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World Class Artifact to be Restored at Lang Pioneer Village Museum

There are few inventors who can claim that their creation changed the world, but in 1801, Joseph Marie Jacquard invented a loom that became the launching pad of the Industrial Revolution. Likewise, there are only two museums in Canada that can boast having a Jacquard Loom in their collection – the Ontario Science Centre and Lang Pioneer Village Museum.

This restoration project has been made possible by a grant from the Chawkers Foundation. The foundation was started in 1989 by Charles Alexander as a family foundation. Over the years it has evolved into a national foundation. Their philosophy is to promote education and the arts by looking for new initiatives that are used to expand horizons. They believe in providing groups with seed money for new projects that meet the criteria and have funded a variety of projects over the years.

The restoration of the Jacquard will be orchestrated by Didier Schvartz who is himself a master weaver and has restored looms that date as far back as the 1700's. It's believed that the loom was originally built in Paisley, Scotland although it's not known how it arrived in Canada. What is known is that it was purchased by a young man named Samuel Lowry who was born in Warsaw, Ontario in 1862. He worked as a weaver in Warsaw from 1884 to 1888 then moved to Peterborough and established a business at 172 Hunter Street. His main products were carpets, flannel and horse blankets which were sold to clients from Lakefield to Hastings and Warkworth to Omemee. In 1887, his salary totaled \$429.42 but by 1905 he couldn't compete with the large woollen mills in the area and went to work at the Toronto Carpet Company. Samuel returned to Peterborough in 1907 and continued weaving until 1909 when he headed west to seek a more profitable line of work.

The looms were left as payment to the landlord, Mr. Buller, for a \$200 debt owed in back rent. They remained in the Buller family until 1967 when the looms and Account Books of Samuel were purchased at an auction sale by Mrs. John Moes who later donated them to Lang Pioneer Village Museum.

For more information and visual materials on this media release please contact

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