New Heritage Minutes boosted by old favourites

by Andrea Bellemare  Posted: October 18, 2012 10:42 AM | Last Updated: October 18, 2012 10:57 AM

Categories: Canada, Community

They're short snippets of Canadian history, films just a minute long that bring history to life. And for many Canadians, the Heritage Minutes are instantly recognizable, from Laura Secord's run through the forest to Dr. Wilder Penfield's hunt for the causes of epilepsy ("I can smell burnt toast!").

Now, The Historica-Dominion Institute has released the first two new Minutes in seven years. Above is the story of Richard Pierpoint, "a formerly enslaved Black Loyalist who, at age 68, enlisted black men to fight in the War of 1812."
other new Minute is "the story of John Norton and Grand River Warriors at Queenston Heights."

For a quick refresher on the Heritage Minutes, as well as interview with an actor from one of the most well-known films, watch Duncan McCue’s piece for CBC's The National below:

Heritage Minutes

21 days ago

To coincide with the new stories, The Historica-Dominion Institute commissioned a poll by Ipsos Reid on the Minutes. The firm contacted 3,900 Canadians to find the most popular Minutes, the least popular, and what Canadians think about the Minutes.

The most popular Minutes of all time are, in order:

1. Jackie Robinson

Jackie Robinson became the first African American to play for a Major League Baseball team when he started with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. But he actually made his baseball debut in Canada in 1946 when he joined the Montreal Royals (the team was the minor league affiliate of the Dodgers), which the Institute describes as his "first big test in the world of 'white' sports." Robinson helped propel the Royals to win the Little World Series that year.

Bowman

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Baumgardner's supersonic jump reverberates
2. Halifax Explosion (tied with Jackie Robinson for most popular)

The Belgian ship Imo collided with the French steamship Mont Blanc in the Halifax Harbour, causing the worst man-made explosion ever (until the atomic bomb exploded in Hiroshima) on Dec. 6, 1917, killing 2,000 people. In this Minute, train dispatcher William Coleman sacrifices his life to telegraph a train with 700 people aboard heading for Halifax's harbour. Coleman's telegraph reaches the train in time, and it stops before reaching the city.

3. Jennie Trout

Jennie Trout, along with Emily Stowe, broke barriers for women wanting to enter medicine. In this Minute, Trout faces down a room of belligerent medical school students and a lecturer. Trout became the first woman in Canada licensed to practice medicine in 1875. (Stowe was practicing medicine in Toronto before Trout, but was not licensed.)
4. Winnie
Not just any old bear, but Winnie-the-Pooh Bear. Captain Harry Colebourn brought his pet bear, 'Winnie', to London in 1915. The Canadian captain named the bear after his hometown, and unable to take her to war, he donated 'Winnie' to the London zoo. A certain A.A. Milne visited the zoo with his son Christopher Robin, who asked to take the bear home with them. Instead, Milne wrote stories for his son, launching Winnie-the-Pooh to worldwide fame.

5. Laura Secord
Laura Secord's trek to find Lieutenant FitzGibbon during the War of 1812 is the subject of this Minute. In June of 1813, Secord and her husband were forced to provide dinner to some American officers. They overheard the soldiers plotting to defeat British and Canadian troops. So Secord took a 19-mile trek through forest and bog to find FitzGibbon and warn him. Her efforts helped FitzGibbon defeat the Americans a few days later in the Battle of Beaver Dams.
The least popular minute features painter Paul-Émile Borduas.

A Part of Our Heritage - Paul Émile Borduas

The Minutes got some buzz on Twitter:

“GUESS what I’m going to do this weekend! New Heritage minutes came out!”
@karalynnbear

How am I procrastinating? I found all of the Heritage Moments online, and there’s like a MILLION of them! historicadominion.ca/conte...

Heritage Minutes are back! Are you smelling what I’m smelling? Get yer toasters ready!
gotaminute.ca/
I have a headache and I don’t seem to be able to watch the new Heritage Minutes on my iPod. WOE IS ME.

mad as a fish 17 days ago

A flood of nostalgia and pride washed over me when I read that Canadian Heritage Minutes are coming back #BurntToast

Ziggy Garzon 17 days ago

Fellow Canadians: today I attended the premier screening of the new Heritage Minutes and scored an Isaac Brock shirt for my trouble.

Elizabeth 17 days ago

On the way out, they gave everyone a copy of the DVD with ALL 64 previous Heritage Minutes on them. I KNOW YOU ARE JEALOUS.

Elizabeth 17 days ago

When asked what they would most like to see as the subject of future Minutes, Canadians said the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (82 per cent), Terry Fox (80 per cent) and the creation of Nunavut (79 per cent). Wayne Gretzky was the most popular Canadian celebrity (44 per cent).

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<td><strong>truth2000</strong></td>
<td>I don't know anyone that doesn't love the Heritage Minutes, and I don't want to.</td>
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<td><strong>Her_2_Cents</strong></td>
<td>Thanks to a Heritage Minute, I'll always remember that James Naismith (a Canadian) invented basketball :)</td>
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<td><strong>Romter</strong></td>
<td>They are great, we should be proud of who we are and where we came from. I may be first generation but I am still a Canadian and happy to learn and know Canada's collective history.</td>
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I liked the Laura Secord one. An American Captain named John E. Wool would eventually save her life from a couple of American troops about to kill her and her husband. She and that Captain would remain friends for life. That Captain eventually fought in the American Civil War dying four years after it ended.