

## MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

### ***Canadian War Museum explores experiences of enemy aliens during the First World War***

Ottawa, Ontario, October 2, 2014 -- During the First World War, national security fears and wartime prejudice drove the policy of internment, which lasted until 1920. During this time, Canada interned 8,579 men identified as “enemy aliens,” mainly Ukrainian and German immigrants, across a network of 24 camps. The latest special exhibition from the Canadian War Museum, **Enemy Aliens – Internment in Canada, 1914–1920**, explores the internment operations and the experiences of the internees: who they were, the conditions they endured and the legacy they left behind.

“The history of internment during the First World War in Canada is unfortunately not well known,” said James Whitham, Director General of the Canadian War Museum. “I hope this exhibition will broaden the public’s understanding of how the war tore apart the lives of the internees and their families, and changed Canadian society at large.

This exhibition features 33 photos from the Canadian War Museum, Library and Archives Canada, and many university, archival and private collections throughout the country. It traces the history of First World War internment from the pre-war immigration boom -- when the Canadian government actively recruited European immigrants -- to the declaration of war and the enactment of the War Measures Act, which allowed the government to register and intern many of those same immigrants. The exhibition explains the division of internees into “First” and “Second” class, and depicts the often rough conditions in the camps. Finally, it describes efforts to revive and preserve the history of First World War internment camps in Canada.

**Enemy Aliens – Internment in Canada, 1914–1920** has been developed in partnership with the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Foundation. The exhibition runs from October 2, 2014 to March 29, 2015 in the Museum’s north corridor.

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*The Canadian War Museum is Canada’s national museum of military history. Its mission is to promote public understanding of Canada’s military history in its personal, national and international dimensions.*

**Media contacts:**

**Yasmine Mingay**  
**Director, Public Affairs**  
**Canadian War Museum**  
**Telephone: 819-776-8608**  
**yasmine.mingay@warmuseum.ca**

**Avra Gibbs Lamey**  
**Senior Communications and Media**  
**Relations Officer , Canadian War Museum**  
**Telephone: 819-776-8607**  
**avra.gibbs-lamey@warmuseum.ca**

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