

COMPANY TO FUND DIGITIZATION OF KEY NATIONAL HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

Ottawa Citizen - January 18, 2005

OTTAWA, WINNIPEG and TORONTO — Public History Inc. (PH) today announced that it will fund a major initiative to help improve access to key historical documents at Library and Archives Canada (LAC). Last month, Public History Inc. agreed to donate \$20,000 toward funding the digitization of the archival Red and Black Series files from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. The donation will also help ensure the files are readily accessible through ArchiviaNet, LAC's online research and consultation tool. "Library and Archives Canada is immensely pleased with this significant corporate donation to an important initiative," said Ian E. Wilson, Librarian and Archivist of Canada. "The Red and Black files have been heavily used for years by historians, genealogists and legal researchers in the Ottawa area. Public History's generous financial support will now enable researchers throughout Canada and around the world to enjoy similar access to these valuable records." The Red and Black Series files cover almost all aspects of the government administration of Aboriginal affairs in Canada between 1872 and 1964 with most of the material covering the period 1872 to 1923. In total the files consist of nearly 400 microfilm reels and more than 350,000 images, of which 100,000 will be digitized. Only records that are deemed open under the Privacy Act will be scanned and linked to ArchiviaNet — a process LAC expects will take approximately six to eight months.

As one of the largest single LAC users, the firm's researchers spend more than 30,000 hours each year working with LAC resources. "The digitization and web access will certainly make our job easier," admits company president Fred Hosking. "However, the initiative is doubly important for people in First Nation communities who will now benefit from convenient point-and-click access to a wealth of historical material."

This contribution is not Public History's first to Library and Archives Canada. As part of its ongoing community contributions in 2002, the company purchased automated card readers for two of the institution's microfilm reader-printer machines.

Public History Inc. is North America's largest historical-research company. A multi-disciplinary firm with 70 employees based in Ottawa and Winnipeg, Public History Inc. specializes in Aboriginal land-claims, litigation research, document analysis and report writing. The company serves a range of private and public sector clients throughout Canada.

Library and Archives Canada is an innovative knowledge institution whose objective is to provide all Canadians with easy, one-stop access to the documentary heritage that reflects Canada's cultural, social and political development.