

Spirit Lake Internment Mural Unveiled In Amos, Quebec

Amos, Quebec – The official unveiling of an impressive ten by eighteen foot, hanging, framed, mural depicting the internment at Spirit Lake during World War One, was held on May 29, 2013, at Amos, 600 km North of Montreal. The mural unveiling took place at the opening of the Coop IGA West store in Amos, Abitibi region.

Incorporating regional historic awareness, the General Director of the Coop IGA West, Paul Bourget, chose to erect the internment mural as a permanent tribute to the 1,200 men, women and children mainly Ukrainians, unjustly interned at Spirit Lake 1915-1917 during Canada's National Internment Operations 1914-1920.

Following opening speeches and cutting of the ribbon at the store opening, in his concluding remarks, General Manager Paul Bourget brought attention to the internment mural, the store's display-centerpiece. Elaborating why this subject was chosen to the numerous persons attending, he stated that those that were interned almost eight decades



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– Prudan Thouin

ago “provided the economic motor for the development of the city and region and now, history will be remembered as we recognize the forced labor of these people, clearing land, expanding the territory.” He added, “this store is located in the Western part of the city

of Amos, the same part from which the city's early development first began and later expanded.”

Among the guests at the opening were the Mayor of Amos, Ulbrick Cherubin, representatives from Sobey's head office, Federal and Provincial government officials, members of Coop IGA Board of Directors, the General Director of the “100th Anniversary of Amos Celebration Committee” to be celebrated next year, and members of the Camp Spirit Lake Corporation's Board of Directors, including chairperson James Slobodian.

The internment mural, entirely funded by Coop IGA West of Amos,

was designed and installed by a Montreal company. The enlarged 10 feet by 18 feet photo image is of two archival photos -- one of the men, women and children interned, overlapping the archival photo of a guard holding a rifle near the railway tracks as internees arrive in January 1915 to be interned. The photos are put on canvas and the eye-catching framed mural is viewed from everywhere in the store.

This project was a novel idea and continues to receive such comments as “thought provoking, beautiful mural”. The mural will bring internment awareness to thousands of local, out-of-town visitors and seasonal tourists on a daily basis. Spirit Lake Internment Interpretative Centre, the first such Centre opened in Canada, is located less than twenty minutes away from Amos.

The Spirit Lake photos are from the internment documentary “Freedom Had A Price”, and the collection of unique Spirit Lake photos donated by Yuriy Luhovy to the National Archives of Canada following his early research on the subject. Spirit Lake was the second largest of the 24 internment camps across Canada.

For further information and how to visit Camp Spirit Lake Internment Interpretive Centre please see: www.campspiritlake.ca campspiritlake@cableamos.com or tel. (819) 727 2267.

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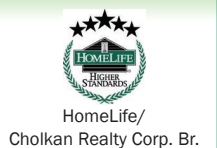
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