



# Staff Report to Council - for Information

**Title:** Museum Information Report - January 2025

**From:** Cathy McGirr, Director of Museum and Cultural Services

**Date:** January 23, 2025

**Report Number:** MUS-2025-027

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## Report Purpose:

This report is for information.

## Report Summary:

Museum program and service highlights for the month of December throughout the report.

## Background/Analysis:

### County Art Collection - Penetangore Hub

Human Services staff at the Penetangore Hub provide a range of integrated programs to support the well-being of people in our community. Since the opening of the Penetangore Hub, much thought has been given to how the artwork would represent the community, county values and the services provided at this location. Over the last few months, this project has included discussions focused on ensuring diversity and making the space welcoming for clients and staff. With inspiration and guidance from staff, four main areas each with a unique artwork approach across a variety of mediums has been selected to accomplish the vision. The beautiful, local, and inclusive artwork strongly aligns with the department's focus of embracing an equitable and person-centred approach to ensure everyone feels valued and included.

### Reception Area - Medium: Photography

As the main welcoming area to for the county's services, this area will include several iconic Kincardine images. Kincardine photographer Sarah Chisholm was selected to create a collage of photographs depicting Kincardine and celebrating the many themes that come to mind when you think of Kincardine including agriculture, industry, shoreline, culture and more. Sarah creates artwork featuring the natural world with a touch of magic, conveying a sense of wonder in otherworldly realms. She uses both photography and digital painting to showcase her unique style.



### Artist Bio - Sarah Chisholm

Sarah Chisholm is a Canadian photographer, fine artist, and writer who was born near the shores of Lake Huron. She grew up among notable artists and photographers and is inspired and encouraged by her talented family and friends. She now creates otherworldly and dreamy images and prints. Sarah finds inspiration every day in her surroundings, and loves to photograph landscapes, the sky, the forest, and the beach. She uses digital tools for her photography and fine art paintings. Sarah is not afraid of bold and vibrant colour, and is especially aware of composition and lighting, both when clicking the shutter button and in post-processing. Her work is featured in collections around the world, and has been sold in galleries, art exhibitions and shows across Ontario. Sarah resides with her husband, Phil, and their three beautiful daughters near the beaches they all love.

### Interview Room - Medium: Fibre Art

This area is also another area that is used to as a first point of contact for clients and visitors. The selection of a large bright fibre art piece was intentional to make the room feel cheerful and welcoming.

The piece “The Tulips Attend a Folk Festival” by Port Elgin artist, Margaret Grottenthaler was selected. This piece is inspired by the designs of Alexander Gerard who was a top designer for Herman Miller in the 1960s and is a second piece in a series of works featuring

stylized tulips. The piece is pieced and quilted by domestic sewing machine and is constructed of commercial cotton. It measures 40 x 40” and was made in 2024.



#### Artist Bio - Margaret Grottenthaler

Margaret Grottenthaler, took a 180 degree turn to focus on creating art quilts and hand stitched works. She began sewing and stitching as a child and kept up this practice sporadically throughout her professional life. She now applies her “domestic” skills to create vibrantly coloured textile works. She is inspired by elements from her surroundings, including plants, flowers, graffiti, ceramics and the natural scenery of Lake Huron, where her family has a second home.

She believes that art can be appreciated for its aesthetic qualities without requiring deep contemplation. Her quilts and stitched works are designed to evoke positive emotions and provide an impactful visual experience.

Margaret is a member of the Studio Arts Quilts Association, the Toronto Modern Quilt Guild and the Shoreline Artists Association. A collection of her quilted bowls and trays is currently for sale in the AGO shop in conjunction with the Pacita Abad exhibit.

#### Children Services, Income & Employment Support Hallway - Medium: Mural

This space lends itself well for a mural design. Saugeen First Nation artist, Jeannette Ladd was selected to create the mural. The mural is called “New Beginnings: Wisdom of the Land”.

The mural embodies the essence of new beginnings. At its heart is a child in a cradleboard, lovingly carried by a parent. This stage of life reflects purity, potential, and the innocence of new life. Just as the sun rises in the east to mark the start of each day, it symbolizes warmth, light and the importance of new beginnings, hope and love in aspects of life.

The energy of the sun fuels the earth, nurturing growth. The trees in the mural represent this growth - they begin as a single seed, much like a small dream or goal, and with care and perseverance, they flourish into strong, beautiful trees.

The bear, or makwa in Ojibwe, signifies bravery. This bravery is essential for pursuing and achieving our dreams. The bear teaches us to live a balanced life - one that harmonizes rest, survival, and play. A mother bear's protective nature mirrors the way parents safeguard their children.

The river, adorned with fish, represents life itself, with water as its sustaining force. Butterflies, symbolize transformation, carry dreams and desires as they glide gracefully, reminding us of the beauty of change.

The sun and moon are significant elements in this story, with the sun symbolizing the grandfather and the moon representing the grandmother. Finally, the stars serve as a reminder of our ancestors, ever-present in our lives, guiding us with their wisdom and light.



#### Artist Bio - Jeannette Ladd

As an Anishnaabe-kwe from Saugeen First Nation, nestled within the Saugeen Ojibway Territory on the shore of Lake Huron in Southern Ontario, I have always been deeply connected to my roots. My upbringing in this vibrant community has profoundly influenced my artistic journey.

I graduated from the University of Toronto with a bachelor's degree in architecture, where my studies allowed me to design spaces that harmonize with the ways people live and work. Despite architectural background, my passion for art has been a constant thread throughout my life. I am particularly drawn to creating pieces that honour and celebrate my culture.

Art has been a vital part of my personal development. Through my art, I strive to create meaningful connections and convey the stories and experiences of my people. Each piece is reflection of my heritage, blending traditional techniques with contemporary expressions. My journey as an artist is a testament to the enduring power of culture and creativity.

#### Penetangore Hallway

Working with Kincardine Pride and Kincardine youth, this area is under development and will incorporate a diverse youth perspective focusing on inclusion. This area is expected to be completed early Spring 2025.

## Exhibitions

For the Birds: Upcycled Bird Palaces December 14, 2024 - April 30, 2025

On December 14, the Museum opened the For the Birds exhibition to an enthusiastic crowd and sold six pieces of artist, Graeme Chalmer's work. This colourful, quirky exhibition adds a wonderful pop of colour to the Museum's walls and draws the visitor in to explore all the fine details of every birdhouse. Each bird house is a unique design, crafted from found treasures and are also fully functional including ladders for the smaller birds to use to easily exit the house. The exhibition is on until April 30, 2025, and will also include an Artist Talk in March. This is an exhibition you won't want to miss! [For the Birds: Upcycled Bird Palaces - Bruce Museum CA](#)



Realism in Fantasy, January 11 - April 30, 2025

Back for her second solo show at the BMC&CC, we were pleased to open Yukselle Hassan's show Realism in Fantasy on January 11. Her inspiration of nature's magic of organic shapes and flowing patterns along with her strong passion for pouring nature uniquely on canvas are evident throughout each piece. Her style and colour of her work are her signature. Although Yukselle was unable to join us in person we were excited to have her welcome everyone to the show in a pre-recorded message from Turkey. In April an Artist Talk with Yukselle is being planned, so stay tuned for more information on this.

See Yukselle's welcome video [here](#).

[Yukselle Hassan: Realism in Fantasy - Bruce Museum CA](#)



## Weinstein Online Publication / Exhibition

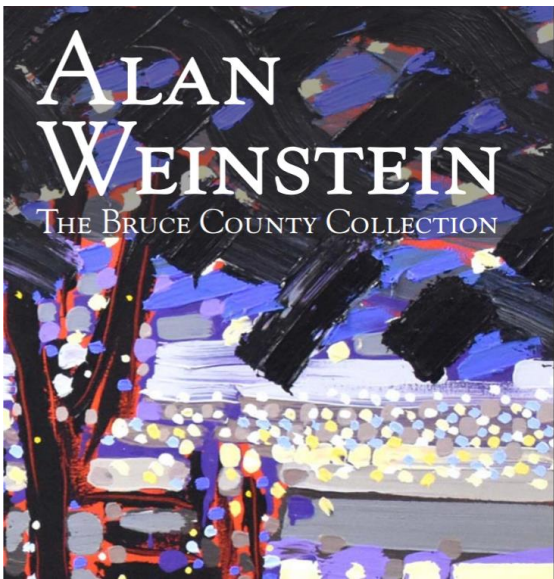
In 2021 the BCM&CC was gifted with a remarkable art collection from artist Alan Weinstein. The 525 pieces in the collection represent a vast body of work through Alan's career. Alan's work carries significant historical value. William Ronald, the founder of Painters Eleven, was considered a pioneer of the movement of Modernism in Canada dating back to 1954. It is apparent that Weinstein's work has been heavily influenced by this movement. Alan's work has been exhibited widely and is in firm standing within a community of fine artists of this movement.

With the acceptance of this donation and the BCM&CC mandate, the Museum has been working to make this collection accessible to the public through a variety of channels, including but not limited to online collections, an online publication / exhibition and educational programming.

The Museum is pleased to announce that the online publication / exhibition is now available online on the website at <https://www.flipsnack.com/FFD6DFBA9F7/alan-weinstein-the-bruce-county-collection/full-view.html>

This extensive publication represents a year-long collaborative effort including Museum staff and the IT department to make it a reality. The publication outlines Alan's story from a young age, covering his career and contains 141 images from the 525 pieces of the County's collection. 193 items from the collection are also accessible in the Online Collection [Search Results for Weinstein | Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre](#) with a plan to add an additional 70 items by March 2025.

In September the Museum plans to launch as part of the 2025/2026 Education Guide curriculum-based programs utilizing the content from the online publication / exhibition. The work involved to catalogue, preserve, interpret, and make this extensive collection accessible is an ongoing priority for the BCM&CC.



## Education and Outreach Programs

### Education Programs

In 2024, The Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre's Education Programs reached 2,016 students in 94 classes through 122 education programs over 49 days. This is the highest number of students reached in the last 8 years.

In December, the Museum provided education programs for 197 students during 5 days of programming including 2 days of Mobile Museum Programs. A popular program at this time of year is the Winter Celebrations program for grade 2 classes, which is tied to the social studies curriculum. Participants hear a solstice story, play dreidel for Hanukkah, dance to Bollywood music for Diwali, do a Bohdi Day meditation, and make Christmas pomanders.



Grade 2 students from Arran Tara play a dreidel game.

### Outreach Programming

On December 9, the Museum presented an outreach program to the Port Elgin Day Away Program. 18 participants had a chance to handle a selection of dolls and doll-related artefacts from one of the travelling trunks, and shared stories of some of their favourite toys from their youth.

### Children's Programs

Merry Munchkins, December 11

Preschoolers and 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 Saugeen First Nation Food Bank.



Museum Munchkins decorating Meal Kit Bags to be donated to Saugeen First Nation Food Bank

### Upcoming Programs

#### PA Maker Day: Make it For the Birds, January 13

The first PA Maker Day of the year is inspired by Graeme Chalmers' vibrant and quirky upcycled birdhouses on display in our exhibit "For the Birds". Children will explore how art meets engineering by creating their own imaginative bird houses using new and repurposed materials. Through hands-on activities, they will learn about bird biology, habitat needs, and creative ways to reuse everyday items to create functional and artistic homes for our feathered friends.

### Marketing

#### Saugeen Makers Market - December 14

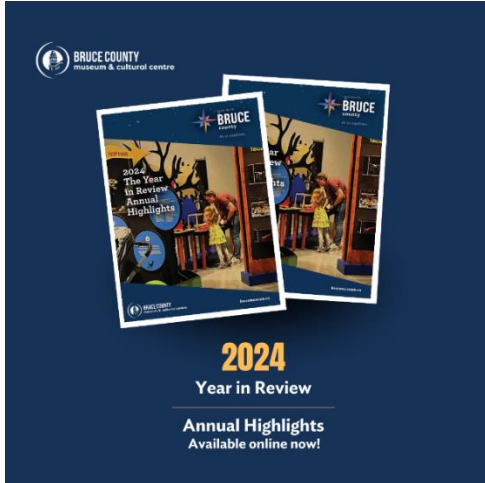
The Museum attended the Saugeen Makers Market held at the James Mason Centre with an outreach booth to provide information on upcoming holiday programming and a friendship bracelet craft to engage attendees of all ages. The event was well attended and included many artisans from within the local Saugeen First Nation community selling handcrafted designs - from art prints, to jewelry, embroidered clothing, wood crafts, and more.





## 2024 Year in Review Annual Report

The Museum’s Year in Review Annual report was published in December, highlighting the major milestones, community engagement, and inspiring exhibitions from throughout 2024. This year was one of growth, creativity, and connection, as the Museum continued to fulfill the mission and emphasize the BCM&CC’s dedication to reconciliation, inclusivity, innovation, and meaningful community engagement. Read [the full report here](#).



## 70 Years of Stories and Memories

2025 marks the BCM&CC's 70th anniversary. To celebrate this remarkable milestone, the Museum will be launching a yearlong social media campaign “70 Years of Stories and Memories” in the first quarter of 2025 to showcase the people, places, artefacts, and moments that define Bruce County, and the Museum in its role as a vital cultural and historical hub for the preservation of these stories.



## Programming and Events

### Holiday Book Nook, December-January

Ahead of the December 13 Light Up the Holidays event, the Museum launched a Holiday, Christmas, and Winter themed Book Nook. Partnering with the Bruce County Public Library, the book nook was stocked with over 25 publications for all age groups. These books outline a variety of holiday crafts, Christmas stories, and winter fun.



### Light Up the Holidays, December 13

Light Up the Holidays is the Museum's annual celebration of the winter season, and the 2024 version offered a festive and joyful experience for over 300 community members.

On December 13, all areas of the Museum were full of activities and visitors. The OPG Gallery hosted crafts, sponsor tables, and a hot chocolate and coffee bar. The Bruce Power Theatre showcased Erin Milley-Patey and her studio singers, with the Southampton Rotary providing free popcorn. Families gathered in the Bruce Gallery for fun activities, Victorian crafts, and to see our guest of honour, Santa! Mac 'N Cheese and sugar cookies were enjoyed in the lower café, and the Exhibit Hall featured wood turning, spinning, and weaving demonstrations, canon firing, and face painting by Painted Pebble. Guests enjoyed Holiday Storytime from the Bruce County Public Library, whose Bookmobile was out front offering books to check out for the holidays. There was also a museum-wide scavenger hunt. Finally, the historic Log House, Log School, and back patio were all adorned with lights, providing a bright and merry evening for everyone who came out.



### Winter Break Movies, December 23 & 30

On December 23, we played the holiday classic *The Muppet Christmas Carol* (1992, G) which drew 33 visitors to the Bruce Power Theatre. On December 30, we showed *Kung Fu Panda 4* (2024, PG) which had 37 visitors in attendance.



### Winter Break Crafting: Make Your Own Birdhouse, December 27 & 28

Inspired by our new winter exhibit 'For the Birds,' children and adults alike created, painted, and decorated their own birdhouses. Younger participants were able to paint and decorate mini pre-made birdhouses, while older children and adults selected from a variety of larger birdhouse designs and had to assemble the avian abodes first. The colours and creativity were on full display for the sold-out program.



### **Upcoming Programs**

#### Family Day - Earth Explorers

**February 17 | 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM**

Head over to the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre on Family Day for Earth Explorers, a science-themed day where the museum will be activated with opportunities for families to learn about the local environment, Indigenous land stewardship, and our local biodiversity, all while having fun in the process!

Families are invited to shows by storm chaser and nature photographer, David T. Chapman who will guide you through beautiful birds, wacky weather, and the magic of the night sky. There will be exciting activities and crafts including building ECO bird feeders. The halls of the museum will come alive on this action-packed day full of discovery.

[Events & Programs - Bruce Museum CA](#)

Members FREE; General Admission Applies.

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Revenue Development

Memberships

In December the Museum wrapped up the holiday membership drive with over 50 new members. The winner, Laurel Silenzi received a \$200 gift card to Little Cubs Family Fun Centre in Port Elgin. The year closed off with 661 membership households, an increase of over 20% over last year.

A Very Grinchmas Morning

Over 100 participants joined in to kick off the holiday break for A Very Grinchmas Morning. This exclusive “Members Only” event featured grinch themed activities such as a Whoville Hair Salon, face painting, themed ballons, crafts and ended with a screening of the 2018 animated version of the Grinch in the Bruce Power Theater. Those brave enough to get up close to the Grinch joined us at the Grinchy photo station and took home a keepsake photo to capture the surprise encounter.



**Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:**

There are no Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT considerations with this report.

**Interdepartmental Consultation:**

Interdepartmental consultation with Library Services regarding the Light up the Holidays event, and Holiday Book Nook has occurred. Human Services were also consulted regarding the County Art Collection.

**Link to Strategic Goals and Objectives:**

Community and Partnerships - Enhance and grow partnerships

**Link to Departmental Plan Goals and Objectives, if any:**

Pillar 1. Expanding BCM&CC's role as a community hub for the entire county

Objective 1.2: Establish BCM&CC as a centre of cultural activity.

Objective 1.3 Build profile as a core tourism destination.

Pillar 2. Building affinity across the county

Objective 2.1 Engage underserved audiences

Objective 2.2 Deepen relationships with communities across the County.

**Report Author(s):**

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**Attachments:**