

# Midland trio catalogue Huronia Museum pieces

Come mid-August Huronia Museum Curator Vern Farrow will have at his finger-tips a complete, up-to-date file of each and every item in Midland's museum, from an 1800's ladies' bustle to an Indian arrow tip found during excavations in North Simcoe.

And three Midland university students will head back to their respective universities with a better understanding of the forces which shaped their heritage.

Starting next week, Wendy McCullough, Dawn Monckton and Steve Ranson will be cataloguing the museum's memorabilia, as will hundreds of students throughout the province who are working on a provincially funded Experience '77 grant.

The Ministry of Culture and Recreation has, according to Vern Farrow, decided a thorough list of all treasures stored away in Ontario's many museums may some day prove to be useful. "This way, the province can, on a moment's notice know what's available anywhere," Farrow explains. And with student unemployment in the state it is, what better way to 'kill two birds with one stone'?

Wendy, Dawn and Steve are actually completing the work started last summer by three other students also working under the Experience '77 program. Farrow believes most of the objects in the main museum room, relating to pioneer and Victorian lifestyles, have been

catalogued, but none of the Indian collections or library of books and prints have yet been scrutinized. The three have only 14 weeks to complete a monumental job.

The three summer cataloguers yesterday headed off to a special three day seminar organized by Culture and Recreation to acquaint the students with the tasks ahead of them. None of the Midland trio have ever worked in a museum before and only one, Wendy who has studied pre-Confederation Canadian history, is somewhat familiar with the styles and events depicted in the Huronia Museum and Gallery of Historic Huronia (or Midland Museum, as it is commonly referred to).

"I know something about this area," Wendy McCullough explains. "But not as far as individual items are concerned." "That however shouldn't prove to be a problem - Vern Farrow himself is a wealth of information.

"Do any of you know what this is?" he asks, as he pulls a bellows-like apparatus (without windbag) out of some storage cupboard. Wendy, Dawn and Steve lean forward curiously, watch as Farrow pulls the two pieces of wood apart but come up with nothing.

"It's a corn planter," says teacher Farrow as he demonstrates how individual kernels of corn fall out of the carrying case into the hole dug by the manually-operated kernel. There's no doubt about it - the students will be stumped. "If they don't know what something is, they'll have to find someone who does, or go to reference books," says Vern.

Chances are with Vern Farrow around, the cataloguing trio won't have to look too far. Farrow himself is also attending the York University seminar as he will be the students' supervisor between the bi-monthly visits of a supervisor from the

Ministry of Culture and Recreation. He's looking forward to the cataloguing and to working with Steve, Dawn and Wendy, and above all, to the results of this summer's work.

"It'll be a benefit to the museum," he points out. "We can't have

everything out at the same time, but once we know exactly what we have (including the items in storage) we'll be able to say - 'ok, let's bring this out and hide this away for a while'."

And that should have Midlanders coming back for more.

## CORRECTION

The Hutchison Homefurnishings advertisement which ran Wednesday, May 11th, should have read

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And this is...?

Huronia Museum curator Vern Farrow tests Steve Ranson, Dawn Monckton and Wendy McCullough's knowledge of pioneer artifacts. Although none of the three students could identify the corn

planter, chances are they'll know all about it and many other museum pieces before the summer is out. The three will be cataloguing all items in the museum starting next week. Staff photo

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