

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Canada's History Society Announces 2026 Recipients of the
John Bragg Award for Atlantic Canada**

Three \$50,000 grants will support projects sharing stories of influential figures in Atlantic Canadian history and society.

WINNIPEG, June 25, 2026 — A doctor turned patron, educator, and builder of cultural development whose commitment shaped the artistic and heritage identity of Madawaska and Acadie. A queer artist and philanthropist whose legacy continues to inspire cultural and community life in Atlantic Canada. A visionary artist and pioneer of occupational therapy who put craftsmanship at the service of well-being, economic autonomy, and the vitality of rural communities in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The lives and legacies of these remarkable Atlantic Canadians will be honoured through the John Bragg Award for Atlantic Canada. The award is a granting program made possible by the River Philip Foundation, dedicated to preserving and promoting the histories of people whose contributions shaped the region.

“The stories that shape our communities are often found in places, people, and legacies that might otherwise fall into obscurity,” said Melony Ward, President and CEO of the Canada’s History Society. “Whether it is highlighting the contributions of important figures or preserving heritage sites that reflect diverse experiences, the John Bragg Award supports initiatives that allow these stories to be preserved, shared, and passed on to future generations.”

“This award supports community initiatives that bring to life significant stories from Atlantic Canada and make them accessible to a new audience,” said John Bragg on behalf of the River Philip Foundation. “By highlighting figures who have shaped art, culture, and social engagement, we hope to inspire current and future generations to also contribute to the well-being and vitality of their communities.”

Each of the recipients’ projects aims to expand knowledge and increase public awareness of key leaders in their communities. The 2025 recipients are:

- **Société historique du Madawaska**, Edmundston, New-Brunswick — *Dr Paul-Carmel Laporte, « un artiste dans l’âme, »* museum exhibition and series of lectures
- **La Société Vieille Maison Association**, Meteghan, Nova Scotia, — *La Vieille Maison — Saving Built Heritage, Saving Stories*, preservation of a heritage site
- **Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (Heritage NL)**, St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador — *Jessie Luther — Craft and Community Advocate*, research and writing of a biography to be published online

Each organization will receive \$50,000 to implement its initiative.

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About the John Bragg Award

The John Bragg Award was launched in 2022/2023 to support projects that conserve and promote the history of individuals who have had a significant impact on communities in Atlantic Canada. The award is administered by Canada's National History Society, with the support of the River Philip Foundation. CanadasHistory.ca/BraggAward

About Canada's National History Society

Canada's History Society is a national charitable organization that seeks to encourage Canadians to engage more deeply with their country's past. It shares the stories behind the history through its magazines, *Canada's History* and *Kayak: Canada's History Magazine for Kids*, digitally at CanadasHistory.ca, as well as through education and award programs, including the Governor General's History Awards. Canada's History Society believes all Canadians should see themselves reflected in its publications and programs.
CanadasHistory.ca

About the River Philip Foundation

Named for the waterway in Nova Scotia's Oxford County, the River Philip Foundation focuses on grants and funding for initiatives addressing poverty, supporting at-risk youth, education programs, community infrastructure projects, and enriching Canadian culture through performing and visual arts. Additionally, the foundation is committed to funding transformative medical research at Canadian universities and medical schools. RiverPhilipFoundation.ca

BACKGROUND

John Bragg Award for Atlantic Canada Recipients 2025

Société historique du Madawaska, Edmundston, New-Brunswick

Dr Paul-Carmel Laporte, « un artiste dans l'âme »

The project highlights the life and legacy of Paul-Carmel Laporte (1885–1973), a physician, cultural promoter, and philanthropist from northwestern New Brunswick. Founder of the Madawaska School of Art, the Madawaska Historical Museum, and the Canadian Federation of Wood Carvers, Laporte trained several leaders of Acadian art and contributed to the region's architectural and cultural heritage. The initiative includes a museum exhibition, a publication in the *Revue de la Société historique du Madawaska*, a series of lectures, a travelling tour throughout Madawaska, and Laporte's nomination to the Edmundston Arts Hall of Fame. Support from the John Bragg Award will allow the organisation to hire students for research, writing, and exhibition panel design, as well as cover material and printing costs.

La Société Vieille Maison Association, Meteghan, Nova Scotia

La Vieille Maison — Saving Built Heritage, Saving Stories

La Vieille Maison — Saving Built Heritage, Saving Stories aims to complete the preservation of La Vieille Maison, a nationally significant Acadian heritage site located in Meteghan, Nova Scotia, and to remove barriers to public access. This house, a symbol of Acadian resilience following the expulsion, is closely linked to Adolphe Robicheau, a queer artist and philanthropist who left a mark on the cultural life of Atlantic Canada. The project proposes three main activities: the restoration of the main entrance and its historic windows, as well as the construction of an accessible washroom building which will allow the site to meet accessibility standards and welcome visitors, educational programs, and community gatherings. These interventions will strengthen the building's infrastructure, ensure safety, and preserve the authenticity of the site. By supporting this work, the project can allow La Vieille Maison to continue sharing the story of Adolphe Robicheau and Acadian heritage with a wider audience while reinforcing its role as a place of culture, learning, and community inspiration.

Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (Heritage NL), St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

Jessie Luther — Craft and Community Advocate

The Jessie Luther Project highlights the life and legacy of Jessie Luther (1860–1952), an artist and pioneer of occupational therapy who contributed to the social and economic development of rural communities in Newfoundland and Labrador through Grenfell Industries. Trained at the Rhode Island School of Design and influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement, Luther created industrial workshops for women and hospital patients, encouraging the production of handcrafted rugs and traditional objects while supporting community well-being. The Heritage NL project includes three components: research and writing for a detailed biography to be published online, the submission of a nomination for provincial commemoration, and the delivery of accessible community workshops inspired by Luther's craft techniques. This initiative preserves the history of a pioneering woman — often overshadowed by Wilfred Grenfell — while transmitting her artistic, social, and educational legacy to new generations.