

Photography

<https://collections.pacmusee.qc.ca/en/objects/photography-2010-163-050/>

Collections / From federalism to the end of the Second World War / photography



CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license

Black and white photograph. Parade of snowshoers in 1913 in Trois-Rivières. Trois-Rivières City Hall in the background. Club Saint-Jean Baptiste snowshoers pulling children on a wild sled. Parade passes under a fir-tree arch.

Accession Number 2010.163.050

Artiste / Auteur Sutcliffe, Harry S.

Date 1913

Medium and Support test, glass

Historical context

The use of snowshoes to get around on the snow in winter is a legacy of the Aboriginals, who used these instruments made of wood and animal skins (babiche) and passed the practice on to Europeans. Indispensable to early explorers, travelers and settlers in the colony's early days, snowshoes gradually became a pastime in the 19th century for city dwellers, who gathered to enjoy this winter activity in organized clubs. The photo opposite, by Harry Sutcliffe, shows a parade of snowshoers (but without snowshoes!) in Trois-Rivières in 1913.

The first snowshoe club to be founded was the Montreal Snowshoe Club, created around 1840 by members of the city's English-speaking elite, who got into the habit of getting together to snowshoe on Saturday afternoons on Mount Royal. In the years that followed, several clubs were formed in other cities across Quebec and Canada, testifying to the sport's popularity. In addition to their snowshoes, snowshoers were recognizable by their costume, consisting of an arrowed belt, cap and soft shoes, reminiscent of the *coureurs des bois* of the heyday of New France.