

News from the Gallery Shop



We are online! For those of you who enjoy shopping from the comfort of your own home, the beautiful jewelry collection of OMAH's gallery shop is now catalogued and available on our website, along with our already popular book listing. Each item is one-of-a-kind and we cannot guarantee that your favourite item will still be available, so act fast! You can access our jewelry at www.orilliamuseum.org/museum_shop/jewelry/index.htm. Be sure to tell your friends and family of this new way to shop!

For those of you who prefer the old fashioned way, you definitely won't want to miss our fabulous assortment of hand-knit scarves, hats, and mittens, pick up some fabulous new books, or see our new collection of Kerslake pottery—perfect for a late Christmas present, or an early Valentine's Day gift!

Welcome & Thank You

We would like to welcome Park Street co-op student Megan Boyd, Youthquest participant Paul McLaren, and Katimavik volunteer Travis Simms, to the OMAH team. We would also like to thank our previous Katimavik volunteer Leah Palmer for all her hard work.

Volunteers Needed

OMAH is looking for volunteers to work at the front desk on Tuesday afternoons, Thursday afternoons, and Friday mornings.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Gloria Taylor at 705-326-2159.

Thank you to the following sponsors:



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Orillia's Downtown Businesses

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ORILLIA MUSEUM OF ART & HISTORY

Muse News



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HOURS OF OPERATION

Tuesday—Saturday

10 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Orillia Museum of

Art & History

30 Peter St. South

Orillia, Ontario L3V 5A9

Tel: 705-326-2159

Fax: 705-326-7828

Email: info@orilliamuseum.org

News from the Director/Curator

-by Gloria Taylor

I promised myself that I would not start this newsletter talking about the weather again, but who could help it! I have spent the last two weeks crawling through snow squalls wishing I had stayed in Orillia or staying and wondering if I should have braved the storm. Truly though, Orillia is aptly named the Sunshine City as we have an abundance.

This is the time of year that we all look back to reflect and remember those that have impacted our lives. In my case it means I have many people to thank, especially the volunteers that lend their valuable time to make sure OMAH functions at the highest quality. Our volunteers take on jobs that help us run the day to day tasks, operate the Board, sit on Committees, work on special events, work in Archives, Collections and Research, and a multitude of other needed operations.

Thank you to all of our members who renewed and to all of our donors and sponsors who chose to support OMAH during a most difficult year. We worked very hard to stretch every dollar you gave us and are very appreciative. Your

help allowed us to have a very busy but successful year.

We are looking forward to the New Year. Thanks to all our supporters, we are in a healthy place to tackle 2011. We are still awaiting news from the City on our grant allocation as well as regarding Cultural Spaces (for our expansion) and the Accessibility Grant (for the elevator).

While we wait to start our capital project, we are working on new and innovative programming. We are partnering with the Orillia Opera House to provide activities that compliment shows offered to schools, with the City to produce programming for Regan House, and with other cultural organizations in marketing initiatives.

Please remember that we are here for you and the community. If you have any questions or suggestions, we would like to hear from you.

May you and yours have a safe and happy New Year.

Current & Upcoming Exhibits

Fully Exposed II: the Nude Figure in Contemporary Art

January 11 to February 26

Opening Reception: Friday January 14 from 7-9 p.m.

The Orillia Museum of Art and History is pleased to once again host an exhibition that explores and celebrates the nude form in contemporary art, featuring work by some of our talented local artists. Each piece will be selected by OMAH's Art Committee to represent a variety of mediums and styles.

Join us for our opening reception and a chance to meet the artists on Friday January 14 from 7 to 9 p.m.



International Women's Day Art Show

March 2 to April 9

Opening Reception: Saturday March 5 from 1-4 p.m.



The International Women's Day Art Show will be celebrating its 15th year in a new location - The Orillia Museum of Art and History. The exhibit has had a vibrant history since its inception in 1997 at Tiffin's Creative Centre. In 2003-2004, it was held under the auspices of OMAH at its temporary location during renovations - The Coach House. Zephyr Gallery has provided the venue for the exhibit since that time.

The primary goals of the show have been to honour and celebrate women's creative expression, as well as to provide an inclusive opportunity and venue for women's artwork. Any female artist, high school age or older is encouraged to participate. The enthusiastic participation of dozens of women artists over the years has ensured dynamic and stimulating exhibits, exploring a variety of media. Each year the show has a theme: the theme for this year's exhibit is "HARMONY". Artwork is always accompanied by a brief "story", which adds a rich dimension to each piece and the exhibit as a whole. A highlight of the show is the Artist's Forum, in which participating artists come together to share their artwork in a fun and supportive environment.

Tours of the exhibit by art classes from high school to postsecondary will be available. The exhibit runs from March 1st - April 9th. To participate, story submission deadline is February 6, 2011.

For more information contact: womensartshow@hotmail.ca

The Katimavik Connection

-by Travis Simms

My name is Travis Simms, I'm 18 years old, I am First Nations, and I'm one of the new Katimavik volunteers in town. I've been here since December 1st, 2010. My stay here in Orillia so far has been truly amazing. The town, the snow, it's all so beautiful.

I am originally from the town New Hazelton, B.C. in a tiny little village called Hagwilget. And before I came to Orillia, Ontario I was staying in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador. Labrador is an amazing place to be, so much culture all around you.

Now, some of you are probably wondering what the heck is Katimavik. That's what I thought back in March when I first heard of this program. Katimavik is a volunteer organization that allows youth from all across country to be given the chance to travel and experience the different parts of Canada. A big part of Katimavik is the work placements that you get while staying in the community. Basically it's a Monday to Friday, 9-5 type job. This helps the volunteers to have a better understanding of the community.

I've been in this program since the beginning of September of this year, and let me tell you, it has been one of the biggest, life changing experiences I've ever had! I've been very fortunate these past 4 months away from home. I have had the pleasure of meeting a wide variety of new and interesting people, from Sherman Downey, the amazing Newfoundland singer, to Leo Abass, the Mayor of Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador, and Roberta Benefiel, the wonderful Environmentalist. But it wasn't always people that have made a difference in my life.

Here in Orillia I am currently working at the Museum, and it has been a wonderful learning environment for me so far. But, back in Happy Valley-Goose Bay I was volunteering at the local animal shelter, the SPCA.

There are no words to describe about my experience at the SPCA. It was just truly, truly amazing. I got to meet some pretty amazing animals in my 3 months in Goose Bay. One stuck out from the rest. Hocus, the loveable stray. Everybody loved Hocus. I never wanted anything as bad as adopting Hocus as a pet.

But he has a real family now, and I am happy for him.

So Katimavik has brought me truly amazing opportunities and I was able to go beyond what I normally do. I learned a lot of lessons and gained new experiences. I am happy to say that this was the best decision I made for my life.



Travis working hard at the front desk

Artifact Focus - "If the Walls could Talk"

-by Lynda Whiston



Treasures can appear most unexpectedly - from the earth in your garden, from boxes in the attic, or in this case from the walls of a house itself. As I continue to catalogue a backlog of artifacts stored deep in the basement of the Sir Sam Steele building, I frequently encounter fascinating objects and documents. The most intriguing find of late involves the mysterious discovery of a lady's handbag found in the walls of the house of the donor.

The handbag itself is not particularly remarkable, constructed of black pigskin suede and typical of the type used by women in the mid 20th century. What is extraordinary is that the purse was discovered inside the walls of a house when the donor was doing some renovations.

While one might expect the story to end there, fortunately, we can tell much more about the owner of the purse based on the contents found in it. Not only do we know her name and address from the

numerous papers found in the purse, but we also know where she shopped and to which clubs and organizations she belonged. In all, there were 21 items in the purse giving us a veritable time capsule of the everyday life of this woman, Mrs. D____. We can deduce from the evidence that the purse was probably put in the wall sometime early in 1949. We have dated receipts from numerous Orillia businesses revealing that Mrs. D____ bought a shirt from Silver's Men's Wear; a compact from Madden's Jewellery Store; a toy from Anderson Home Furnishers; and shoes from Agnew Surpass. We have a complete list of groceries bought at the Red and White Stores in May of 1948 and several shopping lists, one of which consists of all the ingredients for a Christmas cake. From ticket stubs, we know that Mrs. D____ attended a movie, and the "Harlemantics" at the Orillia Opera House. We know she belonged to the United Church, the Ladies Auxiliary, and the Women's Canadian Club of Orillia.

With all that we can piece together from the contents of the purse, nevertheless, many mysteries remain. Why was the purse found in the house *next door* to Mrs. D____'s? Did she put it there or was the purse stolen, the money removed and the evidence stashed in the wall, the thief thus concealing his crime? We may never know for sure the true story behind the handbag in the wall. However, we can be grateful for this snapshot of life in Orillia more than 60 years ago, and I for one have relished the role of detective afforded by this particular artifact and its contents!

Exhibition Schedule & Upcoming Events

500 Million Years of Prehistory

History Gallery
Permanent Exhibit

Tony Bianco: A Portrait of Canada

November 9 to January 8

Sir John A. MacDonald Gala Dinner

Saturday January 8

Last Minute Tickets Still Available!

Fully Exposed II: The Nude Figure in Contemporary Art

January 11 to February 26

Opening Reception: Friday January 14
7-9 p.m.

Recent Works by Marlene Bulas

Community Art Wall
January 11 to February 26

History Speaker Evening: Qennefer Browne

Two Sculptors Celebrate the Spirit of Orillia
January 19 at 7:30 p.m.

Valentine Art Auction Event

February 12 from 7-10 p.m.
Tickets \$25

History Speaker Evening: Drs. Khaled Abdel-Razek & Hanan Fahmy

The Egyptian Valley of the Kings
February 16 at 7:30 p.m.
St. Paul's United Church

International Women's Day Art Show

March 2 to April 9
Opening Reception: Saturday March 5
1-4 p.m.

History Speaker Evening: Mike Hill (Artistic Director)

Fifty Years of the Mariposa Folk Festival
March 16 at 7:30 p.m.
St. Paul's United Church

March Break Day Camp

March 14 to 18
9:00 a.m. to 4 p.m.
For children aged 6 to 12



OMAH celebrated another successful Festival of Banners Gala & Silent Auction on November 5, 2010. Thank you to everyone who purchased a banner to support next year's festival!

Thank You to Donors

OMAH would like to thank the following people who have donated money between December 2009 and December 20, 2010. We sincerely appreciate your contributions.

Abernathy, Alan & Dorothy	Fecht, Joe	MacPherson, Dorothy	Sapunjis, Lynda
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Programs Update

- by Kate Zubczyk

As many of you know, OMAH plays an important role in our community in more ways than one. One of the most significant responsibilities we have is educating our youth, and we are very proud to offer a number of high-quality and professionally taught education programs based in both art and history for kindergarten up to grade 12. These classes can be delivered at the museum or directly in the classroom. Such programs provide a significant source of support for our museum, and we are always looking for ways to better promote them in our community. As a result, if you are a teacher, know a teacher, or even if you have school-aged children or grandchildren, we would appreciate your help in spreading the word about our programming. Copies of the education program brochure are available at the museum if you would like the written material to distribute, or the same information is also available on our website at www.orilliamuseum.org/programs/classes.htm. If you are interested in sponsoring a class to receive one of our programs, the board of education can provide you with a tax receipt.



Orillia Heritage Education Program

Furthermore, the beautiful Sir Sam Steele building is an asset to our entire community, and it is available to you to rent! We hope you will keep us in mind when you are looking for a space to run an art workshop, a corporate function, a business or organization meeting, or even your next birthday party! For more information on the space, fees, booking a time slot, and guidelines, please feel free to contact me at anytime at programs@orilliamuseum.org or calling 326-2159.

Thank you for your assistance in these important endeavours!

Important Message for E-mail Users

Here at OMAH we work hard to try and reduce costs as much as possible so that every dollar of your donations can be spent wisely. Thank you to everyone who has opted to receive their bi-monthly newsletter by e-mail — this saves us over \$400 a year! This also enables us to send you exclusive updates on our programming, exhibits, and projects.

However, it is important that we have an up-to-date e-mail address for our records. If you have recently changed your e-mail address or haven't been receiving e-mails from OMAH, please call at 326-2159 or e-mail programs@orilliamuseum.org to let us know so that we can update our database. You can also choose to switch from mailed to e-mailed newsletters at any point in your membership.