



Fort Frances Museum & Cultural Centre

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Find us on Instagram & Facebook!

April 2019

Special Dates of Interest

- **Taking Back Our Natural World** runs April to June!
- **Mon April 22** —
Earth Day!
- **Opening for 'Taking Back Our Natural World'**
Wed April 24, 4-6 p.m.
Winners of art contest announced, sponsored by New Gold.
- **Tree Care Workshop**,
Diana McGhee, MNR
Sat Apr 27.
- Watch for other workshops & seminars around **climate change**.
- **May long weekend**:
summer hours begin
- **open daily, 10-5 p.m.**
Admission fees apply.
Includes Hallett & tower.
- **Thurs May 30** — AGM & elections of officers for Friends of the Museum, 5:15 p.m.
- **Echoes in the Ice: Finding Franklin's Ship** runs July - Sept. Soft opening June 29.
- **Grand Opening for Franklin exhibit**—
Wed July 3rd.
- **Thurs July 4**:
Tea & Scones begins.
- **Tuesday afternoons during July & August** at the Rainy Lake Square—programming for kids!

Hello, Spring!

It's been a rather long winter, and as much as we've all been grateful that spring took its time about getting here — lessened the risk of flooding — we are all eager to welcome warmer temperatures and more days spent outdoors. Finally!

As the seasons change, so do the exhibits at the museum, and the programming that go with them. Saturday workshops will be wrapping up in early May for another year, students are back around the same time, and planning for our tourist season has already begun.

In conjunction with all that, the rest of our year is shaping up nicely. Mark your calendars! Some things aren't to be missed!

First, the Museum is hiring a full time assistant — *very exciting!* For a number of years, we have been very fortunate to receive grants through the **Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation** to hire interns that have accomplished some very important projects for the museum... transferring old databases to new collections software, digitizing our weekly newspapers, inventorying our artefacts and maximizing storage, developing interactive components for our permanent exhibits, and community outreach. The latter helped us re-evaluate past practices and adopt new strategies for including all members of our communities.

All have greatly increased the museum's functionality and ensured the best care of our collection. In addition, our museum is well placed on our journey forward. But even as we've streamlined tasks, traffic continues to increase. More people visit exhibits, make use of research materials and attend workshops. To ensure we are fully meeting the needs of our community, we require staffing. We thank town council for supporting this request.

Taking Back Our Natural World, our climate change exhibit will be opening soon. Various workshops and presentations around this theme are in planning stages. Once we pin down dates and times, these will be advertised. *Open House is planned for Wed Apr 24, 4-6 p.m.*

Echoes in the Ice: Finding Franklin's Ship comes to our museum this summer! Created by *Ingenium, Canada's Science & Technology Museum*, this is a first class exhibit and the biggest our museum has brought in on loan. We will be raising rates for summer admissions to help with costs. We hope you will support us by coming in to see it. You won't be disappointed! This is a Canadian story that has garnered attention from around the world.

Taking Back Our Natural World

This exhibit will deal with climate change, probably the most important issue facing our world... *ever!*

The more I research, the more I wonder why there isn't more fuss. Yes, there are those who deny it and will continue to deny it until they've made the last dollar they can off the profits that can be made by pretending it isn't so.

But that's not most of us. And yet... ??

We all know that climate change is with us now. The evidence is around us in more wild fires, less arctic ice, thawing of the permafrost, a retreat of the world's glaciers, species disappearing or moving their range, severe flooding and drought that will cause mass migrations of people on a level that we've not seen before.

Scientists are clearly concerned. With so many of the greatest minds in the world strongly lobbying for drastic change, one can't be faulted for thinking that they will come up with something.

As for governments... We are habitually reluctant to put our trust in our politicians, and understandably so. Hasn't our provincial government just dismissed their environmental commissioner? They are also challenging the carbon tax when leaders from around the world agree that although costly, the carbon tax is one of the most important deterrents to fossil fuel reliance and production — both climate-crippling practices that must be minimized now.

Yes, we are concerned about prices at the pump, but the truth is... *it's time to pay the piper.* The years of nearly-free energy and oil-dependent travel are unfortunately drawing to a close.

What will the world look like for our children and grandchildren, if we don't? Will there be fresh water and clean air? What about animals, birds, insects? What happened to red-bellied garter snakes? Bats? Bees? Water beetles? At what point do we take notice of their plight? When fewer become none?

Will parts of our world be so uninhabitable due to droughts, flooding or overcrowding, that this beautiful world we love be changed beyond recognition?



We need to ask ourselves these questions. And, at the very least, we need to be learning everything we can about this high-priority topic. And perhaps we need to be asking more questions of our governments... why has the province dismissed their environmental commissioner? Why now with climate change critical? If neither the commissioner nor the carbon tax are considered necessary, what is to be the alternative?

Should we not be hearing 'no' more in response to fossil fuel production, and 'yes' more when it comes to solar, wind and water power? When money must be invested in energy, should it not be green energy?

Indigenous elders have spoken out on every continent. Living close to nature, they see that temperatures have risen to the point that feed for reindeer has vanished, that without sea ice, seals cannot safely birth or raise their young, that glaciers have retreated by miles, thus driving more change to weather patterns. Are we hearing their concerns?

Thousands of youth have rallied in the streets. They want answers as to what we plan to do. How will we respond?

The good thing is, it's not all gloom and doom. Around the world, people are stepping up to the crises they are facing. Some innovative solutions are being proposed. Many see the problems as an opportunity to fix the things that are broken in our society... the imbalance of wealth, and the power wielded by giant corporations. For example: Why is it that solutions to climate change can be challenged in the courts simply because they will impact the profits of a company that has made billions on oil production with few safeguards for environmental or individual rights?

But yes, many governments and fossil fuel producers are listening and proposing change. Some countries are saying 'no' to fracking and even oil exploration. Others have passed laws that require car manufacturers to significantly reduce emissions — costly changes that will eliminate profits.

Man has changed earth dramatically. Can we stop this course we're on? And can we do it in time?

'Taking Back Our Natural World' runs until June 22nd. Opening: Wed Apr 24, 4-6 p.m. Please join us.

In conjunction with the climate change exhibit, there will be workshops and presentations on the following:

- Sat **Apr 27**, 9-12 at museum, 1-3:30 outside - **Tree Care Workshop**, led by **Diana McGhee**, Partnership Specialist with Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry; participants must pre-register at museum.
- Afternoon & evening presentations by **IISD Experimental Lakes Area** on the impact of climate change on local lakes (water temperatures and clarity, and effects on fish, algae bloom, mercury); date to be announced.
- Composting by **Peter Kirby**; date to be announced.
- Effects of climate change on insurance by **Myles Kuharski, Gillons**; date to be announced.

All workshops are free to the public, but space will be limited, so pre-registration will be required.

In addition, we have plans to show **Edward Burtynsky's film, *Anthropocene: the Human Epoch***, an award winning documentary on climate change. Exhibitions of Edward Burtynsky's photographs are making the rounds at the world's most famous art galleries. We are very pleased that 20 of these photographs are included in **Taking Back Our Natural World**, *courtesy of Edward Burtynsky*.



Winners!

Our winner for the People's Choice Award in our Fibre Arts Festival is Caren Fagerdahl. Caren worked with felt to create stuffed animals, the characters from the book: *The Mitten*. We congratulate Caren on a job well done.

The piece to receive the second largest votes was Camie Gray's *Lady in Red*, a very striking, queen-sized quilt.

We thank all those who contributed pieces to our fibre arts exhibit. We love seeing the creativity and effort that goes into these works of art and are always blown away by what are locals are doing in their down time.

We intend to do this again in 2-3 years, so watch for updates and start planning.

Tues Apr 16 was the last day that we accepted art for inclusion in our climate-change exhibit. Winners will be announced at our exhibit opening on Wed Apr 24th. Prizes will be awarded for 1st and 2nd place.

Thank you to all artists who submitted pieces. Art will hang for the duration of the **Taking Back Our Natural World** exhibition, until June 22.

We thank **New Gold** for providing cash prizes for our event.

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June 29 - September 22, 2019

10 a.m. - 5 p.m. daily

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& Cultural Centre**



Echoes in the Ice

FINDING FRANKLIN'S SHIP

**Grand Opening:
Wed July 3rd**

Admission Fees Apply

Using artifacts, images, audiovisual presentations, and art, **Echoes in the Ice: Finding Franklin's Ship** decodes the mysteries of the Franklin Expedition of 1845, in which an entire crew vanished in the Arctic during an ill-fated search.

The exhibition is a co-production of Gone West Productions and the Canada Science and Technology Museum in Ottawa, with the generous support of Natural Resources Canada and Parks Canada.



CANADA SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM
MUSÉE DES SCIENCES
ET DE LA TECHNOLOGIE
DU CANADA

Artefact

An interesting piece in the museum's collection is a flintlock pistol. Rather than see it remain locked in our gun cabinet as it has done for many years, we decided it was time to put it on display.



Fortunately for us, we know a very good craftsman who likes to tinker away in his workshop at various projects. Just weeks after being asked, Eric Fagerdahl, a Friend of the Museum, brought back the flintlock encased in a fine wooden display case that is now featured in our fur-trade exhibit.

For those of you who may not know much about pistols, flintlock is a general

term for any firearm that uses a flint-striking ignition mechanism. These pistols were introduced in the early 17th century, and quickly replaced earlier technologies such as the matchlock and wheel-lock pistols.

A matchlock — as the name implies — held a slow-burning match in a clamp at the end of a small curved lever known as the *serpentine*. Upon the pull of a lever protruding from the bottom of the gun and connected to the serpentine, the clamp dropped down, lowering the match into the flash pan and igniting the priming powder.

A wheel-lock replaced the matchlock with a friction-wheel mechanism that caused the spark for lighting the gunpowder. It was the next major development in firearms technology after the matchlock and the first self-igniting firearm.

A typical flintlock mechanism has a piece of flint which is held in place on the end of a short hammer. When released by the trigger, the spring-loaded hammer moves forward, causing the flint to strike a piece of steel called the "frizzen". The frizzen is pushed back, allowing the cover over the gunpowder pan to open. As the flint strikes the frizzen, a spark is created that ignites the powder.



The flintlock continued to be in use for over two centuries and would likely have been carried by some of our early explorers. The piece on the right — the badly rusted mechanism from a similar weapon — was found on a sandbar on Rainy Lake.

The **Indigenous Workshop Series** is going well. A successful beading class was held over the past weekend at Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung Historical Centre and was sponsored by New Gold.

Continue to watch for news of additional workshops as we work out details with instructors.

We thank our partners: New Gold, TD Bank, Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung Historical Centre, Seven Generations Education Institute, Fort Frances Public Library Technology Centre, Friends of the Fort Frances Museum, Sunset Country Metis, Project Sunset, Gizhewaadiziwin Health Access Centre, and a multitude of other community members.