

# CHA's 1993 Annual Conference at Carleton University Already Under Way

At its fall meeting the CHA Council appointed Del Muiise of host Carleton University to Chair the 1993 program committee and approved four themes for the conference. Several members observed the need to get members more involved in presenting recent research results and the incoming program committee was urged to be more active in soliciting participation. It was also agreed that preference would be given in submissions to those proposals coming from members of the Association.

To assist planning, the final deadline for submission of proposals has been advanced to 1 August, 1993. A preliminary meeting of the planning committee will be scheduled for Charlottetown in May, where proposals for sessions will be discussed. Early submissions for sessions or papers welcome.

While the four themes listed below need not be reflected in all sessions offered at the conference, they have been designated as deserving of special treatment in 1993. Particularly welcome are suggestions featuring completed research suitable for submission to the **Journal**.

## 1. Ethnicity, Nationalism and the

**Modern State:** Provides an opportunity for Canadianists and non-Canadianists alike to compare the origins of contemporary multi-ethnic and multi-regional states and explore the implications and circumstances for the structuring (perhaps even their de-structuring?).

**2. Historians and their publics:** Solicits comparative sessions by historians working both inside and outside the academic milieu who direct their research endeavours to non-academic audiences. Exploring different media from the traditional published book or article is suggested. Indeed, alternative presentations to the traditional paper are urged.

**3. The Black experience in America:** On the occasion of the 200th anniversary of John Graves Simcoe's attempt to abolish slavery in Upper Canada the breadth and scope of the Black experience provides a theme with particular merit. It may include discussion of 20th century trends in Black immigration, as well as

comparative sessions situating the Canadian experience with other parts of North and South America.

## 4. Capital Cities and their problems:

Comparative discussion of the evolution, governance and particular problems surround both national and provincial/state capital cities is an appropriate subject given the fact that the conference is being held in Ottawa. Of course, the theme is not limited to Canadian capitals.

A Program Committee is being assembled to help organize sessions; suggestions for membership are welcome. The commit-

tee, besides Del Muiise, now includes Donna Andrew (Guelph), representing the Council; Jim Kenny (Carleton), representing graduate students; and David Richeson (National Museum of Science and Technology). Suggestions for other members, including those whose role might be limited to taking on responsibility for planning individual sessions, are welcome.

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## The Heritage Test:

### Some interesting findings

The following summarizes the main findings of the Heritage Test survey, a summary of which was published in the last issue of the CHA Newsletter. The survey was conducted February 6 to 14, 1991 and 1,628 adults and students across Canada answered it. Half the sample was male and half was female.

- There is a strong desire to see more emphasis placed on teaching young people about Canadian heritage and history in the school system in Canada.
- Canadians are less than satisfied with their own perceived knowledge of Canadian heritage and history and there is a strong interest in learning more about it.
- Contrary to popular belief, Canadians do not view Canadian heritage and history as boring.
- There is a definite feeling that Canadians do not take enough pride in their heritage and history.
- The actual Heritage Test results, however, suggest that Canadian's knowledge of their country's heritage and history is better than they, themselves, think it is.
- Demographically, adults obtain slightly better average scores than students and

males do somewhat better than females. Average test scores also tend to improve with age and as students progress to higher grade levels.

- Not surprisingly, there is clear evidence of a cross-cultural gap between Canada's two main language groups revealed in the test results. That is, French Quebecers exhibit much better knowledge of Quebec history and heritage than they do of Canadian anglophone history and heritage and vice versa.
- There is a definite feeling among both French and English Canadians that encouraging better understanding and appreciation of our cultural and historical roots as a nation and society would strengthen our sense of national purpose and identity.
- Canadians do not seem to have many Canadian heroes to identify with or to look up to. They also have some difficulty in naming events, achievements or successes in Canadian history of which they can be proud.
- Canadian cultural literacy is better developed when it comes to knowledge of Canadian musicians, than Canadian writers or artists. Indeed, it is in the area of Canadian art where the knowledge level is lowest.