



# CLEARING AWAY

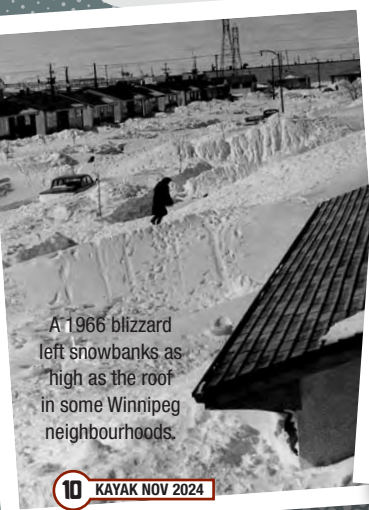
Playing in snow is fun. But when we want to get around on sidewalks, roads or on a train or plane, we need tools to help.



## SHOVELS

Anything with a handle and a part that lifts or shoves makes snow clearing easier. Early shovels were carved from wood. Eventually the blade — the part that touches the snow — was made of metal, then plastic. Around Sudbury, Ont., there was a famous kind of shovel known as the Sno Float made by a company called Rockiron. It had such a big, deep scooping blade that people pulled little kids or their groceries in it.

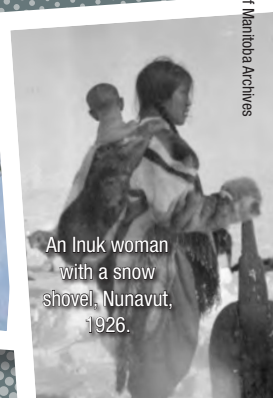
**TRAVEL WAS ACTUALLY EASIER IN WINTER WHEN SLEIGHS COULD JUST GLIDE OVER THE SNOW. CARS MEANT THE SNOW HAD TO BE MOVED.**



A 1966 blizzard left snowbanks as high as the roof in some Winnipeg neighbourhoods.



Some kids earn money shovelling walkways after a snowstorm.



An Inuk woman with a snow shovel, Nunavut, 1926.



A railway snowplow in Ontario, 1925.

## SNOWPLOWS

How do you remove snow from a city street? At first, nobody bothered. Snow was often tossed from sidewalks into the street, where it packed unevenly. A group of men might shovel snow from the road into a horse-pulled sled or pack it down with a horse-drawn roller. But until simple snowplows became more common in the early 1900s, streets in cities with heavy snowfall were a bit of a disaster. (On country roads, the snow was just left to pile up.) Early plows were little more than big angled boards pulled by horses. They were soon followed by metal plows mounted on the front of tractors or trucks. Those evolved into our huge modern snowplows, which are also known as winter service vehicles. Many also spread sand or salt to help vehicles get a grip on newly cleared roads.

**SINCE THE LATE 1800S, TRAINS HAVE CLEARED THEIR OWN WAY IN LIGHTER SNOW WITH HUGE METAL BLADES ATTACHED TO THEIR ENGINES.**



Snowplow drivers often work through the night to try to have roads ready for trucks, cars and school buses in the morning.

## SNOWBLOWERS

If snowplows started out small and grew, snowblowers went the other way. First came various versions of a huge rotary snowplow for trains. They churned up snow and threw it out the side. In 1925, Arthur Sicard, who grew up in rural Quebec, invented something that changed how we deal with snow. He called his truck-mounted device "*la déneigeuse et souffleuse à neige Sicard,*" (the Sicard Snow Remover Snow Blower). Montreal started using it in 1927, just as cars were starting to become more common. Over time people invented versions you could attach to a tractor and smaller ones a person could push to clear a sidewalk or driveway.