

Date: Feb. 2, 2004

Location: Stratford, Canada

- NEWS RELEASE -

Burnett Thorne to Develop "Rideau Cultural Heritage Corridor"

Burnett Thorne Cultural Tourism has signed a contract to plan, develop and market the cultural tourism assets of the Rideau Canal region, from Ottawa to Kingston, inclusive.

The project, known as "The Rideau Cultural Heritage Corridor", will package the Rideau's heritage, arts, cuisine, and natural history experiences, in a campaign to be launched for the 2006 tourism season. Work on the project is now underway.

The project is funded by a consortium of partners responsible for tourism development and heritage stewardship along the Rideau Canal. Parks Canada and the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation for the Province of Ontario are the project's lead funders.

Cultural tourism assets within the jurisdiction of the project include Ottawa's national cultural institutions, heritage attractions, arts events and festivals, Kingston's arts and heritage attractions, and the museums, galleries, and cultural experiences in other communities that are contiguous to the Canal. As a heritage asset of international stature, the Canal itself will be positioned at the centre of the initiative.

Steven Thorne comments on the project: "The Rideau Cultural Heritage Corridor is the most ambitious cultural tourism initiative in Canada - and perhaps on the continent. After two years of development work, the world will be invited to explore the remarkable cultural assets of our nation's capital, the historic Rideau Canal, and the City of Kingston. Canada lags far behind its global competitors in cultural tourism. This project will head us in the right direction."

Constructed as a military supply route following the War of 1812, the Rideau Canal connects the Ottawa River in the nation's capital to the St. Lawrence River in Kingston, a distance of 202 kilometers. When its construction was completed in 1832, the Canal was considered an engineering marvel. One of Canada's National Historic Sites, the Rideau Canal is operated and maintained by Parks Canada.

Burnett Thorne Cultural Tourism

Burnett Thorne Cultural Tourism is a Stratford-based firm that specializes in planning, developing and marketing cultural tourism destinations. A fast-growing and lucrative segment of the North American travel market, cultural tourism is described by the Canadian Tourism Commission as "an enormous opportunity for the tourism industry, for cultural and heritage organizations, and for Canada as a whole".

Burnett Thorne Cultural Tourism is wholly owned and operated by Stephen Burnett, and Steven Thorne.