

New website launched!

After a careful review of our readers' preferences, available internet tools, cost improvements, and international trends in the price of wheat and fish, the Board of the Leacock Associates voted in May to invest time and effort in improving and enhancing this website.

By the end of July 2017, we will have completed a transition to a more logical format that highlights important information in a way that may be entirely impossible to follow, while at the same time starting to present more of the rich content from over seventy years of recognising the best of Canadian literary humour and the surprised writers that create it.

To control costs, we are using in-house expertise and writing skills to build and transition to our new format. We also tried consulting the Oracle, at Delphi, but our agent tripped on the way up and came down squawking in Yiddish instead. Of course, we will send another agent, but this one now makes the most delicious chicken soup with *lokshen*. Not bad, for an Anishinaabe.

Any such website change will have some small snags, for example when one of your previous bookmarks or links to a favourite page no longer work as before. *Get over it!*

We hope that the advantages of a much more intuitive and enhanced experience, with slightly deeper detail and simpler content access, eventually become benefits that bring you back to explore some of Canada's best writers in *any* genre, doing their funniest work in novel format, or to grab a great reading list for that long hot summer weekend or candle-lit winter ice storm power outage.

Speaking of summer, we run an annual Gala Weekend each year here in Orillia, Ontario, and you are welcome to join us to celebrate and honour the shortlisted authors, find out who wins the prestigious Leacock Medal, and spend an evening or two with national literary icons and a few local idiots.

But I digress. When the website is live, please do not expect an encyclopaedic reference site – life is too short for that and we are too busy inspiring and recognising the next generation of humorous Canadian writers to build such a thing. We are reminded of our focus by this quote from Stephen Leacock:

*"Many of my friends are under the impression that I write these humorous nothings in idle moments when the wearied brain is unable to perform the serious labours of the economist. My own experience is exactly the other way. The writing of solid, instructive stuff fortified by facts and figures is easy enough. There is no trouble in writing a scientific treatise on the folklore (sic) of Central China, or a statistical enquiry into the declining population of Prince Edward Island. But to write something out of one's own mind, worth reading for its own sake, is an arduous contrivance only to be achieved in fortunate moments, few and far between. **Personally, I would sooner have written Alice in Wonderland than the whole Encyclopaedia Britannica.**"*

Stephen Leacock, 1912 preface, *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town*

Thanks for reading!

Stephen Davids, MA Creative Writing
Board Member and Chair, Publicity