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A milestone in the Vietnamese Boat People Museum: The land has been purchased

Ottawa, August 6, 2008

Dear friends:

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Vietnamese community in Canada, the Vietnamese Canadian Federation – an umbrella national organization of the community founded in 1980 – launched the Vietnamese Boat People Museum Project with the following purposes:

1. ***To present the historical facts of the quest for freedom of Vietnamese refugees, the majority of whom were the boat people, and their reception worldwide;***
2. ***To showcase the contribution of the Vietnamese community to the resettlement countries.***

Since then, the Project – organized under the auspices of the Vietnamese Canadian Centre, the Federation's charitable organization – has been able to raise, or to obtain firm commitments for, a total of close to over \$355,000. Together with the estimated current market value of the Centre's building, which the Federation plans to eventually merge with the Museum, the Project currently has an expected fund of around \$700,000 or over 30% of the estimated total cost (\$2 million).

Earlier this month, the Federation, through the Vietnamese Canadian Centre, has purchased a piece of land to build the museum, for \$600,000, at the corner of Preston St. and Somerset St. West in downtown Ottawa (opposite corner from the Vietnamese Commemorative Monument featuring the statue "Refugee mother and child" by sculptor refugee Pham The Trung) that the Federation helped erected in 1995. Over the next 2 years, the Federation will try to raise sufficient fund in order to build the museum by 2010 as planned.

In addition, after almost 2 years of working together with a group of volunteers, the Federation has published a book entitled ***Gift of Freedom: How Ottawa welcomed the Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian refugees.*** Written by Brian Buckley, formerly a senior executive at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and currently a professor of international studies at Carleton University, this book describes in details the efforts undertaken by the citizens of Ottawa under the leadership of then mayor Marion Dewar under ***Project 4000*** to accept 4000 Southeast Asian refugees, the majority of whom were Vietnamese boat people, for resettlement in the city. This book was launched at the Ottawa City Hall on May 3, on the occasion of the Vietnamese Cultural Day.

Gift of Freedom can be purchased through the Vietnamese Canadian Centre, at \$20 per copy, with extra shipping cost: \$3.00 for Canada destinations, \$6.00 for the U.S., and \$10.00 elsewhere. The proceeds from its sales will go to the Museum Project.

You can also help us by contributing as follows:

- Making a firm pledge or contribute \$25/month for 5 years to the *Project 525* by paying in lump sums or by post dated cheques; or
- Making a donation of any amount.

All donations above \$5.00 will be issued a receipt for income tax purposes.

The Vietnamese Canadian Federation hopes that you'll be able to contribute to this worthwhile project.

Contributions can be made by cheques or money orders (the mailing of cash is to be avoided) made payable to *Vietnamese Canadian Centre / Museum Project*, and sent to:

Vietnamese Canadian Centre
249 Rochester St.
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For further information please contact us at:

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Yours truly,

Thang D. Tran, M.D., Representative of the Council of Presidents, Vietnamese Canadian Federation

Ut V. Ngo, President

Can D. Le, Ph.D., Commissioner for External Affairs
& Vietnamese Boat People Museum Project Leader



Vietnamese Commemorative Monument - Ottawa



Vietnamese Boat People Museum – artist's rendition