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The National Battlefields
Commission

Commission des champs
de bataille nationaux

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

250th Anniversary of the Battles of Québec **The tree that cured scurvy** **is the subject of a new book**

Québec, September 22, 2009 – For the 250th anniversary of the battle of the Plains of Abraham and the battle of Sainte-Foy, the National Battlefields Commission was eager to remind us of the significant participation of the Amerindian Nations to the Seven Years' War in America. Launched today at the Discovery Pavilion of the Plains of Abraham, the new book ***L'Annedda, l'arbre de vie*** broadens our knowledge of the First Nations' contribution to our history, and is meant as a tribute to the annedda, the tree of life that helped cure Jacques Cartier's crew of scurvy in 1536.

For historian Jacques Mathieu, giving back to the tree its name “annedda”, reconstructing its identity and recalling its properties means to recognize the contribution of North America's First Nations to our civilization. “A living, highly symbolic monument that emphasizes the age-old alliances between peoples,” says the historian, who also sits on the board of directors of the National Battlefields Commission.

In the sixteenth century, botanical science revealed the existence of a new tree of life originating from Canada and the Amerindians. The infatuation with this tree of life was such that it spread at dazzling speed and rapidly found itself in all Western European countries. However, the reasons behind its name and the species' identity were quickly lost, although some specimens were offered to King François 1^{er} of France and transplanted in his gardens at Fontainebleau.

The history of this tree gave rise to a wide range of research and answers intended to resolve an enigma that was almost 500 years old. Mr. Mathieu invites the reader to follow him through this historic investigation of the mystery surrounding the annedda's identity.

A retired Université Laval professor, Jacques Mathieu specializes in the history of New France and collective memories. He has conducted research work in collaboration with scientists from various fields. His published works include: *Entre poudrés et pouilleux* (2008), *Le jeu des apparences à Paris au XVII^e siècle* (2008), *The Plains of Abraham, The Search for the Ideal* (1993, in collaboration with Eugen Kedl), the work *L'Occupation des terres dans la vallée du Saint-Laurent* (1991, with Alain Laberge), and *Le premier livre de plantes du Canada* (1990).

The book **L'Annedda, l'arbre de vie** sells for \$15.75 and is available in French only at the Discovery Pavilion of the Plains of Abraham, 835, Wilfrid-Laurier Avenue, level 0, Québec (418 649-6157).

- 30 -

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