her priorities right!

When Hiram started distilling his whisky in Canada it cost the consumer 8¢ a quart bottle. In 2006 three million cases of Canadian Club were produced, to be shipped to 151 countries around the globe. An interesting nine-minute video presentation is part of the tour, which tells how the whisky is made using rye, malt, barley and corn, 80% of which is grown in Essex County. When we heard of CC's "nose of caramel and soft oak with orange rind and toffee aftertaste" we couldn't wait to try it! A question was asked about American whiskey, which apparently is made from 51% corn and thus sweeter than Canadian.

Throughout the offices we'd been noticing the fine collection of Inuit art on display. And soon, after mounting the stairs to the main boardroom, we were in for a surprise and another treat.

In the sunny room overlooking the gardens and the river, our guide pointed out the Italian plaster mold ceiling and the superb 'mirror image' panelling, made possible because the wood had been cut from one giant Circasian walnut tree brought from China. But that wasn't all. The walls here are adorned with paintings by Frank Carmichael, J.E.H. Macdonald, Lawren Harris, A.Y. Jackson, Arthur Shilling, Fred Varley, Tom Thomson and Arthur Lismer. Apparently, in 1987, when the company changed hands, this art collection was estimated at C\$6 million. We all enjoyed our visit to this building so much ... it alone is worth the drive to Windsor. By the way, there's a gift store here offering "the famous CC Whisky barbecue sauce" and many items bearing the CC logo: decanters, glasses, golf items and lots of clothes ... but for the 'real thing' you'll have to make a stop at a liquor store!

However, there's more on our Whisky Trail. Next on our itinerary was a visit to Willistead Manor, home of Hiram Walker's son, Edward Chandler Walker, set in a 15-acre park in the heart of Old Walkerville. The manor is a 36-room mansion designed by architect Albert Khan to reflect 16th Century Tudor-Jacobean architecture but with 20th century amenities. No expense was spared in the creation of this 1904



Pictures of Hiram Walker grace the offices of the Canadian Club Brand Center, as do photographs explaining the term "bootlegger"!

mansion, built of gray limestone quarried in Amherstburg and stone cut by Scottish stonemasons specifically 'imported' for the project and containing a Great Hall and many fine features and details. Lovers of architecture and gracious Ontario homes will enjoy a tour here and from time to time there are special events such as terrace luncheons, afternoon teas and murder mysteries.

I'm sure I don't have to mention that Windsor has many other attractions to offer the visitor, but which we unfortunately did not have time to enjoy. There's the Art Gallery of Windsor, Canada South Science City and a Casino. We did glimpse the soaring Ambassador Bridge to Detroit and the fine riverside park which is home to the Odette Sculpture Park containing, I later learned, a work by renowned sculptor Dame Elisabeth Frink. Windsor offers a wide selection of restaurants, many reflecting the large number of Italians who have settled in this area over the years.

Some details to help you plan a visit: the above-mentioned **Radisson Riverfront** in Windsor is basic (my room didn't look like the one shown on the website) though the view of Detroit at sunrise made up for the lack of frills. It's listed on many hotel discount booking sites or go to www.radisson.com/windsorca. For those who'd prefer a B&B, **Ye Olde Walkerville B&B** was strongly recommended to us and I see there are excellent reviews on line. Rooms from \$89, tel: 519 254 1507 or visit www.wescanada.com/walkervillebb/ When I next go to Windsor that will be my choice. We had a good dinner in **Spaga Ristorante**, at 690 Erie Street East, call 519 252 2233. For details of the **Canadian Club Center** tours, which are \$5 or less, call 519 973 9503 or visit www.canadianclubwhisky.com and **Willistead Manor** tour details (again \$5 or less) can be found at www.willisteadmanor.com or 519 253 2365. And there's lots of information on **Windsor** and the whole of surrounding **Essex County** on the website www.visitwindsor.com (or call 1 800 265 3633 for a Visitor Guide). This fertile region is home to dozens of wineries. Explore www.sense-sational.com or www.swovintners.com for details. And if you go in spring, summer or fall don't forget Essex County is also home to **Point Pelee** and **Pelee Island**,

home of B&Bs, wineries, Monarch butterflies and famous for lots and lots of migrating birds! Enjoy!

CHATHAM-KENT

And now a few more words about Chatham-Kent which, like its neighbour Essex, is home to prosperous farms, delightful towns, museums, many outdoor adventures, bird-watching and much more. As explained, the main purpose of my visit was to explore the Underground Railroad sites in this town and surrounding area, but most of the men in the group seemed excited about something else on the itinerary: a visit to something called RM Classic Cars and Auto Restoration, located in the town of Blenheim. I needed to be enlightened and soon was. Apparently Chatham-Kent is well known amongst vintage car lovers as 'Canada's Classic Car Capital' and RM Classic Cars and Auto Restoration is the world's largest vintage and auction restoration company. "Oh yawn," think I, as I alight from our the bus. But soon I'm hurrying back to the car park for my camera, as I knew some folks in my family would be so very interested in what I was seeing. The one-hour guided tour here really is special. Via a glass walkway visitors can watch the expert crafts-



*One of RM's classic, restored cars
(note the old posters on the wall behind!)*

men (yes, they were all men) painstakingly at work restoring vehicles, before entering the 'gallery' that is usually home to about 60 rare and valuable classic and antique vehicles. And by valuable I really mean valuable ... a 1931 Daimler restored here fetched US\$9 million at an auction in 2006. We were told that the majority of cars date from the 1930's and that RM is involved in about nine high-profile auctions every year. What a treat for a car-loving man: a stay in RetroSuites, which is owned by Rob Myers of RM (see previous article), where several rooms have car themes, and then a tour of RM Classic Cars!

Before you head to this region, call 1 800 561 6125 for a Travel Guide or visit www.chatham-kent.ca. And entering 'RM Chatham-Kent' in your search engine will take you to a variety of sites covering **RM Classic Cars**, which is located at One Classic Car Drive, Blenheim, tel: 519 352 4575 for tour requests. 📄

Ottawa's eight locks, flanked by the Canal commissariat, Ottawa's oldest building, now face the Museum of Civilization across the river.



Happy 175th Birthday to the Rideau Canal!

story by Isobel Warren, photos by Milan Chvostek

Ask most Canadians about the Rideau Canal and they'll probably identify Ottawa's 7.8 km 'world's longest skating rink'. They're right, of course – and wrong.

Certainly the Canal begins in Ottawa, at the mouth of the Rideau River, but it continues for 202 km through rivers, lakes and man-made waterways to Kingston. "People picture the Rideau as a big ditch," Rideauphile Sue Pike commented. "They're shocked when they encounter this gorgeous, pristine waterway with its quiet lakes linked by rivers

and canals, oozing history and mystery and charm."

Like many Rideau fans, this Ottawa-based publisher, who's launching two new Rideau books this year, puzzles over Canada's disinterest in the canal but worries that this year's focus on the venerable waterway may sully its peaceful ambience. After all Rideau folks have had paradise all to themselves for most of its 175-year lifespan. It was built as a bulwark against American incursions across the St. Lawrence but the only American invasion has been tourists.

Alarmed by continuing American attacks after the 1812

war, the British government sent Lieutenant-Colonel John By to find a safer route from Montreal to Kingston. The Montreal-Ottawa leg via the Ottawa River was easy but then the going got tougher. Colonel By and his Royal Engineers, backed by thousands of labourers, mostly Irish and French-Canadian, slogged through dense forests and malaria-infested swamps (about a thousand workers died of malaria) to carve out the canal in just five seasons. From his very own Bytown, now Ottawa, down the Rideau River, through small rivers and lakes to the Cataragui River, emptying into Lake Ontario at Kingston, they constructed 47 locks, plus dams, canals and fortified blockhouses.

Of course By blew his budget. The initial estimate – £62,258 for a system fit for voyageur canoes – grew to £230,785 for a wider barge canal. But Colonel By saw the future, teeming with big new steamships. That pushed the final tally past £800,000, (an estimated \$500 million in today's dollars) and earned him an accusation of misappropriation of funds. Recalled to England, he was cleared of the charge but died four years later at age 53.

Colonel By was not honoured in life for his brilliant achievement but this year, his genius, vision and endurance will be amply honoured. The Rideau, now administered by Parks Canada, was named a National Historic Site in 1925 and a Canadian Heritage River in 2000. And now it has been nominated for World Heritage Site designation – the decision will be announced in late June. This coincides with the 175th anniversary of its completion and the 150th anniversary of Ottawa's founding.

Will there be parties? You betcha! At locks and docks and charming towns, in museums and historic sites from Ottawa to Kingston, the good times will roll. Concerts, corn roasts, regattas, fireworks, heritage events, tattoos, art shows – you name it you'll find it. For lots of information log on to www.rideauheritageroute.ca and/or www.rideaufriends.com.

The Heritage Brewing Company in Carleton Place celebrates with two new Rideau lagers – available only in

Rideau-area establishments, including the LCBO. And Sue Pike's Deadlock Press is publishing two Canal-inspired books: *Locked Up*, a collection of 21 mystery stories by writers who live along the waterway and *Shillings* by Vicki Cameron, geared to the 8-12 set.

Retired geologist Ken Watson, who has explored the Rideau from every angle – geological, archaeological, historic and scenic – has written *The Rideau Route* for general audiences and *Engineered Landscapes: The Rideau Canal's Transformation of a Wilderness Waterway*, a scientific overview of pre-Canal geography and Canal construction, complete with maps, period paintings and surveys. His '2007 Visitors Guide to the Rideau' is available as a download from www.rideaufriends.com.

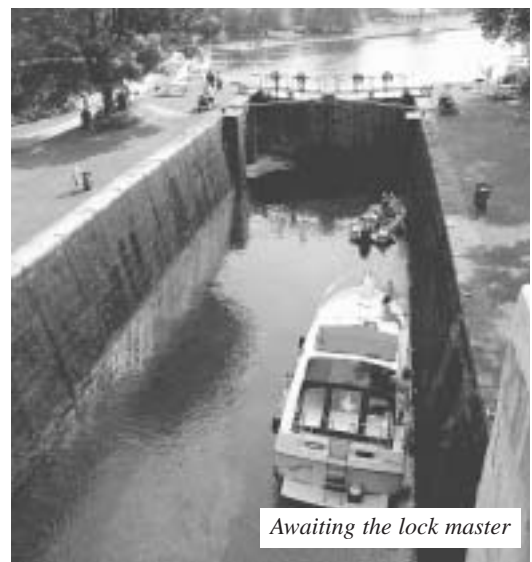
The Rideau Waterway is now dotted with private cottages and resorts, tucked up on tiny islands or wooded shorelines, rich in wildlife. It's a haven for leisure boaters, hikers, bikers, campers, nature lovers and fishing enthusiasts. Charming towns such as Merrickville with its artisan and specialty shops; Smiths Falls, home of the Rideau Canal Museum; haunted Watson's Mill near Manotick where you can load up on bags of fresh stone-ground flour; fine old resorts such as Kenney's at Jones Falls, (established 1877) and the century-old Opinicon at Davis Lock plus Ottawa and Kingston, both reeking with history and pageantry, ensure something for everyone.

In fact, Ottawa celebrates its own birthday this year, marking 150 years since Queen Victoria's finger on a map transformed ratty Bytown into our nation's capital. And that's triggering another party – a spectacular bash with music, dancing, speeches and fireworks on June 30, followed by a bigger-than-ever Canada Day celebration on Parliament Hill.

Everybody's welcome on the Rideau. Drivers can shadow the canal from Ottawa to Smiths Falls via Highway 43, thence to Kingston via Highway 15. Boaters at every level of expertise can cruise the waterway and access the locks. (Navigation opens May 22). Hikers can revel in



Captain Lance sports a replica of an 1832 British naval uniform as he cruises the Rideau with summer visitors.



Awaiting the lock master

excellent trails maintained by Parks Canada which administers the Canal. See www.rideau-info.com, Ken Watson's informative site, for maps, lock fees and accommodation suggestions.

Where to stay ...

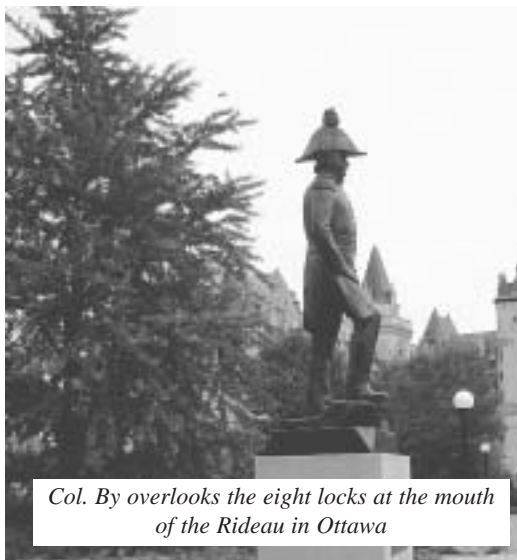
- **Ottawa** boasts accommodations of every style and price range. We sampled the **Carmichael Inn and Spa**, in a gracious neighbourhood just steps from the Rideau Canal, a short walk from the canal's Commissariat (Ottawa's oldest building) and first eight locks. This luxurious little hotel – just 11 elegant antiques-furnished rooms – is a designated historic site, built in 1901. The Inn offers many special packages and promotions including plenty of spa treatments such as aromatherapy, reflexology, hot stone massages and hydrotherapy baths. A relaxing twilight glass of wine and an outstanding breakfast provide extra comforts. 1 877 416 2417, www.carmichaelinn.com
- **Merrickville**, an easy hour south of Ottawa, is a town of arts, crafts and specialty shops such as Mrs. McGarrigle's Mustard plus the four-star **Sam Jakes Inn**, another historic establishment. Innkeeper Gary Clarke, named Canada's Tourism Man of the Year in 1988, not only restored the derelict old inn but marshalled the entire town to develop its eclectic mix of shops and hospitality. Sam Jakes, an industrious Irish immigrant, schoolteacher, postmaster and merchant built his fine stone house that's now the heart of the inn, in 1861. (His three-storey department store at Merrickville's main intersection was once the largest department store between Chicago and Montreal.) The inn offers quality dining, a spa, a pleasant pub and in summer, a flowery outdoor patio. In a new three-storey addition, the guestrooms are decorated in 1860s style. 1 800 567 4667, www.samjakesinn.com
- Probably the Rideau's most historic hostelry is the **Hotel Kenney at Jones Falls**, founded 130 years ago by proprietor Joe Kenney's great-grandfather as a shipping and receiving depot for local farmers with a tavern and rented rooms. The

original old building is still there, surrounded by unpretentious hotel rooms and amenities. A fiercely-loyal clientele returns year after year for the fishing and the quiet charm of the place. U.S. President Taft was a regular; Princess Louise, wife of Lord Tweedsmuir, declared it the most beautiful place in Canada, an American couple who honeymooned there returned every year for 52 years. 1 866 536 6397, www.hotelkenney.com

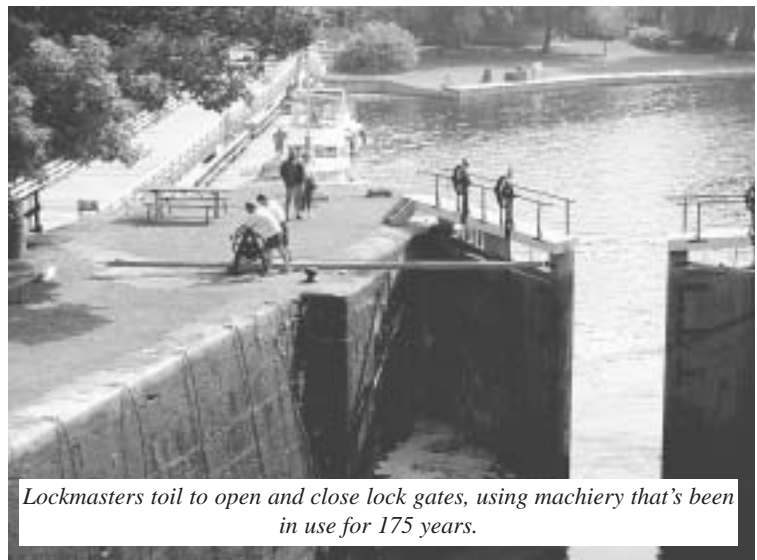
- Many delightful inns and B&Bs dot the route. The **Green Woods Inn** occupies an historic home just minutes from either the Canal's final lock or downtown **Kingston**. The land belonged to Scottish schoolmaster George Baxter who lost his teaching job because his brother-in-law was William Lyon Mackenzie. His son built the house around 1850. Tessa and Nigel Dearsley bought the house in 2002 and furnished it with fine antiques, non-allergenic feather beds and warm hospitality. Nigel delights in startling guests with his fluent Welsh – he grew up in Wales; Tessa is Welsh/Polish. Breakfasts are outstanding: eggs benedict or fritatta, crêpes or French toast topped by organic fruits and – the crowning touch – a blossom or two from Tessa's garden plus fresh-ground coffee or a choice of eight varieties of tea. The deep verandah provides a sweeping view of the countryside, just far enough from either Highway 401 (a mile north) or downtown Kingston (a couple of miles south) to afford peace, quiet and convenience. 1 866 878 1884, www.greenwoodsinn.ca
- **Downtown Kingston** itself is home to some renowned B&Bs and inns, all of which have been popular for many years. They have formed an alliance and can be found at www.HistoricInnsKingston.com

More information ...

Parks Canada: www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/on/rideau/
 Friends of the Rideau: www.rideaufriends.com
 Ken Watson's website: www.rideau-info.com
 Ottawa Tourism: 1 888 688 2928 www.ottawatourism.ca
 Rideau Heritage Route: www.realrideauheritage.ca 



Col. By overlooks the eight locks at the mouth of the Rideau in Ottawa



Lockmasters toil to open and close lock gates, using machinery that's been in use for 175 years.

IN SEARCH OF GRIZZLIES

story and photos by Heather Allen



Carvings at Sointula

While southern Vancouver Island – Victoria to Campbell River – is well known and has been extensively covered in this magazine, the northern half of the island is much less explored by travellers. And yet it has so much to offer! I had always wanted to see the resident orcas (killer whales) at Robson Bight, and so we decided to make this our 45th wedding anniversary treat. However, when I contacted the whale watching company I was told that 3 June was too early, that the whales wouldn't be in residence until the end of the month. But we found another option. We could watch grizzly bears. I was immediately intrigued.

Whale watching companies are always careful to explain that they can't guarantee whale sightings. After all, it's a big ocean. But Tide Rip Tours explained that since the guides know the feeding habits of the bear, and they are much less mobile than orcas, you are almost certain to see them. My husband was game for the trip, but cautioned me that we might not see a bear, and if we did, it was bound to be a long way away. So, with different expectations, we set off for Telegraph Cove, 300 km north of Comox.

Telegraph Cove itself was an unexpected treat. The lit-

tle community was built in 1912 and the boardwalk is lined with charmingly-restored buildings which are now rented as cabins. Each cabin has a plaque describing its original purpose – hospital, bunkhouse, store, etc. Most are big enough for families or groups of friends, sleeping between two and nine people. All have fabulous ocean views and private bathrooms, often with old claw foot tubs, and some have wood burning stoves. There are no telephones or televisions in the rooms. There is also a full serviced campsite including showers and laundry facilities. Telegraph Cove has a general store with great ice cream, a 140 berth marina if you bring your boat, a restaurant, pub and souvenir shop. We were too early in the season for the pub, but had a great lunch in the restaurant with a window table overlooking the cove.

But the highlight of Telegraph Cove, at least for us, was the wonderful Whale Interpretive Centre. It is located in the old warehouse building at the end of the boardwalk. The largest of the many displays is the skeleton of 'Finny'. Finny was a 60 ft fin whale which was killed by a passing cruise ship in 1999. The enterprising crew at Telegraph Cove sunk the body and left it for a year while the sea creatures stripped most of the flesh. They then brought it to the surface and power washed all the bones. 'Finny' now tow-

ers above you in the tall building, overwhelming you with its sheer size. 'Finny' is the largest representative of a pilot project that is nicknamed the 'Bones' project. This employs students in the preservation of skeletons of about 20 marine mammal species found in nearby waters. I was particularly struck by the difference between a seal and sea lion. I have seen many in the sea over the years, and thought they differed mainly by their size. But in fact while the seal bones look streamlined, the sea lion has well developed back legs. Also their skulls are very different. We were told by the very well-informed guide at the centre that scientists think the seals descended from the same family as weasels while sea lions share genes with the bear.

Ah, the bear. That was why we were there. Tide Rip Tours originates in Telegraph Cove, and the boat ride in the comfortable water taxi takes about two hours to the Glendale River and estuary in Knight Inlet. There were 11 of us in the boat, including a couple from Amsterdam and another from Australia.

En route we saw dolphins and bald eagles. The three bear were visible even before we got to our anchorage. The guide, Lindsay, knew the three – the adolescents were related, all having the same mother. The larger bear was 5½, the younger pair were 3½ year old siblings. We anchored and were transferred to an open skiff with a long bench running down the middle, to provide maximum viewing. We were admonished to be quiet, and not to take out any food. They don't want the bears to associate food with people. From the safety of our boat we watched the bears as they went about their feeding, totally unconcerned about us. They were about 30 metres away. Do you really want to get any closer to these powerful animals? They turned over massive rocks with ease, looking for the bounties of the sea for their lunch. There was no need to tell us not to talk; we were all too awe struck to say a word. If you had forgotten your binoculars, they were provided, and the only sound for an hour was the subdued click of camera shutters. Lindsay had hip waders and stood in the water, pushing the boat along the shore so we always had a good view of the bears. After about an hour we were taken back to the larger boat where we made great sandwiches from the fresh vegetables and ham and salami provided. And after fruit and cookies, we again got in the skiff to watch the bears as they made their way along the beach. It was beyond our wildest dreams – to see these magnificent creatures at such close range in the safety of the boat. In late September and October when the bears are feeding on the riches of the spawning salmon, visitors are taken to a viewing platform to watch them. This would be an even more exciting spectacle. The guides told us, "We run out of tourists before we run out of bear." They run the tours from late May to November.

The following day we took the half hour ferry ride from nearby Port McNeill to Sointula. The island of Sointula was a Utopian socialist community founded in 1901 by immigrants from Finland. The community was welcomed by the province and given a land grant. But only a few years after

its inception, fire destroyed most of the buildings, and the impracticality of the leader led to its financial collapse. There was a split, and half the group left, but a new leader emerged and the community continued. With an influx of more immigrants in the 1950s, and 'back-to-the-landers' in the late 60s and 70s, Sointula is now a strong and vibrant place with 800 inhabitants, 30% of whom can trace their ancestry back to the original Finnish settlers. There is a wonderful small museum and, when we were there, it was manned by Tom Roper who generously told us the history and answered our many questions. Though his knowledge was extensive, Tom is not Finnish. He was a teacher from Los Angeles, who had fallen in love with the place during a trip in 1986. He and his wife purchased property, and when he retired 10 years later, they moved permanently to Sointula. We drove around the island with its pretty houses and well-kept yards, and had a lovely walk in the old growth forest of Bere Point Regional Park. The Bountiful Bay trail starts here and follows the bay to Malcolm Point, about 5 km. There is a viewing platform near the trailhead that offers an opportunity to see the whale rubbing beach.

Another great day trip from Port McNeill is to the native community of Alert Bay, which boasts the west coast's tallest totem. At 173 feet it features a total of 14 figures, and is topped with a large sun design. Historic buildings in the village date back as far as 1878. The rich history of the people is displayed at the U'mista Cultural Centre, especially the potlatch masks and regalia. And if you are there in July and August, you can watch traditional dancing at 1:15 p.m. every Thursday, Friday and Saturday. If you wish to stay on Alert Bay there are hotels, bed and breakfast accommodation and a campground. The more adventurous can take a kayak trip for a few hours or a few weeks.

About a half hour's drive from Telegraph Cove, Port McNeill is a good base from which to explore the wonders of this area. It is a pretty town with very friendly people, and has all the amenities you will need. We stayed at a lovely bed and breakfast, the Seeview. The hostess, Dawn Harilstad, was very welcoming. A Finn, she was born in Sointula and had spent her life in the area, even serving for years as a town councillor in Port McNeill. Our room was comfortable and had a huge bathroom with a jacuzzi tub, the breakfasts were great and, when we returned from our day at Sointula, there was a split of champagne cooling in a bucket – a present for our anniversary! But you don't need a special occasion to enjoy these destinations. The North Island is a wonderful part of Canada, waiting to be explored.

Contacts:

* Tide Rip Grizzly Tours, tel: 1 888 643 9319, www.tiderip.com

* Telegraph Cove Resort, tel: 1 800 200 4665,

www.telegraphcoversort.com/lodging

* HelloBC.com/PortMcNeill/Vacations and visit

www.vancouverisland.com for general tourism information.

* Seeview B&B, tel: 250 956 4818,

www.bbcanada.com/seeview 

The French Islands of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon

by Vera Howard

Last year we enjoyed a touring holiday that included New Brunswick and the Gaspé Peninsula (see some highlights in Readers' Letters section). It seemed the perfect opportunity to add a few days in these tiny French islands situated so close to the Canadian mainland. Our experience, while delightful, made us ask questions and scratch our heads in an attempt to understand how this foreign property seems to have successfully kept its equilibrium and identity in such an unusual situation, and why France obviously cares enough to spend millions keeping it.

The ferry to the islands from Fortune, Newfoundland, covers the 25 km. in short order, but Newfoundland was a bit far from our chosen tour route, so we decided to fly from Halifax. The Air Saint-Pierre's 42-seater plane was comfortable and covered the 560 km distance in one and a half hours. We landed at the sparkling new airport that serves the islands and presented our passport for entry to this French territory. Yes, we did need passports and also euros, although Canadian dollars are sometimes accepted. This is truly a part of France, although these small rocky isles have been fought over with exchanges of rule many times since they were discovered by the Portuguese in 1520. But since 1985 they have been a "Territorial Collectivity" of France.

With a total size of just 242 sq. km, the archipelago is composed of three main islands: Saint-Pierre, Langlade and Miquelon, the last two joined by an isthmus of sand. The total population for all islands is just over 6,000 with Saint-Pierre, although the smallest of the islands, being the economic centre and home to nearly all the inhabitants. We were told that about 60% of the people work for the Government of France. Medical and police personnel and their families are sent out from France for several years on rotation assignments. Students receive heavily subsidized university educa-

tions in France. Twice a week a supply ship brings the necessities of life from Halifax, but items like wine and cheese are brought from France. There is still a little commercial fishing and the harbour has a deep-water quay which can accommodate vessels with up to a 10-metre draft. While we were there the Halifax to Saint-Pierre yacht race took place and the harbour was a-flutter with colourful flags on the 'fully-dressed' large ocean-going yachts.

Agriculture is non-existent as the islands are generally slabs of rock covered by barely enough soil for a thin layer of grass. The terrain of all the islands is rather flat, but with some lovely coastal cliffs and beaches. Because of the open location in the Atlantic Ocean, trees are rare, and those that do grow are stunted. However, the need for colour is apparent in the brilliantly painted houses. No calm pastels here ... just primary tones and often two or three hues on one house! Many homes do have very nice gardens that must take a great deal of work to succeed in this harsh climate.

A variety of accommodation is available, from *gites* and *auberges* to good hotels. We stayed at Hotel Ile de France, a stone's throw from Place du General de Gaulle, the hub of the town. We had a large, comfortable en suite room and the hotel had an excellent restaurant and bar. Interestingly, the décor of the lobby and restaurant seemed to have been inspired by North Africa; there were many carved artifacts, brightly coloured gauzy fabrics and a full Bedouin tent that hung from the high ceiling of the restaurant.

As we expected, the restaurants where we dined served excellent food. There was an emphasis on fresh seafood, but we also enjoyed delicious duck and lamb dishes. Unfortunately our few days there were far too short to sample all the delicious items we saw on the menus.

The efficient Tourist Office offered several tours. Our first was the bus tour of Saint-Pierre. The island is

so small it takes only about an hour to do the round trip. Along the way we saw the interesting old cemetery with its above-ground graves in the Basque tradition. The Cutty Sark Villa was also pointed out to us; its siding made from the whiskey crates left from the days of Prohibition when Saint-Pierre was a major warehousing and transfer point.

Another day we took an hour's boat ride to Langlade and Miquelon, which entailed a Zodiac ride to shuttle tourists from the main boat to the rocky shore. A small bus then took us on a half-day trip to see the sights of the two islands. Langlade has no permanent residents and the few buildings we saw were summer cottages used by people from Saint-Pierre. Miquelon has a tiny town with a beautiful wooden church, a small airport for emergencies, a medical clinic, a little museum and a café in a private home where we enjoyed coffee and home-made cookies in the owner's front room. The flat open grasslands of the islands were busy with people picking wild strawberries that were growing profusely amongst the beautiful wild flowers. A herd of so-called wild horses proved to be so tame and friendly they would gladly have come into our bus! Along the unspoiled shore there were seal colonies and flocks of seabirds.

A guided tour of Ile aux Marins, a very small island about 10 minutes by boat from Saint-Pierre was also most worthwhile. At the height of the fishing industry about 600 people called it home, but now no one lives there at all. It has been turned into a fascinating 'outdoor museum' with restored buildings, a church and the remains of some houses ... a reminder of a way of life now gone, along with the cod stocks. In a thoughtful gesture, the traditional Stations of the Cross placed around the island had been inscribed with the names of local soldiers who had given their lives for France.

We especially chose to be on Saint-Pierre for the 14th of July, when Bastille Day is celebrated with gusto. Overnight, Place du General de Gaulle was transformed: red-white-and-blue bunting was hung from lampposts, a stage and sound system installed, picnic tables and food booths operated by clubs such as Lions and Rotary appeared and *le tricolor* fluttered in the breeze. Rain fell on all these preparations and we were worried, but by noon, when *la maire* released hundreds of balloons and declared "Let the fun begin", or words to that effect, the sun had come out brilliantly.

In the square, a long table had rather miraculously appeared holding hundreds of glasses of kir (a favourite French cocktail of white wine and crème de cassis) and we were generously invited to help ourselves. Women from the community were circulating with big platters holding baguette rounds topped with slices of *saucisse*.

The square was filled with the sounds of laughter and chatter in French and English. Music played non-stop: everything from rock groups to an accordionist whose music made us feel we were on the banks of the Seine, not thousands of miles away across the Atlantic. The music stirred some to dance in the square and we were entertained by an energetic group of Basque folk dancers. Delighted children ran about with *bombes spaghetti*, catching unaware friends to drape them in these nets of harmless goop. Representing the maritime nature of the islands, there were several challenging dory races in the harbour and a tricky competition that involved a bosun's chair being pulled over open water. Food was available from the many booths: more *saucisse*, hamburgers, paella and so on.

The entire day was filled with music, food and the smiles and voices of people enjoying themselves. One excited young teenager voiced her fervent hope that the weather would stay clear. In her short life, due to rain or fog, she had never seen the fireworks planned to close the festivities after dark. How wonderful that she got her wish! Yes it was a memorable day that will forever portray Saint-Pierre et Miquelon to us.

If you'd like to go ...

* **Air Saint-Pierre** operates flights from Halifax, Montréal, Moncton, Sydney and St. John's, but times, days and seasons vary. We paid C\$556 pp return from Halifax. www.airsaintpierre.com or 1 877 277 7765.

* The **ferry from Fortune, Newfoundland**, carries 200 passengers but NO cars. There is a safe parking area in Fortune. The trip takes 55 minutes. www.spm-express.net or 1 800 563 2006.

* **Maxxim Vacations** offers a package to the islands. Visit www.maxximvacations.com or call 1 800 567 6666 for a brochure.

* It is possible to **rent cars** on Saint-Pierre, but they are not really necessary as the island is so small and there are a variety of sightseeing tours covering all there is to see.

* **Hotel Ile-de-France**, 24 rooms, 3-star, tel: 0508 410 350, fax: 0508 410 380. We paid €88 per night, plus taxes, for a 5-night stay. We found restaurant meals cost the equivalent of a mid-range establishment in Toronto. In addition to the restaurant in our hotel we especially enjoyed **La Voilerie** and **Le Feu de Braise**.

* As mentioned, you need your **passport** and **euros**. English is readily spoken although, of course, French is the language of the islands. The **tourist season** runs from May to September, with July, August and September the most favourable months we were told. 🇫🇷

CANADA

- Here at TTS we don't remember publishing a story on **Edmonton, Alberta**. That's surely a shame, because we do know that it's dubbed Canada's Festival City and offers a great deal: the Alberta Ballet, the Edmonton Opera, the Edmonton Symphony, the Citadel Theatre and many others, the Art Gallery of Alberta, an Arts District, 60 art galleries and much more. Yes, we'd love to publish a 'Cultural Edmonton' story. Please help! And to help you plan, visit the city's new website www.edmonton.com/itscoolerhere

- Coming to **Montréal** for the second year is **International Flora: the Montréal Festival of Gardens** located in the Lock Gardens of the Quays in the old city. This showcase of gardening will run from 29 June to 3 September. 175,000 spectators visited last year and this year the event is expected to be more popular ... and more spectacular. For details visit www.floramontreal.ca

- The very first travel story that I (Editor Ann) ever wrote was about a trip up **Québec's**

Saguenay River for *Canadian Yachting* magazine. So you can imagine how pleased I am when the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean tourism people come to Toronto to tell about the new tourism initiatives in their beautiful, all-season region. Yes, it really is spectacular and a warm welcome is awaiting you from the locals who are known as 'Bleuets' due to the widespread cultivation of blueberries in the area. I could fill many pages with all there is to see and do there, but why don't you take a peek at www.saguenaylacsaint-jean.net and see for yourselves all the sporting opportunities, the majestic fjord and beautiful lake, the wildlife, the National Parks, cultural events such as music festivals and the many accommodation options. Prefer to call for a brochure? The number is 1 877 253 8387.

- This exhibition has been touring many countries over the past ten years, receiving an audience totaling over 15 million. Now it's Canada's turn to see **Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition** either at the **Royal B.C. Museum** between now and 14 October 2007, or at the **Ontario Science Centre** between 2 June 2007 and 6 January 2008. The exhibition offers visitors a chronological journey through life on the historic ship, as each visitor becomes a passenger and experiences the excitement of the voyage and the subsequent tragedy of that fateful night in 1912. Visitors step into the past to view remarkable recreations of a first class stateroom, the third class cabins and the Ship's Boiler



The Titanic leaving Southampton (RMS Titanic, Inc.)

Room. The tragic tale is brought to life with photographs, sounds and stories of the passengers and crew members, as well as over 250 artifacts recovered from the wreckage site 3,800 metres below the surface of the Atlantic Ocean. Full details and tickets at www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca and www.ontariosciencecentre.ca

- If the articles in this edition have tempted you to visit or explore **Ontario** soon, you may like to have a copy of the Ontario Accommodation Association's *2007 Traveller's Companion*, available by calling 1 800 461 1972 or via online ordering at www.ontarioaccommodation.com. The publication lists all 1,000 members of the Association: motels, inns, hotels, resorts, B&Bs and lodges.

- You may have seen their great advertisements on television. Yes, the **Yukon, Northwest Territories** and **Nunavut** have collaborated to promote tourism in the north and they have also launched a new website to lure - and assist - travellers. Take a peek at www.lookUpnorth.ca

and be tempted! At a recent press conference, attended by all three Premiers, Northwest Territories Premier Joe Handley said "There's a whole other Canada up there that most Canadians never visit. But everyone is invited!"

ITALY

Gorgeous Italy may already be on your summer itinerary, but have you thought of adding a visit to the island of **Elba**, which is an easy side trip from **Florence** or **Rome**? Ferries serve the island from the port of Piombino and bookings for these, together with car rentals, can be made on line at www.VisitElba.com If this idea appeals check out the Boutique

Hotel Ilio in Capo Sant Andra as an appealing place to stay – www.ilio.it. Maurizio Testa, who owns and manages the hotel, also runs the VisitElba website. In his message to us he says, "Elba is never going to be an island of huge hotels, bright lights and late-night clubbers. It's aimed at people who enjoy the simple pleasures of life." The 20-room Hotel Ilio offers rooms from €40 pp B&B and from €50 half board (about C\$61 and \$76 respectively).

IRELAND

Here's just a little room to say that **Tourism Ireland** has new Visitor Guides/Vacation Planners available. They cover the whole island, have include detailed maps, tour info and sample self-drive itineraries together with a 'must see and do' section for each area. Call 1 800 223 6470, www.discoverireland.com.

A new tour

CHINA SILK ROAD

Departing: 10 September 2007

Perhaps you are one of the many people who have come with The Travel Society on our China Yangtze Spectacular tour of China? Or perhaps you have always been fascinated by tales of the Silk Road? Whichever the case, we hope you will be thrilled to hear about our new, 20-day Silk Road tour. Come with us from Canada to Beijing, Urumqi, Kashgar, Turpan, Jiayuguan, Dunhuang and Xi'an before ending your tour in Shanghai. Lakes at sunset and mountains at dawn; lush vineyards and spectacular deserts; exotic walled cities and ancient ruins; colourful ethnic minorities, nomads, imams, merchants and saints; Great Bazaars

AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES departing:

Victoria	\$5,490 pp/dbl	Vancouver	\$5,370 pp/dbl
Edmonton	\$5,500 pp/dbl	Calgary	\$5,500 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$5,620 pp/dbl	Halifax	\$6,100 pp/dbl
Toronto, Montreal & Ottawa	\$5,670 pp/dbl		
Single supplement	\$1,100 Prices are subject to confirmation		

selling camels and donkeys, carpets and spices; caravansaries, gardens and pagodas; train trips and cultural shows and, would you believe, the 492 Mogao grottoes known as the Cave of the One-Thousand-Buddhas. All this and more you'll experience on this trip. Call us now for the detailed itinerary and start dreaming of discovering part of the fabled Silk Road of China.

Your tour costs includes:

- Round trip transpacific air on Air Canada
- All domestic air and coach transportation
- All transfers and baggage handling
- 4-star accommodations
- 1 sleeper on overnight train
- 3 meals (except on free days in Beijing & Shanghai)
- Daily sightseeing
- Local English-speaking guides

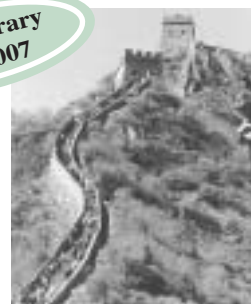
China ... Yangtze Spectacular

New itinerary for 2007

FROM \$4,145 FOR 18 DAYS! Departing: 3 October 2007, Spring & Fall 2008

It is vast, fascinating and mysterious and it has beckoned travellers from the west for centuries. Mention it to avid travellers and they are sure to say, "Yes, I hope to visit China one day." And what would they choose to experience? A cruise on the mighty Yangtze River (now in the process of changing for ever); a look at the work-in-progress on the massive Three Gorges Dam; a walk on the ancient Great Wall; views of charming villages, lush terraced hillsides and magnificent mountain peaks; visits to the great cities of Shanghai and Beijing; a trip to view one of the world's greatest archaeological finds ... the 6,000 terra-cotta warriors at Xi'an; scenes of palaces, pagodas, pavilions and pandas; tastes of Peking duck and Chinese banquets and so much more. So how do you choose? When you decide on The Travel Society's tour there's no need to choose because all these highlights are included. Yes, in these remarkable 18 days you'll stay in Beijing; you'll take a 4-day first-class cruise on the Yangtze with many shore excursions; you'll fly to see those centuries-old terra-cotta warriors in Xi'an; you'll visit bustling Chongqing and see its pandas; stay in Hangzhou and travel into the hills covered with tea plantations; explore the exquisite gardens of Suzhou, and visit Nanjing and Wuzhen. And you'll have time to explore spectacular Shanghai. Throughout the

trip you'll see magnificent architecture, you'll be entertained at cultural events, you'll join your hosts at a variety of banquets, you'll have time to shop, and you'll marvel at some of the most wonderful scenery on earth, all in the company of English-speaking guides. You'll travel by plane, by luxury bus, cruise ship and river boat. Many of our members have told us it's an experience of a lifetime ... and all at an amazing price!



Editor Ann Wallace took the China Yangtze trip and her 14-page, illustrated account is available. For your copy please send \$5 with your address.

AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES departing:

Vancouver	\$4,145 pp/dbl	Victoria	\$4,195 pp/dbl
Calgary	\$4,420 pp/dbl	Edmonton	\$4,420 pp/dbl
Saskatoon/Regina	\$4,590 pp/dbl	Winnipeg	\$4,590 pp/dbl
Toronto	\$4,490 pp/dbl	Ottawa	\$4,490 pp/dbl
Montreal	\$4,490 pp/dbl	St. John's	\$4,850 pp/dbl
Halifax/Quebec	\$4,850 pp/dbl	London	\$4,850 pp/dbl
Single supplement	\$1,195 (Sharing can be arranged.)		
Taxes and visas extra.	Prices are subject to confirmation		

ADD-ON HONG KONG

4 days/3 nights \$1,288 pp/dbl
Single supplement \$544

ADD-ON BANGKOK

4 days/3 nights \$1,185 pp/dbl
Single supplement \$350

ADD-ON TOKYO

4 days/3 nights \$1,375 pp/dbl
Single supplement \$299

ADD-ON KYOTO

4 days/3 nights \$1,450 pp/dbl
Single supplement \$325

Your tour costs includes:

- Round-trip transpacific air fares on Japan Airlines or Air Canada
- Chinese domestic airfares
- Canadian domestic airfares
- First-class hotel accommodation
- First-class 4 days/3 nights Yangtze River cruise aboard a deluxe cruise ship
- All transfers
- Daily sightseeing
- Three meals daily
- 2 Western-style dinners.
- Special banquets in Hangzhou, Xi'an and Beijing
- Evening cultural shows
- Fully escorted by English/Chinese-speaking tour guide
- English-speaking local guides
- Free time in Beijing & Shanghai

Please call The Travel Society 1 877 926 2500 x24 or 416 926 2500 x24 for the full details. All our tours are specially priced for Travel Society members and are only available at these prices through our office. TICO ACTA

Now 23 days

India's Golden Triangle

No charge London stopover

23 days departing: 24 September 2007, Spring & Fall 2008

India is one of the world's greatest travel destinations. But unless you're a young backpacker, a tour is the way to go! And The Travel Society is offering the ultimate tour of India's fabled northwestern region known as The Golden Triangle. This tour will show you all the highlights and more, including camel and elephant rides ... guaranteed to give wonderful photographs! You'll start your tour in Mumbai (once known as Bombay) where you'll visit Dhobi Ghat, the Gateway of India, Marine Drive, the Hanging Gardens, Jain Temple and the Prince of Wales Museum. There will be free time also, perhaps for a little shopping, before you fly to Udaipur, home of the Maharna City Palace, the Jagdish Temple, Garden of Maidens and so many other sites. And here you'll dine in the spectacular 250-year-old Lake Palace that seems to float on an island on Lake Pichola.

A drive to Mount Abu, a beautiful hill resort, comes next, followed by fabled Ranakpur, home of the beautiful Ranakpur Temples. Ancient Jodhpur is next on the itinerary, then it's on to the pilgrimage city of Pushkar with its temple dedicated to Lord Brahma. It's in Pushkar that, if you wish, you will take a camel ride into the sand dunes. The famous Pink City - Jaipur - the capital of Rajasthan comes next and you will spend two nights there, with days full of exciting sightseeing and an excursion to the Amber Fort by elephant. Jaipur is also famous for its bazaar full of wonderful gifts ... and of course you'll spend time there.

Agra is the home of the Taj Mahal and so, of course, it's on

our itinerary too. You'll have an early night and leave before dawn to watch the beautiful Taj revealed by the rising sun. Then it's on to Jhansi by the famous Shatabdi Express train - an incredible excursion. You'll be met by your bus there and driven on to Khajuraho, site of the World Heritage Temples - the eternal images of love. Varansi has been requested by many of our members and we've arranged for this destination to come next. You'll never forget your early-morning boat ride on the River Ganges here, nor the narrow by-lanes of this, one of the most ancient living cities. Your last destination is Delhi, reached by air to allow for plenty of time to see the sights and do some last-minute shopping.

Throughout this trip you will stay in first-class hotels; travel in de luxe a/c, fully-equipped coaches and enjoy wonderful meals, banquets and entertainment. Many days will be full, but there's plenty of free time too. Haven't you always wanted to visit India? Make this the year! Twenty-one days! A life-time time of memories! Come with The Travel Society and enjoy the best of Rajasthan with fellow members!



Your tour includes:

- All international flights with British Airways
- Domestic flights
- Deluxe a/c coach transportation
- Shatabdi Train Fare
- State transport taxes
- All taxes and meals
- English-speaking guides and escort
- All entrance fees
- Elephant ride and Camel safari
- Baggage handling

AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES: 23 Days

Toronto	\$6,275.00 pp/dbl	Ottawa	\$6,475.00 pp/dbl
Montreal	\$6,375.00 pp/dbl	Vancouver	\$6,548.00 pp/dbl
Calgary	\$6,548.00 pp/dbl	Winnipeg	\$6,650.00 pp/dbl
Halifax	\$6,650.00 pp/dbl		

Single supplement \$1,480 (Sharing can be arranged.) Prices are subject to confirmation

New Tours for 2007

- Costa Rica - à la carte
- Africa - train tours
- Namibia and the Shongololo Express

Please call The Travel Society 1 877 926 2500 x24 or 416 926 2500 x24 for the full details. All our tours are specially priced for Travel Society members and are only available at these prices through our office.  

Galapagos Islands Cruise & Ecuador Small Ship

with options to Kapawi Lodge in the Amazon and Machu Picchu, Peru

14 days departing 24 May, 30 August, 6 & 20 September, Oct, Nov & Dec 2007, Jan, Feb, Mar & April 2008

The Travel Society is proud to be able to offer its members an outstanding trip to some of the world's most spectacular destinations. Who hasn't dreamed of cruising to the Galapagos Islands and seeing wildlife as Darwin witnessed it? Think of the unique adventure you will enjoy, of the stories you will have to tell and the photographs you will take! You will spend a week aboard your first-class 20-passenger ship, taking daily shore excursions to a variety of the islands with experienced naturalists in groups of no more than 10 people per guide.

You'll also visit other destinations in Ecuador, and then you can choose to enjoy the exciting optional extensions: to Kapawi - a ecological lodge in the Amazon and/or a visit Machu Picchu in Peru. We'll take care of all the travel details. All you have to do is enjoy!

PRICES INCLUDE AIR: Toronto \$5,995.00 pp/dbl

prices are available from all major cities

GREAT ADD-ONS, INCLUDING AIR:

Kapawi - from all departure points \$1,680.00 pp/dbl

Machu Picchu from \$1,996.00 pp/dbl

Prices are subject to confirmation

Your tour includes:

- Round-trip international air
- All domestic air transportation
- All accommodation
- First class Galapagos small ship cruise
- All meals as per the itinerary
- Admissions to all sites
- Expert Galapagos guides
- Transfers & baggage handling
- All taxes

Copper Canyon and Mexico City

Departing: 18 May, 8 & 22 June, Sep, Oct, Nov & Dec 2007, Spring & Fall 2008

We are offering a new 9-day tour to Mexico City and the Copper Canyon. The Copper Canyon is four times larger than the Grand Canyon, and you'll enjoy a journey that is considered by many to be the world's most exciting train trip, with its 87 tunnels, 39 bridges and uncountable spectacular views. You'll meet the people, stay in unique accommodations and explore the present and the past in this astonishing region.

Air-inclusive prices:

Toronto	\$3,760 pp/dbl	Ottawa	\$3,830 pp/dbl
Montreal	\$3,760 pp/dbl	Vancouver	\$3,994 pp/dbl
Calgary	\$3,994 pp/dbl	Halifax	\$4,196 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$3,994 pp/dbl		

Single supplement \$798 (Sharing can be arranged.) Prices are subject to confirmation

New itinerary!

Your tour includes:

- All air on Mexicana/Air Canada
- Canadian domestic air
- Bilingual guides
- 8 nights' first-class accommodation
- All transfers, baggage handling & tips
- Meals as per the itinerary
- All train trips and tours as per the itinerary
- All taxes

22 days from \$6,275

A Traveller's Turkey

Limited to 20 Members

Depart: 11 September 2007, Spring & Fall 2008

It is one of the cradles of civilization and one of the most wonderful countries on the planet. Here are fabled cities, unique landscapes, incomparable historic sites and calm, friendly people who are eager to show that their land is, indeed, both historic and modern.

Ann Wallace, our editor, has travelled extensively in Turkey and always returns claiming it is one of her favourite destinations. So now we have organized a luxurious tour of Turkey exclusively for Travel Society members. We have combined our extensive knowledge with careful research to ensure you see the very best that Turkey has to offer. You'll stay in first-class historic or very specialized hotels, travel in a 40-seat air-conditioned luxury bus, enjoy cruises on private boats, sample fine food and be entertained by cultural performances. And the itinerary? Magical Istanbul (plenty of time there); Ankara, home of one of the world's finest museums; the unique 'geological poem' called Kapadokya (or Cappadocia); mysterious and lovely ruins such as Aphrodisias, Pergamum and, of course, Ephesus; the fabled and beautiful Aegean coast; the peaceful Princes Isles in the Sea of Marmara and so much more.

Ann says, "This is the most perfect tour of Turkey imaginable; you will have an unforgettable time ... and such a small group, too! Sign up now!"

AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES: 22 Days

Toronto	\$6,275.00 pp/dbl	Ottawa	\$6,475.00 pp/dbl
Montreal	\$6,275.00 pp/dbl	Vancouver	\$6,395.00 pp/dbl
Edmonton	\$6,495.00 pp/dbl	Calgary	\$6,395.00 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$6,495.00 pp/dbl	Halifax	\$6,495.00 pp/dbl

Single supplement \$750 (Sharing can be arranged.) Prices are subject to confirmation



Your tour includes:

- Round trip transatlantic flights with Air Canada/Lufthansa/British Airways
- All domestic flights
- 20 nights' accommodation
- All meals as per itinerary
- All domestic transportation
- 40 seat air conditioned luxury bus
- Admission to all sites
- An English-speaking guide/director and a Travel Society host
- All taxes

Please call The Travel Society 1 877 926 2500 x24 or 416 926 2500 x24 for the full details. All our tours are specially priced for Travel Society members and are only available at these prices through our office.  

A 19-day tour with Cyril Payle at an incredible price ...

Spectacular **South Africa**

*No charge
London stopover*

Departures: 12 October 2007, Spring & Fall 2008

Come with The Travel Society to a land of wonder ... on a South African trip unlike any other. Designed especially for our members, this trip takes in all the highlights: Kruger National Park for game watching, the famous Garden Route, the beautiful wine region of Stellenbosch and the sights of incomparable Cape Town, including Cape Point, Chapman's Peak Drive and Robben Island. But on our trip you will do far more. You will tour the Great scarpment of Eastern Transvaal – a place so beautiful writers run out of adjectives – where you will visit God's Window, the Blyde see Johannesburg and be

escorted to Soweto for lunch in a Township house and jazz in a famous nightspot. You'll enter the Kingdom of Swaziland to meet the people and enjoy more game watching. Zululand is also on the itinerary, with its historical sites and unique entertainment traditions. You'll be driven through the Valley of a Thousand Hills to East London and take the famous Outeniqua Choo-Ttoe train from Knysna to George. You'll visit the Addo Elephant National Park and traverse the Little Karoo Desert – flanked by great mountain ranges – to see the Cango Caves. You'll travel in a luxury air-conditioned coach, you'll stay in lovely properties ranging from good hotels to charming chalets, you'll enjoy a wide variety of entertainment and you'll enjoy South Africa's delicious cuisine and wines and you'll be escorted all the way by Satour-accredited guides. Here at The Travel Society we know South Africa well ... and we can't imagine a more comprehensive, in-depth and fascinating tour of South Africa.

PRICES INCLUDING AIR AND TAXES departing from:

Toronto, Montreal	\$7,680 pp/dbl
Ottawa	\$7,940 pp/dbl
Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg	\$7,940 pp/dbl
Halifax	\$8,040 pp/dbl
Single supplement \$850.00 (sharing can be arranged)	

Prices are subject to confirmation

Pre-tour - Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe ~ 3 days \$1,548 including Air

Pre-tour - Victoria Falls and Chobe National Park, Botswana ~ 5 days \$2,946 including Air

Post-tour - Namibia & Etosha - Desert Wildlife Experience ~ 4 days \$1,688 including Air

Your tour includes:

- Return international airfare on British Airways
- First-class accommodation throughout
- Luxury a/c coach
- Experienced Satour-accredited tour guides
- Special Travel Society experiences
- All meals; breakfast, light lunch and dinner
- All transfers with full luggage service
- All sightseeing fees (with no hidden extras)
- All taxes

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