



Dry Stone Canada
Dry Stone Walling Association of Canada
Association des Murs en pierres sèches du Canada

Media Release
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AMHERST ISLAND, ONTARIO — Dry stone wall builders from Canada, the United States, and Ireland will resurrect a century-old stone wall on Amherst Island as part of this year's Dry Stone Canada International Symposium from September 23 to 25.

Dry Stone Canada is excited to welcome its members and international colleagues once again to Amherst Island.

Dry Stone Canada continues to return to Amherst Island year after year for wall building projects, thanks to the island's many century-old dry-stone walls, built by Irish immigrants.

"It's a charming and welcoming place," Bill Jeffers, Dry Stone Canada's treasurer, said. "It's a unique place to go, away from the rest of the world. Arriving in Stella is almost like going back in time. There are many places on the island for us to do wall restoration or to even create a new build."

The island has hosted three previous Dry Stone Canada festivals in 2015, 2018, and 2019. The momentum is growing once again with public interest and professional engagement. This year's event was organized amidst the uncertainties that the pandemic has presented to event planners.

"As a group we haven't been together for two plus years," Jeffers said. "We couldn't really plan a festival this year, not knowing what COVID would do. We're happy to have the public come by to watch wallers work, it's not a full itinerary like previous events, rather it is a smaller restoration project."

Forty to 60 members of Dry Stone Canada are anticipated to attend the three-day event, which will see the restoration of a heritage dry stone wall at the historic McMullen Farm, which was established on the island in 1842.

Loyalist Township recognized the McMullen wall as having cultural heritage significance and protected it with a by-law designation in 2014. The restoration project will be capped with a permanent plaque acknowledging the Dry Stone Canada event and its role in preserving this piece of local history.

The event will offer hands-on dry stone walling experience to members of the public who are interested, a waller will guide visitors through a brief process of building.

2022 also marks the first year for the **Waldemar Wower Bursary**, a joint collaboration between Dry Stone Canada and the Dry Stone Walling Association of Ireland. One recipient from Canada and one from Ireland were selected for the bursary and will each spend two weeks in the other's country learning dry stone walling skills from some of their best wallers, as well as participate in the symposium on Amherst Island and the Feile na gCloch Dry Stone Festival on Inis Oirr, County Galway, Ireland. For the two recipients this is an exciting opportunity to improve dry stone walling skills by learning from some of the best dry stone wallers in our respective countries.

About Dry Stone Canada

Dry Stone Canada is an award-winning national not-for-profit association established to promote, celebrate, and educate people about the art and craft of dry stone construction. The organization's projects and events leave lasting permanent structures that enhance cultural heritage eco-tourism and positively impacts a region's economic development.

For more information, visit www.drystonecanada.com.