

Old Canada Road Historical Society

For Immediate Release

Date: October 21, 2005

Contact: Marilyn Sterling-Gondek, oldcanadaroad@yahoo.com

Old Canada Road Historical Society Awarded Grant for Wyman Dam Anniversary Project

The Old Canada Road Historical Society has been awarded a \$1,000 grant from the Maine Humanities Council and the Kennebec-Chaudière Heritage Commission, with funding in part from the Betterment Fund. The award will support a project commemorating the 75th anniversary of the construction of Wyman Dam in Moscow.

Wyman Dam was one of the largest construction projects to be undertaken in the state at its time—1928 to 1931—employing over two thousand people at its peak. The construction of the dam and its storage basin changed the lives of area residents as much as it changed the landscape of the Upper Kennebec.

The historical society plans a series of public events as well as targeted research activities that will be carried out by volunteers, including interested students from Valley Junior-Senior High School in Bingham. There will be public events in November, February, and April. Details of these events will be announced as they become firm and will also be posted on the society's Web site (www.rootsweb.com/~meocrhs).

The society will create an information archive to be placed in local public repositories and on its Web site. The goal is to raise awareness of the scope and historical significance of the dam's construction and to bring together as much relevant information as possible. "There are excellent written and photographic resources out there," said Marilyn Sterling-Gondek, project manager, "but they have never been brought together in a unified bibliography or archive. We look forward to doing that and are grateful to the Council and the Heritage Commission for their support."

The group will highlight a number of topics. Among them are the human-interest story in the flooding of the Wyman storage basin and the many families displaced to make that possible; the participation of the noted design firms of John Calvin Stevens and Frederick Law Olmsted; the photographic legacy of Milford Baker; the enormous construction challenges presented by supply and workforce logistics; and the state-wide debate about exportation of surplus power outside Maine, a factor of great concern to Walter Wyman and others involved in the construction of such a large generating facility.

Anyone with time or materials they would like to contribute to the project, is urged to get in touch with the society by email: oldcanadaroad@yahoo.com or by mail: Old Canada Road Historical Society, P.O. Box 742, Bingham, ME 04920.

----####----