

Museum Musings: Family Day and Beyond

For me, one of the delights of volunteering for the Historical Society involves the occasions when we have free admission. I love the excited chatter of the young families, the questions about the exhibits, and the interest displayed.

This coming Monday, February 17th, is Family Day in the Province of Saskatchewan, and the Historical Museum (River Street and Central Avenue) will be open free of charge from 1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. It is an opportunity to visit the Historical Museum for the first time, or for those of you who have been here before, to check out the changes we have been making to our exhibits.

Monday is just the beginning of the February break, so students are likely to have time on their hands for the entire week. Consider joining us each afternoon for special activities at the Historical Museum. We will be open free of charge each afternoon from 1:00 until 4:00.



Parents and Grandparents should remember to bring a camera to take pictures of the youngsters sitting in the fire truck, wearing a fireman's helmet, or simply to capture that moment when some other exhibit catches their imagination.

Because Monday is Family Day, we will be featuring the family tree of an important member from our community's past. Also, Spencer (our Museum Educator) will be providing instruction on how to prepare your own family tree. So, be sure to come in to see which Prince Albert family we have selected, and start work on your own family tree.

Tuesday afternoon would be the ideal time for families to come in and check out what hand woven artifacts we have, as well as our bracelets from the past. Spencer will be running a hand weaving and bracelet making workshop, so if you have an artistic bent you might try recreating one of the historic bracelets from our collection.

On Wednesday afternoon, we will be providing interested visitors with a "behind the scenes" tour of the Museum. Ever wondered what is in the vault in the basement? Are you curious about the artifacts in storage? Just what is behind that door with the sign reading "Staff Only"? You may have heard about the Bill Smiley Archives, but just what does that entail? Are there photographs? Books? Other documents? Who works in the archives, who has access, and from where does the material come?

Having visited the Museum, checked out all the exhibits, and done the “behind the scenes” tour, you are probably an expert on Prince Albert history. So, here is your chance to display that knowledge. On Thursday afternoon, we will be hosting a trivia contest. Come individually, or enter your family as a team. I have heard that there will be a sweet prize for the winners!

Finally, on Friday afternoon, we will be displaying some items from the past. This will be your chance to identify artifacts which are no longer typically used, or at least to make a guess at what it is. Then, we will let you use the item. Instead of sending a tweet, try typing a letter. What about a telephone call on an instrument on which there is no keyboard? Try ringing a bell to let family members know that it is time to come home for dinner.

All in all, there is no need to be bored during the February break. Join us for one afternoon, or every afternoon. Get to know the Historical Museum, the staff, and some of the volunteers. Learn about the history of Prince Albert and area, and maybe even win a prize.

We look forward to seeing you!

And check us out on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/PrinceAlbertHistoricalSociety/> or on the Prince Albert Historical Society website.

Fred Payton
Prince Albert Historical Society
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