



# RAVEN REPORT

Ides of March 2013

## Forty Years: Then and Now

It's 40 years since the Wombles, a group of small furry recyclers living on Wimbledon Common in southwest London, jumped from books to BBC TV. The Wombles were originally created in 1968 but their TV appearances mirrored and supported the growing interest in ecology in the 70s. With that in mind, how have things changed since Great Uncle Bulgaria first appeared on Britain's screens?

In 1973 the UK had deposits on glass bottles only which were collected at stores for reuse. Rag-and-bone men who used to collect old rags, furniture, metal and the like were almost extinct. Alberta had just introduced Beverage Container Regulations the year before and BC's Recycling Council began operations in 1974. There was no recycling in the Yukon and recycling in Ontario was negligible. About the only recycling that occurred on a large scale was metal recycling. The energy problems of the

decade meant that the lower energy costs of recycling were attractive to producers. They still weren't interested in your tin cans though.

Scoot forward a few years to 2013 and how do things look? Recycling is in full flow in most of Canada and many other countries. The number of commodities that can be recycled has increased dramatically. In particular, social attitudes to recycling have become more positive. Blue box recycling pick-ups have sprouted in many areas and it is common for people to have recyclables picked up or take them to a recycling centre. Things that would have been laughed at back when Orinoco and the rest of the gang first appeared. Recycling matters have definitely improved since 1973. As to the next 40 years...here's hoping for a Zero Waste Yukon.

### DID YOU KNOW?

A resource is defined as a "source of supply, support, or aid, especially one that can be readily drawn upon when needed". Plastics, paper and other materials that end up in landfills are in fact a resource. Many items can be recycled, such as paper, plastics and metals. Organic materials such as unwanted food and yard waste can be composted and used to grow new plants. For a while in the 20th century it was acceptable to throw plastics and the like in the garbage and it was Goodnight Vienna as far as they were concerned. Fortunately views are changing and, appropriately for recycling, are

looping back to where they once were as far as "waste" is concerned. Manure from farm animals has long been used to fertilise soil and the contents of London's cesspits were taken from the city and used for the same purpose on farms for centuries. Compost piles are known to have been around in the Roman Empire. Paper recycling goes back a long way and likely started soon after papermaking began. Milk deliveries in reusable glass bottles have been running in Britain for over a century. Reusing and recycling of resources has a very long history. What may be regarded as waste by someone can be useful to other people. An empty pop bottle might seem useless but with a bit of work it can be turned into something useful either by recycling or reusing. The Earth has finite resources and by recycling and composting we can help to form those resources into an endless loop.



People Behind Raven

Joy Snyder is the grand fromage of Raven. She was the first ever depot worker hired in 1992 and has been here ever since. In her past life Joy has been an bird biology technician with YTG and did interpretive work at Swan Haven and on the Dempster which led to work in the Raven Education department. She also studied at the Alberta College of Art for four years, which accounts for the good taste with which the bottle depot was redecorated.



## RAVEN RECYCLING

Our Commitment is the Environment

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