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# Fort Frances Museum & Cultural Centre

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*Now on Facebook!*



Winter 2015

*Coming up soon!*

## Friends of the Museum's Fall Fundraising Gala:

### *"Cut a Rug"*

The focus for this year's gala is dance. As the backdrop for the gala is our rug-hooking exhibit, Friends believed "Cut a Rug" would make for a fun event.

*And wow! Altogether, it is shaping up to be another great evening!*



The music will be lively and the trivia contest, created around a dance theme — popular dances of the last 100 years, great dance movies and the dancers themselves — is sure to test your brain cells.

To get things warmed up, the Rainy Lake Highlanders will be piping us in. Then the music of the Rainy Lake Community Orchestra will carry us into the night. As always, you can expect the appetizers prepared by chef Mark Nagant and Judy Kielczewski will be

scrumptious and the selection of wines very fine indeed! Dessert, tea & coffee will be served upstairs.

We've been receiving donations for our live auction all week.... *veerry* nice! A little something for Christmas giving, perhaps. Auctioneer, Telford Advent will be doing the honours.

You can also get a sneak peek at the new 2016 heritage calendar!

*It's all happening Thursday, November 5th, 6:30—9:30 at the Fort Frances Museum!* Tickets are \$35 each or 2 for \$60, available at the Museum or Library.

*See you Thursday!*



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### **Arts Programming coming up!**

This year, the Museum is partnering with the Friends of the Museum to provide arts programming on Saturdays. The Museum/Friends group will pay an honorarium to artists to teach the class. Participants will pay for their materials. This allows us to offer programming at a rate that will be reasonable for everyone.



We are pleased to offer programming for both adults and children.

#### **Adult programming (includes ages 12 and up).**

Coming up Saturday, December 12, in time for the Christmas season - Jennifer Coats will be showing us how to create wreaths and centre pieces from live greenery. Class size will be limited, so be sure to sign up early. There will be a small charge.

Then in the new year, we have a number of workshops lined up. Debbie Ballard: rughooking; Charlene Mallory: china painting and soap-making; Jen Coats: painting with acrylics and chalkboard art; Lindsay Hamilton: Pysanka. There are other possibilities, but we're still working out details.

#### **Children's programming is geared to families and will be led by Lindsay Hamilton.**

One Saturday per month, there will be an open studio for children and their families. This means families can show up anytime during the 1-4 time period, take part in a planned activity or simply do their own thing with the materials available to them. Lindsay will lead, teach, offer instruction and make suggestions to ensure children explore their creativity, develop skills and have fun.

The first session is booked for Saturday, December 5. No need to sign up. Just show up between 1 & 4. In the new year, open studio sessions will run the last Saturday of each month.

Cost is \$2 per person or \$5 per family.

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### **Friends merchandise: Something for that special someone!**



says 'Fort Frances', it was a great choice for souvenirs at the museum.

T-shirts come in various sizes. BBQ aprons are one-size fits all. Beer glasses are nicely weighted. All items are of excellent quality.

Money raised through sales helps pay for extras, including the arts programming mentioned above.

The new 2016 heritage calendar is being printed as we go to press, and it's even better than last year! It will be available at Thursday's gala, and then at the museum.

Also available is the line of merchandise created by the Friends of the Museum. The artwork is based on a product that was once sold locally... beer brewed and marketed by the Fort Frances Brewery. As the labeling so clearly



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*Update on current museum initiatives...*

### **Collections Management Coordinator**

As you recall, we received a provincial grant through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund to hire Bethany Waite to manage our collection. She is working through our storage rooms, ensuring that our collection is stored and labelled according to museum standards, and that our database accurately reflects what we have. She is also coordinating the purchase of additional shelving. These components are similar to what we already have — rolling units that allow us to use the space we have in the best way possible. It will make it easier for us to get large items off the floor and out of aisles.



### **Interactive Programming**

Also in the plans for next year, we will be using funds gifted to the museum to bring interactive content to our exhibits. Although we find that visitors of a certain age are very happy with our museum, we need to be looking at new ways to involve our young. Museums today are interactive, meaning that at a push of a button, visitors can hear dialogue, see a video, watch as a story unfolds. As our young people are our future, we need engage them in better ways. In short, museums like ours, need to be bringing the past into the present. Or we won't have a future!

### **The Rainy Lake Hotel Artifacts**



At present the murals — one of the causeway and another of the mill and dam — are in Winnipeg in the competent hands of a conservator and an art restorer. This team of professionals has reviewed the murals and noted issues to be considered in their preservation. This includes separation between the panels on one mural; this happened during transit due to the fact glue had been missing along this one seam. Other problems listed are: some paint lifting in spots, streaking due to humidity and other issues, nicotine damage, some food spatter, small nicks due to mounting hardware, etc. It doesn't sound like any of the damage cannot be

treated, however it should be noted that the paintings cannot be brought back to 'brand new' condition. This is expected. The treatment by the team will stabilize and prevent further deterioration.

We now know that both paintings were the work of Helen Strickland as signatures have been confirmed on both murals.

What will happen to the murals once refurbished is the question. We had originally hoped that they could be preserved to allow them to be part of an outdoor structure, and therefore part of what is built to replace the Rainy Lake Hotel. This may not be possible however, as the paintings would be exposed to extreme heat and cold. Further discussion will be necessary.

In addition to dishes, glasses, a framed photo, the 'Windsor Room' sign, a chair, entertainment posters and a mirror, the wrought iron balcony was saved. Very nice, as some community announcements were made from that balcony, including the end of WWII. Perhaps the balcony can be included in the final plans for the area.

I hope our community will give the future of the site some thought, and take part in public discussions, coming up. Let's create a welcoming space that we can all enjoy.

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## Feast your senses with a February Fashion Show!

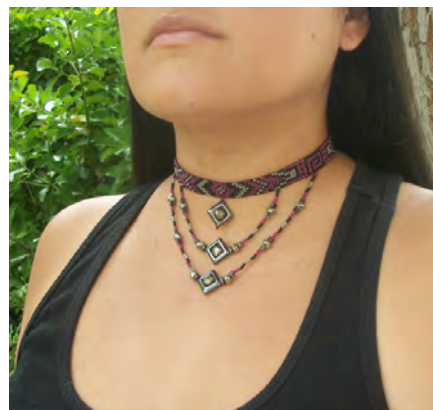
Coming up in the new year, the Museum is partnering with Odawayigamig, Scott Street's new Native Craft Store, to bring you something special. We will be offering a fashion show of native clothing and jewellery, inspired by Ojibwe culture, and hand-crafted in traditional ways.



The Native Craft Store's owners, Pam Johnson and Sandra Wayash-Calder, are excited to present a sampling of the artistic talent in our First Nations communities. The presentation of native fashions will be complemented by traditional music and foods.

For additional information, to submit a piece, or to be involved in any way, please contact Sandra at the store, or email

Sandra@odawayigamig.com. *'working together in preserving our language, culture and traditions'*



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## Donations to Our Collection

Pictured here are two pieces that were recently gifted to the museum.

On the left is a very nicely preserved cotton undergarment. This, along with several other pieces of women's undergarments, was donated by Christina Stoessinger.

Below right is a drawing by James Campbell and donated by Dorese Harrison. Many of you will remember Katz

corner and Wong's Chinese Food, just west of it, a favourite spot for a bite after the bars closed down.

And if you didn't know, Fort Frances was once a hopping place, when most restaurants — and there were a lot to choose from — stayed open well into the wee hours to accommodate the after-bar crowd... of which I was one! In the '70s, when I turned that magic number of 18, young people made the rounds between the Emperor (current tourism building), the Prince Albert (groundwood mill), the Fort Frances (mill training centre) and the Rainy Lake hotels. There was plenty of entertainment with the sounds of *Santana*, *the Guess Who*, *Three Dog Night* and *the Stones* on the play list. Ahh, yes, nostalgia.

If you have an item of interest, please do not hesitate to contact the museum. As we age, we tend to downsize. At that time we may find items that we've held on to from our past. Unfortunately our children may not be as fascinated by our treasures, so it's wise to determine where your things are going before the decision becomes theirs. Give me a call at 274-7891, or bring it by. I can quickly let you know if you have something the museum would be interested in. As a rule of thumb, we generally preserve anything that is related to the history of our area.

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## Don't forget our **Fibre Arts Festival 2016!**

This museum-sponsored event will feature finished pieces submitted by artisans and crafters working with fibre. With about a year to create, we are hoping to see some original designs, but also welcome pieces worked from a pattern.

Submitted pieces will be featured in the Museum's upstairs gallery from September to December 15, 2016. Call 274-7891 for more information or ask at the museum. We're also online: [ffmuseum@fort-frances.com](mailto:ffmuseum@fort-frances.com)

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### Exhibits

Currently at the museum is the **Artistry of Hooked Rugs**, curated by local rug-hooker, Debbie Ballard. There are over 60 rugs on display, many of them primitive designs, some heritage pieces and all of them works of art.

If you have not been in to see it, you still have time. The exhibit will run until December 19th, when we will close for Christmas.

**Coming up** in the new year, we will feature portraits. Fort Frances was fortunate to have many excellent photographers set up business in our area over the years. As a result the museum has hundreds of photographs and many of them portraits. These are important for a number of reasons, but primarily as examples of dress and décor through the years.

Bethany Waite, our Collections Management Coordinator, is also rounding up cameras and other photography equipment, which we will include in the display.

We have also begun planning for some upcoming exhibits: bush planes and boats. If you have anything — photos, stories, memorabilia — related to either, we would like to hear from you.

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### Display Cabinet Repaired

The Museum would like to thank **Jim Rose**, a local carpenter, for repairing our display cabinet. The legs were beginning to splay, causing the glass top to bow in the middle. We were very concerned that someone would inadvertently lean on, or attempt to move the case, and the structure would buckle. Not only would such a move cause irreparable damage to the cabinet, but we feared that someone could be injured.



Jim Rose, spent many afternoons working on the piece, using his expertise to strengthen joints and give stability to the cabinet.

The piece is believed to be from the Ray S. Holmes establishment, located where La Flambee recently operated.

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