



**THE CORPORATION OF
THE TOWN OF PERTH**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Perth Museum Takes Steps Toward Repatriation of Indigenous Belongings

Perth, Ontario – Inside the Perth Museum’s collection are Indigenous belongings that have been in the Museum’s care for many years. Over the past year, the Museum has been taking a closer look at those belongings, including where they came from, how they came to be part of the collection, and the responsibilities that come with caring for them.

This work is the first phase of a project the Perth Museum has undertaken to identify, document, research, and care for Indigenous belongings within its collection. The work is an important step toward future consultation with Indigenous communities and, where appropriate, the repatriation of belongings.

“Every belonging in our collection has a story, but in some cases, we don’t yet know enough about that story or the community it may be connected to,” said Kathryn Jamieson, Manager of Tourism & Culture. “Our responsibility is not simply to care for these belongings while they are here. It is to better understand how they came into our care, to listen and learn, and to be prepared to work respectfully with Indigenous communities about what should happen next.”

The work began with looking carefully at what the Museum holds. Staff created a comprehensive inventory of Indigenous belongings, researched their histories and potential communities of origin, documented their condition, and improved how they are stored and cared for. The project also established a framework to guide continued research and collections management as the work moves forward.

Indigenous belongings previously on display at the Museum have also been removed from exhibit while this work continues.

But documenting the collection is only the beginning.

The Museum is now preparing a grant application to support the next phase of the project, which is expected to include further research, improved access to collection information, and outreach and consultation with Indigenous communities. That work will help guide decisions about the future care and potential return of belongings to their communities of origin.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada identified museums and archives as having an important role to play in reconciliation. As the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is recognized on September 30, the work underway at the Perth Museum

reflects an ongoing responsibility to move from acknowledgment toward meaningful action.

“This isn’t work that happens quickly, and it shouldn’t,” said Jamieson. “It requires care, respect, and relationship-building. We are still learning, and this first phase gives us a much stronger foundation for the conversations that need to happen next.”

The work at the Perth Museum is one part of the Town of Perth’s broader commitment to learning and taking meaningful action toward reconciliation.

The first phase of the project was funded through the Government of Canada’s Museum Assistance Program.

To learn more about Indigenous reconciliation in Perth, and the work underway at the Perth Museum, visit [Perth.ca/Reconciliation](https://perth.ca/Reconciliation).

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