



Honourable Mayor Avis
and Members of Council
City of Fort Frances
320 Portage Avenue
Fort Frances ON P9A 3P9

June 17, 2013

Dear Mayor Avis and Members of Council,

Re: Raising of the Franco-Ontarian flag at Fort Frances' City Hall

L'Association des francophones du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario (AFNOO) ensures the development and the prosperity of the Francophone communities in North Western Ontario on a political, educational, economical, linguistic, social and cultural level. We have enclosed for your information our latest activity report.

In May 2010, the Legislature enacted the *Franco-Ontarian Day Act, 2010*, S.O. 2010, c-4, (the "Act") designating the 25th of September of every year as the Franco-Ontarian Day.

The Preamble to the Act recognizes that many Franco-Ontarians commemorate September 25 to celebrate their language and heritage and also take pride in their collective accomplishments. Furthermore, September 25 is the anniversary of the first unveiling of the Franco-Ontarian flag in Sudbury in 1975. It should also be noted that the *Franco-Ontarian Emblem Act, 2001* recognizes the flag as the emblem of the Francophone community of Ontario.

As stated in the Act; "By proclaiming September 25 as Franco-Ontarian Day, this Act officially recognizes the contributions of the Francophone community of Ontario to the social, economic and political life of the Province and the community's importance in Ontario's society."

In 2012 Franco-Ontario Day was celebrated in our region by the official raising of the Franco-Ontarian flag in the City of Thunder Bay, City of Dryden and Township of Terrace Bay; both the Francophone and Anglophone communities gathered together to celebrate and rejoice the raising of our flag.

AFNOO has been solicited by the Francophone residents of our City, with the following requests:

1. **Raising of the Franco-Ontarian flag** ⁽¹⁾ on September 24, 2013 at Fort Frances' City Hall – if possible between 12 pm and 2 pm (to accommodate our young public); they have further requested that the flag remains on a permanent basis;

2. The support of the City of Fort Frances in the celebrations surrounding the "**Community commemorations of 400 Years of the French Presence in Ontario 2013-2015**", to be held between January 2014 and September 25, 2015. It is specifically being requested that during this period of time that the City of Fort Frances raise the special 400 years celebration flag along with the Franco-Ontarian flag in its City.

We have enclosed, for your information, images of the Franco-Ontarian and 400th celebration flag.

The above referenced events are of significant importance to our community and our members. In this regard, we enclose letters from our schools showing their interest and the importance to celebrate such an exceptional Day and anniversary.

The francophone citizens of our City are proud and eager to share their cultural heritage within their community; such events assist in enhancing French language in your region, it further promotes and encourages the development of our economy, diversity and tourism.

We look forward to your favourable response. For further information, please contact: **Ms. Elodie Bedouet, Executive Director:** (807) 684-1950 or by email: dg@afnoo.org

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Maire et membres du conseil, nos salutations les plus distinguées.

Chantal Brochu

Chantal Brochu
President

1/



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[HOME](#) [NEWS](#) [CONTACT US](#)You are here > [Home](#) > [Francophones in Ontario](#) > Franco-Ontarian flag**Franco-Ontarian Flag*****Franco-Ontarian Emblem Act, 2001*****Preamble:**

The French language has been present in Ontario for 350 years. The first French speakers to come to Ontario were the missionaries who established the mission of Sainte-Marie-among-the-Hurons in 1639.



The Ontario French-speaking community is the largest French-speaking community in Canada outside Quebec. French is one of the two official languages of Canada. In Ontario, it is recognized as an official language in the courts, in education and in the Legislative Assembly.

For nearly 40 years, the Province of Ontario has recognized the importance of serving its citizens in French upon request. It was when the present section 5 of the *French Language Services Act*, an Act also known as Law 8, came into force in November 1989, that the Province recognized that its citizens were entitled to those services upon request.

The Franco-Ontarian flag was unveiled for the first time on September 25, 1975 at Sudbury University. From then on, the Ontario French-speaking community has consistently used it as its emblem. It is therefore appropriate now to recognize it officially as the emblem of that community.

Therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:

Definition

1. In this Act,

"Ontario French-speaking community" means the community of persons who have the right under subsection 23 (1) or (2) of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, without regard to subsection 23 (3) of that Charter, to have their children receive their primary and secondary school instruction in the French language in Ontario.

Franco-Ontarian emblem

2. The flag described in the Schedule to this Act is recognized as the emblem of the Ontario French-speaking community.

Description of the Emblem of the Ontario French-Speaking Community

The emblem of the Ontario French-speaking community consists of two vertical bands of different colours. The first band is mid green and has a white lily in the middle of the band. The second band is white and has a mid green trillium in the middle of the band.

On the emblem, green represents summer and white represents winter. Together the two colours represent the diversity of Ontario's climate. The lily evokes the French-speaking community worldwide, whereas the trillium is the floral emblem of Ontario.

The following is an illustration of the emblem:



(This picture outlined for contrast. Actual flag does not have green border.)

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You are here > [Home](#) > [Francophones in Ontario](#) > History of the French Presence in Ontario

History of the French Presence in Ontario

The French presence in Ontario dates back nearly 400 years. The French were the first to explore the province and establish permanent settlements, as shown on our [interactive map](#). They are an integral part of Ontario's history.

The story of the French presence in Ontario begins with the explorations of young Étienne Brulé in 1610 and the establishment of first Jesuit mission at Sainte-Marie-Among-the-Hurons in 1639. The French were the first Europeans to use the natural and economic resources of the land that would become Ontario and the first to forge alliances with its Native peoples.

However, following wars with the Iroquois and the British, the French positions were weakened and France ceded all its North American possessions to Great Britain in the First Treaty of Paris (1763).

Under British rule, Francophones played a role in the economic and social development of Upper Canada and became more autonomous. Efforts by religious communities resulted in the creation of the first French-language educational institutions.

After Confederation in 1867, Ontario experienced a period of immigration and prosperity as a result of industrialization and the construction of the railways. French Canadian settlement followed the rail lines. At this time, internal divisions increased amongst English Canadians leading to further assimilation. French Canadians called for equal status. French Canadian leaders demanded equal recognition of their religious and educational rights.

When Ruling 17 (1912) made English the only language of instruction in Ontario's public schools, Francophones protested and created a separate school system. The crisis abated in 1927 when bilingual schools were re-established.

From 1910 to 1960, Ontario's Francophones created numerous organizations to defend their rights and promote their culture. During this time, the *Association canadienne-française d'éducation de l'Ontario* (ACFÉO), the first Francophone *caisse populaire* (1910) and a daily newspaper, *Le Droit* (1913), were founded.

In 1969, Ontario's laws authorized French language schools at the elementary and secondary levels. In 1970, the administration of French language government services was entrusted to the Office of the Government Coordinator of French-Language Services (which would become the Office of Francophone Affairs in 1985). The 1970s represented a time of tremendous artistic and cultural creativity, particularly in the Sudbury area. The *Franco-Ontarian flag* was created and raised for the first time at the University of Sudbury on September 25, 1975. This event has since become an important symbol for the Franco-Ontarian community and is celebrated each year.

In 1980, TVOntario began to offer programming in French. In 1984, the *Courts of Justice Act* gave French the same official language status in the courts as English. In 1986, the Government of Ontario adopted the *French Language Services Act*. The Act gives French legal status in the Legislative Assembly and guarantees the public the right to receive government services in French.

The 1990s and 2000s were marked by many advancements and accomplishments, such as the creation of twelve French-language school boards in 1997 and the recognition of the *Franco-Ontarian flag* by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as an emblem of the Francophone community of Ontario in 2001. The anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian flag has become a symbolic date and is celebrated every year by francophone communities across the province.

For more information on the development of French language services, see [Historical Overview of French-language Services in Ontario](#).

To learn more about the French presence in Ontario, visit the Office of Francophone Affairs' exhibit [Ontario's Francophonie: Then And Now](#) and consult the Archives of Ontario for more information on [French Ontario in the 17th and 18th centuries](#).

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