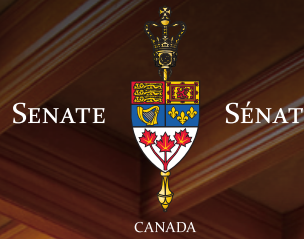


The Salon de la Francophonie



The Salon de la Francophonie – One of the Treasures of Parliament Hill

As the social conventions surrounding tobacco faded, however, the smoking room gave way to other uses. Over the course of the years, it evolved into a venue for meetings and receptions.

In 1992, the Department of External Affairs and the Canadian branch of L'Assemblée internationale des parlementaires de langue française (an international organization of French-speaking parliamentarians) approached Parliament with a proposal to formally commemorate Canada's ties to La Francophonie. The Senate agreed. On March 18, 1993, the former smoking room was officially designated "Le Salon de la Francophonie," confirming the importance of this connection for Canada. It also serves as a pendant to the Commonwealth Room, the name given to the House of Commons' former smoking room in 1965.

Today, the Salon is decorated to reflect Canada's francophone history and identity. Fabrics adorned with fleur-de-lys upholster the chairs and frame the windows. Portraits of six French kings involved in

the settlement of New France grace the walls, drawn from Senator Serge Joyal's donations to the Canadiana Fund. Two bronze busts carry this sense of francophone history to Canadian soil: one is Samuel de Champlain (d. 1635), known as the "Father of New

France"; the other, Senator Raoul Dandurand, a prominent senator (1898 to 1942), cabinet minister and international statesman, as well as Speaker of the Senate from 1905 to 1909.

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The decor also serves to complement the room's distinctive architecture. Centre Block architect John A. Pearson designed the room in the Tudor Gothic Revival style, with its exposed wooden beams and the textured plaster finish of its walls. The oak paneling of the north and south walls is carved with gothic tracery and tiny bosses carved in the shape of flowers, gargoyles and human faces. The limestone fireplace is flanked by seating alcoves with half-vaulted canopies, each divided by a slender column that supports delicate open tracery. The coffered ceiling is divided by oak beams, some of which also feature carved bosses. The overall impression is one of strength, restraint and tradition.

Once a smoking room, the Salon de la Francophonie is today a valued formal venue for meetings and receptions. The sense of dignity and pride it exudes is a fitting reflection of Canada's French identity.



The Salon de la Francophonie is located on the east side of the Centre Block of Parliament, a few steps from the entrance to the Senate chamber. Dedicated to Canada's association with La Francophonie (the international union of French-speaking countries), it is one of the Senate's most distinctive meeting rooms.

The room has an interesting past; it was not always identified with La Francophonie. Following the reconstruction of the Centre Block after the fire of 1916, it was used as a smoking room, where senators could relax and hold private conversations.

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François I
Portrait: After Titian, circa 1820



Henry III
Portrait: School of François Clouet, circa 1580



Henry IV
Bronze effigy: After Barthélémy Tremblay, circa 1830



Louis XIII
Portrait: Studio of Philippe de Champaigne, circa 1630



Louis XIV
Portrait: Studio of Hyacinthe Rigaud, circa 1700



Louis XV
Portrait: Studio of Carle Van Loo, circa 1740



Samuel de Champlain
Bronze bust: Alfred Laliberté, circa 1930-1940



The Rt. Hon. Raoul Dandurand, P.C.
Bronze bust: Alfred Laliberté, 1941