

S'side R. C. A. F. Station Military Band



The newly organized Summerside R. C. A. F. Station military band is seen above at its first outdoor appearance on the Summerside station recently. Under the competent instruction of Bandmaster Sgt. Bill Conkey (centre foreground), and with the assistance of the chairman of the band committee, Flying Officer Jack Cahan (first, left row) this group of bandsmen has by devoted effort, prepared itself for band service in less than three months. Initial work on the formation of a band on R.C.A.F. Station, Summerside, began in February, 1952, when Flying Officer Jack Cahan was appointed chairman of a band committee. After going through numerous necessary channels, a new set of band instruments was eventually secured, and even more important than the acquired instruments, a very competent bandsman instructor, Sgt. Bill Conkey, was transferred to

the Summerside station in September, 1952, primarily for the job of training the band. The band instruments are chiefly of Boosey-Hawkes make, and are said to constitute the finest set of band instruments on Prince Edward Island. The first organizational meeting of the band was held on November 26, 1952, with about fifty-five interested applicants present. During the first week in January the group who had been organized into a band, sat down to their first organized rehearsal, and by the middle of January had begun to play scale. Since then they have been practicing faithfully. For approximately 75 per cent of the men who comprise the band it was the first time they had had any musical training, had learned to read music, or had actually tried to play an instrument. Several hours daily are spent in

band practice. The commanding officer designated one hour a day away from their regular duties, but over and above that they have added 1/2 hour of their own time at lunch hour, plus anywhere up to four hours a day of their own free time, either practicing by themselves or under the direction of Sgt. Conkey who has willingly come out after duty hours to hold sessions with the band at which he gives individual or group instruction. There are presently 29 men in the band, but this number will eventually be raised to a complement of 35 men. At the present time the band instruments include such sections as saxes, carinets, cornets, trombones, euphoniums, cors tenor (mellophone), snare drums, base drum, and cymbals. In addition to military music the band is also practicing various concert numbers. On R. C. A. F. Station Summerside the band will be used for all commanding officer's parades, ceremonial parades, and for special functions whenever necessary. It is also expected that through the permission of the Commanding Officer the band will represent the R. C. A. F. at special events in various parts of Prince Edward Island. Sgt. Conkey's knowledge of music, which began at the age of five, is quite profound. He is familiar with all the instruments in the band and can instruct on every one of them. A native of Strathroy, Ontario, his wife is a P. E. Island girl, who, before marriage, was Eleanor Dymont, daughter of Mr. and the late Mrs. H. E. Dymont, of Northam. His mother holds a degree of music from a well known conservatory in Belgium. At the age of five his mother started teaching him piano. When he was about ten, he became a member of Junior Military Band, but soon, because of his height, he was inducted into the adult military band. In later years when he joined the Air Force his department on parade led him to be chosen for the position of drum major with the R. C. A. F. Central Band in Ottawa. During the war he was assistant conductor of the St. Mary's Symphony Orchestra in Regina, Saskatchewan, where he was a band master. He was also an assistant band master of No. 2 I. T. S. Bnd. He has been a bandsman in the R. C. A. F. since 1942 except for a period between 1946-47 when he was with the R.C.M.P. band at Ottawa. While he was in Ottawa with the R.C.A.F. Central Band he was also a member of a well known choir. He possesses a very fine tenor voice, and has directed a choir in Regina. There are two P. E. I. airmen in the band. They are LAC. J. W. Gillis, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Gillis, of Melville; and LAC. J. N. Paquet, whose wife is from St. Louis, P. E. I. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. L. Paquet, of Souris, P. E. I. Flying Officer Jack Cahan, chairman of the band committee,

Strange But True

By F. H. MacArthur

You can often learn more from a person's errors, than from his virtues... gossip is like mud thrown against a clean wall. It may not stick but it leaves a dirty stain. Some people think more about their dogs than they do of going to the dogs. Dog owners in increasing numbers are spending millions for the comfort and care of their pets. Dog food in Canada and the United States runs well over a billion pounds every year. The cost of such tidbits runs to \$200,000,000 a year. Drugs and veterinary services eat up another \$12,000,000. Business outside the food, medicine and doctoring services, include such items as coffins, rubber bones, (to chew on) clothing, harnesses, etc. Many dogs nowadays are being buried in pet cemeteries in plots costing as much as \$60 and in caskets costing from \$10 up. Then there are beauty parlors and clubs for Fido's beauty treatment and entertainment. In the clubs the dogs are taught to be "straight as an arrow". And one dog school in Chicago has a course showing masters how to live with dogs.

All this is very interesting, to be sure, but listen to this: Within the past 30 years the dog population in Canada and the U. S. A. has grown over 200 per cent while the human population has shown a 50 per cent increase. Think of it. The proper weight at 25 to 30 is the figure that should be maintained throughout life. Most people, however, gain weight as they grow older. The average increase during or after middle age is about 15 pounds. In 1835, the settlement known as Durango in Mexico, had a scorpion plague. Real manhood begins with Koreans only when they marry, even if the bridegroom is seventy. A bachelor's opinion is not worth a tinker's damn! Because of the belief in Confucianism and spirit worship, the Korean's chief aim in life is to have a large family, especially boys, so that the family tree will not perish and his descendants will worship his spirit. Koreans in mourning for their dead don white, the traditional color in that country. The custom is to mourn for three years which means that relatives of a deceased person must wear white for this period of time.

At the age of 96, Mrs. Ellen Sullivan registered and voted for the first time last November in Lewiston, Maine. In the Kerak region of Palestine may be seen cow barns hanging from trees! These miniature cow barns are small silk and leaf structures, the stables of a kind of hopper, which gives a milk like nectar that ants feed on. The clever ants erect the midget barns to shelter the hoppers, as humans keep milk cows, to furnish food for families. Dr. William Mann first observed the aerial cow barns in 1914. But it was until he investigated their interiors that he discovered what they were made of and what purpose they served. Did you know that the death rate from the white plague (T. B.) has declined more than 80 per cent since 1900 and more than one-third from 1940 to 1950? From the above figures it would seem that the outlook for controlling this disease grows brighter each year.

John Law has the job of enforcing the law in Park County, Colorado, because the law says that John Law is the sheriff. The late Peter Brodie, of York, raised and butchered a porker that weighed 900 pounds and measured 8 feet from snout to tail. The center of Oak Grove, La., boasts an undertaker named Gay, a preacher named Chestam, a deputy sheriff named Crook, and a lawyer named Sting. Farmers in South Africa are scratching their heads over the small drop in egg production since the air force has taken to jet planes. What with those new air borne craft zooming in from London thrice weekly the hens just won't keep on laying as they used to do, or so the farmers claim. Some blame the noise: scientists are not yet prepared to give their answer. On the Island of Tristan, lying between South Africa and South America, are 280-odd men, women and children, apart from a small group of native fishermen, who are related to each other by inter-marriage. Among this little band there are only seven surnames — Glass, Green, Hagan, Lassarollo, Repetto, Rogers and Swain. As you have already guessed they are of English, Dutch, Italian, American and natives of St. Helena. They all speak English, but visitors are hard put to understand their local idioms. The inhabitants of this windswept, volcanic isle, are survivors of ship wrecks who landed on the island some 184 years ago. In 1897, at the request of five bachelors, the skipper of a passing vessel persuaded five women from St. Helena to wed the lonely men on Tristan. So the offspring of these wedded groups make up the present population. Bill Repetto is the leader of this isolated group. His mother, widow of a shipwrecked sailor, was "queen" until her death in 1948.

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