

MUSEUMS & MUNICIPAL FUNDING:
TOWARD A STRATEGY FOR INCREASING
LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR
HERITAGE INSTITUTIONS

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THE SAM WALLER LITTLE NORTHERN MUSEUM

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THE PAS, MANITOBA
CANADA



Manitoba

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Introduction:

On numerous occasions and in various forms, both museum workers and analysts in the field have expressed the need for increased financial support for museums from municipalities (Bovey 1986:10).

In response to this need and to requests for assistance in seeking financial support from local governments, the following will briefly examine the history of municipal museums and summarise the literature on the current trends. A case study outlining the evolution of a relatively successful relationship between the Town of The Pas and The Sam Waller Little Northern Museum will demonstrate one pattern of cooperation. Alternate structures and arguments justifying municipal support for museums will be presented. Finally, key strategies for approaching local governments for funding will be identified. Much of the data in this study has been extracted from Dr. Lee Jolliffe's (1987, 1983) research.

It is hoped that museums will take the information and suggestions outlined in this report and adapt them to your local situation, adding your own knowledge about your community, your own ideas and approaches in order to develop a strategy that will be effective in persuading local governments to increase the support given to your museum.

History of Municipal Museums:

In Canada, the municipal museum is a relatively recent phenomenon compared to the situation in England where the concept originated in the early to mid-1800s with enabling legislation being passed in 1845 and 1850 (Jolliffe 1987:37, 145). The Guildhall Museum established in London in 1826 became one of the first municipally supported institutions.

In Canada, the first municipal museum was Allan Gardens in Toronto which was established in 1864. Having established the genesis of municipal government only in 1773, it was not until 1883 that tax funding for museums was formalised in law by Ontario. On that basis, a museum was started in Peterborough in 1896-7. The idea did not catch on quickly since, by 1932, only 7 of 125 museums surveyed were supported by local governments. In the next six years this figure increased only by two. (Jolliffe 1987:37-9).

However, with the impetus of economic growth, national and provincial centennial celebrations in the 1950s and 1960s, accompanied by a related rise in awareness of and support for heritage, the municipal museum idea began to grow. More recently, community landmark preservation battles have resulted in the coalescing of local heritage groups and many historic sites

have been turned into museums. Gradually, municipalities have been drawn into funding these institutions which, in general, have been formed by private individuals or associations outside municipal control. It is often the case that local government is the only stable source available to provide operating funding (Jolliffe 1987:24, 30). The availability of existing collections and/or an historic site have been important factors since few museums have been started from scratch by municipal governments. This trend parallels the expansion of municipal concerns which traditionally have been limited to the regulation of conduct and provision of basic services, into the fields of education, libraries, parks, recreation, housing, and planning (Jolliffe 1987:61, 131).

By 1985, more than 28.4% of Canadian museums were being operated by municipalities, making it the largest single category of governing authority (Jolliffe 1987:1-2). The trend is clearly on course for this proportion to increase. In the eight year period between 1978 and 1986, municipal support for museums increased by three times (Bovey 1986:83).

Current Status:

Jolliffe (1987:98) reports that all types of local governments, large and small, sponsor museums. Of all municipal museums villages sponsor 6.2%, townships 10.5%, towns 24.4%, cities 43%, and many of those (32.6%) operate more than one facility. Nearly half of all community museums are municipal (Bovey 1986:33). In Ontario this figure is as high as 59% (Neufeld 1989:5).

Although Jolliffe (1987:99, 145) reports that more than half of municipal museums are located in communities with populations of more than 26,700, and she postulates that a minimum population of 10,000 is required to support a museum, she also notes that municipal museums have been established successfully by communities with populations as small as 200. As will be shown below, the Town of The Pas, with a population of 6,283, is proof that a community with a small population and tax base can provide solid financial support for a museum operation.

Statistics show that in Canada the municipal contribution to museums is substantial and growing. In 1981-82, 247 municipal museums' combined operating budgets totalled \$38.7 million, of which 61.6% derived from local governments; 18.9% from the provinces; 3.7% from federal sources; and 14.8% from other sources. (Jolliffe 1987:104). In her major survey carried out in 1983, Jolliffe (1987:73) found that 21% of these museums received all of their operating funds from municipalities. Per capita spending by local governments at that time ranged as high as \$8 and averaged \$1.53 (not including services or tax exemptions).

In 1985-86, municipalities spent \$19,932,000 of their own funds on museums which is less than 3% of their total spending on arts and culture (Canada 1989a:3, 10). In Manitoba, local

18.9%
 61.6%
 3.7%
 14.8%
 21%
 \$8
 \$1.53
 3%
 23%

government spending on museums totalled \$254,000 in that period (Canada 1988:35). As a group, Canadian municipal museums paid the salaries of 1,328 full time and 2,184 part time employees (Canada 1989b:57). Municipal governments continue to report operating surplusses on their museum operations totalling \$2.4 million in 1985-86 (Canada 1989b:57). In terms of capital expenditures, municipal spending on museum facilities totalled \$11.8 million in 1985-86.

The most recent figures available for 1987-88 from the Museums and Heritage Section of the federal Department of Communications clearly show that local governments across Canada are continuing to significantly increase their support. They now report spending more than \$20.6 million on their museums which is up by 74.7% in four years. In Manitoba, for the same time period 1987-88, local government spending on museums totalled \$338,000 which is up by 23.4% over four years. The following table provided by the Museums and Heritage Section reports spending on museums divided by budget level.

Municipal Support Reported by Museums, 1986-87

Size of Museum:	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 - \$500,000	Over \$500,000	Total
	(dollars)			
MANITOBA:				
Municipal Support for Operations	91,687	175,309	340,000	606,996
Total Revenues for Operations	860,269	2,290,186	7,450,828	10,601,283
CANADA:				
Municipal Support for Operations	1,379,539	11,438,676	8,572,457	21,390,672
Total Revenues for Operations	7,236,155	44,934,114	189,934,114	241,882,928

SOURCE: Statistics Canada preliminary information.

NOTES:(1) Municipal figures are non-federal, non-provincial government sources from the museum survey, and approximate actual municipal figures.
(2) The support museums report obtaining from municipalities exceed the support municipalities can identify as providing to museums.

In summary, the general trend for municipal spending on museums appears to be a positive one.

Little Northern Museum Case Study:

The association between the Town of The Pas and The Sam Waller Little Northern Museum demonstrates one example of how relationships between museums and municipalities tend to develop.

After immigrating to Canada from England in 1911 as a young man of 16, and later returning for four years as a member of Canada's World War I effort, Sam Waller began a 36 year career as a teacher and lay missionary in northern Ontario. Beyond his educational and religious interests, Mr. Waller pursued a life-long penchant for collecting and he amassed an amazing variety of artifacts and natural history specimens in his private collection. This effort was clearly in the tradition of the seventeenth century origins of the museum idea and the nineteenth century Victorian enthusiasm for natural history.

While serving as teacher at the Big Eddy School and later principal of The Pas Indian Day School after his arrival in 1939, Mr. Waller opened his small teacherage to any who wished to visit and view his growing personal teaching collection of historic, scientific, and "curiosity" materials from the north and the far corners of the world.

As early as 1949, he began to lobby in the community for the creation of a municipal museum in The Pas. He stressed its educational value, cited the community's rapid growth in other fields, and argued the need to preserve a rich, but rapidly disappearing, northern heritage. In the ensuing years he actively pursued a variety of avenues to achieve this goal. He attempted to enlist the support of various community groups including The Northern Manitoba Trappers' Festival, the local school board, the Home and School Association, library supporters, the Chamber of Commerce, town councillors, service clubs, and outside museum professionals.

In order to start a public museum, Mr. Waller offered to contribute his own valuable collection to the proposed facility as well as to provide his own services as curator at no salary. By 1954 an ad hoc committee had proposed a budget of \$4,000 per annum in the hope of attracting additional operating funds from outside the community. The budget included an annual curator's stipend of \$2,000 plus his living quarters in the facility.

The main stumbling block to this proposal was the difficulty in obtaining an appropriate facility. New construction was estimated at \$18,000 and the renovation of a vacant school annex building would have cost \$5,000. Supporters hesitated because of the perceived difficulty in raising sufficient funds for construction. In any event, an appropriate location for the museum was not to be found.

From the perspective of the Town of The Pas, it was argued that the need for sewer and water work outweighed the need for a museum and Mr. Waller's efforts came to naught. There was also some resistance to the very idea of a municipal museum

as Mr. Waller reported the words of one town councillor: "We don't want anything like this...the town will only be saddled with a bunch of junk etc."

Having failed to raise sufficient support for the creation of a public museum in the community, Mr. Waller now directed his efforts toward launching his own private venture. He retired from full time teaching in 1957 and, with the support of a small group of friends, he obtained land on the outskirts of town. Using his own meagre savings and scrounged materials, he built a home for himself and his collection. This was not an easy task either because he had to combat negative attitudes among the town councillors of the day who were concerned that the facility planned would end up being an "eyesore".

Nevertheless, on 2 February 1958 Sam Waller officially opened his Little Northern Museum to the public. Living on his meagre pensions and running the museum on the proceeds of the donations box, he offered an unique experience to visitors. His was the first such eclectic private museum collection in northern Manitoba and, although Mr. Waller was self-deprecating at times, this was certainly an accomplishment of note for the time and place.

The fears of town fathers that the facility would become an "eyesore" were never realised. Indeed, the Museum soon became a widely recognised asset to the town, not only attracting tourists and researchers, but also generating tax revenues for both the town and the province.

When Mr. Waller began his operation he was not only in his words being "soaked" for \$200 annually in property taxes, but he was also required to pay a provincial amusements tax. Although a request based on the beneficial cultural and non-profit nature of his enterprise for an easement on property taxes by the town was turned down in 1959 as a result of the mayor's deciding vote, Mr. Waller's activism was rewarded in another area. Having hosted the provincial minister responsible at the Museum and enlisted the support of others in the museum community, he was successful in having the amusement tax waived in 1960, not only for the Little Northern Museum, but for all museums in the province.

During the early 1960s as his concern grew for the eventual disposition of his museum collection, Mr. Waller also pursued a plan to donate his collection to the province in order to ensure its permanence in the community. This idea also never advanced beyond the discussion stage.

In the meantime, the Little Northern Museum collection grew apace through Mr. Waller's active scrounging, trading, contact with people working in the field, as well as through the kindness of the many visitors who wished to donate items to the impressive collection. The Museum holdings eventually outgrew the original building erected by Mr. Waller. In the late 1960s with the support of The Pas Rotary Club, Mr. Waller continued

to urge the creation of a community museum in conjunction with the movement to build a new library for the town. As part of his desire to see the Museum properly taken care of after his death (and one suspects as part of his campaign to raise support for retaining his collection in The Pas), Mr. Waller sought and apparently received offers to move his Museum elsewhere.

After failing to raise sufficient enthusiasm and municipal support for a new combined museum-library complex, the local Rotary Club decided to raise funds for and build a new bungalow style single purpose museum facility to house Mr. Waller and his collection. This was carried out as a Manitoba centennial project in 1969-70. The Town of The Pas contributed a \$6,000 capital grant toward the \$25,000 building and the new Museum was inaugurated on 1 September 1970.

In order to accomplish this advance, Mr. Waller had given his land, building, and collections to The Pas Rotary Club which had agreed to help operate the facility as a volunteer project for the community. Mr. Waller continued to serve as curator without salary and he endeavoured to open the facility to the public from early morning until he retired at night seven days a week. He often said that he was married to his Museum and, later in life, he began to complain about being tied down too closely to the operation.

Now in his declining years, Mr. Waller again returned to his campaign to establish a public museum facility in The Pas. With the assistance of the Rotary Club, Mr. Waller eventually persuaded the town fathers of the day that the Museum was a valuable town asset worthy of municipal support. They finally agreed to assist with operating expenses and to take over the operation upon his death. A formal agreement to this effect was signed on 21 February 1973 and Mr. Waller finally had achieved his dream of creating a public museum for the Town of The Pas-- nearly a quarter century after first broaching the subject.

The Town of The Pas now assisted the operation of the Museum by providing some operating funding, applying for grants, and hiring a variety of temporary and untrained assistants to help Mr. Waller in his unpaid position as curator. The town also carried out certain maintenance tasks, although the Museum never achieved a very high priority within the municipal structure. An advisory board was appointed by the Town to assist with the direction of the Museum.

In 1978, at the age of 84, Sam Waller died while still caring for his beloved collection and the Town of The Pas then assumed full responsibility for the operation. According to the 1973 agreement, at Mr. Waller's insistence, the town was required to provide a "suitably trained curator" for the Museum operation. Unfortunately however, the staff remained untrained until a second successor to Mr. Waller (hired more as a caretaker than a curator) was allowed to take advantage of some workshops offered by the Association of Manitoba Museums.

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In 1983, some personnel problems resulted in the incumbent being laid off and the Museum was closed by the town. For the first time, province-wide advertising was carried out and subsequently, a curator with related education as well as training and experience in the museum field was hired. The starting salary was under \$20,000. Prior to this development, the Town of The Pas had formally integrated the Museum into the municipal structure as a line department by passing a by-law based on section 431 of the Municipal Act which regulates the establishment of community centres. This by-law formalised the make-up and responsibilities of the Museum Board and the role of staff. In practice, however, the by-law has been found to be ambiguous with regard to the distribution of authority and is currently being revised in order to clarify the situation.

When the professional curator was hired in 1983, the Museum budget totalled \$18,889. By 1990, the incumbent had initiated Museum development along several lines including the addition of a second full-time permanent curatorial position to assist with the growth of the Museum and its programmes in a new \$1.5 million facility which will be four and one half times larger than the existing building.

By the end of 1989, the Museum's operating budget had increased by 376.2% to \$71,056. The contribution from the Town of The Pas had risen by 169.3% to \$31,024, and non-municipal revenues had also grown by 149.3% to \$27,357 in 1989. In recent years, per capita spending on the Museum by the Town of The Pas has ranged up to \$7.40, totalling \$5.56 in 1989. This figure is likely still well above the national average for municipal spending on museums which was last reported in 1983 to be \$1.53 (Jolliffe 1987:106).

The important advances reported above can be attributed in large measure to the presence of a full-time professionally trained and motivated staff person who was able to build on an established operation as originally contemplated by Mr. Waller.

The evolution of The Sam Waller Little Northern Museum from a private collection into a public museum facility owned and operated by a municipality reflects a number of national trends in this field. Prime among them are: the origins outside of the municipal ambit; availability of an existing collection and building in which to house it; inexpensive volunteer staffing; gradual but significant growth in municipal operating support; evolution into direct control by the municipality as a stand-alone line department; a move toward increased professional training among staff; and subsequent professionalisation of the operation.

Today, The Sam Waller Little Northern Museum stands as a valuable community facility--an impressive monument to the far-seeing vision, persistent dedication, and personal sacrifice of its founder.

Subsidiary
\$18,000

1990

272.7%
165.4%
41.331%

= 34.32% of
BUDGET
7.23 in 1990

Alternate Structures of Municipal Control & Support:

As indicated above, the vast majority of museums now supported by municipalities were originally started by individuals or organisations totally separate from the influence of local governments. This evolution toward municipal control is based on changes in the expectations of the public relating to municipal services, the need for greater continuity and stability of operating funds for museums, and the availability of effective leadership within municipal structures (Jolliffe 1987:45).

There are a wide variety of possible organisational structures ranging from provision of indirect services to direct control as a full line department of the municipality. Nearly two thirds of municipal museums are established and managed under single purpose arms-length or quasi-independent boards or advisory committees as is the case for many public libraries for example. Most local government controlled museums (70.2%) report to council, and 49.5% have been set up under authority of a municipal by-law. Only 9.9% have been established as line departments of municipal government (Jolliffe 1987:97, 101-2). Jolliffe's (1987:199) study notes a definite trend over time toward changes from arms-length special purpose boards to advisory committees with museums being operated on line by municipalities.

At its most remote, municipal support can consist mainly of services such as the provision of a building or grounds maintenance, purchasing, long distance telephone, accounting, insurance, and equipment. In her survey, Jolliffe (1987:108) found that 36.9% of the municipalities provided housing for the museums in public buildings. Closer cooperation is marked by those museums which receive annual operating grants or property tax relief from their local governments. Of municipally supported museums surveyed, Jolliffe (1987:104) found that 61.6% of the total operating budgets derived from local government sources. In 1985-86, this figure has risen to 65.3% (Canada 1989b:54). A limited number of museums are managed jointly by two different municipalities or by local governments and private associations. Others have staff paid by municipalities, however, part-time (often grant) employees and volunteers easily outnumber paid personnel (Jolliffe 1987:110). Typically, pay rates and benefits for staff in municipal settings are much better than in the arms-length situations. As indicated above, only 9.9% of municipal museums are full line departments of local governments.

For example, The Sam Waller Little Northern Museum is operated as a separate line department of the Town of The Pas. The curator is a Town administrative employee hired directly by the Town with a full benefits package. He reports directly to the Municipal Administrator. A ten member "board" with one Town Councillor representative is appointed by Town Council to serve in an advisory capacity. All of the traditional "board" responsibilities such as hiring, firing, legal transactions,

supplying financial resources, and determining the pace of progress toward goals are assumed by Town Council. The board reports to Town Council which has final say in all matters.

In the end analysis, the type and closeness of the relationship between a museum and its local government depends on the different situations and character of each community as well as the personalities and vision involved. Jolliffe (1987:92) recommends only that the relationship of the museum with its municipality must be defined as clearly as possible with regard to power, authority, reporting lines, and place in the organisational structure. Otherwise, confusion and frustration can and do arise.

Advantages/Disadvantages:

The benefits to museums of establishing a relationship with a municipality in one form or another seem obvious. First among them is stability of financial support. Contributions from local government can also be used to obtain matching funds from provincial sources.

Less apparent benefits consist of the variety of other types of support available from municipal sources, ranging from maintenance to professional accounting. For example, staff of the Little Northern Museum have benefited a great deal from management and supervisory training available to municipal staff. In addition, Jolliffe (1987:119, 200) reports that municipal museums tend to have stronger managerial expertise and demonstrate a greater level of policy development when compared to other non-municipal museums as a group. In Manitoba, this strength would have a practical impact on a museum's ability to achieve increased operating funding as a Level 2 institution under the provincial community museums grant programme. Paradoxically, however, Jolliffe (1987:153) reports relatively little municipal influence in museum planning exercises.

The disadvantages inherent in municipal control are the loss of autonomy in decision-making. The Little Northern Museum Board, for example, has often been frustrated by the lengthy and involved decision-making process since Council of the Town of The Pas has final say on most crucial decisions. This division of authority also has caused difficulties in relationships with outside bodies which tend to expect that a "board" has full decision-making powers. As well, small museums can get "lost" within the hierarchy of local government when they have to compete for funds and attention within a large municipal department.

On the other hand, in relation to limited resources, municipal museums may be faced with undue pressure to focus on providing public services at the expense of other important museum functions. This has been the experience of the Little Northern Museum when pressure to provide more public programming was exerted by town councillors at a time when it was much more

appropriate to be devoting limited staff time and energy to **planning** and collections management tasks. Appropriate cooperation requires that both parties **understand** that museums must be **goal-driven** (e.g. concerned with proper conservation of the collections) and not simply **market-oriented** (i.e. concerned only about attendance) operations.

From the municipal perspective, the **political** and administrative levels of local government tend to **resist** divesting the prestige and decision-making **power** or fiscal accountability to an arms-length body (Jolliffe 1987:59-61, 72). Problems with fiscal responsibility may occur if the museum operation is not under the direct control of the municipal council. The Sam Waller Little Northern Museum has encountered some difficulties in this area as town council sometimes seems to **resent** the lack of direct **control** over **spending** once the budget has been approved.

In light of recent calls for **restraint** and cutbacks at all levels of government, it can also be assumed that municipal governments do not appreciate what they consider to be undue **pressure** from outside the community for **increased** levels of municipal **funding** for museums (cf. Bovey 1986:10).

The benefits to the municipality itself are not so obvious. Museums may **not** be the **most valued** of **services** provided by a local government despite the fact that municipalities are service oriented. Museums, which are founded on the **Victorian** ideal of **public service** and education, can provide important and desirable services to local citizens (Silber 1989:183, 185). and they can be **justified** in the manner of any **other civic service** (Jolliffe 1987:29). Indeed, as a result of **quality of life**, educational, tourist, and other economic spin-offs, E.C. Bovey (1986:83; cf. Jolliffe 1987:74) reports that, after local citizens, **municipalities** are the **principal beneficiaries** of museum activities. These benefits are summarised below.

Value of Museums to Municipalities:

When approaching your local government for support, your museum requires a good **"case"** to **justify** the expenditure of **public tax dollars**. Museum supporters should not be intimidated by this task. The most recent data available from Dixon (1974: 62, 88, 121-2) shows that **84%** of Canadians **agree** that **governments** should provide **financial support** for museums. This is the **highest** ranking among **seven** leisure-time **activities** tested. On the **praries**, this figure reaches **90%**. Even among **non-visitors**, **72%** **agree** with government spending on museums and the more often a person visits the more often they approve of this source of financial support (**91%** among **frequent** visitors). Dixon concludes that **approval** of government support for museums depends on the **widespread perception** of their **importance** to Canadian **culture and identity**. Bovey (1986:28) found that **46%** of Canadians desire **increased** levels of **support**.

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The following presents an outline of some of the important justifications for supporting museums.

A. Value of Heritage Preservation:

A Museum's major social role is to collect and preserve heritage in order to provide an educational tool to help the community understand its own past and that of others.

"Those who cannot remember the past will be condemned to repeat it." George Santayana

All societies are built on their past culture and history. A basic function of society is therefore to perpetuate itself by preserving and transmitting its lasting values, knowledge, skills, and beliefs to new generations. Museums are dedicated to this function and, by serving as a collective memory, assist community members in relating to their own enduring tradition. A community can scarcely exist without the awareness of its own roots.

No other institution in society is dedicated to preserving the legacy of material objects from the past in trust for future generations. Objects are unique and irreplaceable elements of this trust since heritage resources are non-renewable.

All museum collections in Canada hold parts of our collective national heritage, and when viewed in their aggregate, it is clear that our national heritage is being husbanded as much by our small community museums as by the large national and provincial institutions.

B. Social Importance:

Museums play a significant role in fostering a community's self-awareness, positive identity and pride, thereby assisting in the development of social cohesion through focussing on common reference points in a mutual heritage.

Museums help to maintain the texture of local community/regional/ethnic identity in the face of the forces of assimilation and homogenisation prevalent in post-industrial society.

Museums help reduce the sense of isolation and helplessness by creating a sense of stability and community rootedness through the preservation of significant touchstones and psychological anchors as antidotes against the disruption of increasingly rapid social change (Alvin Toffler's "future shock"). Museums are regarded as institutions of authority and certainty in these uncertain times known as "The Age of Discontinuity".

Museums inform and influence social attitudes. They provide important perspectives on the past to counter the narrow exclusive concern for the present in isolation from the origin and development of particular social problems. This function is not being carried out by the media, and society is losing sight of the

concept that we all belong to a succession of generations stretching back into the the past and ahead into the future. As a **corrective** to the unchecked pursuit of individual **self-interest**, museums teach us that we stand on the shoulders of past generations and that we are merely stewards of a world belonging to our children.

Museums provide **associational space** where people come with family and friends to enjoy themselves, thus meeting the basic human needs for **affiliation** and **stimulation**. The link between museums and improved **quality of life** is significant and inescapable (Bovey 1986:26; Jolliffe 1987:223).

In our increasingly **multi-ethnic** society, museums help to increase awareness, understanding, and **empathy** across ethnic and other boundaries.

C. Value in Relation to **Social Trends**:

Museums are structured to meet the needs of a society characterised by **increasing** levels of **education** and demand for more varied **"lifelong learning"** opportunities.

Increasing pressures on **leisure** time and demand for **quality** leisure experiences are also social trends with which museums are equipped to deal.

The **aging** of the population profile and a related growing public interest in heritage mean that the concerns of museums will gain more public support as time marches on.

The **decline** in the prevalence of **multi-generational** family **household** units means that there is a lack of sustained contact between older and younger members of the community--to the detriment of both groups. Museums are important institutions for **fostering cross-generational interaction** and understanding.

D. **Educational** Value:

One **primary function** in any society is to **enculturate** or educate its youth and to enlighten its members generally. These are central roles for all museums and **community museums** are **primary vehicles** for **community education**.

All education is based on **accumulated experience** such as that found in museum collections. Museums serve as unique data banks of objects useful for stimulating thought, creativity, and research.

Museums make our natural and human **heritage accessible** and assist in the understanding of past historical and natural processes with a view toward solving present and **future problems**, all of which have their basis in the past. As Winston Churchill said, "The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you can see."

Museums engage in popular, informal education in opposition to the prevalence of anti-intellectual and anti-educational tendencies.

Museums provide enrichment for, and alternatives to, the formal education system by organising experience with real objects which is not generally provided by schools. Museums objectify facts and can be important and concrete means of teaching abstract concepts. Child psychology teaches that children's learning is founded on their experience with concrete objects and that the importance of objects to learning extends through adult life. Schools tend to be abstract and removed from reality. Museums provide the multi-sensory experience with real objects which is missing from the formal system in order to reach beyond the abstractions and bring students into touch with reality.

Museums extend the capabilities of the formal education system by providing opportunities for "landmark learning", developing "visual literacy", new learning skills (the ability to learn from studying objects), creative metaphorical thinking skills, and strengthening basic skills by application in a new setting. Learning in museums is informal, individualistic, stimulating, and has been determined to be effective for meeting the needs of exceptional as well as special needs students.

Many studies have indicated that Canadian students are "woefully ignorant" of their past and that more emphasis needs to be placed on this aspect of the curriculum. Museums are ideally suited to assist schools in this area.

If we are to "know ourselves", museums are crucial for any form of local or Canadian studies with the aim of developing knowledge of and reasoned pride in our communities and country.

In any given year, 75% of adults undertake one form or another of a "lifelong learning" experience. Museums can help to meet this demand.

"Seeing is believing, but to touch is the word of God."
Leonardo Davinci

E. Value for Research:

Museums are utilised by individuals, organisations, and governments as sources of information in any number of fields such as genealogy, community development, and other realms of personal and professional interest.

In some cases, museum collections provide the only means of comparative longitudinal research (e.g. changes in mercury levels found in bird feathers).

Museums have taken the lead in several fields of knowledge, notably anthropology.

Museums provide the opportunity to do pure and applied research on objects (e.g. extinct animal and bird specimens) by direct observation, a basic scientific method.

In sum, all knowledge is based on accumulated experience such as that represented in museum collections.

F. Political Importance:

Philosophically, and in real terms, museums have political importance in the sense of helping to increase control over one's own life. Museums collect and preserve knowledge and knowledge is power.

Preservation and free intellectual access to information is a cornerstone of democratic life. Information is required by the citizenry if enlightened political decisions are to be made. Access to information provided by museums is linked to freedom of speech and thought.

The ideal in a free society is to decentralise and democratise information to counter the Orwellian nightmare. After all, Winston Smith's job in the novel 1984 was to destroy the historical record in order to uphold the tyrannical regime.

Local collections of objects and records counter the centralising of power in metropolitan centres which is so frustrating to rural and northern peoples.

Museums are quintessentially democratic institutions since they are open to all without restriction as to age, possession of prerequisites, or ability to pay tuition.

The sense of identity and understanding of the group's origins and background is essential to any stable political order. Individuals have a natural right to have access to their own heritage and all segments of society have the ability to respond to objects and to be enlightened by them.

Museums portray the fundamental values of their society and, among all social institutions, museums have maintained the highest level of public confidence.

Museums in North America were founded as essentially social reform institutions with the goal of educating the "common man". The museum movement is now reaching into the Third World (including North American Native communities). Museums have become instruments of political and ideological power in the struggle to rebuild national pride and confidence versus the effects of colonialism. Museums can play the same role in rural and northern communities in Canada which have been faced with underdevelopment by metropolitan centres.

G. Aesthetic Importance:

Museums are a **civilising** force because they chronicle human creativity and **accomplishment** for the instruction of all.

Museums help to **set aesthetic** and intellectual **standards** of **excellence** for society by preserving the finest examples of art and technology by which our daily life can be evaluated. In doing so, museums help in the **development of judgement**, discrimination, appreciation, and taste.

The presence of museums reflects the **maturity** of a society. As Tacitus said of the **Greeks**, "The most learned and polite people the world ever knew delighted in antiquities."

H. Recreational Importance:

Many people derive much **pleasure** from visiting museums. Museums receive **more** visits per year than all professional sports combined both in Canada and the United States. In 1985-86 more than **21.3 million** visited Canadian museums, an increase of **7%** over the previous year (Canada 1989a:1). Small community museums received more than **2.7 million** of these visits which was up by **5%** (Canada 1989a:9). Figures from 1983 show that **48%** of Canadians reported visiting a museum at least once in the previous year and **84%** have visited at least once in the previous five years.

Museums are regarded as a form of **cultural recreation** or **intellectual entertainment** by most Canadians. Eighty-two per cent of Canadians agree that museums are educational and **79%** see them as **enjoyable** (Dixon 1974).

Museums provide a place for **contemplation and inspiration** following the role of the Greek Muses which was to **uplift** the human **spirit**. By providing contact with society's lasting values and the accomplishments of human creativity, a museum is able to enlarge the vision and uplift the perspective of its visitors for a true **"re-creational"** experience.

I. Economic Importance:

The economic justification is becoming more prominent as **pressure** grows on museums to **justify** financial support. Even though the economic **spin-offs** are **significant**, however, we must be **cautious** about placing undue emphasis on economic justifications. Museum critics can demonstrate that other ways of spending money may be more effective in producing economic gains (although for example **heavy construction** is not one of them). We must ensure that the **value** of museums is not measured on the balance sheet bottom line but on the basis of their **worth as cultural** and educational **institutions** to society.

Museums are part of a major **cultural industry** which is Canada's **fourth largest**. This **\$8.5 billion** industry generates over **\$16 billion** in **spin-off** revenues. Museums are **labour**

(188)-8
23 million
UNION OF
NB MUSEUMS
(1987) RESEARCH
SUBSTANTIAL
CULTURAL
PROVINCE
AS A
→ N.A.M.S
EDUCATION

intensive, producing low cost and "smokeless" jobs.

1971-86
160%
70%
49%

Museums continue to be a growth industry. The museum labour force has grown by 74% in the last decade as compared to a 39% growth in the overall labour force. In Manitoba between 1971 and 1981 the growth was 49% versus 22% in the general labour force. More jobs per dollar invested are generated by museums than any manufacturing industry and we rank high with other service industries in this regard.

1987-8
\$480 million

Of all the money spent on museums, 85% goes to direct spending on salaries and the purchase of supplies. Total spending on museums is in excess of \$463.3 million in 1985-86 --\$68 million of this was spent by local government institutions. Tax returns offset expenditures on museums. For every dollar spent on museums, between \$3 and \$4 is returned to the local economy. American studies have found that a museum with 25 visitors per day generated economic spin-offs equal to a new business with an annual pay roll of \$125,000 (Gasser 1979:28).

Museums play an important role in the tourism industry. The generally accepted estimate for the economic multiplier effect of tourism is 1.5 to 2.5. Tourists are reported to spend an average of between \$5.37 and \$11.28 per visit to a museum. In 1982, municipal museums alone received 9.5 million visits.

The Financial Post indicates that tourism generated more income than wood pulp or oil exports. Heritage tourism accounts for 29% of tourist spending--the greatest single category--more than boating, skiing, hunting, and spectator sports combined. Federal government studies have indicated that tourism has the greatest potential for growth among all industries in Canada--5% in the 1980s and more in the 1990s.

The development of museums and other heritage related institutions has been found to increase property values in the area. As well, more gas, meals, souvenirs, and hotel accommodations are sold as a result.

\$1.6m

Museums are also able to attract capital investment. In 1985-86, local governments in Canada received more than \$8.9 million in capital funds for their museums and spent a total of \$11.8 million on new capital facilities in their communities (Canada 1989b:35-6). In The Pas for example, the Little Northern Museum is the focus for a \$1.5 million capital development, 93% of which will come from non-municipal sources.

The presence of museums in a community improves the local image and they are seen to be important additions to the package of local amenities used to market the area to encourage business investment. Museum services add to the quality of life which is a significant element in what is referred to as the "stay option". In the emerging service-based economy, employees and businesses are mobile (Gasser 1979:28) and a study by the U.S.

Senate found that the most important factors in business decisions relating to economic development were not related to tax rates or to labour costs, but depended on the quality of life and the cultural attractions in a community. Businesses have come to realise that human resources are their most precious assets and that local cultural amenities such as museums help to attract and hold an educated work force.

Elements of a Strategy:

Although many museum workers, senior levels of government, and analysts in the field argue that municipalities should contribute more to their local museums, it is very surprising to note that a 1986 study in Manitoba (Tyler 1987) found that nearly half (48.2%) of the museums responding had never asked their local governments for support. This speaks to what appears to be a serious lack of planning, organisation, initiative, and/or perhaps confidence among museums in Manitoba. It is clear that museums must undertake to put their own house in order through good planning, preparation, and promotion.

Before asking a local government for financial support, a museum should take the time to develop a solid "case" in written form. This can be based on some of the arguments presented above which can be tailored to match the local situation. Your case should demonstrate the history, progress, successes, relevance, value to your audience, urgency, and potential of the opportunity, worthiness, stability, and effectiveness of your museum. It is recommended that you not try to overstate your case, but rely on a "tremendous emphasis on understatement". Attempt to show that your museum is a viable and effective operation. Don't ask for money first. Rather stress your plans, needs, and the potential benefits. Sell the programme first; then ask for money. This involves documenting such things as attendance, public support, hours open to the public, programmes, and other activities which benefit the community. Key documents here of course are annual reports, financial statements, and membership lists, etc. If just starting up, use figures from museums in comparable communities.

Museum supporters should also be prepared to undertake some formal preparatory planning excercises in order to develop a solid, well thought out proposal to present to local government. The need for proper planning cannot be stressed too much. Planning should not intimidate museum workers because it is a relatively straightforward, if time consuming, process and there are resources available to assist (e.g. Lord and Lord 1983; Strachan and Kent 1985). Outside assistance is also available from such organisations as the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature Advisory and Training Service, the Volunteer Centre, Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation, as well as your regional museum.

It is also important to know your community and to identify how your museum can serve its needs. For example, find out how your exhibits and programmes can enhance the curriculum in local schools. Research tourist traffic patterns and have at least a tentative plan for attracting them to your museum (signs, brochures, programme flyers, posters, etc.). Such information can be gathered from your local chamber of commerce, Highway Department (re traffic flows), hotels/motels/campgrounds (re busy seasons), local parks (visitation statistics), and organisations such as Tourism North of 53. This requires a concerted effort in order to ensure that your museum can demonstrate its responsiveness to the needs of tourists and the community in general (Jolliffe 1987:172).

Another step which needs to be taken prior to approaching local governments for support is a public relations campaign aimed at getting the public on your side. Jolliffe (1987:172) maintains that in all cases the support and participation of citizens is a key factor in successfully encouraging municipalities to fund museums. Use the case developed for your museum as a basis for approaching the local media and organisations with a steady flow of information. Learn how to write a good news release (Skalenda n.d.). Local media should be exploited to the maximum in order to inform your community about what you are doing now and what you plan to do in the future. Most newspapers in small communities welcome any such news or human interest stories, particularly if they are in a form which is ready to print. Good general promotion of your operation helps to persuade municipal councillors that your museum is worthwhile. Public meetings and, of course, your museum's programmes are other means of getting your message before the public.

Another strategy to use in your public relations campaign is to focus on past "heritage disasters" which have occurred in your community. As society tends to become more concerned about its heritage, you can advance your cause by reminding the community about previous losses of heritage resources which both the general public and local politicians now regret. In The Pas for example, many people feel badly about the failure to preserve such non-renewable heritage resources as the last steam paddle wheeler operating on the Saskatchewan River and the last steam locomotive on any scheduled run in Canada. Both were offered to the Town of The Pas in the 1960s, but both were turned down. The vessel was burned and the locomotive ended up in Winnipeg. Depending on the community and its history, reminding people of such previous heritage disasters can advance your cause for public support for a municipally funded museum.

While on the subject of the need to learn public relations strategies, it should be stressed that training in the general field of museology will pay large dividends. Even if volunteers are your only staff, make sure that they receive as much training in the field as possible. Correspondence courses and workshops offered by the Canadian Museums Association and the Association of Manitoba Museums will help you to organise your museum properly in order to present a level of competence which will be

attractive to potential funders.

Timing of a request is another variable which requires consideration. Sam Waller failed at one point in his effort to establish a municipally supported museum because the town was facing the expense of a new sewer and water system which took precedence over his request. Despite the fact that some of the same town councillors were involved in the decision, he was later successful because the community's economic position was better.

Another crucial preparatory step falls within the political realm. It is not sufficient simply to have a good case to present to a local government council at a "one-shot" meeting. If you wish to be successful, a good deal of prior legwork and arm-twisting is necessary. First, attempt to obtain as much support as possible from opinion-makers and other leaders in the community who are not members of the municipal council. Here again, your case will be of value in persuading such leaders to join your movement, or at least lend their public support.

Once you can begin to demonstrate public support from leading members of the community at large, then is the time to approach your council. Do not, however, drop a request for financial support into a council meeting with no prior preparation. You should spend the time necessary to approach each councillor to make your case on an individual basis. Arrange your visit on an informal basis with at most two people. It would also be useful to have another community leader contact the councillor later to give his/her support to your plans. Make sure that you introduce each councillor to your museum in a personal way--perhaps through a special behind-the-scenes tour. Most importantly, ensure that the purpose and programmes of your museum are well understood by each councillor, especially in their public service aspects.

This individualised political legwork is crucial, because very often a single strong member of council who happens to oppose giving financial support to your museum can dominate a "one-shot" meeting and persuade his/her uninformed colleagues to share his/her views on the matter. You must provide your potential supporters on municipal council with information, arguments, and evidence of strong community support in order to help them win your case. If only in the planning stages for creating a new museum, it would be wise to have a municipal councillor to sit on your committee.

The strongest arguments against your request for support will be financial and tax dollar related, so it is important to have a clear picture of your financial requirements, including realistic projections. It would be helpful to include information on matching funds available and grants (e.g. summer employment) for which the museum is eligible. This will help to demonstrate that the institution can become a net stimulus to economic activity in the community. For example, the Little Northern

Museum has been a consistent source of three to four and up to as many as seven summer jobs as well as a full-time training position obtained through various grant programmes. It will also help to have comparative information such as is contained within this report detailing the support given to their museums by other municipalities. A small touch of local competitive chauvinism in your community may help your cause.

Resistance may also be encountered from those people who do not realise the value of museum collections and programmes. Plan to expend time and effort educating the public and municipal councillors about the value of heritage and what a museum actually is and does. The public should become aware of the functions of museums and understand that documentation, research, and conservation are equally as important as the more obvious activities of collecting, display, and programming. The more people know about your operation, the more likely it will be that they will develop a sense of ownership.

The personalities and interests of the people elected to municipal council are also factors to consider. You may be faced with the need to try and elect councillors who may be more sympathetic to your cause, or, in extreme cases, to help defeat councillors who are unredeemably opposed to your plans. In small communities, an organised effort during local elections can have significant results. In The Pas for example, one community institution's board experienced serious difficulties with one town councillor in particular who was persistently and unreasonably negative. Indeed, the councillor was extremely rude in dismissing the board's proposals out of hand. During a recent election, the board members acted quietly to persuade only one hundred friends to change their votes. As a result the councillor in question was defeated.

In small communities, therefore, a relatively small group with some determination and effort can have a significant impact in the local political arena. This may seem to be a rather extreme approach (which engenders its own potential dangers should the campaign not be successful), however there may be no other alternative. As is the case for other special interest groups in society, museum supporters have the right, and indeed the responsibility, to take part in local politics.

In summary, if you are able to do effective prior planning, public relations, and political work; if you have developed a solid case and are able to demonstrate strong public support; your task in convincing municipal councils to support your museum will be much easier. However, you must be prepared to persevere. Do not fear failure. Do not give up after a first or second rebuff. Remember that Sam Waller tried for nearly a quarter century before he was successful in obtaining municipal support. If at first you don't succeed, consult the outside resources available, prepare your case, infrastructure, and base of support for a more auspicious time in your community's development. Other museums like yours have succeeded. The trends, the arguments, and the pressures from other levels of government are all in your favour. Good luck!

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