

*Our monthly e-Bulletin provides quick updates on activities of THEN/HiER and its partners.*

## What's new with THEN/HiER?



\* **Heather McGregor, THEN/HiER member**, and doctoral student in the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy and the Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness at UBC, was awarded the Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies *Northern Resident Scholarship*, to help fund her research on education in Nunavut. Congratulations, Heather!

\* **Stéphane Lévesque, THEN/HiER Executive Board member**, organized a research trip on history education for Professors Martin Stolare and Johan Samuelsson from Karlstad University in Sweden. The two professors visited Canada from April 8 to 14 and gave lectures at the University of Ottawa on the "History Wars in Sweden" and the new national examination in history for Grade Six Swedish students. They also took the opportunity to give lectures at the Université de Montréal, organized by **THEN/HiER member Marc-André Éthier**, and at the Université Laval, organized by **Jocelyn Létourneau, THEN/HiER Executive Board member**.

## Funding Programs

The Inverness Miners' Museum and the Inverness Historical Society, located in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, have been awarded a Small Projects Grant for *The Inverness Interactive Archives Project* to develop an online searchable database which will contain historical documents, photos, and artifacts from the museum's collection. The project includes the development of lesson plans for secondary history classes.

Ten participants at the upcoming Historical Thinking Project Summer Institutes have been awarded THEN/HiER bursaries of up to \$750 each for airfare to attend one of the institutes taking place in Halifax from July 8 to 13 and in Toronto from July 15 to 20, 2013.

## Website Update

We have recently added a new section to our website called Controversies, where items related to issues in history education in Canada and globally will be posted, and members can comment on them. We have initiated the page with links to published articles about the House of Commons Canadian Heritage Committee's announcement that it would conduct a review of how Canadian history is taught in schools and post-secondary institutions. Be sure to have a look at *The Canadian Heritage Committee Kerfuffle: A History Educator's Take* by doctoral candidate and Kelowna curriculum consultant Lindsay Gibson. We also invite you to get involved by posting your comments!

## Approaching the Past (ATP)



Casa Loma

The most recent Toronto-area ATP event, Toronto: Multiple Voices, Multiple Lives, took place at the City of Toronto Archives, Spadina House, and Casa Loma on May 1. Archives staff demonstrated their Ward-based programming that focuses on how the area known as The Ward was represented visually over time. At Spadina House, participants role-played particular interest groups to ask the wealthy Austin family for financial support. They also learned the story of the rise and fall of Sir Henry Pellat, Toronto entrepreneur and owner of Casa Loma. On May 30, the Vancouver-area ATP event, A Walking Tour of Stanley Park, was led by Jolene Cumming of the Stanley Park History Group. Participants viewed some historical sites within the park, which at one time was inhabited by First Nations and later by European newcomers. Ms. Cumming showed historical photographs of many of the sites.



Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, Halifax.

## What's new with our partners?

\* **The Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN)** has recently launched a new exhibition on its Virtual Museum website. Heritage Passages: Bytown and the Rideau Canal focuses on the longest and oldest human-made waterway in North America and the development of the Bytown Locks in the 1800s. The exhibition was developed in partnership with the Heritage Conservation Research Collection of the Archives and Research Collections (ARC) at Carleton University and Ottawa's Bytown Museum.



\* **The Museums Association of Saskatchewan (MAS)** is pleased to announce that their course Museums and Education will be offered online as of June 3, 2013. The course includes planning and designing audience-appropriate education and public programs, facilitating object-centred learning, incorporating current issues in programming, and developing education and public programming policy.

\* **The British Columbia Social Studies Teachers' Association (BCSSTA)** has opened registration for its conference Making Sense of Changing Worlds, which will be held October 25, 2013 at Vancouver Technical Secondary School. The keynote speakers will be Joel Bakan (UBC) and John Myers (OISE/UT).



## Graduate Student Committees

Spring has sprung! The Anglophone Graduate Student Committee's May blogs on *Teaching the Past* include Katherine Ireland on using technology in the classroom, Madeline Knickerbocker on the theme of history education and social justice, and a featured member article by Cynthia Wallace-Casey on her doctoral research. There will also be blogs posted in June by students reflecting on their experience at the Agricultural History Society Annual Conference 2013 in Banff which will take place June 13 to 15. Please check out the posts for our blog contest and submit your comments! The committee is also pleased to welcome Eric Poitras, doctoral student at McGill University, as a member. His research focuses on the design, development, and implementation of technology-rich learning environments on computer- and mobile-based platforms. We are also working on our 2013 Annual Regional Conference on teaching history in museums which will take place in Vancouver this fall. May's *Object of the Month* on Facebook, the wall at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in Toronto, included some great lesson plan ideas. Thanks to Toronto teacher Katy Whitfield! Contact Kate Zankowicz.



Kate Zankowicz

The Francophone Graduate Student Committee welcomed a new committee member in May - Geneviève Goulet, a Master's student at the Université du Québec en Outaouais and secondary teacher. We are also happy to report that a special issue of *Enjeux de l'univers social*, a publication of the Association québécoise pour l'enseignement en univers social (AQEUS), a THEN/HiER partner, will be devoted to our Annual Regional Conference *History and Emotion* which took place on October 25, 2012. Each presenter will write an article on historical empathy based on their presentation for the special issue which has a tentative publication date of fall 2014. The blog contest has begun and you are invited to comment on the numerous articles that will without a doubt be very interesting. I also suggest you read the second article on our blog *Enseigner l'histoire* by Marc-André Lauzon on a thematic approach to teaching history. In addition, two future elementary teachers, Jessica Forget and Cynthia Dupuis, have written reflections on the *Parlons histoire (Let's Talk History)* event that took place on March 13, 2013 at the Université de Montréal. Happy reading! Contact Marie-Hélène Brunet.



Marie-Hélène Brunet

## Research Snapshots

This section of our monthly e-Bulletin highlights our members' research projects.

**Jocelyn Létourneau, Professor**  
**Department of History**  
**Université Laval**



### Capturing the Historical Consciousness of Young People

I can't boast that I've had many good ideas in my life. I can only think of five: my four children (ideas shared and achieved with my wife!) and then another (let's hope it's not the last!), that arrived late, but which I've been excited about since I managed to solidify it in the form of a research project.

I have always been fascinated by young people – by their intelligence, curiosity, and thirst for knowledge. I have always been disconcerted by those who claim, to the contrary, that young people don't know much. The fact is that young people know a lot of things, but we don't always know the best way to elicit what they know. For example, can we conclude that, since 95% of young people in Québec don't know who the first premier of the province was, that their knowledge is deficient? We can't, but we do anyway!

In order to counter such a simplistic methodology and interpretation, I told myself that, to get at the wealth of knowledge that young people in Québec have about their province's history in a less superficial fashion, and to directly access their historical memory of Québec, it would be interesting to ask them a broader question, which was in this case: "Tell me the history of Québec as you know it, from the beginning."

#### "TELL ME THE HISTORY OF QUÉBEC"

Explain, recount or otherwise present the history of Québec, from the beginning, as you perceive it, understand it or remember it.

You can answer any way you wish. You can structure your answer as you deem fit. You have only to describe the elements of the Québec past that YOU consider to be important, regardless of the manner you choose to present, recount or describe Québec history.

In 1534, Jacques Cartier made the very 1<sup>st</sup> voyage to discover a new route to the orient, and instead discovered Canada, and mapped the St. Lawrence River.

Over the past ten years, with the support of many teachers and professors, I gathered close to five thousand short historical accounts from young people aged from about 15 to 25 years old, from all over the province. The corpus is as massive as it is rich, consisting of texts written by young francophones, anglophones, allophones and aboriginals.

Needless to say, the accounts – all anonymous – can be analyzed by the age of the respondents or their academic level (secondary, college, university), gender, place of residence (Montréal, Québec City, other regions), language of instruction, culture of origin, etc. The accounts can

also be dissected according to their constituent elements (individuals cited, events mentioned, contexts developed) and their dynamic structure (principles of construction and progression of the narrative).

An analysis of the corpus allows us to grasp the level of knowledge that young people have of their past better than traditional surveys would. It especially allows us to capture the historical memory that secondary, CEGEP, and university students have of the Québécois experience over time. We believe that in the 45 minutes they were allocated to produce their account, the young people mobilized the *crucial aspects* of their knowledge of Québec history. Whether they wrote three paragraphs or three pages, they sculpted a timeline articulating their representation of the province's past. In fact, it is not simply young people's historical memory that the accounts reveal, but also their historical consciousness, their intellectualization of the ensemble of historical information relevant to Québec that they have learned, assimilated, comprehended and appropriated, in class or elsewhere, since they were young children.

This innovative approach to research has generated interest among other researchers who have borrowed it and adapted it to meet the specific requirements of their own research projects. French, Catalan, Swiss and German colleagues are currently amassing student accounts in order to better understand how history contributes to a common understanding of the constitution of a national memory. A similar research strategy may soon be launched in English Canada.

What should we expect from these types of projects? Working from the corpus of young people's accounts, the project will allow significant progress in the study of the following: the historical memory of young people, social contexts of learning, current cultural narratives in Québec society and their assimilation, the influence of history courses in the development of students' collective historical consciousness, the construction of historical representations, and social frameworks of collective memory in Québec – and, by implication, in Canada. The project will have an impact on history education (how to teach history, what content to deliver, which competencies to transmit). It will allow us to better understand how human beings, at the pivotal moment of passing from adolescence to adulthood, anchor their unique identities to collective visions circulating within the public sphere. It will enrich the discussion of the place of history in the present and future of society.

**\* MORE TO COME NEXT MONTH!**