



## NEWS RELEASE

Attention: Assignment/News/Photo/Book Editors

tel. 1-800-816-6777  
fax/télé. 204-988-9309  
info@historysociety.ca  
www.historysociety.ca

# PIERRE BERTON AWARD GOES TO WILL FERGUSON

-- *Canadian History for Dummies* author honoured for popularizing our past --

**TORONTO – June 27, 2005** – Canada's National History Society today announced Will Ferguson as the winner of the 2005 Pierre Berton award for popularizing Canadian history. Now in its eleventh year, the Berton Award is the biggest history prize in Canada. Ferguson, a Calgary resident, is in Toronto at BookExpo promoting two of his books today. The second edition of *Canadian History For Dummies* was launched yesterday, and at 11:30am today, he will be signing copies of his latest book *Hitching Rides With Buddha*.

"Will Ferguson's full-fledged love for Canada and its history is both unique and infectious," said Deborah Morrison, CEO of Canada's National History Society. "Reviewers have referred to him as 'Pierre Berton with attitude' and 'the future of Canadian nationalism' – a description that captures perfectly his biting commentary and deep affection for all things Canadian."

"I am honoured and thrilled to win this award --especially as it is given in Pierre Berton's name," said Ferguson. "He showed me a Canada that was worthy of passion. He has had an enormous influence on me as a writer and I owe him a debt of gratitude."

### Will Ferguson career highlights:

- Publishing debut, *Why I Hate Canadians*, released in 1997; went on to sell 50,000 copies.
- His follow-up, *How to Be a Canadian*, written with his brother Ian, has sold 125,000 copies and won the CBA Libris Award for Non-Fiction Book of the Year.
- Other Canadian / history titles include:  
*Beauty Tips from Moose Jaw*  
*Bastards and Boneheads* a review of Canada's Prime Ministers
- In 2002, Ferguson was short listed twice for the Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour; once for *Happiness*™ (aka. "Generica") and again for *How to Be a Canadian*. This marked the first time in the history of the Leacock Award that an author has been nominated twice in the same year. *Happiness*™ went on to win the award.

Ferguson will be presented with the 2005 Pierre Berton award medal and \$5000 cash prize later this Fall during the Gala evening at the 4<sup>th</sup> Biennial National History Conference, to be held in Edmonton, October 29. The conference is a central rallying point for Canada's history community attracting historians, teachers, museum curators, archivists, as well as local history volunteers and historical societies.

### **About the Pierre Berton award**

Canada's National History Society established the Pierre Berton award in 1994 for distinguished achievement in popularizing Canadian history. Canadian writer and popular author Pierre Berton was the first recipient. Past recipients have included: Charlotte Gray; CBC (Canada: A People's History); Jacques Lacoursière, Peter C. Newman; and, Jack Granatstein. The Award honours those who, like its namesake, have introduced Canadian characters and events of the past to a much wider public audience.

**About the History Society**

Canada's National History Society is a Winnipeg-based charitable organization devoted to popularizing Canadian history. In addition to publishing *The Beaver* magazine, and the recently launched children's magazine *Kayak: Canada's History Magazine for Kids*, the Society also honours innovative classroom teachers through the Governor General's Awards for Excellence in the Teaching of Canadian History.

-30-

For more information:

Aron Slipacoff  
Hoopla Communications  
416.834.2766  
[aron@hooplacommunications.com](mailto:aron@hooplacommunications.com)

Deborah Morrison, CEO  
Canada's National History Society  
1-800-816-6777 ext. 22  
[dmorrison@historysociety.ca](mailto:dmorrison@historysociety.ca)