



MEDIA RELEASE

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Heritage groups put spotlight on local history across Quebec

SHERBROOKE – *Cantley 1889* has received a grant of \$3,000 from the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN) to help protect an early pioneer burial ground in the Gatineau River valley.

The local history society is one of nine community groups from around the province have partnered with QAHN to preserve and share local historical knowledge, with special emphasis on Quebec's English-speaking history.

"We are really happy to be working with our members on such a range of interesting history projects," said Matthew Farfan, QAHN's executive director, following the announcement of the participating communities.

Cantley 1889 plans to commemorate the Blackburn Cemetery with a plaque and will organize activities to raise awareness of the site among local residents.

Belonging and Identity in English Quebec, a QAHN project funded by the Secretariat for relations with Anglophone Quebecers, will support the development of museum and heritage-learning activities in several Quebec regions over the next six months.

Financial contributions to local history societies and other cultural groups totalling more than \$44,000 will be used to highlight the historic contributions of Quebec Anglophones in the Eastern Townships, Montérégie and Lanaudière regions, as well as on the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands.

Volunteer-run history societies and small museums were hit hard by Covid-related public health restrictions during the summer of 2020, with most reporting disruptions in their seasonal programming and a sharp decline in visitor revenue. The *Belonging and Identity* initiative aims to help heritage groups continue to engage and inform Quebecers about local history and culture during the ongoing pandemic by supporting activities that can lessen the impact of social isolation among community members.

Other projects in the Townships include: a series of online presentations and panel discussions on Missisquoi County history, organized by the Missisquoi Museum; self-guided audio tours of Stanstead and Rock Island, presented by the Colby-Curtis Museum in a mobile phone

application; and a bilingual photo exhibit focused on the early settlement of Orford Township, curated by the Société d'histoire du Canton d'Orford.

Members of the heritage network, which was formed 20 years ago, play a vital role in local historical education and heritage preservation in dozens of Quebec towns and regions. Whether they maintain archives and collections, operate museums and cultural venues, or organize special exhibitions, local heritage institutions strive to bring people from all backgrounds together around a shared interest in the past.

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