

National Day of Truth and Reconciliation Day proclaimed in Town of Shelburne

Written By PAULA BROWN

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Shelburne Town Council has proclaimed Sept. 30 as the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation in the Town of Shelburne.

During their meeting on Monday (Sept. 22), Shelburne Mayor Wade Mills read the annual proclamation, which commemorates the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day.

"This day will provide a way for our community to publicly commemorate the history and legacy of residential schools and the resilience of residential school survivors, commemoration being a vital component of the reconciliation process," said Mayor Mills.

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (Sept. 30) honours the indigenous children who never returned home and survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities.

Orange Shirt Day, also recognized on Sept. 30, is an Indigenous-led grassroots commemorative day intended to raise awareness of the individual, family, community, and intergenerational impacts of residential schools.

Orange Shirt Day is inspired by Phyllis Webstad's story. At the age of six, Webstad arrived at the St. Joseph Mission residential school in B.C., wearing an orange shirt brought by her grandmother, and the shirt was taken away from her. The date of Sept. 30 marks the time of year that children were taken from their homes.

Orange Shirt Day also promotes the concept of "Every Child Matters." The orange shirt is a symbol of the stripping away of culture, freedom, and self-esteem experienced by Indigenous children over generations.

In commemoration of the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, the Town of Shelburne, along with its Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee and the Canadian Language Museum, will be hosting a cultural exhibit at Town Hall.

The cultural exhibit aims to introduce visitors to the linguistic heritage of Cree, the most widely spoken Indigenous language in Canada.

"This exhibit showcases the diversity, history, and cultural significance of Cree across Canada," said the Town of Shelburne.

The cultural exhibit will be on display at the Shelburne Town Hall, located at 203 Main Street, from Sept. 29 to Oct. 3.

The exhibit is open to all ages and admission is free.