

River Ceremony: Galilee Centre: August 30th, 2026.

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This the traditional territory of the Algonquin nation
Welcome to everyone

River Ceremony - exchange of blessings and insights with the mighty Ottawa River.

Where to start: What is a river?

River - is water

Water - H_2O - a simple molecule - 3 atoms - two hydrogens, one oxygen

Atoms - origin - the big bang.. 13.4 billion years ago
The atoms in this river been travelling for 13.4 billion years

Earth 4.6 billion years - molten - then cooling, forming a crust...
water vapour formed, into clouds
Clouds released rain.

First Rivers - 4.5 billion - as the Earth cooled - hydrogen and oxygen released,
Hydrologic cycle began

230 million years ago, it rained for 2 million years...
oceans, rivers, lakes....
The Great Rains

Atmosphere, geosphere, hydrosphere, biosphere...

H_2O - water molecule - its simple, - but has highly unusual physical anomalies
that make life on Earth possible.

For example: water is a polar molecule - negative oxygen, positive hydrogen
Can bond with most molecules.... Universal solvent

Water -at the same temperature - solid, liquid, vapour

Water molecule - energetic, dynamic, molecules can rearrange at 2092
kilometers per second...

Master / miracle molecule that built biology

Water is the foundation of the climate systems, the oceans, and the Earth's biosphere

Water - fountain of life - sustains life... Every living creature and plant needs water... every cell of all life

Water is the foundation of the biosphere.. and nourishes and sustains

Life is water, we are 65 % water...

Carries oxygen, minerals, nutrients - to all living cells.. throughout the whole biosphere..

Universal solvent, heals, cleanses, heats and cools, weather patterns....

Waters of life...

Water..... Same atoms, different molecules.. from the origin of the universe, to Earth's formation to now...

...Something to ponder...

The word River:

Latin: *riparia* "of a riverbank

The word changed meaning from the river bank to the water flowing within

Old English, 13c. a considerable body of water flowing with perceptible current in a definite course or channel,

The Ottawa River:

An Ice Age: Around 15,000 years ago, a giant Laurentide Ice Sheet that covered much of Canada, began to melt.

As the ice melted, it left behind a huge ocean over the region - **The Champlain Sea:**

Salt water became fresh water

As it drained path of the modern river formed. roughly 8,000 to 11,000 years

Today, the source of the Ottawa River - Lake Capimitchigama in the Laurentian Mountains of Quebec flows to the St Laurence River

Over 75 tributaries. One being the Madawaska

Ottawa River Life: It provides habitat for more than 85 fish species, 300 bird species, 53 mammal species, and 33 species of amphibians and reptiles. at least 14 different species of freshwater mussels in the Ottawa River.”
The river nourishes plants, insects, array of small to large animals.... And human animals

Most human settlements began near water.

The Ottawa River is simply full of life, richness, and beauty. A Canadian Heritage River. (2016)

History: This town of Arnprior is at the confluence of the Ottawa and Madawaska rivers.

Ottawa River - Kitchi Sibi - Ottawa - Odowa - - meaning to trade, Odowa Nation and Algonquin peoples
For about 8000 years - Algonquin peoples lived
Began trading.. fur, fish
Travel and transportation was by canoe:
the Ottawa River by Arnprior was a main route for the fur trade.

Samuel de Champlain traveled far and wide. he came across the Ottawa River in 1613

Short history of Arnprior and Galilee Centre

Arnprior, the town, was established by a Scotsman - Archibald McNab in 1823, It was named after the ancestral home (Arnprior) of his Buchanan clan. The origin of the name Arnprior is the Priory on the Arn (river) in Scotland Priory are, of course, connected to spirituality, churches.

1851, Daniel McLachlin got this property, This was the McLachlin Estate began lumbering and textiles operations on the Madawaska.

In 1946, Oblates purchased the McLachlin estate. The grounds were restored and a new wing was added. It was the training centre for men entering the Oblate community.

In 1975, the centre was developed into a place of renewal for women and men and named Galilee Community (after Galilee, the land by the water where the apostles wait for the call to their ministries).

In 1988, Galilee was registered as a non-profit charitable organization

With a mission to provide a peaceful place, with programs and services that nurture people's personal and spiritual growth,

50 years - this centre - what has it accomplished?

Hundreds of programs - from Catholic teachings to multi-religious and agnostic

Educational, liturgical, presentations and silence.

Topics: Spirituality and - art, health, love, peace and nonviolence, gender, justice, politics, ethics.

How to listen, to heal, to begin again, to become an activist, to learn to slow down, to retire...

Individuals learning about their own journeys, of love and loss, to go deep, to draw from the profound sources of the divine, in themselves... from the place, the water...

Groups come to discuss challenging topics, to ponder, contemplate, to be nourished.

Thousands of people have come here. Thousands.... Incredible

Almost closed in 2024 - only kept going by donations

Back to the river

For us today - water - is so woven into our lives... barely notice.

We wash, cook, drink, bathe, play, travel, grow food and flowers, eliminate waste,all the time.

Think of our relationship with water...

Gratitude for water

Water - nourishes, refreshes, replenishes,

Water inspires... teaches,

Water is sacred, it baptizes, blesses,

The Ottawa River - this river... same atoms from the origins of the universe - 13.4 billion years ago.

Same molecules from the water vapour in Earth's formation - 4.6 billion years

This river - is life... requires respect, care and reverence.

The next time you journey on the river, remember its rich and ancient history.

Next time you use water... remember its importance

A final comment: Arnprior became a recognized name in the numismatic trade. Word comes from *nomisma*, meaning "coin" or "currency,"

Arnprior became known because of a 1955 Royal Canadian Mint order of silver dollars that featured an accidental coin variety. Became the Arnprior dollar!

Speaking of money

Thank you for your donations

Please give generously if you can.

Why? Galilee Centre is a special place - not glitzy - is simple - salaries are not strong, shoe string budgets,

Few retreat centres left

This retreat centre... I have been coming for 30 years...

The work of this place, these people - unique, life-giving, spiritual depth and breadth, kindness, goodness, education, rituals, silence and sharing.... Giving and receiving..

It must be supported and sustain... the world, the Earth and we need these places.

With gratitude to each of you

For the monetary support - much needed

For the community support

Gratitude to the Ottawa River... from the origins of the universe to the present... we have exchanged molecules with this river....

We are a part of each other.

Thank you.