

History of the Museum in Morinville, Alberta

A few years ago, the Morinville Historical and Cultural Society members were in decline, dwindling numbers, volunteers etc. As stewards of the museum from the late 1970's, they had compiled the collection and set up the museum on two floors of the Notre Dame Convent. In April of 2005 the Society handed over the operations and keys of the Convent to the Town of Morinville and effectively shutdown for a number of years. An asbestos issue throughout the building and possibility of the loss of the Convent triggered a renewed interest in re-establishing the Society.

Since the renewal of the Society, they have been working cooperatively to preserve the artifacts, archives and establish a long term solution for the museum.

A mini Museum was created in June 2006 at a small heritage home-Perras Place at the community information centre. The bulk of their collections were in storage and a larger facility was required. But the renovation and opening of Perras Place was only the start. It triggered a renewed public interest in downtown revitalization efforts and the recognition of historic and heritage roots. This led to initiatives like heritage street signage, an "historic homes and heroes" walking tour, a strengthening of the French corridor cultural tourism experience (with the Société Touristique Centralta Tourism Society, Legal and St. Albert), other historic home renovations, a project to capture the memories and stories of early pioneers, the opening of 2 tea houses, not to mention the re-location of the Tourist Information Centre and the Museum at Perras Place.

In July 2006 the Notre Dame Convent (the present site of the Museum) applied to the Provincial Historic Resources Project for funding. The Notre Dame Convent was to be

rehabilitated for a new primary commercial use as residential apartments. A new basement-storey parkade addition was planned at the west elevation as well as a new basement-storey museum entrance addition at the south elevation. The Morinville Historical and Cultural Society has worked in partnership with the Town of Morinville and the Government of Alberta to develop a new permanent museum space located in the newly renovated Convent. The Museum is a Town leased facility, run by the members of the Morinville Historical and Cultural Society.

The Musée Morinville Museum held a grand opening on June 27, 2009. With renovations now complete, the Museum space includes a showcase area, an area that we have partnered with the Morinville Art Club to display their art work, an office, a Program Room, and a proper storage room.

With patience and commitment, the Society's vision of a museum came to life. Today's members involved with the Morinville Historical and Cultural Society are committed to share this history and artifacts of life in Morinville and area.



Notre Dame Convent 1929
Photo nd-3-4706-k Glenbow Museum