



Suite 120, 12420.104 Ave NW
Edmonton, AB T5N 3Z9
780.424.2626
info@museums.ab.ca
museums.ab.ca

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ferne Gudnason to Receive 2023 Leadership Award for Sustainability from the Alberta Museums Association

September 5, 2023

Edmonton, Alberta - The Alberta Museums Association (AMA) is pleased to announce Ferne Gudnason as the recipient of the AMA's 2023 Leadership Award for Sustainability, in recognition of her commitment to volunteerism, sharing community history, and ensuring the sustainability of the Mirror and District Museum.

A long-time resident of Mirror, Alberta, Ferne first became a volunteer at the Mirror Museum in 2004. In 2017, she joined the board of the museum as Secretary. After the loss of multiple board members, Ferne stepped up to act as Secretary, Treasurer, Volunteer Coordinator, and eventually, President. As a rural community museum with no permanent staff, the loss of volunteers following the pandemic meant that the Mirror Museum was considering closure.

In 2022, Ferne made plans to move to Saskatchewan to be with her family, but she did not want to leave the museum until the board was operating at full capacity. Her promotion of the museum at local events and businesses, her work with the County of Lacombe to ensure the stability of the museum, and her dedication to the sustainability of the organization and its finances demonstrated Ferne's commitment to sharing Alberta's heritage and saving a community museum. Through volunteer engagement and community holiday events, Ferne successfully recruited a full board of volunteers. Ferne has since departed her role, though she still volunteers to mentor the new board as they assume their positions.

Beyond her work to ensure a thriving board, Ferne has also contributed to the cultural and social sustainability of the museum and her community. Ferne is a member of the Icelandic Genealogy Society and has used her passion to help community members connect to their own family histories through research, and photo and record preservation and digitization projects. In her time as a volunteer Ferne has mentored countless summer students, curated exhibitions, and engaged in local museum networks for peer support.

"Ferne definitely needs to be honoured for her tenacity and dedication to the Mirror Museum Association," said Debbie Gillard, current President of the Mirror and District Museum. "If it hadn't been for her the museum would be defunct."

Nominations for the Leadership Awards are adjudicated by the Leadership Awards Committee, comprised of Individual Members of the AMA. The Award will be presented at an Awards Gala during the AMA's 2023 Fall Gathering, presented in partnership with Heritage Park Historical Village. Ferne Gudnason's achievements will be celebrated at the Gala, taking



Suite 120, 12420.104 Ave NW
Edmonton, AB T5N 3Z9
780.424.2626
info@museums.ab.ca
museums.ab.ca

place on Friday, September 22, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. in the Gasoline Alley Museum at Heritage Park in Calgary.

Background

The Leadership Award for Engagement recognizes recipients who build organizational vibrancy. Recipients in this category work to integrate the Five Facets of Sustainability (cultural, health and well-being, environmental, financial, and social) into their museum practice. They implement best practices that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by supporting forward-thinking research, exhibits, conservation practices, and programming. They are seen as leaders due to their bold and inspiring work. Recipients actively lead and participate in community projects and programs that consider environmental and social issues and play an important role in creating a thriving museum sector, both now and far into the future.

The AMA Leadership Awards recognize the exceptional work of Alberta museums and museum professionals in creating value, accessibility, and relevance in their communities. The Leadership Awards recognize excellence, innovation, and creativity in Alberta's museum community in three categories: Engagement, Education, and Sustainability. More information about the AMA Leadership Awards can be found on the [AMA website](#).

The Alberta Museums Association provides a variety of programs and services to over 500 museums and museum professionals across Alberta. Through its focus on community engagement, social responsibility, and sustainability, the AMA utilizes its funding, accreditation, awards, and professional development opportunities to support institutions in their vital role as leading contributors to the social, cultural, and educational fabric of Alberta. The AMA believes that museums can leverage their positions as trusted institutions to encourage respectful dialogue, provide educational opportunities, and bring awareness to some of society's most pressing issues.

Contact: Alberta Museums Association
780.424.2626
communications@museums.ab.ca
museums.ab.ca

###