
Fort Frances Museum & Cultural Centre

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July 2013

*Currently on display in our main floor gallery...
Bone China: Gone with the Hope Chest?*

The exhibit is up and attracting lots of attention. Seeing it makes me wonder why I do not use my china more often, as many of these pieces are quite simply exquisite... lovely tea sets, full dinner services including platters and covered vegetable dishes, graceful figurines, and many, many unique cups and saucers. Crocheted tablecloths and hand-embroidered napkins lend an elegance to the display.



The exhibit provides some history surrounding bone china and the popularity of tea. For example, did you know that bone china gets its name from one of its more important components... bones burned to ash? It was this improvement that gives the delicate porcelain its strength.

We have also included some background on the many businesses that once sold fine china, a profitable sideline that extended over several generations.



Both floors of the museum are accessible by elevator from the rear entrance - available by ringing the bell on most days, but open for your convenience from 10 to 4 on Market Thursdays for tea and scones, served upstairs.

The exhibit continues through July and most of August, wrapping up August 23rd.





Jillian Berry, Hannah Taylor, Libby Paleczny

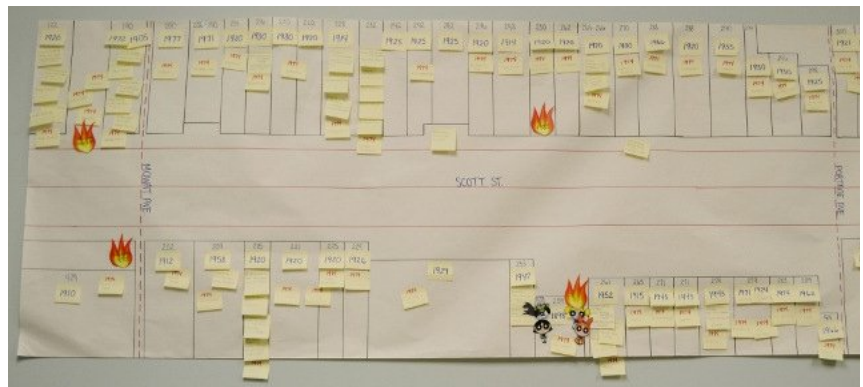
Grants, Students, & the Projects that Come with Summer

The Museum is very fortunate once again to have received grants that permit us to employ student help. We wish to thank the federal and provincial governments for offering Young Canada Works, Canada Summer Jobs, the Summer Experience Program and the Summer Jobs Service — funding for student grants which makes it possible to offer employment to students.

Jillian Berry and **Hannah Taylor** returned from university the first week in May and have been working very hard ever since. They began by opening up the Hallett and Lookout Tower for the summer season, then revamped our Backpack program to reflect recent changes to our upstairs gallery. For those of you who may not be familiar with the program, backpacks on five themes (First Nations, Pioneers, Fur Trade, Logging and Community) are available to children who visit the museum. Children tour the permanent exhibit while completing the activities inserted inside the various pockets within the pack. For the first time this year, the program is now available to two age groups, ages 4-6 and 7-11. The program has proven to be a favourite with many of our primary grade teachers who regularly bring their classes in June.

Once school was out, our Métis exhibit came down and Bone China went up. Students helped with both... properly returning our Métis artefacts to storage and completing research for our Bone China story boards. They also planned and prepared appropriate activities for weekly Rec'n Crew visits and the Day Care youngsters who will be joining us more often this summer.

Picking up where Samantha Manty left off, Jillian and Hannah have continued with research on past and present businesses for our Borderland Walking Tour (to be accessed using QR codes). Information for some Scott Street buildings is readily available, but for others, details are scarce. Although work will continue through the summer, focus has now turned to our very important digitization project spear-headed by **Jeremy Hughes** and funded by the Ontario government.



Mapping out businesses that came and went.

Our museum database has now been transferred from the old system to PastPerfect software. Jeremy has worked hundreds of hours correlating many often-incomplete files to ensure that most information is now in the correct categories. Hannah, Jillian and high school student, **Libby Paleczny** now work at adding information that has been stored on index cards and other archival sources. Photos available on the computer for past exhibits, relevant research, and additional information such as donor names are being attached to the appropriate file. Many, many more hours of careful work will follow, but it feels good knowing we've made a significant start.

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While the students follow up with the database, Jeremy will give the bulk of his time now to the newspapers, the digitization of over 100 years of Fort Frances Times — an important component to our grant. Not only will we have the papers photographed, but hope to have the ability to search the material using OCR (optical character recognition) technology. For example, if you are looking for J.A. Mathieu, the search tool will recognize any references to his name. This feature will make research so much easier for everyone, whether a historian or someone looking for family information.

Summer zips by in a flash. For university students, July marks the third quarter, and there is still so much to do. At the same time, I feel very fortunate to have an enthusiastic group who are as engaged as I am in the positive changes we are making to the museum. Thanks, everyone, for the hard work. Your efforts are most appreciated.

International Artist, **Margot Cormier Splane**, comes to the Fort Frances Museum August 25th until her closing reception on Thursday, September 26th.

Margot Cormier Splane has exhibited her art around the world, participating in 66 international exhibits — almost all of them juried competitions — in 11 different countries, including shows throughout Canada. She has won 12 awards for her artwork and has had 26 solo exhibitions. Splane's work deals with a wide variety of themes including the modern versus the primitive, and technology versus nature.

“Creating art is not something that I want to do, it is something I need to do. My inspiration evolves out of a variety of different sources. Lately I have been dealing with a lot of environmental concerns in my art, in particular using my creation ‘Pandora’s Trojan Horse’ which represents all of the evils of the world, concealed in a wondrous package. This environmental devil horse looks radiant, as it prances around unconcerned about the chaos it leaves behind.

“On a lighter side, I am also dealing with things I see or feel in my every day life: a story from the news, exploring art from the past, a historic event or even an amusing anecdote. Any of these sources can move me esthetically and germinate an idea. I call my style ‘Reality with a Twist’ because it is very realistic, but unlike anything you would ever see.”

‘Pandora’s Trojan Horse Visits Atlantis’ - by *Margot Cormier Splane*



During warm periods in the earth's history, the sea level has been up to 100 meters higher, with no ice sheets at the poles. Because of the cooler climate today, there are massive ice sheets that cover the Antarctic continent and Greenland. In the Antarctic alone, the ice sheet varies from 2 to 4.5 kilometers in thickness; that's 1 to 3 miles of solid ice. Even a small scale melting of these polar ice caps would alter coast lines around the world.



Threadworks returns to Fort Frances

This very popular travelling exhibit features art created with fabric and yarns, and may include quilting, embroidery, beading, rughooking... basically anything that combines textiles with imagination. Examples that have come to us in past exhibitions are outstanding, highlighting some amazing talent Canada-wide. This year's theme is Water. Included here are just a few of the pieces that will be on display during November and December.

'Waves & Flowers'
by Patricia Menon

on left



'A Highland Stream'
by Marianne Tighe
above

'Sirens' by Mary Kroetsch
on left

Fibre Art Festival

In conjunction with Threadworks, the Museum is hosting our own local version of the art show, a Fort Frances Fibre Art Festival. We invite all interested crafters who work with textiles (fabric, thread, yarn) to submit a sample of your craft.



Pieces will be displayed in our upstairs gallery during November and December while Threadworks appears in the main floor gallery. This will highlight the talent in our own area, and at the same time provide a venue for local artisans to exhibit samples of their work.

Pieces must be complete, but could be something you did years ago, or maybe something new you've always wanted to try.... quilting, rughooking, crocheting, cross-stitch, embroidery, a self-designed hand-bag, fascinator or piece of clothing.... Just about anything you can imagine is worth a try!

Anything that can be made with fabric and thread is eligible. Deadline is October 31st for display November 5th. For more information, call the museum, 274-7891.

Please pass the word. If successful, we'll do it again.



Tea & Scones - upstairs at the Museum on Market Thursdays

In conjunction with our Bone China exhibit, the museum is serving tea and scones upstairs on Market Thursdays. Enough cups and saucers have been donated to set up the room with a different pattern at each place setting. Special Market Thursday pricing means \$3 for a cup of specialty tea and home-made scone. \$5 includes a visit to our exhibits.

Not only is this a great bargain for you, but it has also been a great experience for me. I've learned lots about tea drinking,

traditions and even dishwashing from our many visitors. One lady explained to me that it was during the washing up afterwards that her mother shared life's most important lessons, heart-to-hearts that she still remembers well from her girlhood.



Future exhibits...

2014 marks 100 years since the Fort Frances paper mill opened its doors; it was also the start of World War I.

We welcome your ideas as to how we should recognize these milestones.

Calendar of Events

- Tea & Scones every Market Thursday during the summer.
- August 25 - September 26: *Margot Cormier-Splane*, visiting international artist from Timmins, ON.
- September 26 - October 31: *Cher Pruys*: our own well-known international artist.
- November and December: the very popular, textile exhibit: *Threadworks: Water*.
- Thursday, November 7: 2nd Annual Fundraising Gala hosted by Friends of the Museum.

Our writers, genealogy and Friends groups have taken a break for the summer, but will resume meetings in September.

Summer hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

**Remember that the museum is accessible by elevator from the rear entrance.
Ring the bell and someone will be with you shortly.**

Back entrance open all day on Market Thursdays for easy access to tea & scones!