

PRESS RELEASE: re Museum opens new family-friendly exhibit about immigration (for immediate release)

The Brockville Museum is thrilled to announce the opening an all-new, family-friendly and interactive exhibit, "Travel Trunk: Unpacking Brockville's Cultural Stories". The exhibit opens to the public on Family Day, Monday, February 18th. The exhibit aims to unpack the role immigration has played in Brockville's development and to share the stories of local newcomers while helping visitors to explore their own family's journey to Brockville.

"The exhibit has been designed to encourage all family members to consider the immigration experience through hands-on activities and what we hope is thoughtful engagement" says Curator/Director, Natalie Wood. "We thought it was only fitting to open the exhibit on Family Day, which also happens to be during Heritage Week" Wood adds.

Planning for the new exhibit started in 2017 with a funding commitment from the Friends of the Brockville Museum and a subsequent grant from the Brockville and Area Community Foundation. That grant was used to hire research consultants from Know History to conduct interviews with recent immigrants to Brockville and carry-out much-needed research into the history of immigration to Brockville. Then, in late 2018, the Brockville Museum hired Letourneau Heritage Consulting to work with museum staff to create an engaging and contemporary exhibit based on that research that would make the topic of immigration accessible, educational, and entertaining to a family audience.

"We've made it about the people and about their stories" says Wood. "It is about their family and about their neighbours".

This is the first time the museum has hired outside consultants to develop an exhibit.

"This was a complicated and important topic and we had ambitious goals of how we wanted to present it. We knew we needed a team to make sure we got it right" explains Wood. "We are grateful to the Friends of the Brockville Museum who believed in our vision and were prepared to fund it".

The museum has also created a special educational program that complements the exhibit and is available to school groups. "Our Home" uses oral histories and primary documents to further explore the stories of immigrants who came to Brockville, from European settlers to Syrian refugees. The program is designed for grades 7 & 8 and can be booked by contacting the Brockville Museum.

The exhibit opens to the public on Monday, February 18th at 10am but there will also be a special "grand opening" ceremony on Saturday, February 23rd at 11am to thank and acknowledge everyone who came together to make this exhibit possible.

Admission to the Brockville Museum is by donation. The museum is open Monday-Friday 10am-5pm, and Monday-Saturday 10am-5pm starting May 18th.

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