



PRESS RELEASE

BROME COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNOUNCES NEW PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION OPENING MAY 28, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Knowlton (Lac-Brome), May 10, 2021 – The Brome County Historical Society (BCHS) is proud to announce its forthcoming exhibition, *Wood & Wheeler*, will be open to the public in the Temporary Exhibition Gallery from May 28, 2021 to April

11, 2022. The exhibition, produced in-house by the BCHS, celebrates the artistic achievements of Sally Wood (1857-1928) and John Wheeler (1864-1933), two talented turn-of-the-century photographers from Brome County. Featuring original glass plate negatives and prints, Victorian photography equipment, and high-quality exhibition copies of photographs striking by their modernity and beauty, the exhibition invites the viewer to look upon historical photographs in a new light. Visitors will also get the chance to discover the complete collection of Wood and Wheeler's portraits through digital technology integrated in the exhibition's scenography.

Jeremy Reeves, Curator at the BCHS notes: "Photographs from the turn of the twentieth century are invaluable pieces of evidence for any historical undertaking but this exhibition seeks to present the photographs of Wood and Wheeler as unrivalled works of art. The entire team at the BCHS has been planning this exhibition for over two years and we cannot wait to welcome people back to the museum where they can discover these amazing works for themselves."

Wood & Wheeler is laid out to explore four distinct themes. The first section presents a selection of portraits from Wood and Wheeler's studio to illustrate the transition from commercial portraiture to more artistic and creative works as both photographers explored the limits of their medium. The second section explores landscape photography while a third section considers an understudied element of Sally Wood's work: her relationship to femininity. Not only was Sally Wood one of the first professional female photographers in the Eastern Townships, but her work also suggests she used photography to define a new space for women outside of the domestic sphere. The last section explores the materiality of glass plate photography and the processes undertaken by Sally Wood and John Wheeler to capture, fix, edit, and develop their photographs. In the twenty-first century, it is all too easy to forget that until the advent of digital cameras, photography was both an art and a science. This section notably includes a reconstructed Victorian photography studio showcasing John Wheeler's original camera and equipment.

An Original Artwork by Nicolas Ruel

For *Wood & Wheeler*, the BCHS partnered with contemporary photographer Nicolas Ruel who produced an original work for the exhibition. In keeping with the personal style he has developed, Ruel printed on of Sally Wood's negatives onto a sheet of stainless steel bringing this beautiful historic work into the twenty-first century.

Nicolas Ruel's works have been featured in solo and group exhibitions and art fairs around the world. His photographs are part of numerous public and private collections, namely, Air Canada, Cirque du Soleil, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Museum Europäischer Kulturen, Power Corporation, Microsoft and the Rothschild Group. He has also collaborated with international magazines such as Vogue and National Geographic.

Catalogue

Wood & Wheeler is accompanied by a 240-page hardcover catalogue designed by Réjean Myette at Atelier Fugazi and published by the BCHS. The *Wood & Wheeler* catalogue will showcase the history and heritage of Brome County in the best light possible. The catalogue features over 175 high-quality reproductions of original photographs taken by Sally Wood and John Wheeler as well as original essays written by BCHS staff members and outside scholars including Lucie Bureau (independent scholar), Samuel Gaudreau-Lalande (Director-Curator, Colby-Curtis Museum), Julie-Ann Latulippe (independent scholar, curator, and lecturer in art history), and Heather McNabb (reference archivist, McCord Museum).

Peter White, President of the BCHS, adds "throughout its history, and most recently under the indefatigable guidance of Marion L. Phelps, the BCHS regularly published articles, pamphlets, and books promoting local history. However, the BCHS has not produced an original publication since 2005. This catalogue is thus both a return to our roots and a powerful expression of our renewed commitment to historical research and publishing."



Virtual Vernissage & Book Launch

The BCHS will be hosting a virtual book launch in collaboration with Brome Lake Books on Thursday, May 27, from 6:00-6:45 p.m. More details and connection information will be forthcoming over the coming days.

Curatorial Credits & Funding Partners

If the *Wood & Wheeler* exhibition and catalogue beautifully showcase Brome County's rich history, it is only thanks to the incredible generosity of our donors and sponsors. Without their support, this project would not have been possible. The Brome County Historical Society extends its profound thanks to Quebec's Ministry of Culture and Communications, the Town of Brome Lake, the S.M. Blair Family Foundation, the Zeller Foundation, the Bélanger-Gardner Foundation, the R. Howard Webster Foundation, and the Townshippers' Research and Cultural Foundation.

The *Wood & Wheeler* exhibition was designed and produced by the Brome County Historical Society. The exhibition was curated by Jeremy Reeves with exhibition installation support provided by Lisa Belanger and Jack Walker. The touchscreen application was developed by Jean-Maxime Couillard with graphic design templates provided by B-367. The graphics were printed by Multi-Impressions RM and ProSeri. All framing was done by Encadrement Sutton.

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Photographic materials and images pertaining to the exhibition and catalogue can be provided upon request as part of a press kit.

Media Liaison

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About the Brome County Historical Society

Founded in 1897, the BCCHS operates a museum since 1903 that contains over 15,000 objects exhibited in eight buildings, six of which are heritage sites.

The mandate of the BCCHS is to acquire, preserve, research, exhibit, interpret, and publish items of historical interest encompassing all of the historic Brome County and its sites.

The Museum is open to the public seven days a week (10:00 am–5:00 pm) from May 21 to October 10, 2021. During our winter season (Thanksgiving to Victoria Day), the Museum is open Monday–Saturday (10:00 am – 5:00 pm).

**** Public health restrictions may force the BCCHS to change its operating schedule without prior notice ****