



Dr. Colin Carrie MP Oshawa

Dr. Colin Carrie Helps Unveil Plaque Commemorating the Canadian Arctic Expedition 1913-1918 as an Event of National Historic Significance

News Release

For Immediate Release

Vancouver, BC, March 27, 2014 – Today, Dr. Colin Carrie, Member of Parliament for Oshawa and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, on behalf of the Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, spoke at an event commemorating the Canadian Arctic Expedition that left from Esquimalt Harbour over one hundred years ago on June 17, 1913 aboard the Steamship *Karluk*.

“The Canadian Arctic Expedition of 1913 to 1918 has been commemorated as an event of national historic significance because of the profound scientific and social impact it had on Canada,” stated Dr. Carrie.

To honour the contribution made by the crew members, scientific staff and Inuit community, a Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC) plaque was placed overlooking where the voyage began in Esquimalt Harbour at Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse national historic sites. A second plaque will be unveiled at Sachs Harbour, on Banks Island, Northwest Territories, which was named after one of the expedition’s abandoned wooden schooners, the *Mary Sachs*.

Fuelled in part by an interest in strengthening Canada’s Arctic Sovereignty, this expedition was the first major Canadian government scientific expedition to the Arctic. The expedition was divided into two parties, the Northern and the Southern, that brought different focus and expertise to the expedition. Both were greatly aided by knowledgeable local Inuit. The expedition came at a high price with the loss of eleven people in its first year and six more by the end of the expedition in 1918. Despite the hardships and losses experienced by the expedition, both the Northern and Southern parties pressed onwards making commendable contributions to the geographical and scientific knowledge of the Arctic and having a lasting impact on the Inuvialuit and Inuinait who live there. In 1925, the Canadian Government honoured this part of our history by designating it as a national historic event and by erecting a plaque in Ottawa bearing the names of the men who lost their lives on the expedition.

“This commemoration will help ensure that current and future generations of Canadians are able to better understand and appreciate the important role that early northern exploration played in shaping our nation and the important and continued influence that the North has in defining Canadian culture,” stated Dr. Carrie.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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