



PHOTOS BY RON WOLF

The Hallet is in dry dock in Fort Frances, awaiting visitors.

Check out town's 'new' sights

BY RON WOLF

THE official opening of Phase 2 of the Fort Frances Heritage Tourism Project is approaching. The project, unofficially opened to the masses on Friday, involves two structures, The Lookout Tower and The Hallet.

The Lookout Tower was built as part of the early radar detection system during the Cold War. At 100 feet high, the view from the tower is spectacular. You can see the area east to Rainy Lake and the vast Canadian Shield, south to the United States, north to the forest bogs and west to the Rainy River Valley. It's a climb of 115 steps to the top, but only 31 steps to the 25-foot observation platform. The tower had been closed since 2002 for much needed repairs.

The Hallet, a 60-foot, 57-tonne boat, was extensively used in hauling logs until 1974. It, too, opened on Friday. Last August the Hallet was removed from Pither's Point and towed to the town marina.

The Hallet was the largest and most powerful logging boat on Rainy Lake. It was transported in pieces by railway flatcar and reassembled for the pulp and paper mill here. She was later modified to become more suitable for pulling booms across the lake. A change from a single to a double rudder was necessary to make the boat stable. Other renovations occurred, including one as a result of fire.

Despite the engines being changed and other minor alterations, the Hallet's essential function remained unchanged until her retirement.

During an average year, the Hallet made 20 round trips, 100 miles each, hauling 70,000 to 90,000 cords of wood a year in average tows of 4,000-5,000 cords of wood, a mile in size. Modernization of woodland operations and environmental concerns led to use of pulp trucks, carrying 40 cords per load, to carry logs for paper production.

In 1983, the Hallet was placed in Pither's Point Park. Restoration was completed by the Fort Frances Museum.

If you wish to explore these amaz-



RAINY RIVER
DISTRICT NOTES



The Lookout Tower offers a great view of the area.

ing structures, take note that children under 14 must be accompanied by a caregiver aged 16 and over. Appropriate footwear is required. Use caution as surfaces are uneven and platforms are steep and high.

The museum is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. The Sorting Gap sites will be open 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily, depending on the weather.

Ron Wolf's column appears every other Tuesday.