

St. Mary's Band

For Immediate Release

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The St. Eugene Church Restoration Society is nearing the completion of the architectural drawings

Cranbrook - The soon to be completed architectural drawings brings the St. Eugene Mission Church one step closer towards preservation. The historic building, located on the St. Mary's Indian Reserve, was officially closed in November of 2004 due to structural erosion, making the building unsafe for occupancy. Efforts by the Restoration Society have raised nearly \$15,000 through a variety of fundraising activities and generous donations from the community.

"With the architectural drawings, we are now ready to proceed with securing funds to carry out the actual restoration, which we anticipate requiring a minimum of \$250,000. As part of our efforts, the Society will also be making applications to various agencies for funding, including Heritage Canada," commented Vickie Thomas, Chief Operating Officer of the St. Mary's Band.

The St. Eugene Church was built in 1897, and is an example of only a handful of late Victorian wooden churches surviving in British Columbia. This architectural masterpiece features a carefully considered composition, with scalloped louvers, blind window, cut shingles, and featuring pinnacles and buttresses at each corner. The church features original stain, leaded, and kiln fired windows which were made in Italy, and are considered to be both exceptional and priceless.

"We would like to thank all those who have contributed their time, effort, and money for this worthy project. Without the strong commitment that has been shown, we may have lost this invaluable asset" concluded Thomas.

The St. Eugene's Church Restoration Society is a registered charitable organization, if you would like to make a donation or organize a fundraising event, please contact Vickie Thomas, Chief Operating Officer for St. Mary's Band at (250) 426-5717 or vthomas@aqam.net

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