

OMAH's
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UNDER
CONSTRUCTION



Orillia Museum of Art & History

Fall/Winter 2004

Volume 10 Issue 5

Remarkable Times for Orillia's Museum and Gallery

The clock is ticking again in the historic federal building on Peter Street South.

The Orillia Museum of Art and History has taken up residence in the restored Sir Sam Steele Building. As the clock's hands tick out their minutes and hours expectantly, so too there is an aura of anticipation among the museum activists, in the news reports, among the gawkers and walkers along Peter Street.

Crowds hushed to see the turret dropped in place, the clock set, the big hand move.



With a new face and new roof, it is also timely for a face lift on museum organization as well. In the weeks ahead the executive board will study and devise governance reforms. Committees will tackle heady problems: the move to new quarters, long-term operational financing, an official public opening, proper storage and preservation of the collection, acquisitions policies, planning and mounting of future exhibits, public relations and community outreach, and educational programs.

It is appropriate as well that the newsletter respond to new times and give itself a face lift. We return to having professional assistance with layout and printing handled by Impression House.

Be ready for a new logo. The museum is working in partnership with a team of Georgian College computer graphics

students who will submit designs with instructions to address our new spirit of adventure, and our need for a sharp graphic metaphor expressing Orillia's proud history and vibrant artistic community.

The newsletter itself will contain new features: regular brief articles profiling local artists or art works, reviews of books by Orillians, commentaries on artefacts and Orillia historical events, ... as well as the usual listings of current events, notes on achievements, appeals for assistance, kudos and

mentions in dispatches.

Submissions for the newsletter are welcome: locally produced clip art, photographs with commentaries, pithy articles and reviews.

In this issue please take note of the profile on artist Juliana Hawke; the review of Lt. Gov. Jim Bartleman's recent book *On Six Continents*; messages from our president and our curator/director; reports on committees, and recent and upcoming events.

Let's keep the old clock ticking.

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Chairman's Report

Fall looks like it is finally appearing – rain, wind and cold seem to be the order of the day.

But – the Museum is looking forward to a warm, exciting and productive fall as we move toward the opening of the Sir Samuel Steele building in the very near future.

As most of you know, the roof is almost finished and if the rain would hold off for just a little bit, I know the roofers would appreciate it very much. The clock tower looks wonderful with its new roof and spire and it can be seen from all over the City, and the fact that the clock is running is an accomplishment in itself.

It is a busy time for all of our volunteers, as they have been in our temporary location at the gift shop, packing feverishly in order to be ready to move everything to the new gift shop

The interior of the building looks wonderful and I know that all of our members are anxious to see it when the main floor and the lower level classrooms are completed.

We have had some wonderful helpers who are not members of the Museum assist in helping us move some of the boxes to the renovated building. I am not going to attempt to list them all at this time (that will come at a later date), but it is great to know that beside our regular volunteers, there are others who think that our efforts in this project are worth a little of their time.

As to our opening, I cannot give you a precise date at this time, but we will certainly let everyone know when it will be. It will be an awesome event, one we will remember for a long time, and we hope that all of you will be able to attend the festivities.

I look forward to seeing all of you at our regular speakers' meetings and so for now – adieu!!

Jean E. Sarjeant, Chairman

Message from the Director

It hardly seems possible that it has now been two months since I came on as Director/ Curator of the Orillia Museum of Art & History. I knew I'd be busy working with the Board and volunteers in efforts to take OMAH into its new home and next stage, but I did not realize that this constant activity would cause time to fly by so incredibly quickly.

Since August my main focus has been to get organized so that when the major construction on the Sir Sam Steele Memorial building was finished, OMAH could get back into the renovated building as quickly as possible in order to start doing the things a museum does – exhibiting its collection, preserving and interpreting history, offering programs and contributing to the culture of its community. Now that we are at the moving stage, things are happening at warp speed as volunteers show up day after day to pack boxes full of gift shop merchandise and office supplies, load their trucks and vans high, and unload them again at the newly renovated building. Some stay only an hour or two, others work all day sustained by coffee, pizza, and the satisfaction that they are truly doing a good deed. Everyone comes away with a smile and when asked, most say it's because they feel that they are giving something back to their community.

As I try to keep on top of everything from facility reports, to types of gallery hanging systems, to public space design and possible opening event dates, I marvel that this project is even possible. When it all comes together a very short time from now, it will be an example of hundreds of thousands of hours of freely given time by dozens of concerned and civic-minded members of the Orillia community.

I am a latecomer to this project, but have much invested in seeing the OMAH succeed in its new space. Meeting so many new faces and witnessing the enthusiasm of dozens of volunteers over the past two months, I know that I am definitely not alone.

Sim Salata

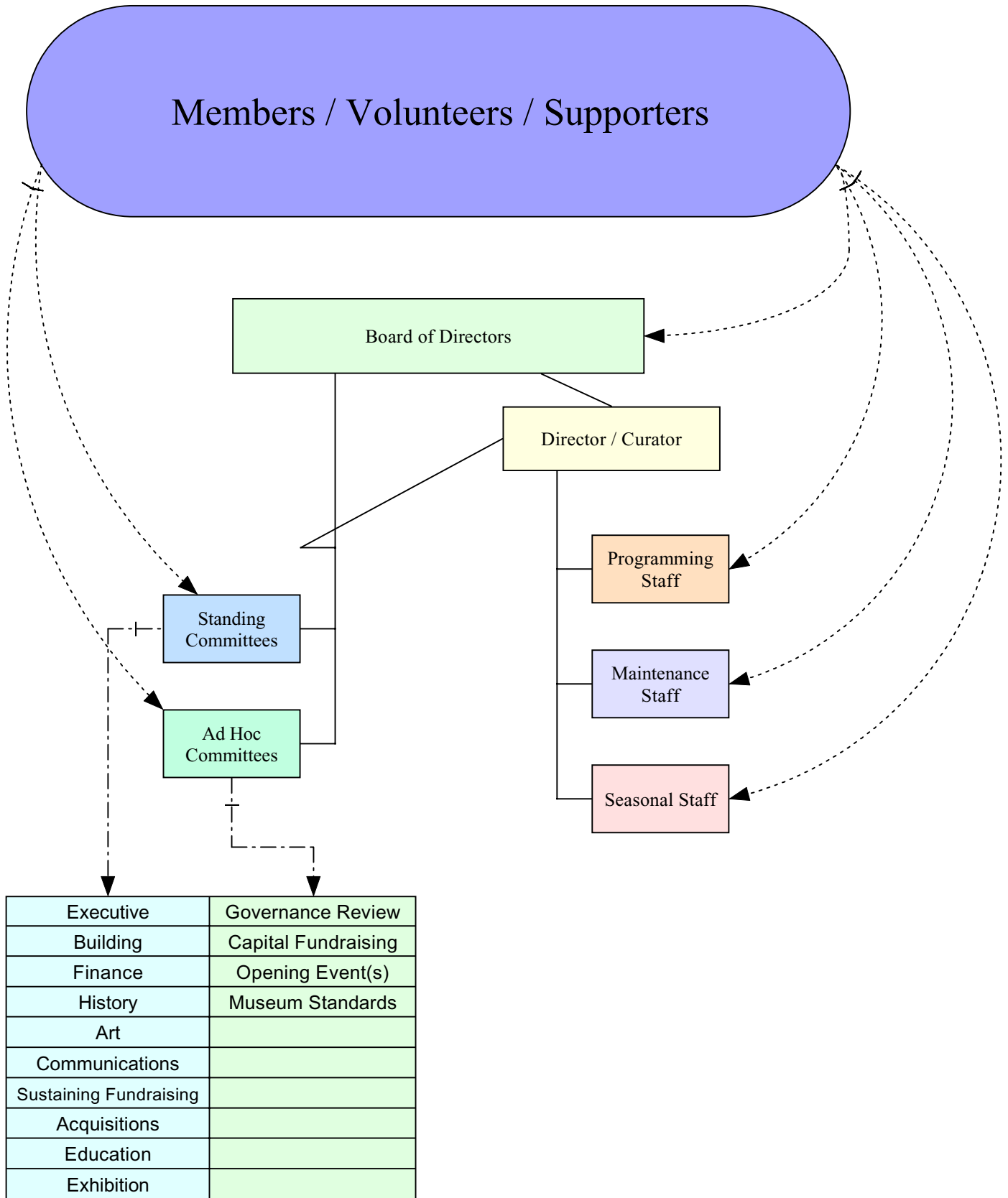
OMAH Building Committee Report

Here is the latest Sir Sam Steele update:

- The spire was hoisted onto the clock tower on September 27, 2004
- The clock was put back into operation on September 30, 2004
- The interior of the building is almost complete and an occupancy permit will soon be issued to OMAH. Volunteers have been moving the office, the gift shop and artifacts into the Sir Sam Steele Building. Our terms of occupancy of the Sir Sam Steele Building are very clear and that the 2nd and 3rd floors of the building are not to be occupied, used as storage space, or for any other purpose. Work on the mansard roof, including more lightning protection, continues and may take another 3 or 4 weeks to complete.



Orillia Museum of Art and History Organization Chart



From the History Committee

The November 19th History Speaker Evening will bring you a fascinating couple, Flash and Jessica Clayton, with tales of war and remembrance. Flash celebrated his 19th birthday on a troopship crossing the Pacific and arrived in Hong Kong three days before it fell to the invading Japanese Army... Our formalities begin at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday evening, St. Paul's United Church. Come early to get a front seat, and to chat with friends.'



On October 20th, the first meeting of our Fall season, **Jamie Hunter** of the Midland Museum presented new insights into the life and work of painter **Franz Johnston**, a contemporary and founding member of the Group of Seven. Franz painted in Algoma with his artist friends on their famous Box Car trips, and some of these works are considered masterpieces of the Canadian landscape. Yet he parted company with the others, accepting an offer to be Director of the Winnipeg Art School for four years. Later, he started his own art school on Georgian Bay, after living for several years in Hillsdale, and later cottaging at Balm Beach. This connection with Simcoe County was the source of Jamie Hunter's extensive research into Franz Johnston's career.

Johnston was a genial man, many-talented and enormously productive. At a rate of 200 paintings per year (which he sold at good prices, steadily) he may well have had a lifetime oeuvre of 8000 paintings, drawings, and designs. Many are buried in private collections, and Jamie has been hunting them down, working with the Johnston family and creating a catalogue raisonne. Johnston had many corporate patrons and has sometimes been regarded as a "commercial" artist. He often worked from photographs, rendering scenes from Canadian industry and exploration in a vivid but illustrative way.

In recounting his research to uncover and document Franz Johnston's work, Jamie Hunter revealed his own outstanding abilities as a curator. Directing a small

regional museum with limited staff and budget, juggling many competing responsibilities, he has somehow found the time and energy and funding grants to bring forward valuable information about a neglected twentieth century Canadian artist.

Now, back to our November meeting! You will be pleased to hear that our Book Table will be revived. This used to be a popular fixture at Historical meetings, before the many-splendoured Manticore came to town. We will begin with a modest selection of books and posters and work up. Mary Elizabeth Mick has kindly volunteered to be the coordinator. She will set the Book Table up at each Speaker Evening at 7 p.m., so you can come a little early to browse. Mary Elizabeth has had a life-long passion for books, and her two daughters are both librarians. The Book Table will welcome additional participants who can bring us special interest publications – archaeological, geological, or scholarly papers that are not available in regular bookstores.

The History Committee is very proud to announce its latest venture in original publications: to gather Isabel Brillinger's charming anecdotes of long-ago Orillia into a little book. Isabel has been presenting these brief stories to us for several years. She never thought of keeping them because she kept coming up with new ones, and now we are making her write them down so everyone can enjoy them! Linda Harris is taking a special role to help Isabel, having spent her childhood as a near neighbour on Tecumseth Street. Other OMAH members with publishing experience to contribute are Wendy Hutchings and Bonnie Rourke. We will be looking for you, the members who are Isabel's contemporaries, to assist her in reconstructing details of old times.

The **Sir John A. MacDonald Dinner** will return bigger and better than ever, on January 15th, 2005. Details of the guest speaker and tickets will be announced at the November meeting by Wally Bremner and his committee.

...and from the Olive Branch.....

*There was an old lady of Ryde
Who ate some green apples and died,
The apples fermented (inside the lamented)
Made Cider inside 'er inside.*

The Orillia Museum of Art and History gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the **Ontario Trillium Foundation**. The Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, receives annually \$100 million of government funding generated through Ontario's charity casino initiative. The Foundation provides grants to eligible charitable and not-for-profit organizations in the arts, culture, sports, recreation, environment and social service sectors.



THE ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION

Orillia Artefacts

There is a wealth of Orillia history awaiting a permanent home in the Orillia Museum of Art and History.

The postcard seen here is dated May 22, 1921. It was posted on the 24th by Bertha and sent to Miss Katie Cairns of R. 3, Orillia. No postal codes in those days.

The one-cent stamp shows George V.

Synopsis:

It is raining so Bertha didn't get to the service at the Methodist church. Katie's father is not well. And Bertha wants to know "how is Flossie getting along?"

As an afterthought, would Katie be going fishing on the 24th?

There is a package of social history attached to this small artifact: the postal system, family life, communications, church architecture, urban-rural connections, Canada in imperial days, etc.

And plenty more. It is worth collecting.

Sneak Preview

We're sure you're all anxious to see the beautifully renovated Sir Sam Steele building, and you won't have to wait much longer to do so. Members' Previews of the museum are planned for the weekend of December 10th and 11th. Watch for your invitation in the mail soon!

CURRENT VOLUNTEER GOVERNANCE

- Board of Directors:
Jean Sarjeant, Chair
- Building Committee:
Richard Oatway, Chair
- Communications Committee:
Peter Gill, Chair
- Education/ Exhibitions Committee:
Peter McEwen, Chair
- Education Programs Subcommittee:
Juliana Hawke, Chair
- Fundraising Campaign Committee:
Don Ross, Dr. Richard Johnston, Co-Chairs
- History Committee:
Qennefer Browne, Chair
- History Speakers Subcommittee:
Wally Bremner, Chair
- History Tours Subcommittee:
Catherine Bullen, Chair
- Mailing Subcommittee:
Mary Hunter, Chair
- Membership Records
Pat Angus, Coordinator
- Museum Gift Shop Management:
Jean Sarjeant, Marilyn Dennis
- Newsletter:
Theresa Soper, Editor
- Nominating Committee:
Sue Mulcahy, Chair
- Search Committee (New Staff):
Peter McEwen, Chair
- Volunteer Committee:
Elaine Milner, Co-ordinator



AN OMAH ADVENTURE

Thursday May 12, 2005

Join your fellow museum members and friends on an all-day trip to explore the art and history of Owen Sound.

Your adventure includes:

- a comfortable coach ride through the beautiful countryside of Grey County
- a guided tour of the Tom Thomson Memorial Art Gallery, with its outstanding collection of top Canadian artists along with exciting contemporary displays
- a guided tour of the Billy Bishop Heritage Museum, located in the historic home where Canada's most famous World War I flying ace was born and raised
- lunch at the recently renovated Best Western Inn on the Bay
- a guided tour of the meticulously restored Leith Church, where Tom Thomson worshipped, and its cemetery where he is buried

All this for just \$45.00 for OMAH members, or \$55.00 for friends or guests.

Your cost includes all museum entrance fees, transportation and lunch (including tax and gratuity) with your choice of soup and entrée.

Interested? Don't delay - participation is limited to 40.

For further information, or to add your name to the list, contact:

- Catherine Bullen 329-0904 • Lydia Bowden 329-2337
- Ruth Watt 326-6032

Book Review

On Six Continents: A Life in Canada's Foreign Service, 1966-2002 by James Bartleman (McClelland & Stewart, Ltd., 2004) \$37.00.

Lieutenant Governor Jim Bartleman's memoirs are a modest 250 pages (Bill Clinton's run over 900.)

Bartleman has a way of speaking right into his reader's ear. He is so personable that even a memoir (which is rarely first choice) is first rate reading.

Bartleman delivers with charm, self-effacing wit, and gentle irony, a proud Canadian career.

He must have measured the BS quotient in childhood, for there is no awe of potentates.

His Excellency matured quickly in the Foreign Service and accepted successively more difficult posts in Ottawa, Columbia, Bangladesh, Peru, the Caribbean, Cuba, Israel, NATO HQ, South Africa, Australia and the European Union.

He served a remarkable period: the end of Cold War,

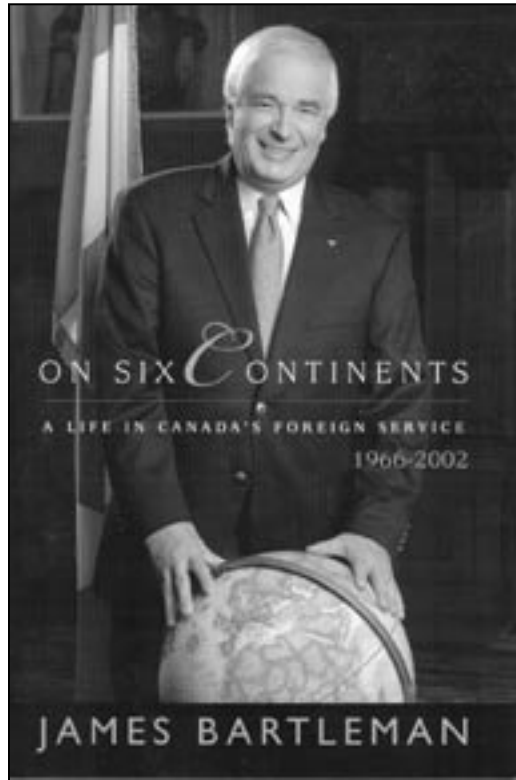
globalization, deepening Israeli-Palestinian quagmire, Latin America's coming of age, Soviet collapse, end of apartheid, Balkan meltdown, post soviet empire search for security, and Canada's changing international role.

How did a lad, born in Orillia, raised in Muskokan poverty, rise to prime ministerial policy adviser?

His memoir reveals more than native wit and raw intelligence: innate curiosity about the human condition, deep personal convictions, extraordinary capacity to listen and observe, passion for work, respect for realities, patience, discernment about risks, and nerve to test edges.

He also has a profound respect for his origins: like 99 percent of the world, no silver spoon. No pretensions, no debts to rank or high estate. Consequently, he never acquired the need, or perhaps even the ability, to tell the boss anything other than the truth as he saw it.

Enjoy *On Six Continents*. You will like Jim Bartleman. He has done us, and himself, proud.



Local Artist Profile

Juliana Hawke is a noteworthy local artist who delights in portraying the beauty of the natural world. Taking inspiration from nature around her, Juliana creates beautifully detailed images in a variety of media. Landscapes, waterfowl, animals, and all sorts of vegetation find their representations on her paper. Currently, pencil, pen



and ink, and watercolour are her media of choice, though she has worked in oil, acrylic, and with printmaking techniques in the past. "I love the challenge of watercolour," she says, noting that she enjoys combining highly detailed passages with freer areas of wash.

Juliana studied biology and fine art at the University of Guelph, an unusual combination of subjects. She was later to combine these two disciplines in her work. She has worked as an illustrator, designing brochures and promotional materials for Ontario Parks and Parks Canada. In addition, she has illustrated nature books for children, and books of local history. Juliana has completed numerous private commissions, and her paintings have been presented to Pope John Paul II on his 1984 tour to

Huronian, and to former Governor General Edward Schreyer.

A founding member of Zephyr Gallery, Juliana is currently on a short hiatus from exhibiting there. Her work was displayed at the recent Thanksgiving Images Tour, and approximately 1200 people passed through her studio during the four-day event. "I like that visitors can see where I get my inspiration from", says Juliana, noting that the beautiful vistas surrounding her Oro-Medonte home provide many of the images for her work.



Yellow Iris, water colour, 2000