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Canadian Museum of History acquires William James Roué Collection

Gatineau, Quebec, October 27, 2016 — The Canadian Museum of History is proud to have acquired a significant collection of artifacts owned and created by William James Roué, one of Canada's most renowned naval architects and designer of the iconic schooner *Bluenose*.

Consisting of three-dimensional artifacts and archival material, the collection celebrates Roué's remarkable career and diverse skills. The acquisition contributes to the study of 20th century naval architecture and the history of wooden ship and boat building in Atlantic Canada. The collection has been recently designated by the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board as being of "outstanding significance and national importance."

The artifacts and archival material have remained in Roué's family since his death in 1970 and come to the Museum from his great-granddaughter, Joan Roué.

"The Canadian Museum of History is very pleased to acquire this significant collection," said Mark O'Neill, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Museum. "It is a very important piece of national history, and we are grateful to the Roué family for safeguarding these objects and giving us the opportunity to add them to the National Collection, where they will be shared with Canadians and preserved for future generations."

"We are grateful for the respect shown to William James Roué by those at the Canadian Museum of History throughout this process and are confident it is the right place for the Collection to find its permanent home," said Joan Roué, great-granddaughter of W. J. Roué. "Part of the process for us was to find a place where a design portfolio of this magnitude could be properly conserved and still be available to the public. The Canadian Museum of History is that place. This will help preserve my great-grandfather's legacy as well as that of *Bluenose* on a national level."

William James Roué is most famous for designing *Bluenose*, the schooner that first won the International Fishermen's Trophy in 1921 and continued winning races throughout the 1920s and 1930s, earning a place in the history and popular imagery of Nova Scotia and becoming a symbol of Canada, both at home and abroad.

Roué's skill as an architect extended beyond his *Bluenose* design. He constantly proved his capabilities as a naval architect, staying abreast with developments in the field and displaying talent for a diverse assortment of vessels. His designs ranged from small pleasure craft to larger racing sailboats, including *Little Haligonian* and *Norseman*, as well as the *Bluenose* Class sloops still built and sailed today. He also designed more utilitarian vessels, such as ferries and fishing boats for the Nova Scotia government and, during the Second World War, invented and designed sectional barges for the British Ministry of War Transport.

Three-dimensional artifacts in the collection include Roué's drawing table, half-hull models of vessels he designed and an engraved pocket watch presented to him after *Bluenose's* historic 1921 victory. Archival material consists of plans and drawings for vessels as well as vessel specifications, client communications and more. In addition to the drawings for *Bluenose*, there are approximately 150 other designs by Roué, ranging from his first boat — launched in 1909 — to work undertaken in the late 1950s.

Some of the objects in the collection will be displayed in the **Canadian History Hall**, the Museum's new signature gallery opening on July 1, 2017, which will incorporate the story of *Bluenose* and William James Roué. The Museum will also present a display on William Roué, as well as a virtual exhibition on its website. These events are being planned to help highlight the 100th anniversary of *Bluenose* in 2021.

Located on the shores of the Ottawa River in Gatineau, Quebec, the Canadian Museum of History attracts over 1.2 million visitors each year. The Museum's principal role is to enhance Canadians' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the events, experiences, people and objects that have shaped Canada's history and identity, as well as to enhance Canadians' awareness of world history and culture. Work of the Canadian Museum of History is made possible in part through financial support of the Government of Canada.

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