

LARK HARBOUR

THE

YORK HARBOUR

BLOW·ME·DOWNER

ABOUT THE OUTER BAY OF ISLANDS, NEWFOUNDLAND

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PARKS CANADA DESIGNATES ELEVEN NL LIGHTHOUSES AS HERITAGE SITES



POINT AMOUR LIGHTHOUSE, LABRADOR, IN 1986

Photograph by Tom Cunningham, VO1CA

PARKS CANADA recently designated eleven Lighthouses in Newfoundland and Labrador as Heritage Lighthouses. They will receive \$22 million in support from Parks Canada and will be maintained as attractions to be visited by tourists. Four are located in Western Newfoundland and one in Labrador. They are:

Belle Isle South End Lower, near St Anthony, Straits of Belle Isle
Cape Anguille, at Codroy, Southwestern Newfoundland
Cape Ray, at Cape Ray, Southwestern Newfoundland

New Férolle Peninsula, at New Férolle, NW Newfoundland
Point Amour, at L'anse Amour, Southern Labrador. This lighthouse is perhaps of most interest to people of Lark Harbour and York Harbour because, as well as being the tallest lighthouse in Eastern Canada and the second tallest in Canada, its last keeper before it was automated was the late Maxwell Sheppard, 1935-1986, of Lark Harbour, son of Linton George Sheppard and Henrietta Maud Gabriel.

The six other Newfoundland lighthouses are:

Cape Race, Avalon Peninsula, received SOS from *Titanic*
Cape Spear, most eastern point of Newfoundland, near St John's
Cape St Mary's, Avalon Peninsula
Fort Amherst, The Narrows, St John's
Green Island, Catalina
Long Point, Twillingate

In addition to the eleven in Newfoundland & Labrador, 63 others were also designated across Canada, in every province except Manitoba. They were selected from a list nominated by each province. Details of the nomination process can be seen at [Heritage Lighthouses of Canada](#) and [Petitioned Lighthouses](#).

THE FASCINATION OF LIGHTHOUSES

LIGHTHOUSES ARE ALWAYS FASCINATING, especially those which are famous, like **Eddystone**, or **Wolf Rock**, off the coast of the British Isles, or **Cape Race, Newfoundland**. Perhaps the fascination lies in their remoteness, or the stark and uncompromising way they stand on some of the most rugged and forbidding headlands in the world. Or maybe it is their association with some legendary event, like the sinking of the *Titanic*.

As a child growing up near the **Port of Grimsby**, an important British fishing centre in the 1950s, I was always fascinated by lighthouses, and took every opportunity to visit them. And when as a teenager I found myself growing dissatisfied with my life in high school, I fantasised often about leaving school and looking for a job as an apprentice lighthouse keeper. Life on a rock in the ocean had a romantic appeal then.

I discussed the idea with a friend, Clive, a distant cousin who had some of the same feelings about school as I did, and one day we spoke of it to our PE teacher, Mr Flunder, a young teacher fresh out of college who often chatted with us and was always prepared to listen.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LH = Lark Harbour YH = York Harbour JB = John's Beach
 HC = Holy Communion MP = Morning Prayer EP = Evening Prayer
 P&P = Prayer & Praise; HB = Baptism; MHS = Mem Hymn Sing
 ☉ = Full Moon

2015 SEPTEMBER 2015

7th Labour Day
 22nd Fall begins - Autumnal Equinox
 27th ☉ Sun

2015 OCTOBER 2015

12th Mon Thanksgiving Day
 19th Mon Canada Federal General Election
 24th Sat United Nations Day
 27th ☉ Tues
 31st Sat Hallowe'en

2015 NOVEMBER 2015

1st Sun Back to Standard Time - Clocks back 1 hour
 11th Wed Remembrance Day
 25th ☉ Wed
 30th Mon NL Provincial General Election

2015 ADVANCE DATES 2015

Dec 21st Mon Winter begins
 Dec 25th ☉ Fri Christmas Day
Christmas Day and New Years Day are both Fridays
Full Moon ☉ also occurs on Christmas Day 2015

THE FASCINATION OF LIGHTHOUSES

Continued from page 1.

We told him of our idea about leaving school and apprenticing as lighthouse keepers. He discouraged us, of course, and was rather sceptical about the idea, but we began to think it would be fun to pursue the idea further.

I discussed it also with my favourite aunt who lived in the same house with my widowed mother, my grandparents, and me, and as always she was prepared to talk to me about anything, including a career as a lighthouse keeper. Somehow my aunt showed me that leaving school at that point would be a stupid decision to make, not to mention the fact that there would have been a regular Armageddon with my mother, so I never spoke to her about it.

Eventually my cousin and I gave up the idea, but a prank seemed in order: we would put together a letter, purporting to be a reply from [Trinity House](#), the administration of the British Coast Guard Service, in which my cousin Clive and I were both accepted as potential apprentice lighthouse keepers. We would be trained for the job and then assigned to an isolated post off the coast of England. My sporting aunt cooperated with us and took our letter to her office and had it typed up for us, making it look as official as possible.

The following day I took the letter to school, showed it to Clive, and we presented it to Mr Flunder who, to our surprise, swallowed it hook, line and sinker, as the genuine article. Of course, the deception did not last very long, and it was soon revealed for the practical joke it was, and all came to an end. But while it lasted it was a great source of entertainment to us.

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Nothing ever came of it, but it was fun while it lasted. I still relish the exhilaration it provided for us two sixteen-year-olds, and to this day I recall with enjoyment that short period of time when we were the talk of the school. Mr Flunder remained a good friend and enjoyed the joke with us, admitting that he had been taken in by it for a while. And sixty years later I still have a fascination with lighthouses, remembering that escapade every time I see one. - SLH

NO PROBLEM TO KNOW THAT ELECTIONS ARE COMING

IF YOU HAD ANY DOUBTS that elections are approaching — as of August 1st, it's 79 days to the Federal vote and 121 days to the Provincial — a mere glance at the news will illustrate how both sitting governments are cleaning up their acts. For example, the Feds are looking at assisted suicide, a topic gaining increased support across the country: [Ottawa appoints panel to review assisted dying](#) and at the Provincial level [Workers comp appeals system will be reviewed](#).

These are just two examples, one Federal, the other Provincial, of issues that have been either steadfastly denied or ignored by sitting governments until they awoke to the fact that their positions in the polls are extremely precarious leading up to the elections. Now both governments are starting to cover their mistakes or omissions.

The Federal election is set for October 19th, and the Provincial for November 30th. It's surprising how keen some of these politicians are to hang onto their seats. Could gold-plated pensions after ten years that far exceed anything the ordinary citizen can hope for, even after thirty or forty years in the work force, have something to do with it? Surely not!

As voters we can attribute varying causes to actions by our worthy politicians, but if a government steadfastly refuses to discuss a topic even though it has been a hot issue for years with many people, although perhaps *not* by their acknowledged supporters, cynicism is bound to surface.

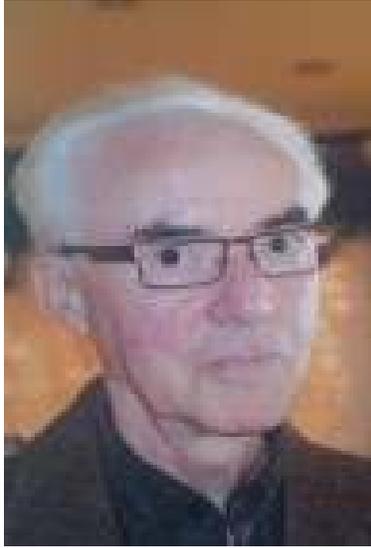
But I beg you, dear reader, do not be influenced by editorial ramblings such as these, nor by what the politicians feed you as excuses. Don't let them blame previous governments for their own dilatory behaviour. Make up *your own mind*, based on how *you* see the issues. And especially don't let them fob you off with, "Honestly, we didn't know these things mattered to you".

Everything matters in an election, especially your opinion. The worst damage that can be done to a democracy is when ordinary citizens do not cast their vote. The greater the number of people who don't vote, the easier it is for manipulative politicians to swing the vote their way by, among other methods, going to great trouble to get their own supporters to the polling stations while discouraging those they know will vote for the opposition. And the current political scene in Canada is loaded with manipulative politicians.

HAVE A SAFE AND RELAXING SUMMER

Obituary
SAMUEL LESLIE SHEPPARD
 1942 - 2015

IT IS WITH LOVE and joyful reflection that we, the family of Samuel L Sheppard, announce his peaceful passing into the arms of the Lord, on Thursday, July 9th, 2015, at the Long Term Care Facility in Corner Brook at the age of 72.



Sam will be lovingly remembered by his wife of 49 years, Anne (née Miller), his children, Bradley (Allison), and Beverly (Kerry), his grandchildren, Caitlyn and Christopher, and a large circle of family and friends.

We would like to thank Dr Westby, the Nurses, PCAs, LPNs, and all the members of the Restorative Care team at the Corner Brook Long Term Care Home, for all your help and support. We would also like to thank the members of the Bay St George Long Term Care Centre for looking after Sam during his brief visit in Stephenville Crossing.

Family and friends may visit Fillatre's Funeral Home, St Mark's Avenue, Corner Brook, on Friday from 2-4 & 7-9 pm. The funeral service will take place at St John the Evangelist Anglican Cathedral on Saturday, July 11th, 2015, at 2:00 pm with the Very Reverend Baxter Park officiating. In keeping with Sam's wishes, cremation has taken place. Interment will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that a donation be made in Sam's name to the Elks and Royal Purple Fund for Children, www.elks-canada.org, or the Parkinson's Society of Newfoundland & Labrador (Western Newfoundland Chapter), www.parkinsonnl.ca.

The family guest book may be signed by visiting www.fillatre.ca.

SPECIAL NOTICE - BEWARE

On returning home after 7 months in hospital, on Friday 24 July I had my home telephone service reconnected and was disturbed when I checked the calls saved there that two calls claimed to be from CRA (Canada Revenue Agency - the "tax people") advising me that I had been reported to them for tax fraud.

Naturally I was disturbed, but I was pretty sure I had not committed tax fraud. I had been out of circulation as most of you reading this will know, but I found the call rather disturbing. I had engaged the services of a professional accountant this year, because my wife Susan always did our tax forms before, and I really didn't know where to start. However I was pretty sure I had not defrauded on my taxes.

The call claimed to be from CRA, and provided me with a phone
Continued in next column → → →

Obituary
ROSETTA MARY ROBINSON
 Née BROPHY
 1925- 2015

IT IS WITH HEARTFELT SADNESS that we announce the passing of Rosetta Mary Robinson on Monday, July 20th, 2015 in Yellowknife at the age of 89 years.



She will be lovingly remembered by her eight children: Sonya Robinson (Darren House), Bonnie White (Troy Harnish), Byron Robinson, Donna Gauthier, Patricia Yule (Dan), Sheila Penney (Alex), Ray Robinson (Juanita), Laurinda Racz (Nick); grandchildren: Kathy, John, Jeff, George, Kayla, Jamie, Sherra Lee, Denise, Petrina, Robin, Derek, Nancy, Dwayne, Darren, Darlene, Dennis jr., Heather, Randy, Katie; sixteen great grandchildren; sister Dora Payne; brother Stedman Brophy (Effie); three sisters-in-law: Lillian Park, Mamie Childs and Vida Robinson-Gough; and numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives and many friends.

She was predeceased by her husband George Reuben Robinson, July 29, 2000; sisters: Freda Biggin, Faith Sheppard; parents Stedman and Rose Brophy. The funeral service will be held Wednesday, July 29th at 2:00 pm from St. James Anglican Church, Lark Harbour with Reverend Nelson Chatman officiating, followed by the interment at the church cemetery. Friends may visit St. James Anglican Church Tuesday from 2-4 and 7-9 pm. As expressions of sympathy flowers are graciously accepted or memorial donations may be made to a charity of ones choice.

Funeral arrangements were entrusted to Fillatre's Funeral Homes, www.fillatre.ca.

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number to call back in regular business hours. So on Monday I tried to contact the real CRA but it's hard to get calls answered there by live people. So I finally called the Corner Brook constituency office of Gerry Byrne, our MP, at 637-4540.

A very pleasant and helpful lady answered, and when I explained what I wanted, she told me there had been other reports of similar phone calls, and she would check this out for me. I gave her the return phone number I had been given.

Tuesday morning, July 28, the lady in Gerry Byrne's office returned my call. The call I had received was a FRAUD !

If you have received similar calls and found them disturbing, you can report them to the Canadian Anti Fraud Centre at 1-888-495-8501 or try their website, but I did not get through. But I shall continue to try. You can also call the RCMP Fraud Centre.

It seems fraud is greatly on the increase in Canada today. - SLH

CHECK THESE NEWS STORIES OUT

WOMAN FINED FOR FEEDING HOMELESS IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

A report in the *San Antonio Express News* of San Antonio, TX, for 2015 July 01 describes how Joan Cheever has been giving away food to hungry homeless people in a San Antonio city park for ten years. She regularly operates a licenced food truck and holds a valid permit for it from the city. But on July 1st she was issued a ticket for \$2,000 by local police for distributing *free* food from a vehicle other than her food truck. She is scheduled to appear before the court on July 23. If you have trouble believing this, see pictures and read more [HERE](#) about her citation, and [HERE](#) about her appearance on the Rachael Ray Show in December 2014.

UPSET MOTHER OF KINDERGARTEN CHILD

According to the TODAY tv show, the *New York Times* of 2015 July 01 reported that a lady named Cara Paiuk was surprised while registering her child for a kindergarten class to find a question on the registration form asking:

"Type of birth: Vaginal __ Caesarean __."

On inquiring why the school needed to know the type of birth, she was told that if the child later had problems, school personnel could look up the child's personal record for information that might help explain the cause. When she asked why the school was not inquiring about more obvious possible causes, such as diet, she was told, "We don't like to ask questions about food. Parents are very sensitive to that." And they aren't sensitive to personal birth info? Read more [HERE](#).

TOP 5 RICHEST NEIGHBOURHOODS IN EACH PROVINCE OF CANADA

In 2014 *Canadian Business* magazine surveyed the country and found the 5 neighbourhoods in each province where the richest people of that province live. Guess first where you think the 5 neighbourhoods in Newfoundland are, then click [HERE](#) to see if you were right.

Then try this quiz about all Canadian provinces :

1. Name 3 provinces whose capital cities contain NONE of the areas.
2. Name 1 province whose capital city contains 3 areas, losing on 2.
3. Name 1 province whose capital city contains 4 areas, losing on 1.
4. Name the 5 provinces where the capital city (or another city closely adjoining it) contains FIVE very wealthy areas.

Answers are on page 7.

Click [HERE](#) to see the wealthiest neighbourhoods of each Canadian province. You might get some surprises.

ELDERLY MAN & WIFE UNABLE TO FLY HOME TO NL BECAUSE OF OUTDATED I.D.

The couple involved trying to get home to NL from Iqaluit after a visit with their son, both awaiting hip replacements, ran into bureaucratic delays because of an outdated driver's licence. Fortunately a Good Samaritan, an Iranian driving an Ottawa taxi, helped out. And people say we shouldn't be taking immigrants into Canada? Tell that to Mr and Mrs Ed Didham, of Colinet, NL. Click [HERE](#) for the details.

Comment: Wouldn't you think someone at the airport, perhaps the airline agent, or airport security, could have made a phone call to check these people out?

RESCUERS NURSE A STRANDED BC KILLER WHALE UNTIL TIDE LIFTS IT TO SAFETY

Many people would think that the death of a killer whale, by being trapped and stranded out of water in a space between two solid rocks, really doesn't matter. But to an increasing number of people, the death of even one of our most magnificent and endangered creatures is a matter for concern. [Read this article](#) which was published in *The Spectator*, of Hamilton, Ontario, on 2015 July 24, Friday. It's good to know that there are people like those who are willing to devote their day to saving the whale, often at considerable personal risk and cost to themselves.

Although whales are not fish, and it's true that they do breathe air through lungs similar to ours, the huge weight of their bodies when they are out of water can cause very serious damage to their internal organs, including their lungs, something like being crushed. But apparently this whale was saved and was successfully reunited with her companions.

**AUGUST IS ALWAYS THE BEST
MONTH TO SEE METEOR DISPLAYS
IN THE NIGHT SKY, AS LONG AS THE
SKY IS CLEAR AND YOU ARE AWAY
FROM STREETLIGHTS AND OTHER
LIGHT SOURCES.**

**Check the Links below for more information
about the August night skies.
Generally speaking, the hours
just before dawn are the best,
but you can often see
very spectacular displays
from the Perseids in August.**

[Meteor shower duet promises out-of-this-world nightly shows](#)

[Perseids Meteor Shower guide for 2015](#)

[PERSEIDS](#)

and also about this Rock Group from the 1980s

[The Stargazers - Rock 'n' Roll Band](#)

Who'd a thunk it?

A Rock 'n' Roll band featured in

??? **The BLOW•ME•DOWNER** ???

Wonders never cease - right?

OVER-PRICING OF DRUGS FOR RARE BUT SERIOUS DISEASES

A very interesting and potentially controversial topic was recently broached in an article entitled: [How pharmaceutical company Alexion set the price of the world's most expensive drug](#). Written by CBC's Kelly Crowe, it is a clear and disturbing exposé of a situation many of us have suspected for years relative to some pharmaceutical companies. In her article, Ms Crowe provides some detailed and credible justification for judging a drug known as [Soliris](#), produced by European-based [Alexion Pharmaceutical](#), as grossly overpriced.

There are two diseases that *Soliris* can treat: Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria ([PNH](#)) and Atypical Haemolytic Uremic Syndrome ([AHUS](#)). Both are life-threatening progressive diseases of the blood, somewhat similar to anaemia. There is no cure, but *Soliris* can help to prolong life by reducing the symptoms. It can, however, cost upwards of half a million dollars per year for the patient's lifetime, making it the world's most expensive drug, and hence a very controversial topic.

The issue of drug pricing is a hot topic because we generally expect the research and testing involved in production of a new drug, an alarmingly expensive matter, to be recouped by the proceeds of sales, as with any other product. 'User pay', in most areas of life, has become the accepted norm, and drugs are no exception. We have come to accept also that the companies manufacturing these drugs are entitled to a reasonable profit from the subsequent sale of their products. In short, the American approach to health care is fast becoming the Canadian approach too. However there are some other factors to consider.

First, all pharmaceuticals are produced to cure or relieve certain ailments. This implies that the consumers of drugs are typically sick people who in the long term are generally either unable to work, or at least face certain restrictions in the employment they can do and are living on restricted incomes. This limits what they can afford to spend on medications, especially since many may have no medical insurance, or have reached the limits it will allow.

Second, the persons whose ailments these costly drugs are intended to relieve are members of a very small group of individuals. Therefore it is a very small group who will be purchasing them, slowing the rate of return on investment for the manufacturers.

Third, we assume that drug development expenses are normally financed by the company involved. However, according to Sachdev Sidhu, an experienced researcher in the field of rare diseases at the University of Toronto (quoted by Ms Crowe in her article), this is not the case with *Soliris*, "for which most of the early research was funded by public money . . . until finally, Alexion, to their credit, kind of picked up the pieces."

Now in production, *Soliris* costs anywhere from \$500,000 (\$700,000 in Canada) upwards per year per patient for life. Alexion has garnered more than six billion dollars in eight years of sales.

Obviously, only a very wealthy minority of patients can afford this kind of cost, and likewise most government and private insurances, so that, although a useful drug is available for those with the disease, very few will be able to avail themselves of it. The question then arises, *What should be done to make this drug and others of similar cost available to all who need it?* Refer also to : [Ambrose urges provinces, territories to allow feds into pharmaceutical alliance](#).

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Health Minister Rona Ambrose's demand is also applicable - that all levels of government should co-operated in bulk buying of pharmaceutical items. This is presently being done, but could be expanded to cover more than its present application.

One suggestion is that government should introduce legislation to ensure that when public funding has been used in the development of these drugs, the price to the consumer should be based on the amount of the company's input only. But most companies are unlikely to be interested in producing drugs where profits are limited, and may therefore decline to become involved.

Another idea could be for government to subsidise production costs. But with the ballooning cost of health care, very few governments are likely to be willing to take on more financial commitments, especially when funds are already being provided indirectly for R & D.

Perhaps such research and development could be performed by a consortium of companies subsidised by governments along the lines of the [International Monetary Fund \(IMF\)](#), but such arrangements are not supported with much enthusiasm by today's governments who already fail to fulfil their membership commitments to such bodies. The [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#), which could be ideal for such projects, is not adequately funded for the work it does already, and broadening its mandate to include additional costly tasks would be doomed to failure.

It is clear that intervention at a higher level than the merely national is needed to bring about action on PNH and AHUS. However the current climate of international co-operation seems to rule out anything more than minimal collaboration in most matters, including medical, and these two diseases are so rare that they create almost no public reaction. It was a slow and painful process before the world woke up to the necessity for collaboration between nations to defeat the [Ebola](#) outbreak of 2014, despite the fact that thousands died, * and even then the effort was half-hearted. This may have been because the disease was largely confined to northwestern Africa. But it is unlikely that PNH and AHUS with their extreme rarity will ever command even the kind of action that Ebola aroused.

It seems therefore that sufferers from these two diseases and others with similar levels of morbidity will have a very long wait for their needs to be met unless they are able to provide medication by their own efforts. The only other possibility is that continued research may result in alternative treatment at much lower cost, but this can happen only if research is continued, with similar financial demands. As previously stated the pharmaceutical industry is unlikely to do so because of the high cost of research and development for a product with limited demand for the benefit of so small a number of individuals. Research done for purely academic reasons, by persons who work for altruistic reasons or plain and simple personal fulfilment, may be the only possibility.

As a final comment on present day society (which perhaps is not much different from the way it has always been) it is a sad situation when the majority of individuals are moved only by the hope for financial gain. Where are our present day [Dr Frederick Banting](#) and [Dr Charles Best](#), the discoverers of insulin which has prolonged the lives of so many diabetics since 1922? We need more altruists like ~~the~~ [the](#)

* Ebola statistics, NW Africa: 11,261 deaths, 27,609 cases reported, but actual numbers may have been much higher due to unreported cases in remote rural areas.

MATHEMATICS IN HIGH SCHOOL

If there is one subject in high school that presents more problems than any other, it's Mathematics. Many students dread it, and they avoid it at the first opportunity. But one has to question, *Why?* Is it the way it's taught? Is it that students don't see it as necessary, because it's easier to use a calculator? Is it because students find it boring?

It may be just one, or it may be a combination of all these causes. But the fact remains that it is not a popular subject, and it is avoided by many, so that they may decide to take other less challenging subjects that don't require Mathematics, or alternatively they may end up in a remedial Math class offered by their university or college because it is a necessary skill for so many other programs.

The sad truth, however, is that Canadian students possess inferior Math skills when compared with those in some other developed countries, and therefore the technical capabilities required to create wealth in Canada are often lost to other countries. Mathematics skills are often the key to innovation and excellence in technology.

There are basically [two methods of teaching Math](#): the old traditional method which uses a lot of memory rote learning, known as the "drill-and-kill method" involving the "times tables", etc, as opposed to the "new Math" which uses a problem-solving approach. The truth lies somewhere between, in a combination of both.

The Old "drill-and-kill" Math usually contains a larger proportion of Arithmetic which has value, especially in everyday applications like retail business, basic book-keeping and accounting. But when it comes to the various branches of engineering, physics, astronomy, and most of the more advanced sciences, then Mathematics, especially Algebra, Geometry and Calculus become vitally important, and a familiarity with these branches of Mathematics may spell the difference between success or failure in a science degree program in university or technical college. Consequently, if our young people have not acquired the basic skills of these branches of Mathematics, then they may not succeed in a science program. Therefore these skills must be mastered at the appropriate levels in high school. This involves a different kind of learning — a problem-solving approach.

The difference, in simple terms, is exemplified in giving a child a multiplication table to learn, or giving that child a problem to solve. It may be a relatively simple problem such as, "A man is laying tiles measuring 0.25 metres by 0.25 metres in a room with a floor measurement of 3 metres by 4 metres. What will be the cost for tiles if they cost \$18 for a box of 6 tiles, and the supplier refuses to sell only whole boxes of tiles?" Plainly this involves more complicated processes than just learning how many centimetres in a metre, or the 6 times table. And if after solving the problem the child has learned that we need to calculate the total number of tiles needed, to divide that number by the number of tiles in a box, to round the number of boxes upwards to arrive at the number to be purchased, and finally to calculate the total cost, then learning will have taken place.

If at the same time the teacher can elicit from the students that it would be useful to be able to multiply 12 by 9 (to calculate the number of tiles to cover the floor) and then to divide that number by 6 (to find the number of whole boxes needed) then learning will have taken place for a few students. With one or two more examples worked and more students grasping the process, some may even have figured out that it is simpler to set up a statement like :-

$$\frac{12 \times 9}{6} \text{ to be cancelled down to } \frac{2 \times 9}{1} = \frac{18}{1} = 18$$

to keep the numbers smaller, then a whole new order of learning has been achieved by some students. Others may take much longer to

achieve that level, and some may never achieve it; but some may also have learned that the "times tables" are useful, and will then learn them, either by rote, or by habit, or even by osmosis (learning by absorption). Learning takes place at different paces for different students, but all will have learned some new skills.

Problem solving as a learning process has the strong advantage that it challenges the learner to use his/her creative powers to devise new ways of approaching a problem. The example used above is very simple, but as more advanced and complex problems are approached, there may be as many solutions to the problem as there are individuals working on it. The method also encourages students to work in groups of two or three to solve by brainstorming or experimentation, to develop language skills as they discuss and explain to others, and to record for future reference what they have discovered, so cross-discipline learning may also take place. Even students who are normally hard-pressed to sit still for a period may become so absorbed in what they are doing that they stop fidgeting and firing spitballs when teacher's back is turned!

A classroom of students of almost any age who have previously been disinclined to settle down to work on a project may suddenly become infected with enthusiasm. This is particularly the case if they can see that they are achieving something with their own effort. Then the teacher becomes a resource person, providing inspiration and guidance by asking further questions to elicit the students' response.

Inevitably not every attempt at a problem-solving class will be successful. Students and teachers alike have their bad days, when energy levels are low, or when some event preoccupies them. And of course if the problem-solving approach is over-used, many of the old difficulties are likely to reappear. There is also no question but that some teachers will be much more successful in their use of any teaching method because there are many highly competent and capable teachers; but unfortunately also just as many on the other side of the bell curve.

Mathematics, too, for a variety of reasons including its complex nature and perceived difficulty, often the result of incompetent teaching, may be approached with a defeatist attitude that spells frustration and even fear for some students from the very outset. It is therefore extremely important that teachers should be keen and enthusiastic about the subject themselves because students, like the canary in the coalmine, will be affected by even the slightest lack of confidence or tentativeness on the teacher's part. Then it will not be long before some wag will proclaim that Mr or Ms Jones "hasn't figured what it's all about, so how can we be expected to understand?"

In the past "higher" Mathematics has been the domain of the eccentric professor or the occasional self-taught genius who found numbers too fascinating to be able to leave them alone. These were people like René Descartes and Isaac Newton and others, largely self-taught geniuses who devoted their lives to the study of some branch of Science or Mathematics. They were frequently men of leisure and social misfits, and their achievements were not usually reached methodically, but with an element of luck. This is no longer the case. The days of *dilettante* experimentation are long past. To succeed today, scientists and mathematicians must be educated, dedicated individuals with a solid grounding in their subject.

It is therefore essential for Canada to educate mathematicians of world calibre to maintain this country on the leading edge of technology. If we fail, we are doomed to remain as "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the powerful technological giants. -SLH

**THE LAW LOCKS UP THE MAN OR WOMAN
WHO STEALS THE GOOSE FROM OFF THE COMMON
BUT LEAVES THE GREATER VILLAIN LOOSE
WHO STEALS THE COMMON FROM THE GOOSE**

PERHAPS there never was a time in history when the wealthy and powerful did not take advantage of the poor and defenceless. Even today, in our modern “democratic” society here in Canada, we often think that we are protected against illegal acts by those who have more power than we do. In our enlightened society where government boasts of its support of [Law and Order](#) we expect those who commit crimes to be held accountable for their wrongdoing on our behalf through the legal system, backed by Big Brother the government. But this is not always so, and perhaps never often enough.

In the 1700s in England most people owned little or no land and had very few rights under law, but many did have the right to work a piece of land for which they paid a small rent. It was a system of agriculture which had its origins in the [Feudal System](#) that developed after the Fall of Rome, from about 700AD. The Feudal [landowner collected a small rent](#) in cash, in kind, or in military service, and he in turn farmed that piece of land for himself. This system of land tenure continued without serious modification until about 1700AD when the hated [Enclosure Acts](#) began to be passed by Parliament, removing the age-old rights of the peasants and allowing the wealthy landowner to farm it on his own account, displacing the peasant who lost his independence and had nowhere to go.

Of course, the peasants objected, trying to hang onto a tradition that for a thousand years had protected their right to farm, but the Law said otherwise, yielding to the demands of the rich and powerful. The system came particularly under fire when pieces of “Common Land” which had been available to anyone rent-free, much like the [community pastures](#) that existed in some parts of Canada until a few years ago, were fenced in and became the exclusive property of the local landowner. Rhymes such as the one at the top of this page came into existence when poor farmers, accustomed to having a pasture for their livestock, lost what had been their livelihood for centuries.

Let us now turn our attention to a glaring example of the way in which a modern government in Canada is showing favouritism to those with great wealth while denying comparable rights to ordinary citizens who do not have “the clout” to make the same claims for themselves. Take a few moments to click on this short article (305 words) from the *Montreal Gazette*, written by Ross Marowitz of the Canadian Press: [Ottawa softens anti-corruption rules for companies seeking government work](#).

[SNC Lavalin](#), a gigantic Canadian multinational corporation—42,000 employees, offices in 50 countries, 8 billion dollars in annual revenues—was implicated in some shady business deals three years ago and is still making amends for its sins. Wisely, the company terminated several of its senior employees who were discovered to have been involved in bribery, money laundering, and other offences, including [two charges of fraud and corruption in Libya](#). It is now seeking to be treated with leniency by the Federal Government because, says Chief Executive Officer Robert G Card, of the negative consequences for his company if the protocols used to award contracts were not changed in light of the company's legal troubles.

The CEO of a company is “the boss”, and makes a huge salary. Mr Card, 72nd in the list of [Canada's Top 100 Highest-Paid CEOs](#), is

head of SNC Lavalin with a total annual salary of \$5,629,590 in 2014. He is not by any means near the top of the list: Canada's highest paid CEO last year was Gerald W Schwartz of Onex Corporation, a private equity investment firm. Last year Mr Schwartz took home a total of \$87,917,026, roughly seventeen times Mr Card's income. Mr Card's income breaks down to \$108,261 per week. If he works 60 hours per week, he receives \$1,804 per hour. If Mr Schwartz works 60 hours a week, he makes \$30,674 per hour. Note: I did not say he earned it!

If these gentlemen receive such high salaries, one must assume it is because their jobs are extremely demanding and highly stressful, requiring constant attention to financial decisions which could make or break the company. Surely, with such high incomes the general public has the right to expect detailed monitoring of the company's finances, ethical conduct, and even its role in the international community. And with those enormous incomes, Canadian society has the right to expect very high standards in all aspects of the company's operations. This in no way excuses the CEO when those standards are not met. The buck stops at his desk.

So in the case of Mr Card of SNC Lavalin, Canadians might expect a record of good conduct from his company, but if that record is besmirched, then we should have an equal right to expect Mr Card to forfeit some at least of his extremely high salary. However in the [Montreal Gazette report](#), there is no indication that Mr Card forfeited anything. It is conceivable that the company as a whole may have endured a reduction in its profit and/or its share value, which would be reflected in the CEO's remuneration. We do not know, because such fluctuations may occur regularly through the normal changes of business profit and loss, or the rise and fall of the stock market.

No change to Mr Card's remuneration was made by the company. Nor was there any demand made by the government. Yet Mr Card has the temerity to ask for leniency through the public purse for what was a premeditated crime committed by his employees.

This situation would never be faced by an “ordinary Joe” who behaved with a similar cavalier attitude when he was guilty of such behaviour. He would almost certainly by now be serving time in prison for his attempts at fraud if, for example, he padded a client's bill, or accepted a bribe. He certainly would get no consideration from the government. It remains to be seen what will happen to Mike Duffy and his colleagues if they are found guilty as charged.

Are we for ever going to continue to see more cases of Joe Q Public jailed or punished for minor break-and-enter to steal a few dollars from a store, while well-heeled, privileged, high-ranking executives in business and government receive a mere rap on the knuckles for much greater plundering and misappropriation of public or company funds? It is not simply a different attitude prevailing towards “white collar crime”: it is an attitude arising from a sense of entitlement and, even more significantly, being a member of an “old boys' network”. The old verse quoted as the title of this article remains as true as ever. Society has changed very little in the four centuries since the Enclosure Acts began. —SLH

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- Quiz
1. Alberta, New Brunswick, Québec
 2. Saskatchewan
 3. Prince Edward Island
 4. British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland & Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario