
Fort Frances Museum & Cultural Centre

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CraftCurrents: Contemporary Craft in Northern Ontario

The first-ever touring exhibition featuring Northern Ontario craft will begin its journey at the Fort Frances Museum July 14th and run until August 27th. The opening reception will be July 14th from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Local artist, Marke Henteleff of Blackduck Pottery, will speak about her ceramic work in the exhibition.

The juried traveling show features 44 pieces of craft reflecting the diversity and quality of work being created in Northern Ontario. All regions of Northern Ontario are represented as well as various cultures. The pieces utilize a variety of media including bone, brass, ceramics, copper, driftwood, fabric, feathers, fleece, glass, gourds, leather, stainless steel, sterling, sweetgrass, wasp paper and wood finely crafted into a wide range of objects.

The exhibition is part of the Ontario Crafts Council's (OCC) project, Growing Ontario's Craft Community-North that also includes a series of artist professional development workshops, meet and greet events, and a symposium. The project aims to provide artists with a variety of places and spaces to learn, share business skills and further develop sustainable livelihoods while raising the visibility of the culture sector's vitality. Jude Ortiz of NORDIK Institute at Algoma University is coordinating the project and states, "*The exhibition is an excellent opportunity for the craftspeople to gain exposure to businesses, residents, peers and tourists within the north and beyond*". A full colour catalogue will be available at each tour stop as well as on-line on the OCC's website.

After Fort Frances the exhibition continues its tour with stops in Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Huntsville, Elliot Lake and Hearst and will end at a gallery in Toronto.



Friends of the Museum

After seeing the huge success of the Fort Frances “Friends of the Library”, the Museum has decided to form their own “Friends” group to assist with much needed fund-raising.

As with any new organization looking to fund-raise, we will need to develop by-laws and elect a governing body: president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. Library staff will assist us with by-laws, but we do need people to take the lead while we get our group on its feet and fully functioning.

We will be hosting a *Meet & Greet* in September to raise awareness of the Museum and its presence in the community. We hope you will stop by and say hello. We value your feedback and suggestions.

So... you think you're savvy of pioneer tools and artifacts? In the planning stages for this November is a wine and cheese gala. One of the evening's activities will test your knowledge of past gadgetry.

Volunteers

Besides fund-raising, the Museum has need of volunteers for other activities:

- Taking photos of artefacts for online viewing
- Scanning school ledgers into a searchable database
- Exhibit set-up & takedown
- Research requests
- Planning & assisting with events
- Researching future exhibits
- Small carpentry jobs -- we need shelves!
- Writing historical articles for Museum newsletter & newspaper
- Authenticating engine room in Hallett
- Teaching old-time crafts to kids
- Assisting with children's activities
- Recording community stories – interviewing our elderly
- Creating table-top pioneer village for kids

If you have the time — one or two hours per week, an afternoon a month, a day or two a year — and the interest in helping out with any of the above projects, we can definitely use your assistance. We will match our needs with your skills, and *promise* that we'll not put you in a back room somewhere filing!

Interested? Call Sherry at 274-7891.

Remember... it's your museum. It is through our efforts together that we shape our community.

Summer Students

We welcome university students Sarah Mallory and Janelle Duffy. Along with graduating high school student, Jillian Berry, and recent hire, Kristina Robertson, they will cover summer hours at the Museum and heritage sites, organize children's activities for visiting Rec'n Crew and help with an ongoing list of projects.

We gratefully acknowledge the funding received from Young Canada Works, Canada Summer Jobs and Northern Development, Mines & Forestry, which makes it possible for the Museum to hire much needed assistance for the summer.



Sarah on the tower stairs

If it has been awhile since the last time you visited the Museum, please stop by. Our modern facility is another great reason to be proud of where we live.

Family History

After receiving an overwhelming response to the genealogy workshop with Janis Higgins held in March, we have formed our own genealogy group. We gather once a month to discuss what everyone is working on, share ideas and generally to support one another. The group is taking a break for the summer, but will resume again in September. Everyone welcome.

Group member and former teacher, Bill Low, will be offering a beginner's course in the fall for those interested in researching family history but are unsure of how to get started. Look for more information later in the summer.

Belegarth

To coincide with the international cross-border tug-of-war event on July 2nd, Jordan York and friends demonstrated Belegarth, a medieval combat society that is becoming very popular with young people of both genders.

Using a variety of weapons engineered from PVC piping, foam and cloth, local youth, with basic instructions, were able to participate in a mini-tournament .

With the enthusiastic response from both participants and their parents, York will be hard pressed to keep up with the demand for weaponry and additional opportunities to engage in the medieval martial art.

Kids enrolled in the Rec'n Crew program, All Sorts of Sports, will have a chance to make shields and take part in a simplified Belegarth mock combat.



It now seems that the carving is the work of a former resident who now lives and works in New York.

He buried the bear, formed from Italian alabaster, in honour of his native name: *momogeshick*.

Found: a white bear

While fishing a favourite spot below Crilly Bridge, local woman, Cecilia Kabatay, found a treasure buried in the ground. A bear, carved from what appears to be white quartz, has since generated a lot of community interest. Too heavy — 16.5 pounds — to have washed up on the bank, the bear's appearance presented a mystery.



Thank You!

The Fort Frances Museum & Cultural Centre would like to thank everyone who has supported us in any way... with your valuable time, your generous donations, or just with words of encouragement and support. We greatly value your input and truly appreciate your help.

Please continue to stop by with your feedback on how we are doing and your suggestions as to what we can do better.

The Museum and Heritage Sites continue to be a work in progress and can only develop and improve with the ongoing support of the community.

Thank you!

Our Heritage Sites

Our refurbished heritage sites — the lookout tower and Hallett — continue to be great draws along the waterfront.



The lookout tower, whether you climb all the way to the top, or stop at the first platform, provides a great view of the river and the La Verendrye Parkway.

The logging tugboat Hallett takes us back to the days when wood was best carried by water — a lasting tribute to all those hardworking loggers who provided the resources to feed the voracious appetite of local mills, which in turn ensured the livelihood of most of this area.

If you haven't visited, you can obtain a pass at the Sorting Gap Marina. Entrance fees include all three: the Museum, Hallett and Tower.