



Staff Report to Council - for Information

Title: Museum Information Report - January 2024

From: Cathy McGirr, Director of Museum and Cultural Services

Date: January 11, 2024

Report Purpose:

This report is for information.

Report Summary:

Service and program highlights throughout the report.

Background:

Collections

Collections had a successful year, fully processing new donations, taking on reorganization projects within artefact storage, creating collections based digital programming alongside programming staff, and continuing to digitize collections for the online collection and for use within the Stories & Artefacts section of the museum's website.

One of the goals of Collections is to digitize and upload artefacts monthly to the online collection. More than 450 objects were added, bringing the total to more than 3,100 items or 15% of the collection. Objects selected for digitization are newly donated, used in exhibitions, used within the Stories & Artefacts section of the website or those discovered within other collections projects. Alongside breaking down geographical access barriers to the collection, digitization acts as a conservation technique by mitigating the need to physically access artefacts reducing risks of damage through handling etc.

Collections aims to add 20 new stories to the Stories & Artefacts section of the website annually. This goal was met, and this section now has 99 featured stories which highlight more than 400 objects and archival materials. Stories uploaded this year include Bruce Peninsula Zinc Mines, Canada Spool & Bobbin, Folk Schools, The Chesley Colts, Ice Harvesting, the Oliphant Regatta and Pharmacists and Chemists.



Ice Plow featured in Ice Harvesting story.

Throughout 2023, alongside programming staff, collections created Deep Dives, short videos introducing and telling the brief history of items within the collection. Subjects of videos included wedding gowns, musical instruments, hair artwork and jewelry, hats, and hairstyles. The episode featuring Emma Manser of Port Elgin's wedding gown dating to 1890 can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zw102-oGFE>.

In all, there were 32 new donations to the collection in 2023. Most donations were from Bruce County residents, but some came from as far away as Saskatoon and Vancouver. A highlight from 2023 includes a dress belonging to Julia Donnelly, the wife of Senator J.J. Donnelly of Pinkerton. The dress was worn in Ottawa when Parliament was visited by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth on their Royal Tour in 1939.

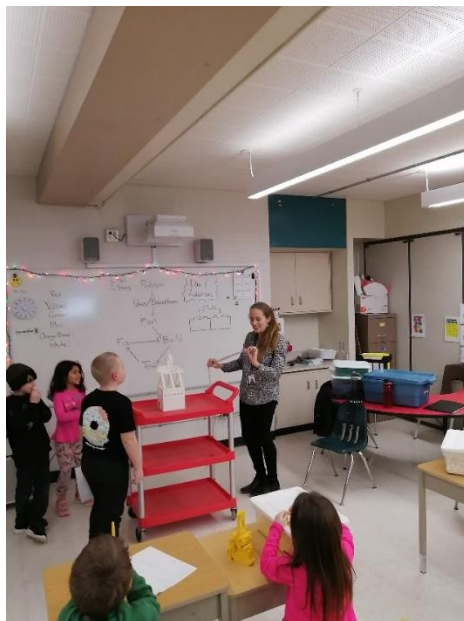


Dress worn by Julia Donnelly during Royal Visit to Parliament.

Education and Outreach

Education Programs

The Museum delivered 6 educational programs in December, reaching 120 students. Four of these programs were delivered in classrooms through our Mobile Museum service. Our Winter Celebrations program was popular this month, where participants learned about the history and traditions of five different celebrations that occur around this time of year: Solstice, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Bodhi Day, and Christmas.



Grade 1 students from Hillcrest Elementary School testing the structural integrity of their LEGO™ Building Challenge towers.

In 2023 we ran In-Museum programs for 57 classes hosting over 1200 students. We also travelled to 20 different classes to deliver our In-School Outreach programs, reaching an addition 392 students. Our Education Program totals for 2023 was 77 programs delivered to 1592 students.

Merry Munchkins

Thirteen preschoolers plus their caregivers attended this exciting morning of holiday exploration and giving. After a festive circle time, participants decorated donation bags that they then took into the Bevan's General Store exhibit and filled with ingredients to create a non-perishable meal kit complete with a recipe card. Meal Kits were donated to the Living Hope Centre's food bank.

Upcoming Programs

Museum Munchkins - January 24: Preschoolers and their caregivers are invited to Museum Munchkins, a program especially designed to engage little ones through play-based learning.

In this inaugural program of the season, we will be joined by Robyn McKenzie from M'Wikwedong to learn about and participate in drum circles. [Events & Programs - Bruce Museum CA](#)

Exhibitions

We will start of the year with two new exhibitions opening in mid to late January.

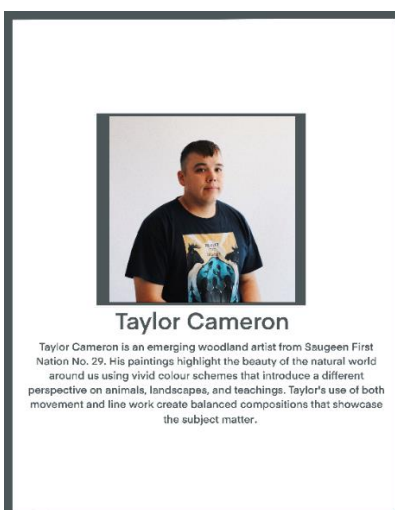
The Thread of the Story: When Artefacts Inspire Art

This in-house exhibition created in collaboration with 39 extremely talented artists takes inspiration from the BCM&CC's collection. Every artefact has a story, or in this case three! The exhibition will uncover the stories of a selected number of artefacts, staff's personal connections to the objects and the ultimate reimagining of the artefact from the artists perspective through fibre art. [The Thread of the Story: When Artefacts Inspire Art - Bruce Museum CA](#)



Woodland People

This show dives into the history and rich culture of the Woodland people who existed in this territory for time immemorial. The artist, Taylor Cameron was moved by his own interest in revisiting stories of the forgotten past, and using his experience studying archaeology to display true depictions of the life that once was. His hope is to bring pieces and moments of history back to modern day spaces to create connections to our ancestors and to reclaim our identity as Anishinaabek people.



Marketing



Year in Review: Annual Highlights

The Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre's Year in Review for 2023 is now complete. Some highlights from the year include:

- [Receiving the Ontario Historical Society's Dorothy Duncan Public History Award](#) for our Newspaper Digitization Project
- The addition of 400 digitized items to our [online collection](#) and 2,415 digitized items added to Archives.
- Working in partnership with Saugeen Ojibway Nation to repatriate archeological collections.
- [4 past exhibits made](#) available online, including our 2022 exhibits Made in Bruce, Farm Fresh, and new [Young Canuckstorian Veterans video diaries](#)
- The return of our Speakers event in 2023 with over 250 participants present for an inspirational talk by Indigenous advocate and author Jesse Wenthe

The full Year in Review can be viewed online at brucemuseum.ca.

Programming

Light-up-the-Holidays

The December 15th "Light-up-the-Holidays" event achieved a milestone with 343 registrations, marking a 54% growth from the previous year.

From 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm, the museum buzzed with festive energy. The OPG Gallery hosted Rabbit Dash Café with treats and coffee. Live musicians featured seasonal karaoke, and the Bruce Power Theatre showcased Steve Baker's Victorian Magic Show. Complimentary food was enjoyed in the lower café. Families gathered in the Bruce Gallery for Santa's visit, crafting sugar cookies, creating Victorian Pomanders, and writing letters to Santa. The Exhibit Hall immersed guests in holiday spirit with a German Koogel ornament craft and readings by the Bruce County Library. Special features included a museum-wide scavenger hunt and exclusive gift bags for members. The historic Mackenzie Log Cabin, adorned with lights, added a nostalgic touch. The "Light-up-the-Holidays" event exceeded expectations, offering a variety of activities that brought joy and a sense of community. The museum's commitment to a memorable and inclusive experience made this annual celebration a highlight for residents and visitors alike.





Santa Visits

The 2023 Santa Visits were a resounding success, accommodating 195 local families. The program, aimed at fostering community spirit, featured a visit from Santa, alongside engaging holiday crafts and a letter writing station for children. This initiative exemplifies our commitment to creating meaningful connections within the community during the festive season.

Upcoming Programs

Crazy Quilting Workshops, January 29 & Feb 5, 2024

Embark on a creative journey into Victorian crazy quilting with our half-day workshops. Inspired by artefacts "Ladies Group" and "Women Gathering," these sessions promise a delightful exploration of this unique fiber art form. Discover hand-stitching and embellishment techniques, weaving historical influences from the American Victorian era,

the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, and ornamental needlework from England. Join us for a captivating blend of history and creativity in the world of crazy quilting!

Revenue Development

Confirmed Funding Requests



Georgian College - Confirmed \$1,500 in funding in support of our 2024 Muse Talks Program (\$1,000) and our Light Up the Holidays event (\$500).

Membership

The Museum's Holiday Membership drive has kick off with 29 memberships purchased to date. All memberships purchased between November 13th and December 20th will be entered to win a \$200 Blue Mountain gift card. The Museum currently has 575 active membership households.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

There are no financial, staffing, legal or IT considerations with this report.

Interdepartmental Consultation:

Interdepartmental Consultation occurred with the Library Services for the Light-up-the-Holidays program.

Link to Strategic Goals and Objectives:

Community and Partnerships - Enhance and grow partnerships

Link to Departmental Plan Goals and Objectives, if any:

Museum Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

Goal 1. "Build a strong and inclusive community": This was achieved through the Light-up-the Holidays event, demonstrated through the wide offer of activities we had on offer.

Goal 2. "Enhance and grow partnerships": This was achieved through the Light-up-the Holidays event, demonstrated through the addition of new vendors and performers!

Goal 2. “Enhance and grow partnerships”: This was achieved through the stewardship and reengagement of community sponsors that generously support our programs and initiatives.

Museum Digital Content Strategy Goals and Objectives

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