



PHOTOS BY RON WOLF

Customers flocked to the last book sale, looking for bargains, at the current Fort Frances Public Library.

Out with the old at library

BY RON WOLF

A MONUMENTAL sale occurred in Fort Frances on Friday and Saturday. It was the last book sale that the 96-year-old library will see at its present location on the corner of Church and Victoria streets.

The book sale, run by The Friends of the Fort Frances Public Library (FFFPL), was held at the current library to help cover the costs for extra items for the new Fort Frances Library and Technology Centre (FLLTC).

The Friends of the Fort Frances Public Library is a 14-year-old registered charitable organization whose aim is to make the Fort Frances Public Library the best that it can be. So far, the FFFPL assisted with a new book display, baby change table, anti-theft security system, a circulation desk, upgraded lounge area, media displays, library use surveys, shut-in deliveries and a television, just to name a few. Tag Day will be the group's next event, scheduled for September.

Truth be told, the sale really didn't start on Friday. The background work for the book sale started on Jan. 12, 1898, when 12 gentlemen subscribers to the Declaration of the Mechanics' Institute met to elect officers, draft bylaws and forward a duplicate of the declaration to Toronto. This was the beginning of the Fort Frances library system and the beginning of the end of the current library. Then, on Feb. 6, 1914, the first Fort Frances Public Library board was instituted. Fort Frances had a population of 2,909 at the time.

Fast forward to a Fort Frances with a population of about 8,000. The sale was held, money was collected



RAINY RIVER DISTRICT NOTES

and the two-day event that so many looked forward to, is now a part of history.

"We are quite active," said **Ruth Caldwell**, who has been treasurer of the FFFPL for the past 14 years. "We raise money to buy things that the library can't include in their budget," she said.

The FFFPL helped financially with the children's section of the new FLLTC.

Although she has no idea how much money was raised, Caldwell said she thinks the sale did "very well."

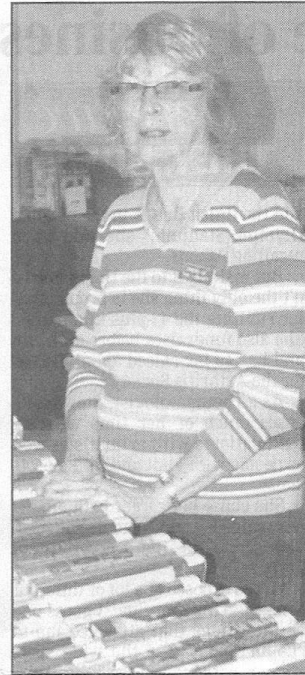
"I was surprised that the quantity dwindled (since Friday). I was very pleased to see so much of it gone because that room (basement) was just packed. It even overflowed into the children's section.

"The interior (of the FLLTC) is all finished and they have to work on the exterior now," she noted.

Friday was quite busy, and the library raised at least \$500 on that day.

Fiction books seemed to be the best sellers of the day, noted **Marge Sveinson**, a member of the FFFPL who worked on the last day of the sale.

The new facility will include the main circulation area, fiction and non-fiction sections, a reading area, an adaptive technology room, study rooms, staff work area and break



Marge Sveinson, a member of the FFFPL, volunteered Saturday at the last book sale at the current Fort Frances Public Library.

room, teen area, children's department, fireside lounge, information technology (IT) training lab, and the Shaw Communications room.

The new FLLTC is scheduled to open in the later part of June.

Ron Wolf's column appears every other Tuesday.