



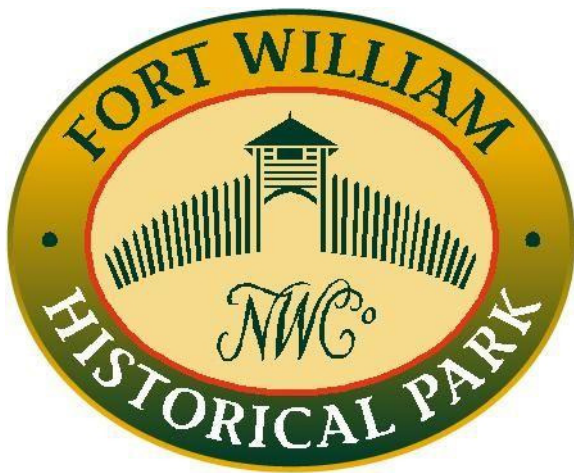
Fort William Historical Park Honoured with Provincial Heritage Award for Programming

OHS Russell K. Cooper Award 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In 1967, The Ontario Historical Society (OHS) established an awards program to recognize individuals, organizations, corporations, and authors who have contributed significantly to the preservation and promotion of Ontario's heritage.

The Russell K. Cooper Award is presented to a living history museum, or a museum that delivers heritage-based programming, showing excellence in programming, ingenious problem solving, or site development. The OHS is pleased to present the 2017 Russell K. Cooper Award to **Fort William Historical Park** in recognition of their innovative programming, their ingenious problem solving, and their significant site development.



Fort William Historical Park is committed to “Preserving the Past While Building the Future”, as demonstrated in their outstanding heritage-based programming and experiences for thousands of visitors each year. Programming excellence at the site is perhaps best demonstrated by its primary performance measure – visitor satisfaction. Visitors continually rate the site's activities and programs very highly, with an average visitor experience rating of 95.58%.

Fort William is committed to delivering an inclusive, authentic depiction of fur trade history, which provides different socio-economic and multicultural perspectives of Canada's history. The living history site illustrates the different roles and contributions of the region's Indigenous people, the French Canadian and Metis voyageurs, and the Anglo-Scottish fur traders during the 19th century fur trade era. Perhaps most notable in the site's program offerings is the development of the Learning Wigwam

facility, and the “Sleeping Under Bark” program, which together comprise the most comprehensive Indigenous program available at Fort William. This programming has garnered national and provincial awards for forging new partnerships and increasing Indigenous programming. Innovation and excellence are well illustrated through the development of “Northwest to the Pacific: A Fur Trade Odyssey”. This comprehensive digital learning resource explores the fur trade and its role in the development of Canada, while examining the heritage and cultures of the diverse communities who were a part of the fur trade.

Highlights of the site's many successes with ingenious problem solving and site development include: raising the profile of the Thunder Bay community and Northern Ontario through innovative tourism initiatives and strategic partnerships; the development of the Fort William Historic Park Canada Gateway Centre in Minnesota; cultivation of a large heritage garden, producing an average of 3000 pounds of fresh produce annually, which is donated to assist underprivileged individuals and families; offering services and programs in English, French and Oji-Cree languages; and the development of the David Thompson Astronomical Observatory. For these many reasons, the Honours and Awards Committee of the Ontario Historical Society is pleased to present the Russell K. Cooper Award to Fort William Historical Park.

Founded in 1888, the Ontario Historical Society is a non-profit corporation and registered charity dedicated to the preservation and celebration of Ontario's history for people of all ages and cultural backgrounds. To learn more about the OHS's Honours and Awards Program, or to submit a nomination, please visit <https://www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/index.php/categories> or contact the Society's offices by telephone or e-mail.

-The Ontario Historical Society-

Contact: Daniel Dishaw - ddishaw@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca - 416.226.9011

 @ONTARIOHISTORY  /ONTARIOHISTORICALSOCIETY  ONTARIOHISTORICALSOCIETY.CA