



Sir Sam Steele Building Restoration Update

Hear Ye, Hear Ye! Wondering how the Sir Sam Steele Building Restoration Project is doing? Well, the news is great! The Community Fundraising Campaign continues to march toward its goal of \$250,000. As of February 13, 2004, the Campaign stood at 92.5% (or \$231,000) of its objective. In addition, the final construction estimates have come in on budget. As a result, OMAH Board Members are confident that the start of construction is weeks away, rather than months. The construction period is estimated to be 17 weeks. After that, there will be a period of time for an army of volunteers to clean up and to prepare to move back into the building with all of the Museum's artefacts.

The breakdown of Phase 1 budget of \$700,000 is:

- City of Orillia \$200,000
- Canadian Heritage \$150,000
- Ontario Trillium Foundation \$100,000
- Community Fundraising \$250,000

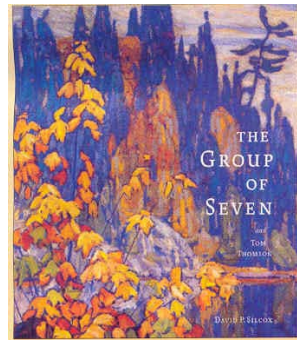
- C. Richard Oatway

You can help restore Sir Sam to its former glory, and create an amazing new space for OMAH—see a committee member for information on how you can contribute, or pick up a pledge sheet at the Gallery Shop.

- ed.



Sir Sam Wants YOU!



Anticore Books is giving a copy of David P. Silcox's The Group of Seven and Tom Thomson (\$85 value) to those who donate \$1000 towards the current capital campaign. This stunning, newly released volume includes over 400 paintings and drawings in what is touted as the finest book on the Group of Seven and Tom Thomson yet published. Present your charitable donation receipt to the bookstore to pick up your copy while supplies last.

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Special points of interest:

Sir Sam Needed Now—Inserted reprint of Article in Packet and Times

Sir John A. Macdonald Celebration Dinner

Wally Bremner, Dinner Committee Chair

In January 10th 2004, the sixth annual Sir John A dinner was held in the Saturn room at the Travelodge Hotel C the final such dinner at the fabled Sundial restaurant complex. It was our largest affair to date, with 212 people in attendance. As in the past, the food was exceptional, with a number of diners calling the Sundial afterwards to express their thanks.

The after-dinner address was delivered by the Honourable Clyde Wells, the chief justice of Newfoundland & Labrador. In his long but carefully researched and precisely structured comments, he outlined Sir John's contribution to the evolution of Canadian constitutional history. The address was titled "He Didn't Mean to Make It So Good." Perhaps Sir John didn't, but Mr. Wells did, and his message will resonate with the audience for some time to come.

Our perennial special guest was Hugh Gainsford, the great grandson, and only living direct descendent, of Sir John A. This remarkable man, who will turn 87 next month, stressed the continuing imperative of honouring his great-grandfather's belief in preserving the special uniqueness of Canada's place in the world at large. Mr. Gainsford was presented with a miniature "action figure" of our first prime minister (no action, nice figure).

As an unexpected surprise, Major Bruce Macdonald, the Canadian president of Clan Donald, brought greetings from Lord Godfrey, high chief of the clan.

Once again, the Sir John A Macdonald Celebration Dinner was a capital success, illustrating for the sixth time that the people of Orillia take pride in honouring Canada's founding father.

Next year the venue will change. The celebration of Sir John's legacy will not.



Chairman's Message

The year 2004 should bring some very exciting news to the members of the Orillia Museum of Art and History. As most of us know, we are now in the process of running a fundraising campaign in the amount \$250,000 that will see us back into that beautiful building located at 30 Peter Street South. But I am sure you will hear more about this from the proper channels, and I would like to speak on other matters.

We had an excellent Christmas Bazaar and although there are a few articles left on sale, we managed to have a very prosperous bazaar. But before the purchases of our gifts can even begin, we need volunteers to attend the gift shows in the late summer and early fall to make the choices that are necessary for you, the purchaser, to pursue. Heather Decker and Kim Wynott did a wonderful job for us this year and we hope that they will be able to help out again when we need

more giftware.

Our volunteers, Mary Hunter, Marion Brophy, Marilyn Dennis, and Penny Balfe did a tremendous job of changing the shop into a Christmas Wonderland. Penny's expertise as a decorator certainly could be seen when one entered into the Gallery Gift Shop. We extend many thanks to her for her assistance, and also to our wonderful volunteers who worked so hard. It took us two full days to change the shop over—I don't think the average person would realize that. So to all who worked so very hard—a very large THANK YOU!!!

As you will read from other reports, your Board Members are being kept extremely busy with many meetings due to the restoration of the Steele Building. As well as those meetings, Don Ross and Dr. Dick Johnston have been keeping us all on our toes with respect to the fund raising. But despite all of the above, our regular school programmes are going

ahead under the direction of Peter McEwen and Juliana Hawke. We are a very active museum even though we are, at the present time, limited to space and area to work in.

I am looking forward to the balance of the speaker's meetings for 2004, and I would be remiss if I did not congratulate Wendy Hutchings and her group on the very successful Sir John A. Macdonald dinner held at the Sundial Inn and Restaurant. We will miss the Sundial, but look forward to next year's activities which I am sure will still be held but in a different venue.

May I wish you all a very prosperous new year for 2004, and I look forward to seeing you all in the completed Sir Sam Steele building in the near future.

Jean E. Sarjeant, Chairman

“ReMEMBERing the Future” Workshop

Last September, thirty OMAH members gathered for an intensive afternoon of discussion and sharing of ideas about the future of our Museum organization.

As fate would have it, on that very day, Richard Oatway was able to announce to us the long-awaited news that the Cultural Spaces Grant had been approved, allowing us all to begin the journey back into our Sir Sam Steele Building. This topic had attracted much “air time” during the afternoon. Members offered many practical comments about how to raise funds as well as local enthusiasm, in order to do this with success.

But the topic given the most attention by the participants was “Communication”. They desired better interaction among members themselves, especially to reduce the distance between artistic - and historic - focused groups. They asked for more information about how OMAH’s leaders made decisions. They wanted more effective public awareness outreach to Orillia citizens, as well as to our local cultural partners, and publicity to promote OMAH as a significant tourist attraction. Even the fundraising discussion referred to communication as an essential support.

*The topic given most attention by participants was
“Communication”.*

Some other participants proposed a fresh look at the Museum’s constitution, its purposes and procedures. They felt that a more comprehensive organizational and committee structure would encourage wider participation by members, and re-invigorate OMAH’s programs and its presence in the city and region.

The workshop planning group were: Jim Angus, Judy Archer, Wally Bremner, Qennefer Browne, Marlene Bulas, Harry Connor and Valerie Connor. The workshop results were summarized and presented to the OMAH Board at its October meeting.

-submitted by Qennefer Browne



International Women’s Day Art Show—2004

This year the Orillia and area International Women’s Day Art Show will take place in the Museum’s Coach House Gallery from March 21st to April 22nd 2004. It promises to be an exciting exhibition of work in a rich diversity of media, based on the theme “A Sense of Place”. Last year’s show, held for the first time at the Coach House Gallery, was a great success and displayed the work of sixty area women artists.

The opening reception for this year’s exhibition will be Sunday, March 21st from 1—4 p.m. in the Coach House Gallery. Celebrate Spring by sharing in this stimulating event! FOR MORE INFORMATION, call OMAH at 326-2159 or MARY ANN TULLY at 835-2629.

*This year’s show is themed “A
SENSE OF PLACE”*

Exchange

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ORILLIA MUSEUM OF ART & HISTORY

For Additional Information Please Contact Us At:
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GALLERY SHOP HOURS

Monday to Friday - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday - 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday - closed

COACHHOUSE GALLERY HOURS

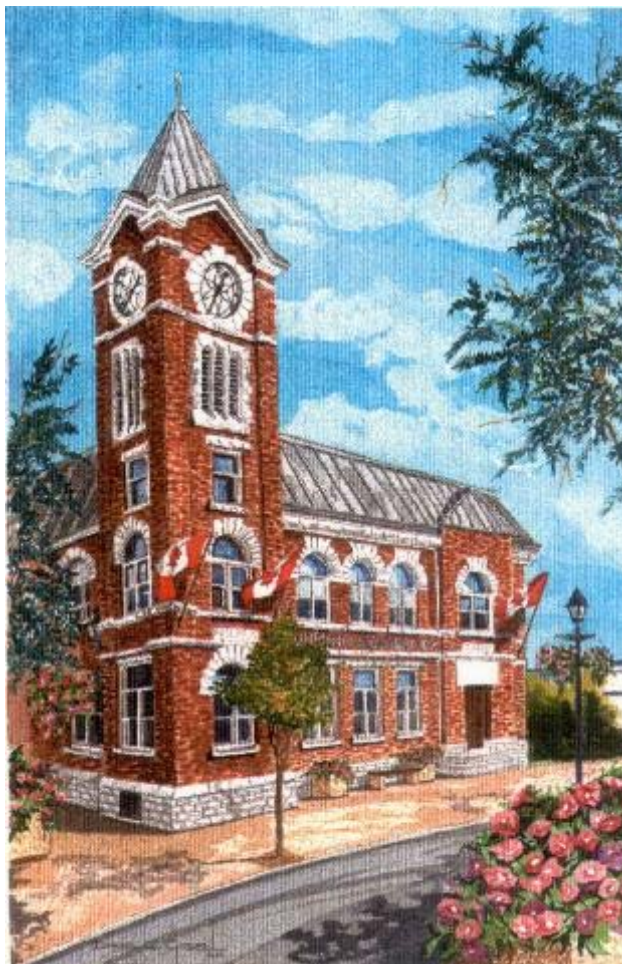
Wednesday to Friday - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday - upon request

Any other time - upon request

ADMISSION TO COACHHOUSE GALLERY

By donation. Members free.



Current Governance Volunteers

Board of Directors

Jean Sarjeant, Chairman
C. Richard Oatway, Vice-chairman
Peter McEwen, Secretary
Marilyn Dennis, Treasurer
Wally Bremner
Peter Gill
Tom Jarvis
Bill Tiffin
Lucy McGarvey

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C. Richard Oatway
Peter McEwen
Marilyn Dennis

Communications

Peter Gill, Chairman

Education Committee

Peter McEwen, Chairman
Juliana Hawke

Building Committee

C. Richard Oatway, Chairman
Jean Sarjeant
Peter McEwen
Tom Jarvis
Bob Browne

History Committee

Wendy Hutchings, Chairman
Pat Angus
Dick Johnston
Qennefer Browne
Wally Bremner
Jim Watt
Fayne Bullen
Pat Gill

Ad Hoc Committees

Futures Committee (a sub-committee of the History Committee)

Qennefer Browne, Chairman
Wendy Hutchings