

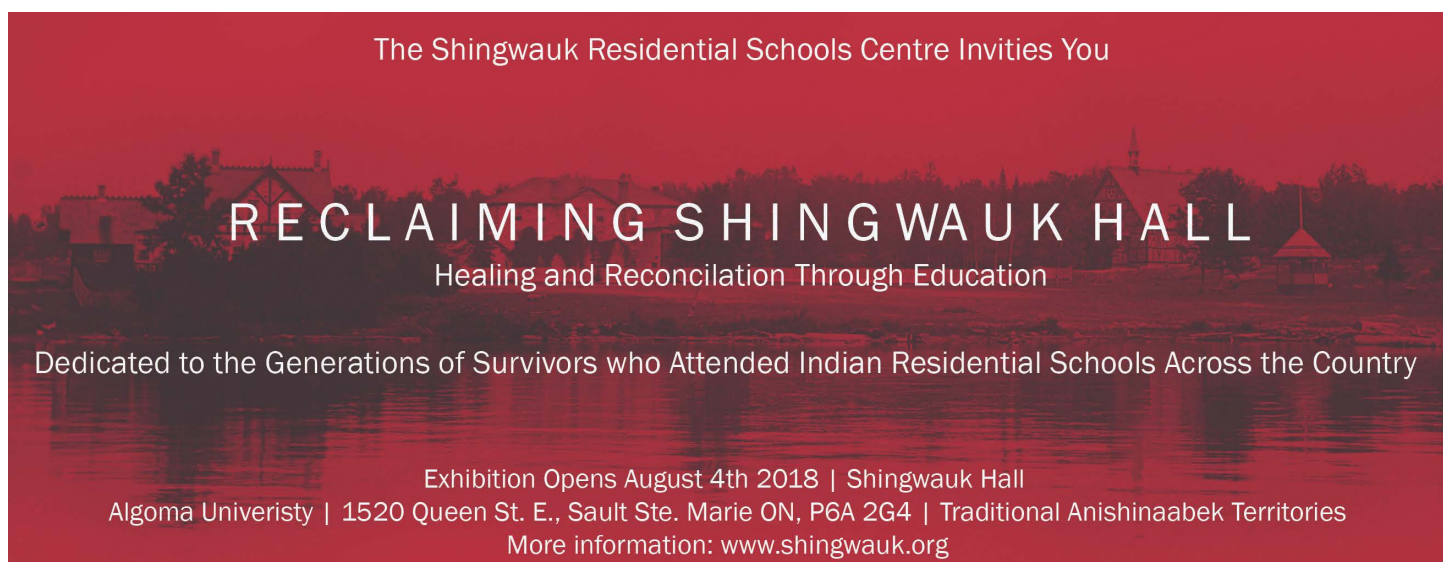


Reclaiming Shingwauk Hall Recognized with Provincial Award

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OHS Indigenous History Award presented June 15, 2019 at Tyndale University College and Seminary in Toronto

The Ontario Historical Society is pleased to present the Indigenous History Award to the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre for the Reclaiming Shingwauk Hall initiative. The Indigenous History Award recognizes significant contributions towards the promotion or preservation of Indigenous history or heritage in Ontario. Uniquely located on the site of the former Shingwauk Residential School, the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre at Algoma University has taken a leadership role in community-engaged work by making accessible the story of Indian Residential Schools broadly, and the story of the Shingwauk School and its Survivors more specifically.



On August 3, 2018, the SRSC opened in ceremony the first major, permanent, Residential School Survivor-driven exhibition in a former Residential School building. Reclaiming Shingwauk Hall honours over three decades of work led by the Survivor community in their efforts to tell the truth about the Residential School legacy and contribute to healing and reconciliation efforts. Reclaiming Shingwauk Hall tells the story of the Shingwauk Residential School within a larger narrative of colonization and the struggle for self-determination.

This exhibition embodies an iterative design process that worked with the Indigenous Survivors of the Shingwauk School to determine their needs for commemoration, public education, and reclaiming a site associated with historical trauma. The exhibition explores the history of the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Indian Residential Schools through three distinct gallery spaces.

Reclaiming Shingwauk Hall incorporates decades of historical research and archival material illustrating the lived experience at Residential Schools. It includes Residential School Survivor testimony in the form of oral history narratives and digital photo stations, allowing for the continuous addition of new historical and contemporary images. Although the exhibition drew heavily from the SRSC archives, a wide range of external sources were also accessed. These include the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, the General Synod Archives of the Anglican Church, the Royal Ontario Museum, the Algoma Art Gallery, Library and Archives Canada, and the Pine Family of Garden River First Nation.

The opening of this exhibition space had a profound impact on regional and national narratives about Residential Schools and reconciliation. The SRSC has seen a tremendous increase in demand for its educational programming. Moreover, the new exhibition space is used for specialized professional development programming for a range of groups, including police officers, provincial Ministry of Natural Resources staff, social workers, medical professionals, and others.

The community-driven approach utilized by Reclaiming Shingwauk Hall is a model for other public historians looking to build respectful relationships with Indigenous communities, reflect on colonial institutions such as Residential Schools, and include more Indigenous-created content. This project exemplifies an approach to public history in which Indigenous peoples tell their own histories. Reclaiming Shingwauk Hall embodies years of collaboration with the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association, Residential School Survivors, and local First Nation communities. The overall design was driven by community input and the project team was in constant communication with Survivors about the ways in which their experience should be presented. Reclaiming Shingwauk Hall exemplifies the future of Indigenous driven, decolonized history practice, which embraces community authority. The Ontario Historical Society is honoured to present the Indigenous History Award to the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre for Reclaiming Shingwauk Hall.

Founded in 1888, the Ontario Historical Society is a not-for-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-

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