

Oisín Wade

McAdam Travel Bursary 2023



The Pretext

- When applying for this bursary, I was about to do a year long exchange at Queen's University in Kingston
- Always fascinated by the extreme cold and the unique peculiarities it brings with itself, the quiet yet oddly inviting landscape descriptions always peaked an interest of mine.
- In my original proposal, I wanted to go to the Artic Circle. Upon arriving in Canada and researching more, to do the trip in Canada was unfeasible. Still, the desire to see the frozen wilderness still had a hold on my heart.
- With 3 other exchange students, Antoine, Maxime and Claudius, a road trip was organised to take place around the Gaspésie region of Québec during the February reading week ,myself the driver
- I felt a powerpoint displaying the images taken during this trip I feel would better convey the atmosphere of the landscape and tell the story better since there were no outright defined goals, rather a unique experience .

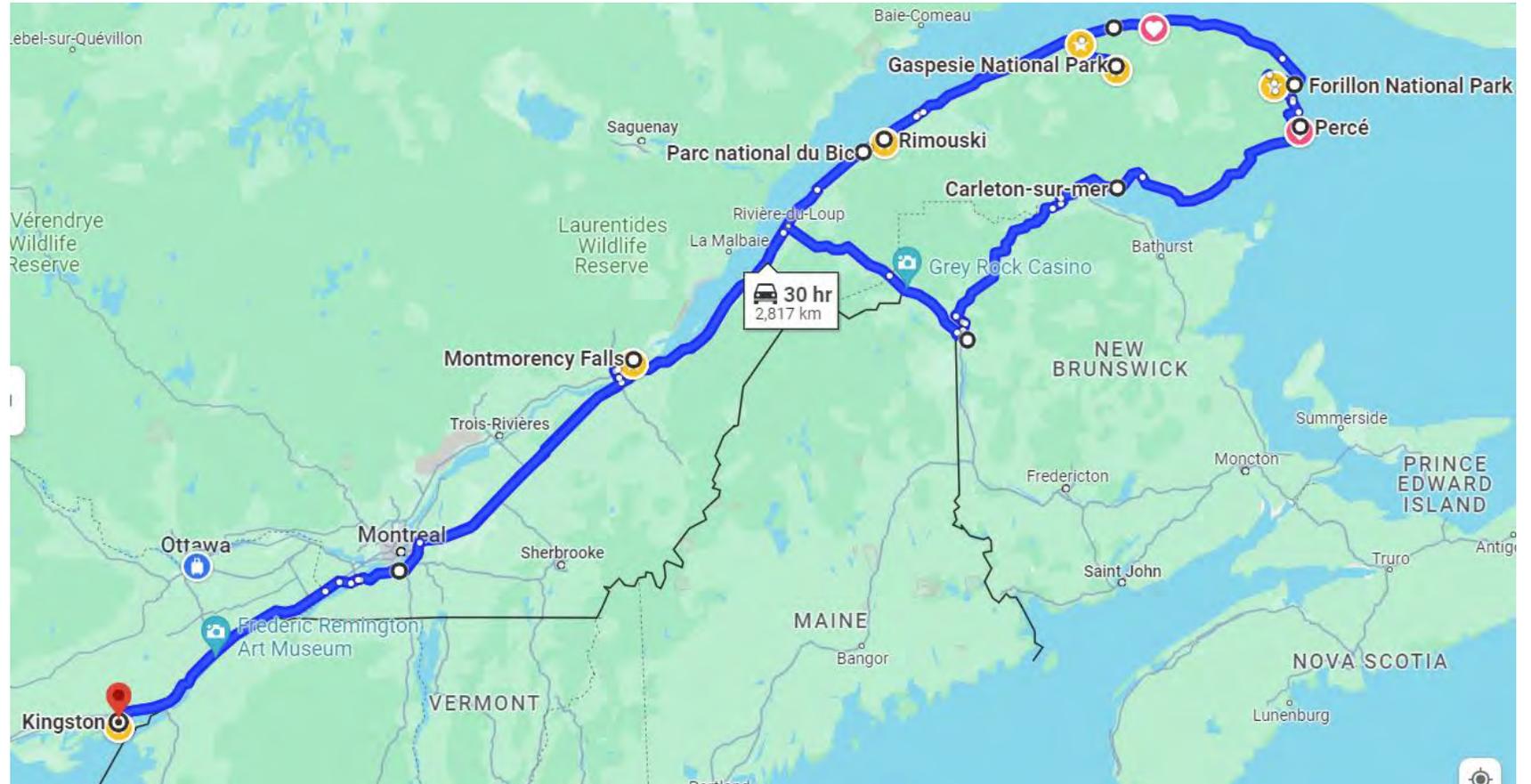
Claudius, Myself, Antoine, Maxime



The Route

Kicking off from Kingston, here's all our destinations for each day for context

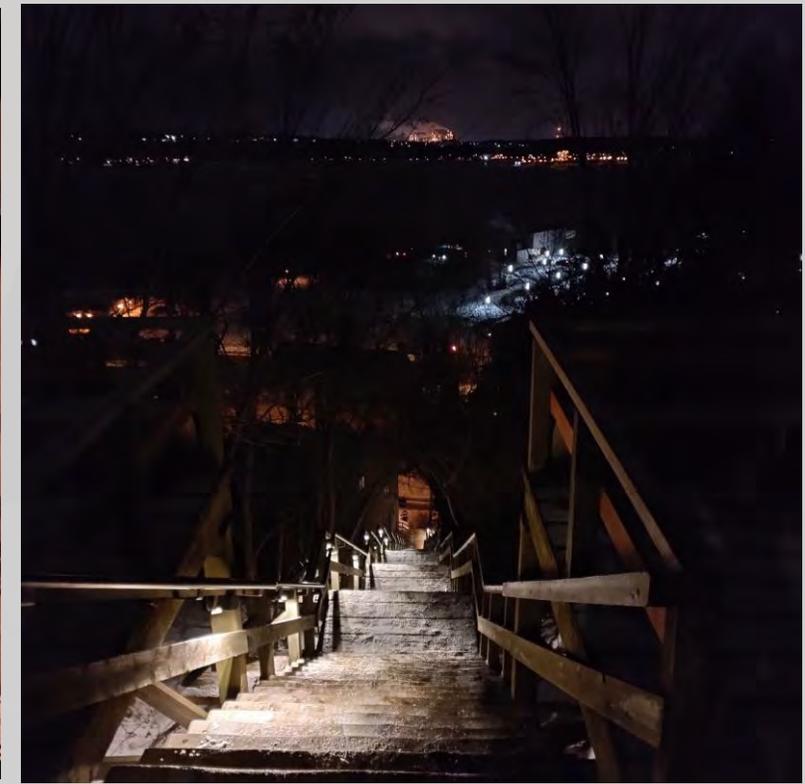
- Day 1 – Quebec city
- Day 2 – Parc de la Chute-Montmorency & Rimouski
- Day 3 – Parc Nationale de Bic & Ste Anne-des-Monts
- Day 4 – Parc Nationale de la Gaspésie & Ste Maxime du Mont Louis
- Day 5 – Parc Nationale de Forillon & Gaspé
- Day 6 – Percé & Irlande
- Day 7 – Percé & Carleton-sur-mer
- Day 8 – Kingston



Day 1: Québec City

Leaving Kingston at 11am, fuelled by Tim Hortons and backseat sandwiches along the way, we arrived in Québec City at dark.

Once settled down in the hostel, we brisked through -30°C wind chills, trying to capture the essence of the European city that became the Christmas Capital of North America.



Yearlong Christmas stores, decorations, nuclear ice breakers, powdery snow and beautifully hot and comforting poutines.



Day 2:

Parc de la Chute-Montmorency

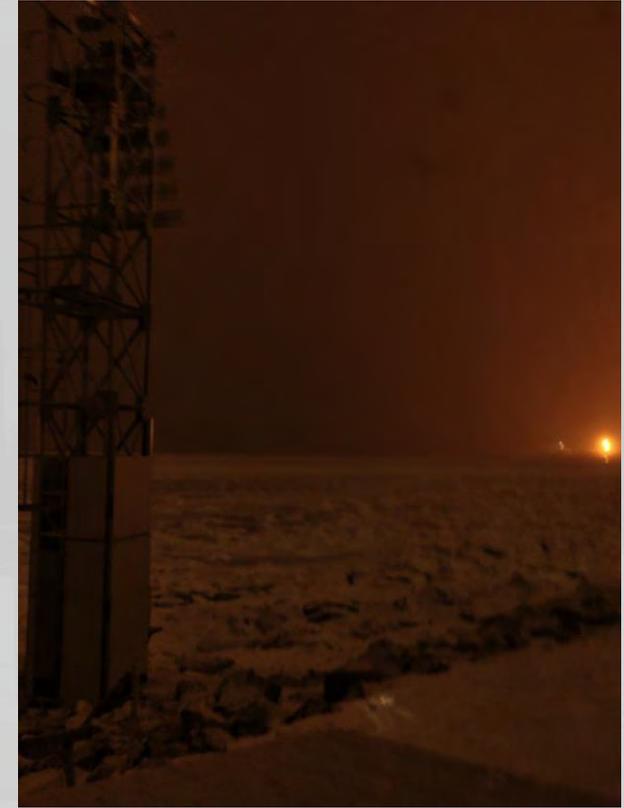
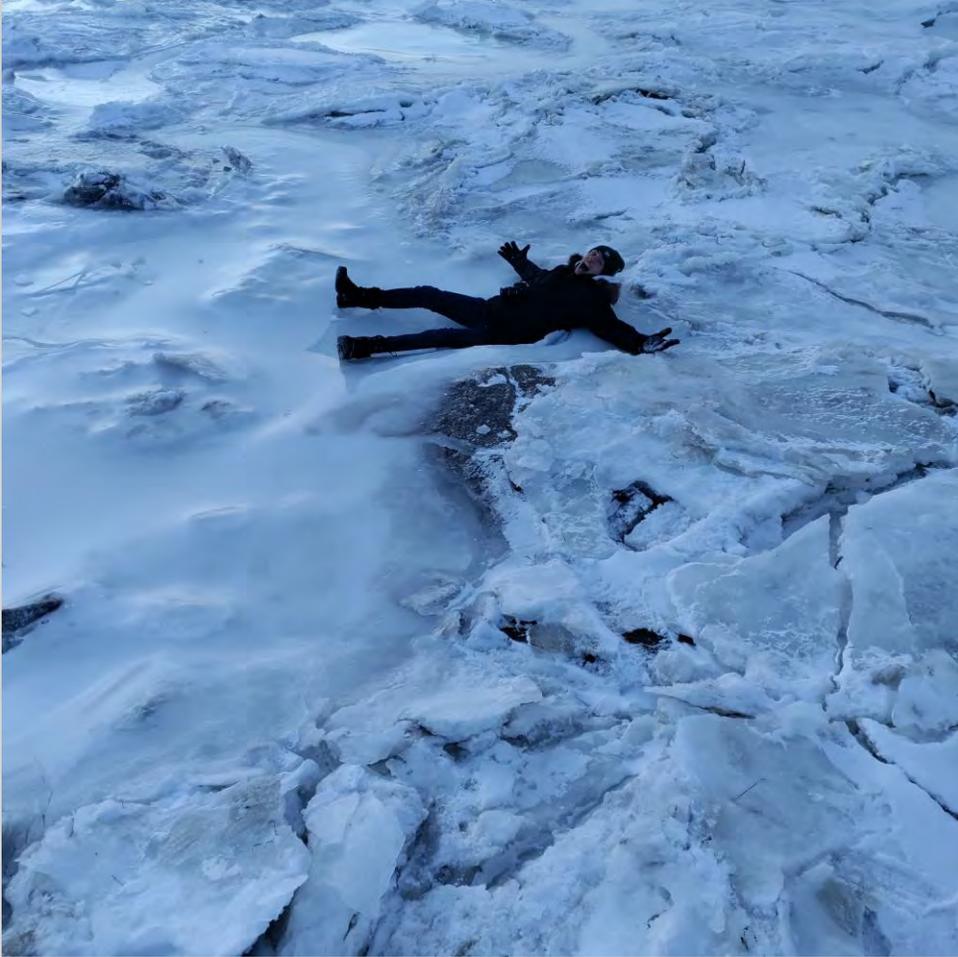
First taste of ice and snow. A frozen top river feeds this half-frozen waterfall. Deep snow, chipmunks and the white creating more dramatic and contrasting views.





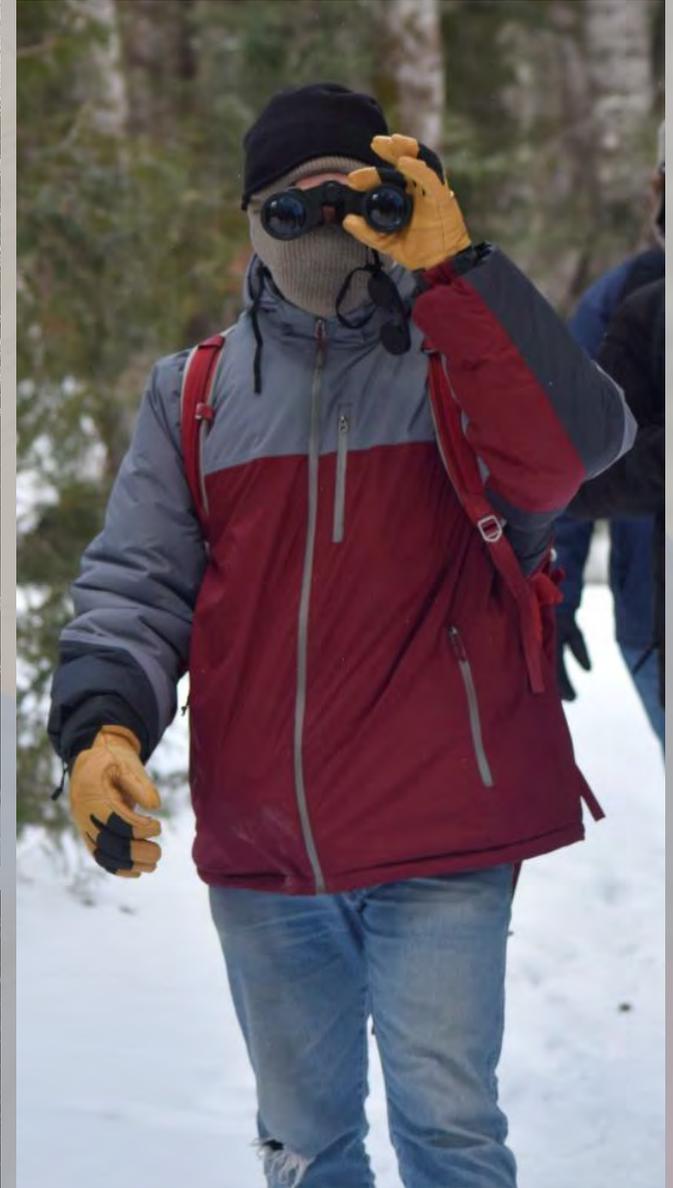
Day 2: Rimouski

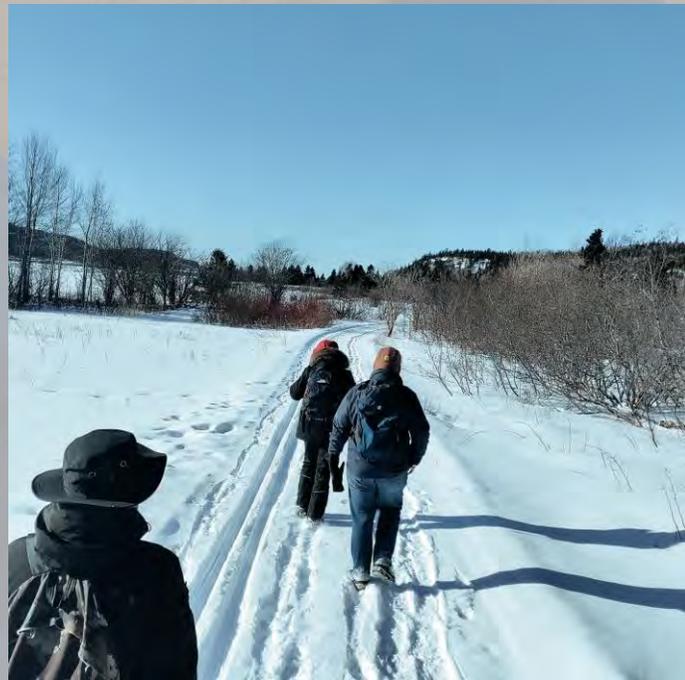
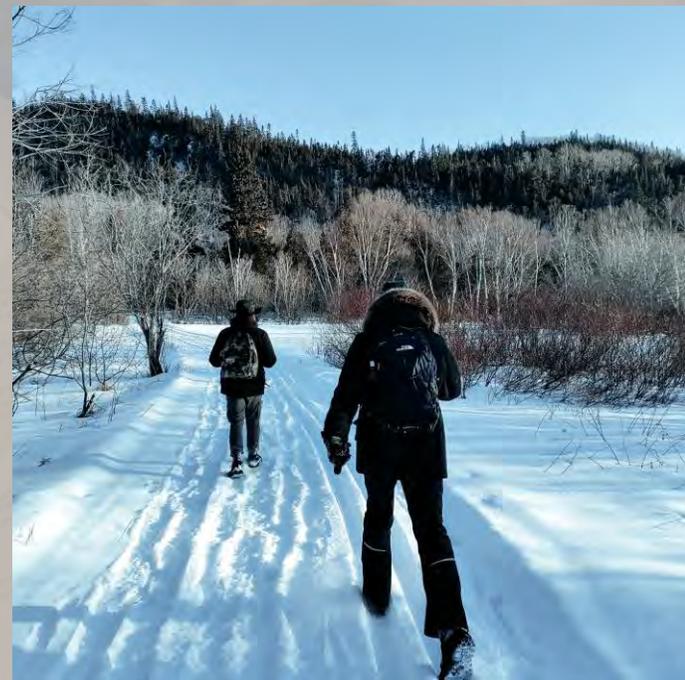
Greeted by a completely frozen Ste Lawrence river, the night time industrial glow and a first time experiencing the North American novelty, the motel.



Day 3 : Parc Nationale de Bic

First National Park. White silent vast open spaces contrasting with the whispering dark conifers that populated the landscape.

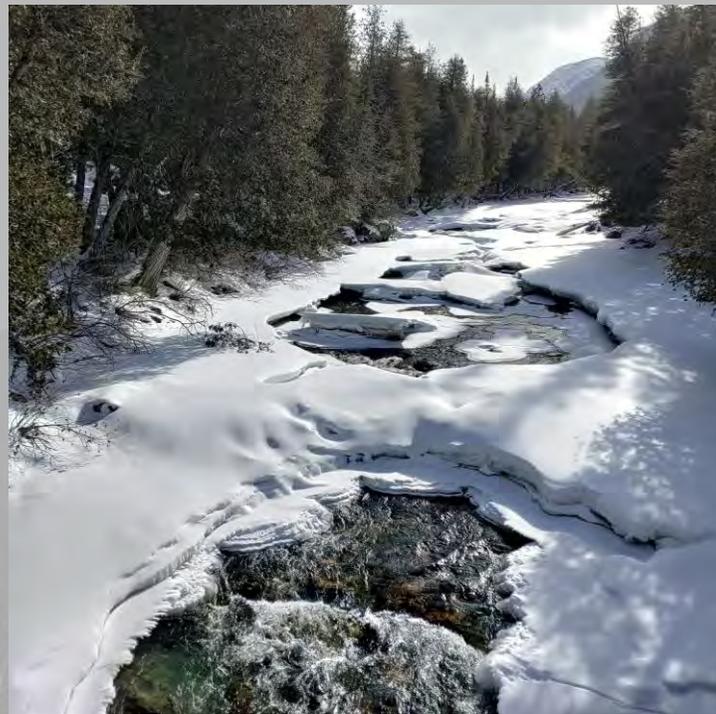


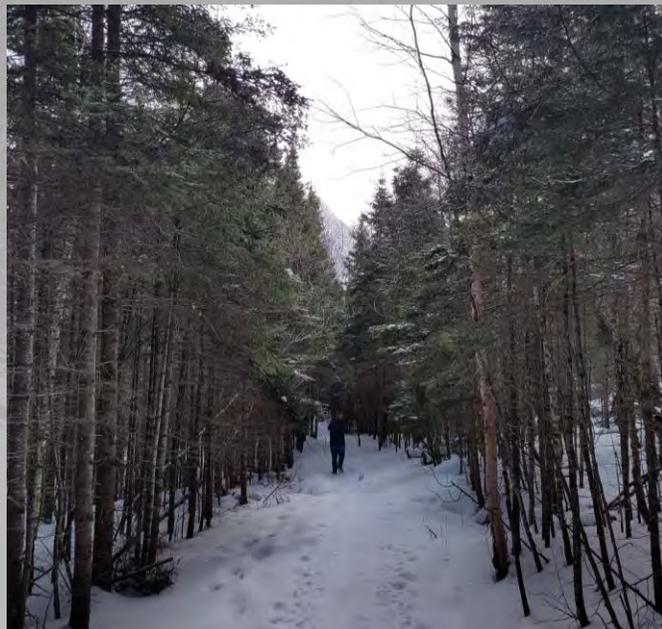


Day 4 : Parc Nationale de la Gaspésie

-37°C winds, frozen top rivers and waterfalls with water still gushing underneath, mountains galore and to finish off the day, a speciality fried chicken chain only found in Québec and New Brunswick, PFK









Day 5 : Ste Maxime du Mont Louis

Goodbye Ste. Lawrence
River and Hello to the
Ste. Lawrence Gulf, the
Atlantic, icebergs and
lighthouses galore



Sheets of moving ice,
caribou trails, the
beach meets the
frozen wilderness,
charming churches
and a stunning drive
all along the way



Parc Nationale de Forillon: *Day 5*





Day 6 : **Gaspé & Percé**

First time skiing. Explored 38 km across the soft gaspéian rolling hilled landscape, brief encounters with moose and deer avoiding the gaze of cameras, and the world famous, Percé Rock



Day 7 : Percé

Hiking up Mont Sainte-Anne, the rock of Percé watching us from a distance all the time, fresh tracks in the snow followed us, leaving our claim at the peak in the new snow, and the start of the endless ocean with home on the other side



Day 7 : Irlande

Huskies in their natural habitat environment, as a troupe, ready for sledding



Day 8 : Carleton-sur-Mer to Kingston

Leaving at the morning sunrise and arriving in Kingston after sunset, the day was mostly driving, with little photo opportunities. Driving through the horizon encompassing vivid ivy green forests of the rolling hills of New Brunswick, the only bi-lingual province of Canada, giving arise to the bilingual stop signs. A quick hello and goodbye to the Ste. Lawrence River and spam filled back seat prepared sandwiches filled up our day

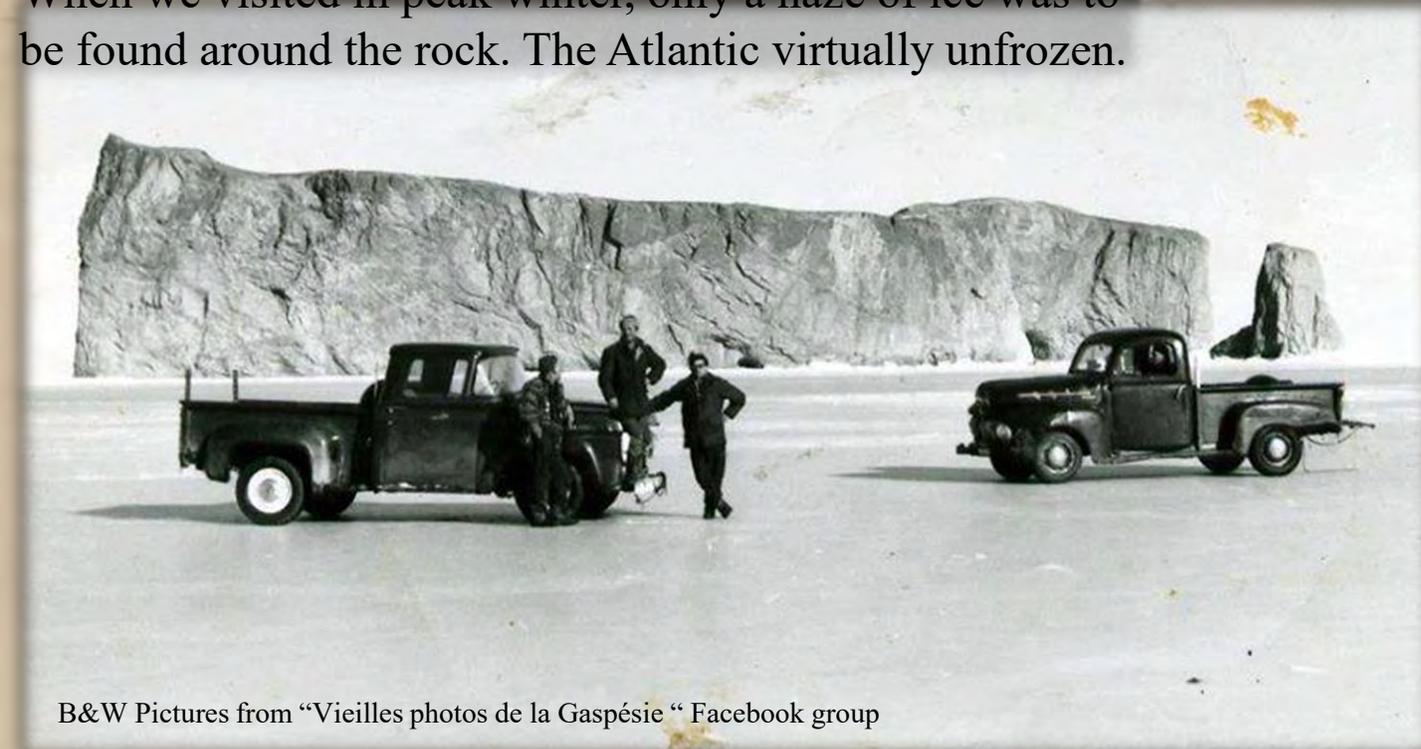


Climate Change

During this adventure, a thought was ever present. This feels rather mild compared to what I thought.

Talking with locals in their Gaspésian French, Climate changes affects was very visible in the region. Every year pre 1945, trucks drove on the ice from Percé to Île de Bonaventure, an island located 1 mile from the coast, between the two lies the Rock of Percé.

When we visited in peak winter, only a haze of ice was to be found around the rock. The Atlantic virtually unfrozen.



Conclusion and Thank You

This experience in the region of Gaspésie was an extremely profound, I will never forget it and it greatly deepened my experience of Canada. I'd like to give a massive thank you to Martin McAdam and his family for this bursary. Without their generosity, this would not have happened, and it has had a significant impact on my personal life and views but also has helped in guiding my professional and academic interests.

Due to this impact of the beautiful moments the Québec Province afforded me, I've really tried my best to condense and communicate the countless experiences and the best photos I captured during this 8 day long adventure to give justice to it. If you ever see me out and about or working in the engineering lobby between classes, and you're curious about anything in this document that you'd like a little more insight on, I'm always more than happy to chat.

Because of this experience, the negative impact that society has had on the landscape of our planet due to our unrelentless and ever-rapid expansion has become a more vivid concern of mine. Motivated by this, I am currently undertaking a summer undergraduate research in University of Notre Dame in Indiana in the US at Prof. Kyle Doudrick's environmental engineering laboratory which has been extremely insightful to date, especially in the area of water pollution. This would not have happened if not for receiving this bursary, so again, I'd like to thank Martin McAdam.

I'd also like to thank my family for pushing me to apply for this. Antoine, Claudius and Maxime, for their endless patience with my road trip mixtape. And UCD and Queen's University for allowing me to have a wonderful yearlong exchange in Canada.

