At the end of the 19th century in Canada, access to savings and credit services was limited. The practice of usury was making the poor even poorer. To combat this growing phenomenon, Alphonse Desjardins set out to learn more about the popular credit system in Europe. On December 6, 1900, he invited the citizens of Lévis to set up the first savings and credit cooperative in America: Caisse populaire de Lévis. In doing so, Desjardins gave his countrymen much more than a financial enterprise – he also gave them a powerful tool for development.

At the origins of a great cooperative movement

In 1883, Alphonse Desjardins and Dorimène Desjardins built the house in which they were to raise their ten children and launch the operations of Caisse populaire de Lévis. Today, that house is classified as a “cultural property”. The historical setting has been painstakingly recreated to allow visitors to learn about the fascinating history of this home and the origins of the largest cooperative financial group in Canada.

A permanent exhibit next door adds to the visitor experience.

Historic Monument and Recognized Museum

Maison Alphonse-Desjardins Opening Hours
Monday to Friday: 10 a.m. to noon, 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday: noon to 5 p.m.
Open year-round
Free admission*
*Reservations required for groups of 8 or more.

Services Offered
Guided tours — Permanent exhibit — Educational activities for children — Advisory services on the history and legacy of Desjardins Group — Boutique (historical publications and souvenirs)

Information
Société historique Alphonse-Desjardins
6, rue du Mont-Marie, Lévis (Québec) G6V 1V9
Tel.: 418-835-2090 or toll-free: 1-866-835-8444, ext. 2090
Fax: 418-835-9173
E-mail: shad@desjardins.com
Web site: www.desjardins.com

Recognition
Alphonse Desjardins
“National Historic Person”
National Life and Heritage Board of Canada, 1933
Voted Quebec’s most influential business leader by Journal de Montréal and Journal de Québec readers, 2007
Founding of Caisse populaire de Lévis “National Historic Event”
National Life and Heritage Board of Canada, 1984
Alphonse and Dorimène Desjardins “Great Quebecers of the century”
Cité des Écrits (Québec), 2011
Alphonse Desjardins “Greatest Canadian Co-operator”
Canadian Co-operative Association, 2009

A house steeped in history,

A Fascinating History!

Alphonse Desjardins – Builder and Visionary

Alphonse Desjardins was fortunate to have the active support of his wife, Dorimène Desjardins. From 1900 to 1906, when the Caisse populaire de Lévis was housed in the family residence, Dorimène Desjardins was largely responsible for its management. The newspaper L’Action catholique wrote in 1932 that she was “one of the most informed women on economic issues as seen from a social standpoint.”

Dorimène Desjardins – A Key Contributor

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Dorimène Desjardins and her daughter Adrienne.

Collection Roger Desjardins

Regroupement des institutions muséales de la Chaudière-Appalaches
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How to Get There

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