

Museum of Dufferin celebrates grand reopening on Aug. 5

Written By **MARNI WALSH**

The Museum of Dufferin (MoD) closed its doors just before Christmas last year to begin renovations on a new Corn Flower Glass Gallery opening this fall, and updates to the Main Gallery, which had not changed since the Museum opened in 1997.

The museum will be reopening to the public on Wednesday, Aug. 1 with plans for an opening party on Sunday, Aug. 5 and everyone is invited.

‘As always with major renovations, there were a few hitches,’ says Promotions Coordinator Nanci Malek. ‘But we are very pleased and excited to have the community see what we have done. The Corn Flower Glass Gallery is still undergoing the renovation, but the rest of the lobby and gift shop area has changed. We have made use of the beautiful natural light of the lobby by opening it up, and new paint colours have added a fresh look.’

MoD received a Canada 150 Infrastructure grant, which funded the glass exhibit renovations, and a partnership with Central Counties Tourism has helped to fund their new exhibit, ‘Temperance and Temptation,’ which highlights the bootlegging past of Dufferin County and those who opposed it.

The Museum shared a bit of the history of the ‘Temperance and Temptation’ exhibit with our readers:

‘Between the mid 1800s and early 1900s, much debate surrounded the consumption of alcohol in Canada. While bootleggers tended to their hidden stills, local temperance enthusiasts met to discuss their anti-alcohol agenda. Unlike the United States, the prohibition of alcohol was less stringent in Canada. At no time was the entire country under prohibition. Instead, residents voted for laws restricting alcohol in their own regions, this was known as Local Option. Beginning in 1894, towns and townships in Dufferin County voted to go ‘dry’. As a rural community with traditionally conservative values, the majority of the county felt that alcohol should be strictly controlled. Of course, not everyone agreed?’

The opening party on Aug. 5, starting at noon, is free to all says Ms. Malek. Activities include a huge bouncy barn with silo in the kids' area, live music from the Sohayla Smith Band outside on the grounds, as well as Mulmur Farmers' Market. A tour of the new exhibit is available, along with photographer Emily Curd's work on display in the Silo Gallery, and the 2017-18 exhibit ‘True Grit.’

The Corn Flower glass and the new gallery ‘is a state of the art presentation that will astound visitors,’ Nanci says. ‘It is truly gorgeous.’ The Coordinator says, the Museum staff would like to ‘thank everyone who has contributed to this exciting renovation and especially our patrons who believe in what we are doing. We would like to thank the Government of Canada for giving us the Canada150 Infrastructure grant and to Central Counties Tourism, who ‘get’ what we are trying to accomplish.’

Ms. Malek says, ‘We feel we are now ready for today, tomorrow and the future with a fresh outlook and perspective on providing the public with wonderful programming, exhibits and honouring the past.’