



Aunt Sally's Farm at the Assiniboine Park Zoo, c. 1970. WPRD.

been thought of purely as a source of recreation and entertainment. Children, in particular, took great delight in watching the animals. Isolated voices over the years had tried to get the board to think of the zoo in a different way. Zoos could be centres of education and research about animals and their habitats. The great zoos of Europe and the United States were museums of the animal kingdom where species were preserved, their habits observed, documented, and interpreted to the public. In addition to their undeniable role as providers of entertainment, zoos were part of the network of universities, museums and research centres that produced knowledge about the natural

world. This was the vision that Hodgson had for the Winnipeg zoo: to transform it from a motley collection of animals indifferently housed to a modern professional zoo. The transformation did not happen overnight but it did happen.

In 1949, White had gathered together "a number of prominent gentlemen" who were interested in promot-

ing improvements to the zoo.⁸ These men included Professor R. K. Stewart-Hay, Dr. A. Savage and Professor R. Glover of the University of Manitoba. Stewart-Hay was a zoologist and Savage was an animal pathologist. The committee also included Gerald Malaher, provincial director of Game and Fisheries and L.T.S. Norris-Elye, curator of the Manitoba Museum. Among other activities, this committee compiled research on the mammals of Manitoba which included 78 species and 30 sub-species plus 12 varieties of upland game birds. In 1950 the board approved a new comprehensive five year plan for improving the zoo. This emphasized the collection of animals indigenous to Manitoba and

outlined needed changes to the facilities and staff. In 1952, John Wallace, an architect with the St. Louis Zoo, agreed to design a master plan for the enlargement of the zoo. That same year, the board negotiated with the Town of Tuxedo for an additional parcel of land in order to accommodate the zoo expansion.⁹ Staffing at the zoo was examined and a classification scheme put in place. Meanwhile the zoo was capitalizing on a new opportunity for publicity. Lion cubs had been born June 7, 1952 and Winnipeg children were hungry to see them and hear about them. An increased appropriation for the zoo that year allowed the lion house to be enlarged and there were new yards for the hoof stock; a great deal of painting and repair work took place as well. The next year R. Sutton, a part-time curator, was hired to supervise the three zoo-keepers. The lion cubs grew too big for the enclosure and were traded to the Seattle Zoo. Their place in the limelight was taken by two polar bear cubs from York Factory. In 1954 the zoo expansion plans were set back by the defeat of the parks by-law and the fact that the new curator had to leave his position. However, the City Council did provide \$50,000 to buy the land for the western extension.

Hodgson continued to seek advice from other zoos. With help from those in Chicago, Seattle and Milwaukee, Winnipeg architects