

**NEWS RELEASE**  
**For immediate release**

**J. Armand Bombardier Museum:  
40 years of following in the footsteps of Joseph-Armand Bombardier!**

*Valcourt, January 27, 2011* – Created in 1971 by the J. Armand Bombardier Foundation to educate the general public about the life and work of Joseph-Armand Bombardier, Canada's leading private museum dedicated to snow transportation, is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, with a rich and diversified programme of events.

**In the beginning...**

In the summer of 1968, the J. Armand Bombardier Foundation commissioned Bombardier's brothers - Léopold, Gérard and Alphonse-Raymond - to submit an outline for creating a museum. Alphonse-Raymond embarked on a process of information gathering from the first employees and friends of the inventor, employing their recollections to draw up sketches of objects no longer in existence. The second phase of the project began in April 1969 with the selection and restoration of vehicles destined for the museum. After Léopold's unexpected death, Alphonse-Raymond started gathering a team of mechanics and other workers. He rented Gérard's workshop and started restoring Bombardier's vehicles. Before the construction of the Museum in 1968, the former l'Auto-Neige Bombardier Garage was moved to 1001, J.A. Bombardier Avenue in Valcourt – the same site occupied by the Museum today. The fall of 1970 marked the start of construction of the Museum. Wanting to tap into the talents of designers who had expertise in the exhibition sector, the Foundation (through Mr. Camille Rouillard) asked Montreal mayor Jean Drapeau to refer some of the best people in the field. The official opening of the Museum took place on September 11, 1971. To begin with, there were only three regular employees, but it wasn't long before new people joined the team, attracted by the success of the J. Armand Bombardier Museum, as well as the growing demand for group tours.

**Since 1990**

On March 23, 1990, the J. Armand Bombardier Museum re-opened its doors following an extensive renovation. The enlarged building allowed the Museum to widen its role and its vocation by being able to add a permanent exhibition showcasing the world of the snowmobile. 1991 was a landmark year. The Museum welcomed its 300,000<sup>th</sup> visitor! On February 7, 2007, a new permanent exhibition was launched to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birth of the brilliant inventor - *Joseph-Armand Bombardier, la passion d'inventer et d'entreprendre (Joseph-Armand Bombardier, a passion for inventing and entrepreneurship)*. The Museum now attracts more than 20,000 visitors annually.

**A great line-up of events for the coming year !**

Our programme for 2011-12 is crammed full of tempting attractions. The year kicked off with a special promotion for the 42<sup>nd</sup> edition of Valcourt's Hockey Tournament. On February 12 and 13, the Museum will be part of the *Valcourt fête l'hiver!* – a family-oriented winterfest! As a



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leading partner in Valcourt's Grand Prix Ski-Doo® the Museum, from February 17 to 20, is welcoming visitors free of charge. Also, for the first time this year, there will be an autograph session with the Ski-Doo® pilots on February 17. On Saturday, February 19, around 100 collectors of antique snowmobiles will be at the J. Armand Bombardier Museum. Visitors will be able to chat with these snowmobile fans who come from all over the province of Quebec. Rides aboard an original 1947 B12 snowmobile will also be offered on that day. During the week of the Spring Break, the Museum will organize a number of educational activities for children.

**... and coming up**

In April, the Museum will launch a completely new temporary exhibition entitled *Bombardier aujourd'hui (Bombardier Today)*. This exhibition, which will run until February 2012, puts Bombardier under the global spotlight from a socio-economic and geographic perspective, profiling its role as the world leader in providing rail transportation and its third place ranking as a manufacturer of civilian aircraft. As well this year, a series of new workshops inspired by the entrepreneur and inventor Joseph-Armand Bombardier, will be developed for school groups. To round off the Museum's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, a Homecoming event will be staged in the fall.

**Opening hours and entry fees**

The J. Armand Bombardier Museum is opened from Tuesday to Sunday, from 10 am to 5 pm. The entrance fee is \$7 for adults, \$5 for students and seniors and \$15 for a family. It is free for children 5 and under. Take advantage of a \$12 package (weekdays only) that combines a visit to the Museum with a tour of the BRP plant, where Bombardier's recreational products are manufactured. Organize a group of a dozen people aged 14 and up and enjoy a guided visit to see the Ski-Doo® or Sea-Doo® assembly lines (subject to production schedules - reservations essential) .

**About the J. Armand Bombardier Foundation**

The J. Armand Bombardier Foundation was created in 1965 to carry on the humanitarian mission of Joseph-Armand Bombardier and to contribute to the social mission of Bombardier Inc., the company he founded in 1942. The Foundation is involved in the fields of education, health, philanthropy and charity, as well as arts and culture. It also supports two cultural institutions in Valcourt: the J. Armand Bombardier Museum and the Yvonne L. Bombardier Cultural Centre.

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