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New Canadian Museum of History Exhibition Tells Story of Franklin's Final Voyage

Gatineau, Quebec, March 1, 2018 — In May 1845, Sir John Franklin set sail from Britain in command of the most ambitious Northwest Passage expedition ever initiated by the Royal Navy. The Expedition's two ships and 129 men never returned. Now, 173 years later, the Canadian Museum of History invites visitors to explore one of history's most enduring mysteries in the new exhibition, **Death in the Ice – The Mystery of the Franklin Expedition**, presented from March 2 to September 30, 2018.

Through historical artifacts and Inuit oral histories, **Death in the Ice** provides the most comprehensive account to date of Franklin's final voyage, and brings together more than 200 objects among others from the collections of the Canadian Museum of History and the National Maritime Museum in Britain.

For the first time, iconic objects recovered in the decades following the Franklin Expedition are displayed alongside new information and objects other objects brought to light as a result of an ongoing collaboration between Parks Canada and the Government of Nunavut. This partnership contributed to the recent discovery of the Expedition's two ships: HMS *Erebus* in 2014 and HMS *Terror* in 2016. In a world first, the Canadian Museum of History will be displaying a portion of the ship's wheel from HMS *Erebus*, recovered from the wreck.

"We are very pleased to be presenting this compelling story, which has had such a profound impact on our nation's geography, identity and imagination," said Mark O'Neill, President and CEO of the Canadian Museum of History. "We are particularly pleased to highlight the critical role Inuit have played in the Franklin story, from the years immediately following the Expedition's loss to recent discoveries of the ships. Though much of what happened to the Expedition remains a mystery, what we do know is largely thanks to Inuit oral history and underwater archaeology."

The exhibition also includes the famous Victory Point Note, returning to Canada for the first time since its discovery in 1859. This is the only firsthand account of the Expedition's desertion of HMS *Erebus* and *Terror*. In addition, the exhibition highlights an array of Inuit artifacts and interviews, which introduce visitors to the critical role Inuit continue to play in solving the Franklin mystery.

When Franklin and his men set sail from England, much of the Northwest Passage had already been charted, and Britain was optimistic that the Expedition would succeed in mapping the final section. Two years later, the Expedition had not returned. By fanning the nation's fascination with the Arctic and her husband, Lady Jane Franklin sparked what some consider the largest and most costly rescue mission in history. It took more than a decade to establish the main facts — that all of the Expedition's men were dead and its ships lost — although how and why remained unknown.

Death in the Ice – The Mystery of the Franklin Expedition is presented from March 2 to September 30, 2018, and is complemented by a souvenir catalogue published by the Canadian Museum of History. The exhibition was developed by the Canadian Museum of History in partnership with Parks Canada and the National Maritime Museum, and in collaboration with the Government of Nunavut and the Inuit Heritage Trust. It was presented by the National Maritime Museum, in London, England, from July 14, 2017 to January 7, 2018.

The Canadian Museum of History is grateful to The W. Garfield Weston Foundation for their support in the presentation of this exhibition.

“The W. Garfield Weston Foundation was pleased to be a lead partner in the discovery of the HMS *Erebus*. Solving this mystery was the result of a unique collaboration between public and private organizations and it speaks to the importance of our history and the pursuit of knowledge. We are very proud to support this unique exhibition, helping to bring this iconic and enduring story to the Canadian public,” said Geordie Dalglish, Director of The W. Garfield Weston Foundation and Chair of its Northern Committee.

Canadian Museum of History

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.

National Maritime Museum

The National Maritime Museum holds the world's largest maritime collection, housed in the historic buildings that form part of the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site. The National Maritime Museum is part of Royal Museums Greenwich, which also incorporates the Royal Observatory Greenwich, the 17th-century Queen's House and the Cutty Sark. Royal Museums Greenwich works to illustrate, for everyone, the importance of the sea, ships, time and the stars,

and their relationships to people. This unique collection of museums and heritage buildings, which form a key part of the Maritime Greenwich UNESCO World Heritage Site, welcomes more than 2.5 million British and international visitors a year, and is one of the Top 10 most-visited UK attractions (ALVA). Royal Museums Greenwich is also a major centre of education and research.

Parks Canada

Parks Canada manages one of the finest and most extensive systems of protected natural and cultural areas in the world, including 46 national parks, four national marine conservation areas, 171 national historic sites and one national urban park. Parks Canada works to ensure that Canada's historical and natural heritage is presented and protected for the enjoyment, education and appreciation of Canadians and visitors from around the world, today and in the future.

Government of Nunavut

Established in 1999, the Government of Nunavut represents more than 40,000 Nunavummiut living sparsely on a land nearly two million square kilometres in size. Nunavut is Canada's largest territory and the newest member of the Canadian Confederation. Nunavut (Inuktitut for "Our Land") has a rich and complex human history spanning nearly 5,000 years, highlighted by the remarkable ability of Inuit and their predecessors to adapt and to thrive in one of the world's harshest and most challenging environments.

Inuit Heritage Trust

The Inuit Heritage Trust is dedicated to the preservation, enrichment and protection of the Inuit cultural heritage and identity embodied in Nunavut's archaeological sites, ethnographic resources, and traditional place names. Its activities are based on the principle of respect for the traditional knowledge and wisdom of Inuit Elders. The Trust receives its mandate directly from the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

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