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For Immediate Release:

Fort Macleod to Celebrate Illustrious Western Heritage with RCMP Musical Ride on August 7th, 2014.

The Town of Fort Macleod announced today that it plans to hold a 140th Anniversary Celebration on August 7th, to commemorate the arrival of Colonel James F Macleod and the North West Mounted Police (NWMP) to what would become the settlement of Fort Macleod and the province of Alberta — a landmark event, for the region, the province, the RCMP, and the country itself.

The development of this first fort in 1874 brought law and order to a previously lawless region, laying the foundation for the peaceful settlement of what was then known as the North West Territories of Canada, and the beginnings of the internationally renowned Western Canadian culture Alberta is proud to lay claim to today.

The rugged spirit of adventure, the courageousness, perseverance, ingenuity, entrepreneurship, and grace embodied by those first few NWMP and the settlers who followed endures in the sons and daughters of the town's founding fathers. That spirit, that love of the west, and the freedom that rides on the winds of change is what makes the character of Fort Macleod so unique – in a word, resilient.

To celebrate this momentous occasion, the Town of Fort Macleod is honoured to have been chosen to host the world famous RCMP Musical Ride on the night of August 7th. The RCMP Musical Ride will feature a full troop of 32 horses and riders. The RCMP initially started out as a cavalry regiment known as the North West Mounted Police. It has a rich history with its officers on horseback and strong historical ties to the Town of Fort Macleod.

"We are so excited to have this opportunity to come together as a community to celebrate the rich history of Fort Macleod," said Councilor Trish Hoskin. "We have so much to be proud of here: our town, the legacy of such great historical significance for the country, and most importantly, the people of Fort Macleod."

There are various events planned throughout the day, at The Fort Museum, The Empress Theatre, on Historic Main Street, and at NWMP Barracks site, culminating with an evening of entertainment at Midnight Stadium. With performers ranging from Can Can girls to trick riders, gunfighters to lawmen, Leon Goodstriker's Indian Games, singers, pipers, Aboriginal drummers and dancers, as well as horses of all shapes and sizes, this event is guaranteed to have something for everyone.

"The founding families in our area literally carry the ancestry of Canada's brave and resilient pioneers, and our First Nations' neighbours in their blood — keeping our history alive. It's high time we celebrate that!" said Councilor Hoskin.

The Town of Fort Macleod's Mayor and Council have extended an open invitation to everyone in the surrounding area, particularly the residents of the MD of Willow Creek, to celebrate the region's illustrious Western heritage in style. For event details, visit www.macleodproud.com, email info@macleodproud.com, or contact the Town Office on 403 553 4425.

About Fort Macleod:

Founded in 1874 with the arrival of Lieutenant-Colonel James Macleod and the North West Mounted Police (NWMP), the Town of Fort Macleod played a pivotal role in Western Canadian history as well as the development of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and their world renowned RCMP Musical Ride. This vibrant community of over 3,000 people lies within sight of the breath-taking Rocky Mountains, 150 km south of Calgary, 100 km east of the British Columbia border, and 80 km north of the US border, acting as a transportation, industry and tourism hub for Southwest Alberta. Find out more about the town at www.fortmacleod.com.

About The RCMP Musical Ride:

The Musical Ride was developed from a desire by early members of the North-West Mounted Police to display their riding ability and entertain both themselves and the local community. Considering the original Mounted Police members had a British military background, it was inevitable that the series of figures they performed were traditional cavalry drill movements. These movements formed the basis of the Musical Ride. Although legend has it that the first Musical Ride was performed as early as 1876, the first officially recorded Musical Ride was performed in Regina under Inspector William George Matthews in 1887. Over the years the popularity of the Musical Ride has grown - today it is one of the most popular Canadian symbols around the world. For more information, please visit the RCMP website at www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca.