

Two lanes of Bloor Street bridge over Humber River closed for emergency repairs

City officials closed two lanes of traffic on Bloor Street over the Humber River for emergency repairs yesterday after an engineering consultant noticed a portion of the bridge was corroding. One lane of traffic in each direction will remain open until repairs are completed. The city had received calls from con-

'SAFETY ISSUE'
cerned citizens about rust on the exterior of the structure, but upon inspection the consultant discovered an area under the concrete in the eastbound lanes was being corroded by water from

nearby drainage tubes, said John Bryson, manager of structures and expressways for the city. "It was considered a safety issue," he said. "Recent studies have shown the corrosion can happen over a two-year period. We have a couple of bridges where we've had issues with corrosion." *Melissa Leong, National Post*

URBAN SCRAWL

It's time for CBC to finally butt out

Federal buildings still allowed smoking rooms

JIM WATSON
Commentary

I can guarantee that Peter Mansbridge won't be mentioning this on *The National* tonight — the CBC still allows employees to smoke inside their building.

Yes, it's true, and I have been lobbying CBC president Robert Rabinovitch to shut these smoking rooms down for over a month.

Ontario's Smoke-Free Ontario Act, which celebrates its one-year anniversary on May 31, bans indoor smoking anywhere in the province — except for long-term care facilities, which have the right to build properly ventilated rooms.

As the Minister responsible for the act, I can attest to how successful it has been. We have seen widespread compliance and Ontarians have smoked 2.6 billion fewer cigarettes since the act came into force.

Clearly, the sky has not fallen and smokers must simply go outside to smoke.

However, due to an archaic and embarrassingly outdated federal law, federally regulated businesses are permitted to build indoor smoking rooms, thus trumping our progressive and effective legislation.

I know the root of this matter ultimately rests with the federal government, which desperately needs to update the 15-year-old Non-Smoker's Health Act. Rest assured that the feds aren't getting off easy; I have written to Minister of Labour Jean-Pierre Blackburn and spoken to Health Minister Tony Clement.

In addition, Senator Mac Harb, who teamed up with Senator Wilbert Keon, presented a motion in the Senate calling for the elimination of smoking rooms on federal property.

This motion was passed unanimously by the Senate and is now awaiting debate in the House of Commons.

In the meantime, while more and more health advocates and people line up to oppose the outdated Non-Smoker's Health Act, the CBC must close down their smoking rooms immediately.

Other federally regulated industries have gone down this path.

A bank is federally regulated; but you won't find an indoor smoking room in any bank in Ontario.

Airports are also federally regulated, but Ontario's two major airports (Ottawa and Toronto) have done the right thing and voluntarily shut their smoking rooms down to protect the health of customers and employees.

Why is the CBC different? I put that question to Mr. Rabinovitch when I spoke to him and told him how preposterous it is that he permits smoking rooms inside the CBC.

For his part, he argued that there is a cost and it takes time to close one of these rooms down. (In fairness, after repeated phone calls and letters, his staff informed my staff that by September these rooms would all be shut down.)

This is still ridiculous. Why the delay? How much time does it take to put up a no-smoking sign?

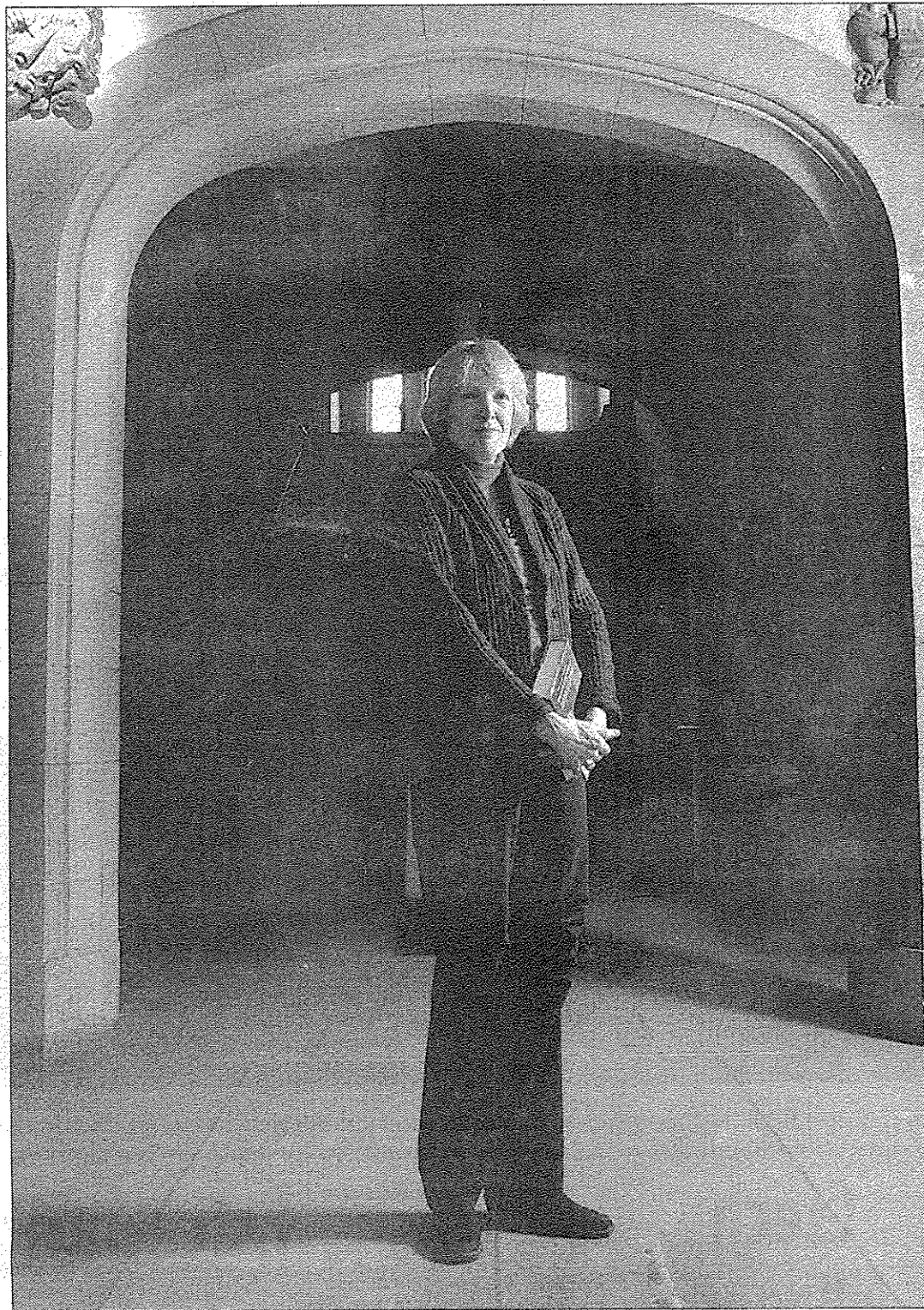
The CBC obviously gets the message that smoking will kill because in their new buildings, they have not built an indoor smoking room.

I am calling on Mr. Rabinovitch to show some leadership and shut the remaining rooms down immediately.

National Post

■ Jim Watson is Ontario's first Minister of Health Promotion.

THE CITY



PETER J. THOMPSON / NATIONAL POST

Margaret MacMillan says she loves the green space provided by Toronto's ravines.

MY TORONTO; MARGARET MACMILLAN

Margaret MacMillan is preparing to bid farewell to Trinity College and move to Oxford University to take up the post of the Warden of St. Antony College. Toronto will miss one of its best known historians, and she'll miss it right back. She spoke to Lydia Perovic about her favourite things Toronto:

St. George and Trinity grounds I have enjoyed the last five years in this neighbourhood and will probably keep a place here. The new opera house is blocks down University Avenue, and Trinity-St. Paul, the home of Tafelmusik, is around the corner. Movie theatres, museums and restaurants are just about everywhere. My usual errand route includes a stop at the Manulife Centre, where my parents live during winter,

then a walk north via Annex for the little stores on Dupont. There's also that lovely park on Yorkville near Bellair. The idea was to reproduce botanic zones of Canada: birch grove, pine forest, prairie grasses, wet gardens... It's worth a visit in every season. If there's more time, I'll walk or bicycle up to my tennis club at Yonge and Summerhill. The obvious advantage to living in the area is that you can freely neglect your car, and ride a bicycle instead.

Green refuges What saved a lot of green space in Toronto are the ravines, which I love. I'd sometimes bicycle up Don Valley to the Sunnybrook, right up to Edwards Gardens. High Park is fine but a bit too far west: Toronto could use a large park in its downtown core. I'm a big fan of the Leslie Street Spit; it turned into a wonderful wildlife environment without anyone thinking it would. There

was something of a country feel around my old home base in Cabbagetown as well.

Old Cabbagetown I moved to the area right after I finished my postgraduate work at Oxford and stayed there for 25 years. The house that I owned was at the northernmost point of Sackville Street, overlooking the cemetery and other people's gardens. Favourite routes always included the Toronto Necropolis and the St. James Cemetery, and further west, the Allan Gardens. I also loved the strange little unexpected alleyways in Old Cabbagetown; I got to know them well over the years; streets and cul-de-sacs with two or three pretty little houses and not much else.

Food cultures Fortunately, we are now far from the dreary Presbyterian Toronto ruled — gastronomically and otherwise — by meat and potatoes. Like going to the Brazilian restaurant Caju on Queen and Trinity-Bellwoods. There's also Mercurio on St. George and Bloor, Boulevard Café and 93 on Harbord, and Prego della Piazza by Avenue Road. I used to cook a lot but there is no time for it now. Besides, the Provost's Lodge, which is very grand, comes with the worst little kitchen.

Departure Of course I'll miss Toronto: It's my home town, a place I know better than any other place in the world. It's this familiarity that can't be repeated elsewhere. I'll miss the people most, my friends and family, my tennis pals, the restaurants, the music (although London with its music scene won't be too far). All the way to my favourite dry cleaner and shoe repair shop. I leave in June but will be coming back with regularity — at least two or three times a year. And for my readers, I am not really going anywhere: the two new shorter volumes are in the works, a biography of Stephen Leacock, and a collection of essays on the uses and abuses of history.

National Post

BEST OF T.O.



This watercolour of a Mexican fishing village by Chief Justice Roy McMurtry, along with other works by lawyers and judges, is being sold through silent auction to raise money for the Lawyers Feed the Hungry Program. Viewing noon to 2 p.m. at the Museum Room at The Law Society of Upper Canada, with bidding closed at 7:30 p.m. next Wednesday.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

KISS star invites us to join 'world of cool'

Gene Simmons, reality TV show star and bassist for the legendary rock band KISS, was in town this month for a meeting with Toronto-based EyeRock Digital, to launch a new online video service. Called NGTV.com, or No Good Television, it will target 18- to 34-year-old males by beaming thousands of candid celebrity interviews around the globe, in three- to five-minute clips. Mr. Simmons invited the Post's Ian Munroe in for an exclusive interview at his suite at the Park-Hyatt Hotel:

Q In a nutshell, what brings you to Toronto?
A In a nutshell, I go wherever I want to go. We actually have some new friends, an interesting little group called EyeRock. We've become partners in the NGTV.com project.
Q Why should we go for this over other television programs being geared to a younger audience?
A Well, this is taking over the world, and you can go back in history to Sergeant Preston of the Yukon, or you can join the rest of the world of cool. Because this is what's happening... no one else can compete.
Q When was the last time you were here?
A Not long ago. The first time I came here was... when we had a local band open up for us, on their first tour. We took Rush on their first tour.
Q What was your favourite show in this city?
A Wherever and whenever we played. You know, you have to get up there and feel like you're God's gift, otherwise you're not. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. So when we got up there we said, "We wanted the best, you got the best — the hottest band in the world!" That's right.
Q When you came to town, where would you usually hang out, if you weren't on stage?
A The hotel room. It was the best place to be.
Q You wouldn't be out in the city?
A That means nothing. You would have the chicken coop. The next room would be where all the chicks come. You would

just go in there — you're the fox, raid the chicken coop. Because ultimately the clubs, and the drinking — I've never been drunk or high in my life — ultimately it all leads to who's going to share your boudoir. See, a little French content.

Q Does that mean that some of your "conquests" have been Torontonians?
A I'd say that's a very safe assessment, yes.

Q So do you have any family in the city?
A Not that I know of. (Laughs.)

Q What else do you know about Toronto? What's the longest street in the world?
A Respectfully, nobody knows that except you... Did you know that Canada used to be called CND? C-eh-N-eh-D-eh. Have you heard the one about the nice person from Toronto who walks up to the a--hole New Yorker in New York, and says, "I beg your pardon, I'm from Toronto. Would you mind, it's my first time in the city. I'm looking for Grand Central Station, can you point me in the right direction or should I just go f--- myself?"

Q Any favourite restaurants, neighbourhoods or shopping places in the city?
A I never shop. I get nervous when I go into a shop — someone says "may I help you?" I just start to sweat... I either have [clothes] given to me or Shannon [long-time partner, Newfoundland-born actress Shannon Tweed], my Canadian content, will get me some stuff.
Q Would you ever consider retiring in Canada? Because you've got a bit of a Canadian connection.
A I would live in Toronto, and I've warned — Torontoans? Torontonians. They've got to shorten that. That's too long. Toras... I've warned Torontonians, when you come to Los Angeles, don't be afraid of the light in the sky. We call that the sun, don't be scared. No, but if the weather was better, I wouldn't have any problem living here.

Q What newspaper do you read when you come to the city?
A Should I tell the truth or lie?
Q The truth.
A Whatever somebody puts in front of me.

National Post
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MARIO ANZUONI / REUTERS

Gene Simmons is promoting No Good Television.



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FOOD AND HISTORY SHOWS

In The Kitchen — West Mezz — 10am & 2pm

<p>APRIL 28TH Barbara Hunter from Hunter's Farms, discusses raising Emu locally, recipes and samples this wonderful fat free, healthy meat.</p> <p>MAY 5TH Scheffler's Deli owner Odysseas Gounalakis shares tastes of prosciutto matched to various cheeses. Gourmet delights!</p>	<p>MAY 12TH From Sovereign Farms, Wes Sovereign, of the North Market brings you the first prime crop of tomatoes from our local greenhouses. Learn about Ontario hydroponics greenhouse growing.</p> <p>MAY 19TH Potted herb plants for your patio or balcony. Farmers' Market-Martin's Gardens special sale and growing information on thyme, basil, rosemary and more, plus herb tasting.</p>
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