

Harper Government Commemorates Thinkers' Lodge as a National Historic Site and Celebrates its Grand Re-opening

Thinkers' Lodge an international icon for the Pugwash Movement and World Peace

Pugwash, Nova Scotia, October 7, 2011 -- On behalf of the Honourable Peter Kent, Canada's Environment Minister and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, Mr. Scott Armstrong, Member of Parliament for Cumberland – Colchester – Musquodoboit Valley, today unveiled a Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque commemorating the national historic significance of Thinkers' Lodge as a National Historic Site.

"The Government of Canada is pleased to recognize the national historic significance of Thinkers' Lodge by contributing to its restoration, and by presenting this plaque today," said Minister Kent. "This global meeting place is an international icon for the Pugwash movement and more broadly for the movement for nuclear disarmament and world peace."

Located in the small village of Pugwash, Nova Scotia, on the Northumberland Strait, the Thinkers' Lodge was refurbished by Cyrus Eaton (1883-1979) during the 1950s, when he began hosting philanthropic "think tanks" there. Certainly the most prominent of these meetings occurred in 1957, at the height of the Cold War, when Thinkers' Lodge was the focal site of the first Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs. This conference brought together top-level scientists from both sides of the Iron Curtain to discuss the threat of nuclear weapons. The informal ambience of the location did much to ease tension among participants, and the conference established the influential Pugwash movement for nuclear disarmament which continues to promote its cause today.

At today's event, Mr. Armstrong also participated in a ribbon cutting, on behalf of the Honourable Bernard Valcourt, Minister of State for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) and La Francophonie, for the grand re-opening of Thinkers' Lodge, following a major restoration.

"Thinkers' Lodge is a place of inspiration and reflection," said Mr. Armstrong. "This reminds us that the goal of world peace is as relevant today as it was to those great thinkers in 1957. It is through recognition and restoration of places like Thinkers' Lodge that the Government of Canada will achieve its goal of a system of national historic people, places and events that is reflective of all aspects of Canadian history and representative of the experiences of all Canadians."

Through the Government of Canada's ACOA and Parks Canada's National

Historic Sites Cost-Sharing Program, along with other partner funding, the Cumberland Regional Economic Development Authority has completed a multi-phase restoration to the Thinkers' Lodge National Historic Site of Canada. It included interior and exterior restoration, repair and enhancement of the grounds. It also involved the development of an interpretive master plan, a marketing strategy and business plan.

Created in 1919, and supported by Parks Canada, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada advises the Government of Canada through the Minister of the Environment regarding the national historic significance of places, persons and events that have marked Canada's history. Parks Canada manages a nation-wide network of national historic sites that make up a rich tapestry of Canada's cultural heritage and which offers visitors the opportunity for real and inspiring discoveries.

For additional information, please see the accompanying backgrounder at www.parksCanada.gc.ca under Media Room.

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