



News Release ***Communiqué***

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Government of Canada Commemorates the National Historic Significance of the Doukhobor Dugout House

Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan, July 5, 2013 – On behalf of the Honourable Peter Kent, Canada's Environment Minister and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, Mr. Maurice Vellacott, Member of Parliament for Saskatoon-Wanuskewin, today unveiled a Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque recognizing the Doukhobor Dugout House at Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan as a National Historic Site of Canada.

"The Government of Canada is proud to welcome the Doukhobor Dugout House to our family of national historic sites," Mr. Vellacott said. "This site celebrates the rich ethnocultural heritage of this great country and is a testament to the ingenuity and tenacity of early settlers as they adapted to their prairie surroundings."

Constructed in 1899, the house is a rare surviving example of a practical and temporary form of shelter constructed not only by Doukhobors, but also by many settlers of various ethnic backgrounds upon their arrival on the Canadian prairies. These initial and expedient dwellings were typically replaced as quickly as possible by more permanent ones, as required under the conditions of the homestead policy in the *Dominion Lands Act*.

The commemorative plaque will be on permanent display at the Doukhobor Dugout House near Blaine Lake.

"National historic sites help Canadians connect with their roots and the experience of the Doukhobors in Canada is one of the many chapters in our nation's long and rich history," said Minister Kent. "These special places offer an opportunity for real and inspiring discovery, and are a great way to learn how our nation was built."

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada was established in 1919 and is supported by Parks Canada. It advises the Minister of the Environment on the national significance of places, people and events that have marked Canada's history. On behalf of the people of Canada, Parks Canada manages a nationwide network that makes up a rich tapestry of Canada's historical heritage and offers the public opportunities for real and inspiring discoveries.

For additional information, please see the accompanying backgrounder at www.parkscanada.gc.ca under **Media Room**.

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