



When you enter the **Délia-Tétreault Museum**, you are surrounded by hundreds of objects and images which have crossed the ages and oceans. In the upcoming issues of MIC Mission News, the Museum will present you some of its treasures, highlighting objects including their history and their key role in Quebec's missionary adventure up to this day.

## Objects and Their Secret Life



**By Alexandre Payer**  
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Before some twenty intrigued children, Sister Gratia Blanchette set up her material. It all happened in 1926, in a small parish school of Saint-Germain-de-Grantham, Quebec, Canada. Curtains drawn filtered the morning light. Somewhat unusual, the silent students were in the semi-dark room; something magical was in the air. A click was heard. A light flashed from the little wooden box set on a table near Sister Blanchette: a window onto another world suddenly appeared on the opposite wall. All eyes were on the unfolding images as they watched and heard a distant voice explaining to them the realities of those faraway children.

**Photos:**

[Above]  
Epidiascope and glass slides in their wooden box

[Opposite]  
Slide on glass: In Tsungming, it is very cold in winter. A missionary takes care of the children keeping them warm around a small stove.

Source:  
MIC Archives



The epidiascopes (or *magic lantern* as they were called back then) were projectors the Sisters would bring with them whenever they went to schools or parishes for mission awareness activities. This device equipped with a lamp and adjustable lenses, displayed black and white slides on glass, most of which were enhanced with hand paint. The epidiascope displayed at the Délia Tétreault Museum is one of those *lanterns and glass slide boxes*. It was bought on November 28, 1925 at M.J.O. Jarrell for the amount of \$499.80; today, it would be worth \$7,029.45. Besides being used during mission awareness presentations, it also served during convention days to present the community's works; among others at the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Missionary Exhibition held in 1927 in Joliette, Quebec.

From the outset, visual aids were used; the community would document the work of the missionaries abroad via images. Délia Tétreault, with her acute sense of publicity, understood the importance of presenting high quality audio-visual material which would capture the imagination of Quebecers and rally them around her cause. As of 1911, visuals were integrated in the community's publications and in 1920 photos were printed in the magazine *Le Précurseur*; those thousand images sent from mission lands have become a rich photographic heritage. They show the courage, the resilience and sacrifices of those Sisters whom Délia, the Foundress, called her daughters.

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