2009 Annual Report

Collingwood Museum

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Museum Highlights - 2009

- Past Perfect collection management records continued to increase.
- Museum and community members continued to provide financial support toward the conservation of Father Time.
- Reproductions of the photograph collection generated funds for the museum operating budget. Staff continued to provide residents and businesses with heritage photographs for display purposes.
- Children’s summer programming was once again offered, providing heritage and curriculum components.
- Two adult bus trips allowed museum members and non-members to enjoy the historic village of St. Jacob’s and the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto.
- Photography exhibit installed at the Bay Haven Retirement Lodge in June 2009.
- Negotiating the Home Front and No Man’s Land exhibit was opened to the public on November 11, 2009.
- Museum membership enrollment increased in 2009.

From the Collection of the Collingwood Museum
Building & Maintenance

The HVAC system for the building has been maintained throughout the year with no issues. Regular maintenance for optimal working order has been completed. An automated computer system was installed to allow computer control for monitoring and adjusting temperature and relative humidity. Computerized control allowed the Fleet, Facility and Purchasing Manager to have visual control of the system from his computer which is located off-site. Manual temperature and relative humidity readings continued to be taken on a daily basis at opening and closing hours.

Four light fixtures were installed at the south end of the property which resulted in increased visibility for staff when exiting the building in the evening and for pedestrians walking on the foot path.

Limited space within the building continued to be a challenge when conserving artifacts and developing on and off-site exhibits.

On July 6th Edwards Alarms performed our annual fire inspection. All fire extinguishers were checked, refilled or replaced if required. All emergency light batteries were replaced along with the alarm bell.

The fascia trim and pillars of the building received a fresh coat of paint.

The exterior signs at the north-east and north-west corners of the Station property were updated with a fresh coat of paint and new vinyl lettering. In updating the north-east sign “Museum” was relocated to the top of the sign. “Museum” was also added to both sides of the large upper portion of the north-east sign.
Updated North-East Sign

Updated North-West Sign
Collections Management

Father Time Conservation:

In January of 2009 museum staff sought financial assistance from the community to help with the cost of conserving a white cedar statue entitled Father Time. The following excerpt appeared in the museum’s January/February newsletter which is delivered to museum members and made available to the general public on the museum’s website.

Help Save Father Time

“Since Father Time’s creation in approximately 1878, the statue has faithfully fulfilled its role as a community greeter, first in front of Godfrey McLean’s jewellery store and today in the Collingwood Museum.

Now in his 131st year, Father Time is a little less spry and in grave need of repair. The largest of numerous structural cracks measures 42 ½ inches and runs the length of Father Time’s robe. No less than 11 layers of cement and paint have been added to the statue’s exterior in an attempt to prevent its slow deterioration. Continuing with this band-aid approach is no longer an option as the statue threatens to split into pieces.

The Collingwood Museum is currently accepting donations for Father Time’s professional conservation. To date the museum has raised $300; however, if Father Time is to be saved the support of the community is greatly needed.

To simply dismiss Father Time as an irrelevant and outdated object is an easy, but detrimental, mindset to adopt. To counter this, please consider Father Time’s historical importance in Collingwood and area’s past.

*Father Time was created in approximately 1878 and was carved from a single white pine log by David Fleming of Craigleith, brother to Sir Sandford Fleming-the ‘Father of Standard Time’.

Today, Father Time can be found in The Collingwood Museum, but in his prime he was “hoisted to a ledge over the first story” of McLean’s Jewellery Store at the corner of Huron and Hurontario Streets.

Father Time remained with the McLean family until the 1950s when the statue was donated to the Huron Institute, which was then located in the basement of Collingwood’s first library, Carnegie Hall.

Father Time survived the 1963 fire that destroyed Carnegie Hall. A layer of cement was applied to the statue’s exterior in an attempt to remedy resulting surface damage.
Over the last half-century, Father Time has become inextricably connected to The Collingwood Museum. For approximately 50 years Father Time has been the Museum’s timeless greeter.

In 2008 an accredited professional sculpture conservator from Conservation of Sculptures, Monuments and Objects in Kingston, Ontario, visited the Museum and estimated a cost of $5,375 for Father Time’s conservation. This amount does not include GST, the cost of detoxification, or the use of an indoor facility for the treatment to take place.

In his proposal the conservator noted that "[t]he sculpture is suffering from checking cracks running vertically. It appears these cracks have been in-filled and painted over but the drying of the wood has caused further cracking that is now leading to eminent structural damage. A big section on the front of the base is barely holding the sculpture upright. If left untreated the sculpture will likely fall forward leading to substantial structural damage."

From the generous support received from the community, museum members, and the Collingwood and District Historical Society, $2812.25 was raised at the conclusion of 2009.

Summer Collections Students:

Throughout the summer, students Adara Bull and Blake Morrison searched for artifacts, clarified collections records and helped to reduce the number of mystery artifacts in the collection. The students numbered mystery artifacts and entered the documentation into Past Perfect. We are now 1/13th of the way to our goal of an estimated 60,000 artifacts! These student positions were made possible through the Young Canada Works in Canadian Heritage Organization Grant.
Database Update:

The Microsoft Access database, which contained 6000 artifact records, was converted into the current collection management software Past Perfect. This conversion allowed for more time efficient and consistent searching practices.

Donations:

In total, 25 individual donations of artifacts were offered to the Museum in 2009.

Exhibits:

1. Capturing Collingwood Lens by Lens: James Asa Castor

Melissa Shaw, Museum Assistant, developed an off-site exhibit that was installed in June 2009 at the Bay Haven Retirement Lodge. The new exhibit featured the photography of local photographer James Asa Castor. In 2007 the museum received a large donation of Castor’s photographs and many of these were featured by theme (harbour, downtown, recreation) for Bay Haven’s residents.
2. Negotiating the Home Front and No Man’s Land: Collingwood in the World Wars

Museum staff researched and designed a military-themed exhibit that opened to museum members and special guests on November 10, 2010 and to the general public on November 11, 2009. This exhibit was entitled Negotiating the Home Front and No Man’s Land and was set to coincide with Remembrance Day.

The exhibit stemmed from an unidentified photograph board that was discovered onsite. To learn the identities of the board’s 252 men,
staff sought the community’s assistance through the local newspapers. The community’s response was very positive and outstripped staff’s expectations. The information that was obtained from the community (attestation papers, photographs and personal letters) was compiled and organized into a binder for A Company, 157th Battalion.

The exhibit was installed in 5 cases and located in the museum’s main gallery. The museum partnered with the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 63 for this exhibit and was able to borrow on loan various artifacts, including a civilian gas mask and a recruiting officer’s uniform. A strong partnership has developed through this joint venture and the museum staff will be working with the Legion’s curators to teach safe artifact labeling and handling procedures. The members of Branch 63’s Executive Board were invited to the exhibit’s official opening on June 10, 2010.

DO YOU REMEMBER?
The Collingwood Museum needs your help identifying local soldiers from World War One!

The museum has recently uncovered a large display board with individual portraits of soldiers belonging to the 157th Simcoe Foresters. This battalion was composed of men from the Collingwood and local area. So far, only 11 of the 252 portraits have been identified. Our goal is to identify as many men as possible by Remembrance Day (November 11) so this fascinating piece may be incorporated into a new and informative military exhibit.

If you have a photograph of a local soldier who served with the 157th, please call the museum at 455-4811 or email museum@collingwood.ca to organize a meeting with a staff member. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Information Request published in Enterprise Bulletin
Postcard invitation sent to members and exhibit participants.
Come see The Collingwood Museum’s Newest Exhibit
opening November 11th, 2009
45 St. Paul Street
running until May 31st, 2010

Negotiating
The Home Front & No Man’s Land

Poster for military exhibit opening that was submitted to local newspapers and posted in Collingwood’s downtown stores.
His Worship, Mayor Chris Carrier, officially opened the exhibit, highlighting the pride and honour that Collingwood’s citizens hold toward the town’s involvement in armed conflict. Mayor Carrier thanked Chic Simonato on behalf of the town’s citizens for Chic’s research on Collingwood’s military involvement from the 1860s to present day. The museum has two large binders containing Chic’s research for the public’s consultation.
3. Smart’s Panel Project

A large boiler was found at the site of the old Smart’s Greenhouses in 2008 and was installed in Heritage Park along the Collingwood trail system. Research was conducted by museum staff and an external panel was developed for installation in 2010. Pamella Branch was hired as the project’s graphic designer.

4. Hulls of Hurontario

The marine online exhibit through the Virtual Museum of Canada continued to bring many information requests to museum staff. The exhibit, entitled “Hulls on Hurontario: Collingwood’s Marine Legacy” can be viewed at the Community Memories Web site.
Promotion & Publicity

Gifts to charitable organizations included the Kinette Club of Collingwood, and Tim Horton’s.

The Town of Collingwood provided space on the back page of The Enterprise-Bulletin, allowing for the promotion of upcoming events, activities and exhibit openings.

Postcards and flyers were developed as invitations and promotional material for Negotiating the Home Front and No Man’s Land.

When attending the Simcoe County Arts Group and Museums, along with the Grey-Bruce Museums networking, rack cards were distributed to other sites representatives.

The Collingwood Museum, as part of the Simcoe County Arts Group and Museums (SCAGM), attended meetings for the development of the 5 year marketing plan for the group’s sites.

Events & Programming

On January 20th Margot Nicholson-Trott, from the Georgian Frame Gallery, delivered an informative workshop on safe photograph/art framing techniques and preventative conservation.

Three presentations were organized by museum staff that saw Greig Stewart speak about the Avro Arrow on March 24th, April 15th, and November 3rd. The response to this special event was exceptional; all three presentations had waiting lists with over 25 names.

Staff members continued to visit Collingwood’s nursing homes, where residents enjoyed the colourful and informative presentations on Collingwood and area’s histories.

The Annual Easter Egg Hunt in April was successful. Over 220 adults and children participated in the annual event. A good time was had by all. Partners for this event included Boston Pizza and Crave.
Summer programmes

1. Children’s Programming

Lee Livingstone and Haley French created and delivered children’s programmes for July and August. Nineteen different craft programmes were developed and these were attended by 267 children. A survey was dispersed to parents and guardians requesting feedback on the programmes and comments on future programmes they would be interested in seeing offered at the museum.

2. Adult Summer Trips

Susan Warner and Haley French supervised a bus trip to the Country Mill Museum and the Famers’ Market in St. Jacob’s. Melissa Shaw and Haley French supervised the bus trip to the Royal Ontario Museum and Gardiner Museum of Ceramics. Trip participants and staff members alike had a great time. Staff members also benefited from visiting other museum sites as they were able to view new exhibit and label designs.
Holiday Programmes

Enrollment in the museum’s holiday programmes was lower than expected due to budget cuts in local schools; however, all in attendance enjoyed the crafts and candle dipping. Great interest was shown in the description of a Victorian holiday season and the various activities that children and parents alike enjoyed.

Once again we invited teachers to inform staff if any students celebrate holidays other than Christmas, so an alternative craft in keeping with their personal traditions and beliefs could be arranged. This was well-received.

Children along with staff had a wonderful time.
Health & Safety

An outside contractor, KitCare Corporation, visited the Station quarterly to inventory the first aid boxes and replenish supplies as needed.

WHMIS training was provided for all Station staff and summer students by Catherine Koepke. This training helped to reach the museum’s goal of providing a safe work environment for all staff members and visitors to the building.

Monthly safety inspections were conducted by designated staff to ensure ongoing safety measures were being met.

Summer students viewed the Work Smart, Work Safe DVD to ensure an understanding of the safety hazards within a working environment.

In July staff received fire extinguisher training from the local Fire Department.
Staffing & Human Resources

Two part-time weekend staff joined the museum team in the fall of 2009, Jacklyn Plater and Adara Bull.

Volunteers

Thank you to the members of the 2009 Museum Advisory Committee: Melanie Milczynski, Bruce Mackison, Patricia Miscampbell, Margaret Adolph, Peter DeVries, Irene Pradyszczak and Christine Cowley. Their dedication and commitment to the museum and Collingwood’s unique history are truly appreciated.

Barb Pepper, one of our long-standing volunteers, returned throughout the year, working on collections management tasks and assisting with holiday programming in December. Her work and experience are absolutely invaluable and her dedication and generosity are much appreciated.

Judith Pipher, also a long time volunteer, took on the challenge of tending to the needs of the museum’s textile collection. Judith made
hanging garment bags for the textiles and relocated the fragile pieces in the collection to acid-free boxes. The pieces were also stored using acid-free tissue paper. Numerous quilts were rehung and buffered using tissue paper. Judith also assisted with the installation and planning of Negotiating the Home Front and No Man’s Land.

Penny Orser assisted Judith Pipher in the textile collections. Penny was largely responsible for photographing the artifacts for documentation into Past Perfect. Penny also assisted with the installation of Negotiating the Home Front and No Man’s Land.

Jim Trott, one of the museum’s most recent volunteers, is a long time resident of Collingwood and enjoys working on the museum’s numerous information requests received from visitors and community members a like. Jim processed numerous requests and answered the numerous questions posed by visitors in the museum gallery.
Museum Store

The museum store experienced a reduced income when compared to 2008. Self-generated revenue from memberships, programs, reproduction orders and gift store sales did not exceed our budgeted goals for the year; however, the profits from the store did offset Museum costs, thereby contributing to the operational budget and reducing the tax payers’ burden.

Sales Summary (Figure1)

1. Gifts
The most popular items throughout the year usually fall into the gift category. 2009 was no exception. Gift sales included clothing, toys, board games, postcards, hasty notes, novelty items, posters and prints.

Best Sellers

1) Novelty
In 2009 the museum purchased gift shop items from three new suppliers: Eagle Ridge Trading, Phasha, and Nature’s Garden. The wooden bookmarks, pencils, key chains and magnets from Eagle Ridge Trading feature Canadian-specific designs and whimsical Canadian animals. These are very popular among national and international tourists. Leather bound journals with organic cotton pages were purchased from Phasha and proved to be popular among local and out-of-town visitors. The small number of bookmarks, tote bags, seed packets, and greeting cards purchased from Nature’s Garden did not meet sale expectations.

2) Attire
In September white t-shirts, featuring the Canada flag and “Collingwood, Ontario, Canada,” were added to the gift shop in response to the numerous inquiries staff received in previous years. These shirts were a necessary addition as visitors desired an alternative shirt than those with the Station logo.
2. Books
Books continue to sell well in the museum gift shop, especially those that are directly linked to Collingwood’s history and the history of the Great Lakes. In November, military books were added to the gift store to coincide with the Negotiating the Home Front and No Man’s Land exhibit. These additions were well received by members and visitors alike.

Revenue vs. Expense (Figure 2)

This graph gives a snapshot of income in comparison to expenditures, showing the value of this particular revenue stream over time. The chart underlines the museum’s ability to generate income.
Gift Shop Revenue 2009 (Fig. 1)
Expenses versus Income 2009

(Figure 2)
Museum Attendance

The museum attracted an increased number of visitors in 2009 when compared to 2008. The summer was busy with numerous visitors from the United States and Europe. Summer programmes also encouraged parents and children alike to tour the museum before and after programme sessions.

Chart 1
“Total Visitors” refers to general visits to the site, as well as outreach programme attendance, special events, programmes, and Website visits.
N.B. Collingwood includes weekend residents with main residences in other communities.