

The birch bark canoe returns to the York River



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by Kristena Schutt-Moore

The weather was perfect for a canoe ride on Friday, Aug. 23 and the Anishinaabe Baptiste Community Organization and members of the Kijiko Manito Madaouskarini Algonquin First Nations took full advantage of it.

Over the past two weeks Kijiko Manito Madaouskarini Algonquin First Nations Chief Stephen Hunter, master canoe builder Chuck Commanda and several volunteers have worked to create a fully functional birch bark canoe. This is the fourth year for the fundraiser for the Anishinaabe Baptiste Community Organization and the annual birch bark canoe build has become an event many look forward to.

The canoe build is a display of craftsmanship, history and culture that has been a part of this area for generations. Located at the Bancroft North Hastings Heritage Museum each year, the canoe build allows community members to experience a connection with nature and history in a new way. All building materials for this canoe were harvested locally and sustainably.

After the canoe's maiden voyage on the York River on Aug. 23 it was given a last check up and then delivered to the Art Gallery of Bancroft. It will be on display there until Thanksgiving weekend when the Anishinaabe Baptiste Community Organization will draw for the winner of the canoe raffle at the Hastings Highlands Community Centre.

Tickets for the canoe raffle are available at the Bancroft North Hastings Heritage Museum, the Art Gallery of Bancroft and the Kijiko Manito Madaouskarini Algonquin First Nations on Flint Avenue. The funds raised from the ticket sales will help the Anishinaabe Baptiste Community Organization create more community events and workshops that will be held throughout the year.