

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Saranac Lake Nonprofits to Commemorate World TB Day 2014 *Events highlight new E. L. Trudeau biography and upcoming documentary on TB*

Saranac Lake, N.Y.(March 17, 2014) — World TB Day, falling on March 24th each year, is designed to build public awareness that tuberculosis remains an epidemic in much of the world, causing the deaths of several million people each year, mostly in developing countries. Two Saranac Lake nonprofits, Historic Saranac Lake and the Trudeau Institute, are busy with joint projects that tie into World TB Day, which commemorates the date in 1882 when German physician Robert Koch astounded the scientific community by announcing that he had discovered the cause of tuberculosis, the TB bacillus.

The antibiotic treatment for tuberculosis was perfected in the 1950s, effectively ending the “TB era” in Saranac Lake. The disease, however, is far from eradicated. According to the Stop TB Partnership:

- One-third of the world’s population is infected with tuberculosis (TB) bacteria.
- Nine million people become ill with TB each year and more than a million and a half people die. In a single day, TB causes the equivalent in lives lost of 15 jetliner crashes.
- TB is the number three cause of death among women of childbearing age and the number four cause of death among women of all ages. More than half a million women die of TB each year.
- Half a million children become ill with TB year. There are 10 million children worldwide who had been orphaned because a parent died of TB.
- People with weakened immune systems have a much greater risk of falling ill from TB; a person living with HIV is about 20 to 30 times more likely to develop active TB.

Tuberculosis and World TB Day continue to resonate in Saranac Lake, which was founded in the 19th century as a health resort for those suffering from the disease. TB has long shaped the town's identity, beginning with the pioneering medical and scientific work of Dr. Edward Livingston Trudeau and continuing today in the Trudeau Institute laboratory of Dr. Andrea Cooper, who will be among the presenters at the venerable New York Academy of Sciences’ World TB Day Symposium: Countdown to 2015, which will take place in New York City on March 24.

As TB Day approaches this year, Historic Saranac Lake (which operates a museum in Dr. Trudeau’s former laboratory on Church Street, established as the first in the United States for the study of tuberculosis) and the Trudeau Institute are combining their efforts to assist with two important projects that will bring attention to the story of TB in the Adirondacks and ongoing efforts to combat it.

The first is the publication of a major new biography of Dr. Trudeau. Mary B. Hotaling, one of the founders of Historic Saranac Lake and its current historian, and Caroline Welsh, director emerita of the Adirondack Museum, are working to produce and publish the book to honor the centennial in 2015 of Dr. Trudeau’s death. The new biography, “A Rare Romance in Medicine: The Life and Legacy of Edward Livingston Trudeau,” is based on the beloved physician’s “An Autobiography” (published posthumously in 1915) and will set Dr. Trudeau’s life and contributions into the larger context of his times.

Dr. Cooper, the Francis B. Trudeau Chair in Tuberculosis and Related Research at the Trudeau Institute, will contribute the closing chapter of the book, explaining Dr. Trudeau's work in the context of the continuing study of the cellular immune response to TB.

"Doonesbury" cartoonist Garry Trudeau, Dr. Trudeau's great-grandson, will pen the foreword to the new biography. Partners in the enterprise include Historic Saranac Lake, the Trudeau Institute, the Saranac Lake Free Library, and Adirondack Life magazine. Early subscriptions for the book have raised over \$14,000, and fundraising efforts continue through Historic Saranac Lake.

A second important collaboration between Historic Saranac Lake and the Trudeau Institute is their participation in the production of a new documentary on tuberculosis, to be produced by the PBS history series AMERICAN EXPERIENCE. The film's examination of the disease and its societal impact in the U.S. over the late 19th through the mid-20th centuries will include Dr. Trudeau's work in Saranac Lake.

According to PBS, AMERICAN EXPERIENCE is television's most-watched history series. The critically acclaimed series "brings to life the incredible characters and epic stories that have shaped America's past and present." Produced by WGBH in Boston, AMERICAN EXPERIENCE films have been honored with every major broadcast award, including 14 George Foster Peabody Awards, four Columbia Awards, and 30 Emmy Awards.

The broadcast premiere for the AMERICAN EXPERIENCE documentary has yet to be announced.

About Historic Saranac Lake

Historic Saranac Lake is a not-for-profit, architectural preservation organization that captures and presents local history from its center at the Saranac Laboratory Museum.

About the Trudeau Institute

The Trudeau Institute is a nonprofit biomedical research center founded in 1884 by Dr. E.L. Trudeau. The Institute's fundamental research on immunity fosters the development of vaccines, treatments and cures for many life-threatening diseases, including cancer, tuberculosis and influenza. The Institute is supported by federal and state grants and contributions from individuals, private foundations and corporations. For further information about the Trudeau Institute, go to www.trudeauinstitute.org.

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