



# MAMMOTH TRACKS

## NEWSLETTER

Vol. 2 No. 1, February, 2004

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More Info...

The Friends of the Provincial  
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## Every Mother's Fear: Alberta's Polio Experience

Iron lung and rocking bed.

The iron lung and rocking bed allowed patients with paralyzed chest muscles to breathe again.



## Director's Message

The renewal of the Provincial Museum is accelerating. Shortly before the end of 2003, the project team hired Lord Cultural Resources, one of the world's leading museum planners, to work with us. The Lord group has worked on over 1000 museum projects around the world. They will be testing our ideas and plans for programs, exhibitions and services against the experiences of scores of comparable museums. I look to them to help us unlock the creativity of museum staff and match it with community interests and their professional experience to build a Master Plan for renewal. Later this spring the facility planning and architectural consultants will translate this Master Plan and our Vision into building concepts.

It's an exciting time at the PMA!

Our planning team met recently with the teams planning major capital projects at four other Canadian museums — the new Canadian War Museum, the Canadian Museum of Nature, the Royal Ontario Museum and the Art Gallery of Ontario. Information about three of these projects can be accessed at their respective websites:

Canadian War Museum:

[http://warmuseum.ca/cwm/new/ca\\_index.html](http://warmuseum.ca/cwm/new/ca_index.html)

Royal Ontario Museum:

<http://www.rom.on.ca/renaissance/index.php>

Art Gallery of Ontario:

[www.ago.net](http://www.ago.net)

Follow these links on the left:

Menu>About the AGO>Transformation AGO

I encourage you to read about these projects and tell us what elements of them you would like to see here. Please send your thoughts to [tiara.letourneau@gov.ab.ca](mailto:tiara.letourneau@gov.ab.ca) or Tiara Letourneau, Renewal Office, Provincial Museum of Alberta, 12845-102 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 0M6.

Don't forget to look for the additions to *Wild Alberta*—coming soon...

Dr. Bruce McGillivray  
Director

## Spotlight on... Every Mother's Fear: Alberta's Polio Experience

*What's true of all evils in the world is true of plague as well.*

*It helps men (and women) to rise above themselves.* – Albert Camus

On February 7, 2004, The Provincial Museum of Alberta has unveiled its latest *Spotlight Gallery* exhibition, **Every Mother's Fear: Alberta's Polio Experience**. The exhibition will explore the many dimensions of our province's encounter with one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's most dreaded diseases. The exhibition will run until September 12, 2004.

Few diseases have inspired the sort of terror that polio gave rise to in the first half of the last century. Memories of crippled children, school closures, fears of public places, and that most terrifying symbol of polio—the iron lung—have remained vivid for many who lived through polio epidemics. Our cultural understanding of polio is largely defined by that fear, that horror, remembered so well by parents and children who can recall the panic that a stiff neck or a slight flu might arouse during polio season.

*Every Mother's Fear* seeks to explore that fear and also add some texture to this understanding of polio. Through many months of rewarding research and documentation, the Folklife Program has conducted interviews, taken photographs and amassed documentary materials. The fruits of this labour have been a more sensitive appreciation for the disease and the often profound personal, social and cultural transformations that polio produced.

The story of polio in Alberta is a tremendously rich, illuminating one. Interwoven with the strands of personal experience are threads of social and political history, scientific and medical innovation, and cultural understanding. The exhibition explores the personal encounter with illness, the medical and social innovations that polio epidemics spawned, the cultural redefinition of "normalcy" through the work of disabled activists, and the great scientific quest to understand polio and vaccinate against it. It is a compelling narrative that extends beyond the particularities of the people and places it directly describes, illuminating fundamental dimensions of the human experience of suffering and vulnerability, as well as the remarkable capacity of human beings to respond to crises with intellect, courage, compassion, and even joy.



Esther Hendricks and her Mother. Polio survivor Esther Hendricks wears one of the iconic symbols of polio—leg braces—as she is hugged by her mother.

Photo provided courtesy of Esther Hendricks.

Matthew Wangler,  
Folklife Researcher

Todd Crawshaw,  
Communications Coordinator



Polio Patients and Staff. Many polio survivors have described hospital personnel as being like family members.

Photo provided courtesy of Florence Shepherd.



Esther Hendricks tries to relearn how to walk with the aid of leg braces and crutches.

Photo provided courtesy of Esther Hendricks.



## On the go... 25,000-year-old discovery find by Museum staff!

The Grizzly Bear is a form of *brown bear* which inhabits the northern continents. Grizzlies come in several colour phases and are characterized by large size, large claws, large shoulder hump—big everything!—and the ability to run pretty fast!

Biologists have long thought that browns arrived late in central North America, coming from Siberia into Alaska more than 50,000 years ago moving south only after the end of the last glaciation, about 12,000 years ago. However, the 1998 find by Provincial Museum staff of a brown bear upper jaw in a gravel pit near Edmonton has disproved that notion. DNA analysis found the 25,000-year-old specimen represented a group not known in far northwestern North America since 35,000 years ago. Its genetic identity matches brown bears found today in southern BC and Alberta and northwestern USA, strongly suggesting that this “clade” of browns had spread south of the last ice sheet *before* ice blocked passage from Alaska and the Yukon. Thus the more southerly bears today derive from stock already present more than 22,000 years ago when the ice blockage occurred. The result of collaboration by Dr. Jim Burns from the Museum with scientists from the University of Alaska–Fairbanks and the University of Oxford in the UK, the work has been submitted for scientific publication.



Grizzly Bear diorama in the Wild Alberta Gallery

Dr. Jim Burns  
Curator, Quaternary Paleontology

## What is this?

Buttons—made from almost every material imaginable—have been used on clothing since about the 12<sup>th</sup> century. “Mother-of-pearl” buttons from the shells of clam-like molluscs have likely been made since the Renaissance of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Shells from the seas of southeastern Asia have provided a wide array of colours and were very popular for *haute couture* buttons, while less exotic, “white” freshwater shells were used for utilitarian kinds (as on shirts and underwear). By the 1850s, button factories in Birmingham, England were said to have “supplied almost the whole world”. By 1885, US firms had become important suppliers and in the early 1900s they introduced abalone buttons. The clam shell pictured here was holed with a tubular drill to make 1/2-inch diameter disks. Thicker disks were split along the natural laminations to make several thinner disks. These were then fitted with a shank, or perforated several times, to permit fastening with thread. For better or worse, the advent of synthetic materials, like plastic, has greatly curtailed the pearl button industry.

Dr. Jim Burns  
Curator, Quaternary Paleontology



More Info...

Quaternary Paleontology



## Exhibitions and Events... at the Museum

### January 24 to April 25: Alberta Naturescapes

This collection of photographs by Michael Chesworth explores some of Alberta's most stunning and majestic landscapes. Come see *Alberta Naturescapes* in the Museum's Orientation Gallery.

### February 16: Family Day

This is the last chance to visit the *Teddy Bears are Back* exhibit! As well, interpretive hosts will be in the galleries to highlight a variety of artifacts and information.

### February 21 and 22: Buried Treasures

11:00 a.m.- 4:00 pm

Dig out your treasures, artifacts and fossils from your backyard, basement or grandma's attic. Bring them to our team of curators; they will help you identify your treasures and the stories behind them. We do not offer appraisals and we ask you not to bring in firearms or weaponry.

### February 26, 27, 28: Creatures Convention 2004

10 am to 3:30 pm daily

Come see the *Bug Room* supervisor (our resident "bug-wrangler"! present Invertebrate Specimen Mounting Techniques and talk about Insect and Spider Fears and Phobias. Also present to entertain and educate us will be John Acorn (The Nature Nut) and local puppetry group Gossiping Earthworms. Find out about the grubs and bugs that are eaten by various people around the world, and why they should be a part of our diet. Try a sample of our own "Crispie Critter" squares! Volunteers will be available all day in the *Bug Room* to answer your questions and to help you handle the critters.

### March 27 to June 13, 2004: In the Shadow of Volcanoes

The city of Yogyakarta is an artistic and cultural focal point in Indonesia. Its open atmosphere has attracted hundreds of artists. Yogyakarta also lies near one of Java's many active volcanoes. Occasional volcanic eruptions may concern Indonesians but so do cultural, religious and political eruptions. Indonesia can be a troubled land.

Living in the shadows of volcanoes, however, are many talented artists. Yogyakarta, with its thriving cultural and academic life inspires hope, even if the shadows are not far away. The exhibit *In the Shadow of Volcanoes* reveals some of the diversity, energy and mystery of Indonesia.

Art with Islamic, Christian and Hindu themes, works dealing with the country's rich history and legends, and pieces confronting current political and social issues reveal a complex multicultural and multireligious society.

*In the Shadow of Volcanoes* consists of 59 two-dimensional works by 31 artists.

### March 27 to June 6, 2004: Through the Eye of the Needle

This exhibition presents a rare chance for the Alberta public to appreciate the quality and diversity of the embroidery traditions of women from Gujarat, India. ***Through the Eye of the Needle: Stories from an Indian Desert*** showcases the craft sector of the Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan co-operative and discusses how cooperative members gained control of production facilities, pressed for reform legislation, and gained access to buyers through direct marketing channels. The embroidery reflects the women's desire for self-determination as well as the beauty and diversity of their culture.

We hope this exhibition increases public understanding of the role craft plays beyond aesthetics. Embroidery is deeply imbedded in the social, economic and political lives of the women of Kutch. The exhibit speaks to this as it addresses themes of poverty alleviation, women's empowerment and efforts to achieve sustainable and equitable economic growth.

The exhibition consists of 98 embroideries, a collection of photographs and a short video presentation illustrating village life and embroidery production.

### March 29 to April 2: March Break

*Wild Alberta* staff and our teen volunteers will host a variety of interactive stations throughout the gallery. Families are invited to drop-in anytime between 10 am - 3 pm.

**April, 2004: Time Travellers Lecture Series**, Eleventh Season Time Travellers is a public lecture series held each spring at The Provincial Museum of Alberta. Internationally known archaeologists take the audience on an intriguing journey through time, connecting you with the ancient stories that have shaped our modern world. This season's line-up includes:

- **Following the Shadows of the "Great Ones": Western Canada's Early Explorers and Surveyors**
- **Carved in Stone: The Rise and Fall of the Great Stone Statues of Easter Island**
- **The wreck of the HMS Pandora**
- **Ethnoarchaeology: Living with hunter-gatherers in Australia and Africa.**

### Tickets go on sale March 1, 2004

Adult/Seniors Series:	\$25
Students Series:	\$20
Individual Tickets:	\$8

**Mammoth Pass Holders receive 10% off.**  
**Phone 453-9100 for more information.**



Museum School

## Exploring the Museum... Museum School

Ever wonder how to take a different look at the displays in the Museum? Below is a variety of activities you and your family can do as you go through the Museum on your next visit. Select one of the activities or do several; the choice is yours.

### Synchrude Gallery of Aboriginal Culture

Look for the brown triangle signs throughout the gallery. The first one is located in "The End of the Ice Age" exhibit as you enter the gallery. The signs are scattered throughout the gallery. See if you can answer the questions on each sign.

### Natural History Gallery

Go through the gallery and find as many things as you can that are white.

### The Bug Room

Bring a map of the world with you and write down where the insects and spiders have come from. Observe a bug and decide whether it crawls or flies. How many of each type are in the gallery? Guess the colours of the habitat for each bug based on the bug's colour.

### Mineral Gallery

Look at the minerals in the gallery and make a list of those that are found in your home.

### Fossil Gallery

Find the herbivores. Find the carnivores. How can you identify them?

### Wild Alberta

Bring a stuffed animal from home. As you go through *Wild Alberta* decide where that animal would live in the province. Which diorama looks like its home?

Count all the animals and/or birds you have seen before.

Find all the baby animals.

Challenge yourself: at each diorama find another animal that is not the "main one" and learn about it. Hint: look in the "Naturalist's Notebook".

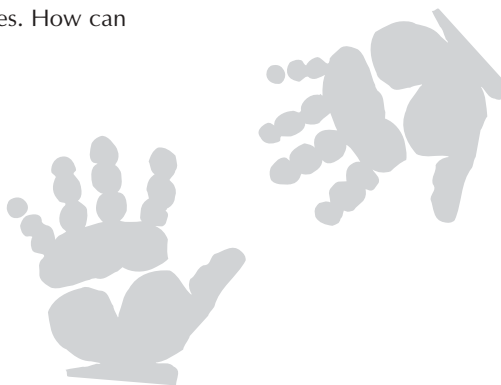
Think about the landscape where you live. Where do you see that in the gallery?

In front of each diorama discuss:

- would you like to live here?
- would you like to visit here?
- what would you do if you were here?
- has your family already gone on a holiday here?
- do you already live here?

Find spring, summer, fall and winter in *Wild Alberta*.

Wild Alberta gallery





[Support Your Museum](#)

## Support Your Museum... New Initiatives!

*Canada is a very prosperous country. But not all Canadians share in that prosperity. We may have tackled the fiscal deficit but we have not yet adequately addressed our social challenges.*

Deputy Prime Minister  
and Minister of Finance John Manley  
2003 budget speech

The Provincial Museum of Alberta is pleased to introduce a new initiative entitled the *Community Strategies Pilot Program*. The Museum believes that every person should have the opportunity to enjoy the remarkable cultural facilities in our province, as well as to better understand our past and how it will affect the future.

It is the intent of the Museum, through the introduction of the program, to encourage organizations that offer programs for the disadvantaged to visit the Museum. Further information on the program will be introduced shortly.

Contributions towards this project, or any other Museum program, are welcome. Please contact the Friends Society at 453-9103. A tax-deductible receipt will be issued by the Society.

## Shopping... at the Museum

Meet Anita Sweetheart! She is looking for a Valentine who gives her flowers all the time and has a deep appreciation for chocolate. She prefers brown furry bears who have their own winter den and a large supply of blueberries.

If you're searching for that perfect Valentine's gift, look no farther than the Museum Shop. We have a wonderful assortment of gift ideas, including Anita Sweetheart and her teddy bear friends.



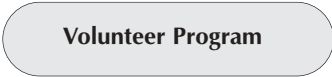
Anita Sweetheart with her Valentine



Cuddly Mini Moe mammoths!

[More Info...](#)

[Shopping](#)



## Volunteer Program... Volunteers are in the Fabric of our history!

Settlers freshly scattered across this “great lone land” quickly understood the importance of neighbourly concern and of providing assistance to others when it was needed. The resulting web of relationships from this mutual caring and assistance helped ease the rigours of life in the northwest and contributed to the eventual establishment of vibrant communities. Pioneers knew that good neighbours could be counted on to make contributions of time and energy without the expectation of monetary rewards.

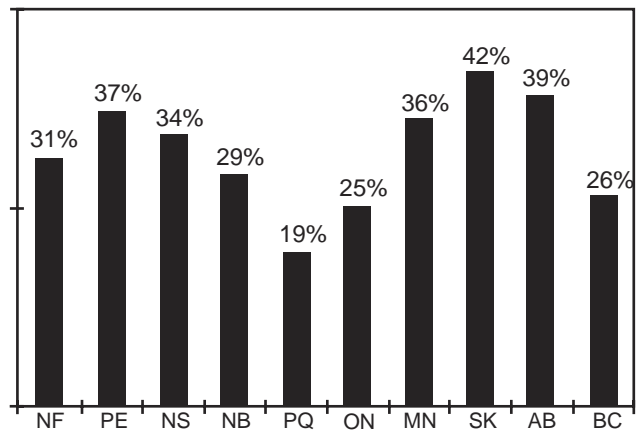
Today being a good neighbour takes many forms. Generally speaking, people contribute their time to projects or institutions they feel are worthy causes. Canadians prove daily that they still hold some of the values so important to pioneers by getting involved in one or more of the many worthy causes that exist.

Statistics Canada reports that, in the year 2000, more than one in four Canadians (6.5 million people) volunteered for a charitable or non-profit organization. Survey information shows that although the number of people volunteering in 2000 is less than in 1997, the number of hours contributed per individual has increased. In fact, “over one-third (34%) of all volunteer hours were contributed by the 5% of volunteers who gave 596 hours or more of their time.” (Information from [www.givingandvolunteering.ca](http://www.givingandvolunteering.ca))

A few interesting graphs from a paper entitled **Volunteering in Canada** by Larry McKeown (which is on the website of the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy), illustrate the current state of volunteering in Canada quite well.

David Parama  
Volunteer Coordinator

### Volunteer Rate by Province



### Percentage of Volunteer Hours and Percentage of Volunteer Events by Type of Organization

