



## MACKENZIE KING ESTATE

*A national gem tucked away  
in Gatineau Park*

As the tenth prime minister of Canada, and in office for more than two decades, William Lyon Mackenzie King left an indelible mark on the history of Canada. A person who loved nature, history and architecture, Mackenzie King had his summer home in the Gatineau Hills, where he spent every summer for close to fifty years.

The 231-hectare Mackenzie King Estate is located in the heart of Gatineau Park. Managed by the National Capital Commission (NCC), Gatineau Park is a superb natural environment located just 15 minutes from Parliament Hill. The Park is endowed with hundreds of kilometres of trails, forests containing more than forty species of trees, abundant wildlife and numerous lakes typical of the hills of the Canadian Shield. Summer and winter, outdoor activities take place in the tranquility of this protected natural environment.

To visit this magnificent Estate is to share former prime minister Mackenzie King's love for horticulture, landscaping, and romantic gardens with picturesque ruins. On site, visitors can discover Mackenzie King's two summer havens, Kingswood cottage, located along Kingsmere Lake and Moorside cottage.

Over the years, Mackenzie King Estate has become a first-class historic destination. Residents and visitors to Canada's Capital Region visit the Estate for its peaceful setting, to discover the romantic atmosphere of the Victorian era at this unique Canadian heritage site, and to learn the story behind this complex public figure that marked Canadian history for half a century.

New for 2008, on weekends and holidays from May 10 to September 1<sup>st</sup>, visitors will also be able to interact with characters from William Lyon Mackenzie King's past. Visitors may even be lucky enough to run into Mackenzie King himself while enjoying a stroll around his country estate.

### **HISTORY**

Mackenzie King first came to Kingsmere in the early 1900s. Enchanted by its beauty and peacefulness, he built his first summer cottage, Kingswood. In 1921, King was elected Prime Minister of Canada. In 1928, he moved to a larger summer cottage, Moorside, which he felt was better suited to his lifestyle as prime minister. Moorside became the gem of his Estate, and he spent a great deal of time embellishing its grounds and gardens. In the late 1930s, King renovated and winterized an old house that he called the Farm. Once he retired from his career in politics, Mackenzie King spent the last years of his life in this new home until his death on July 22, 1950.

In his last will and testament, Mackenzie King bequeathed the Estate to Canadians. The Farm now serves as the Official Residence of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

The Federal District Commission (FDC) from 1950 to 1958, and the National Capital Commission (NCC) since 1950, have been responsible for managing, preserving and promoting Mackenzie King Estate. This cultural attraction welcomes ten of thousands of visitors each year.

### **INTERESTING FACTS**

- Mackenzie King began his purchases that would establish Kingsmere Estate in 1903. He bought a small piece of land and built a one-bedroom cottage, calling it Kingswood.
- He subsequently purchased the neighbouring farm, cottages and land. In 1932, the Estate covered an area of 231 hectares.
- The Estate's ruins include stones from the original Canadian Parliament Buildings in Ottawa (which burned in 1916) and from Westminster Palace in England.
- The former prime minister collected seeds and plants from all over the world for use at Moorside and the Farm. He planted seeds of American walnut, cherry trees from Japan and acorns from the Royal Oaks of Windsor in the United Kingdom.
- Like the ruins, the Estate's gardens are landscaped specifically to suit Mackenzie King's tastes. More information on the 10<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of Canada's inspirations, influences and numerous contemplated projects for his Estate are revealed in the book entitled Mackenzie King Estate in the Guide to the Gardens of Quebec series, which is available at the Gatineau Park Visitor Centre.
- In April 1927, Mackenzie King's government forms the Federal District Commission (FDC), predecessors of the National Capital Commission, and extend Canada's Capital Region to both shores of the Ottawa River.
- On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1938, King's government secured the Gatineau Park project by purchasing the first parcels of land.
- On January 3, 1947, Mackenzie King was the first person to obtain Canadian citizenship.
- Mackenzie King holds the record for the greatest number of years as prime minister, nearly 22 years.
- In 1948, King retired as Prime Minister of Canada and spent the last two years of his life at the Farm (Kingsmere), enjoying and renovating his properties.
- In 1950, a few months before his death, King was made an honorary member of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects and Town Planners. The Society recognized him for advancing the profession of Landscape Architecture in Canada, through his vision of the development of the National Capital and in his choice of Jacques Gréber, a French planner skilled in landscape architecture, to draft the master plan for the region. King was also honoured for demonstrating personal skills in landscape architecture as revealed in the development of his country home at Kingsmere.
- The Estate celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in September 2003. In recognition of the centennial celebrations, Canada Post Corporation presented the NCC with a commemorative stamp of Gatineau Park. The stamp, which features a portion of the collection of ruins surrounding the Estate, was selected as part of a series of 10 stamps highlighting various attractions in Canada.
- In April 2004, the NCC and the Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Firm were given a National Merit Award from the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects for the Mackenzie King Estate Cultural Landscape Conservation Management Strategy.
- The Estate is a member of the Quebec Gardens' Association.

### **TO DISCOVER MACKENZIE KING ESTATE IS TO...**

- Visit the restored cottages
- View films on Mackenzie King's life and times
- Stroll through the gardens
- Photograph the collection of ruins
- Enjoy a light meal at the Mackenzie King Tearoom
- Discover King's favourite trail: the Bridal Veil Falls
- Join costumed volunteer guides for a commented visit in the gardens at Moorside on weekends and holidays in the afternoon between Canada Day and Labour Day
- Participate in the various activities organised by the NCC at the Estate

### **2008 PROGRAMMING ACTIVITIES**

- May 10 - Opening of Mackenzie King Estate and Tearoom
- May 11 - Mother's Day activities
- July 1 - Canada Day activities
- July 19 and 20 - The Estate in Bloom
- August 9 and 10 – 1930's Garden Party
- August 30, 31 and September 1 - Labour Day Weekend activities
- October 3 to 19 - Fall Rhapsody in Gatineau Park

Visitors are also invited to enjoy concerts by the gardens on May 10, 11, 18, 19, June 1, 15, 24, 29, July 1, 13, 19, 20, 27, August 4, 9, 10, 24, 30, 31, and September 1, 7 and 21, from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm.

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Summer - From May 10 to September 1, 2008, the Estate will be open:

- weekdays from 11 am to 5 pm, and
- on weekends and legal holidays, from 11 am to 7 pm.

Fall - From September 2 to October 19, 2008, the Estate will be open:

- weekdays from 11 am to 5 pm, and
- on weekends and legal holidays, from 9 am to 6 pm.

Mackenzie King Tearoom is open daily, from 11 am to 5 pm. For more information or reservations, please call 819-827-3405.

### **ADMISSION**

- \$8.00 per vehicle
- \$30.00 per minibus (20 passengers or less)
- \$50.00 per bus
- \$60.00 for a season's pass (access to all Gatineau Park beaches and Leamy Lake beach, and Mackenzie King Estate)

Free access to the Estate's parking lot for school groups participating in guided or non-guided tours.

### **GUIDED TOURS**

- Minimum 20 people, reservations required
- Free of charge for school groups (parking included)
- \$3 per person for all other groups (parking included)
- For group reservations, please call 1 800 461-8020 or 613-239-5100
- Please note that reservations are not required for non-guided tours and that parking fees will apply

### **HOW TO GET TO THE ESTATE**

From the Parliament Buildings, go west on Wellington Street and cross the Portage Bridge. Immediately after the bridge, turn left onto Alexandre-Taché Boulevard and follow it to the Gatineau Park entrance, which will be on your right. Once in the Park, follow the signs to Mackenzie King Estate.

From the Champlain Bridge, heading north towards Gatineau, turn right onto Alexandre-Taché Boulevard and follow it until you reach the Gatineau Park entrance, which will be on your left. Once in the Park, follow the signs to Mackenzie King Estate.

From the Alexandria Bridge, take Boulevard des Allumettières up to the Promenade de la Gatineau exit, then follow the signs to Mackenzie King Estate.

From Highways 5 or 50, take the exit for Hull-Centre-Ville and then Maisonneuve Boulevard. Turn right onto Alexandre-Taché Boulevard and follow it until you reach the Gatineau Park entrance, which will be on your right. Once in the Park, follow the signs to Mackenzie King Estate.

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

For more information on Mackenzie King Estate or activities offered in Gatineau Park, the public may contact the National Capital Commission at **1 800 465-1867, 819-827-2020**, 613-239-5090 (TTY) or 1-866-661-3530 (toll-free TTY), stop by the Gatineau Park Visitors Centre located at 33 Scott Road, in Chelsea, or visit the NCC's website at **[www.canadacapital.gc.ca/gatineau](http://www.canadacapital.gc.ca/gatineau)**.

### **MEDIA INFORMATION**

For photos, story ideas or guided tours of the Estate, media are asked to contact NCC Media Relations:

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