



# OMAH 2021

## Our future together





PHILIP JACKMAN

# OMAH 2021: Our Future Together

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**Ted Duncan**  
President, OMAH  
Board of Directors

COVID-19 changed our lives in 2020. All of us have had to adjust to a new world. OMAH, as a community art and history hub, is no different. We continue to support and promote art and history in Orillia and area despite COVID-19, but we have to do things differently at the museum in person and online.

OMAH's Strategic Plan Horizon 2020 gave our members, volunteers and staff a guide for three years. We were meeting the goals of improving programming, fundraising and governance centred on community engagement. That is, until the virus changed everything.

OMAH's Board of Directors and our Executive Director reorganized to better meet our mission to celebrate and inspire creativity within the twin pillars of art and history. Because of the changes brought upon us, we have decided to have a one-year extension to the previous plan, which has been modified to get us through 2021. We realize we will not go back to the world as it was. Hopefully by the fall we can revisit our strategic plan and look ahead to 2024.

Stay safe and work together to have a better future!



**Ninette Gyorody**  
Executive Director  
of OMAH

At the beginning of 2020, we congratulated ourselves on having achieved the majority of our goals outlined in *OMAH Horizon 2020*, the three-year strategic plan drafted in 2017. Then, COVID-19 happened and we were faced with what seemed like unconquerable challenges, such as pivoting to virtual programming, reducing our operational hours and, ultimately, determining how we would survive.

What appeared as threats, such as periods of closure, reduction in earned revenue and the elimination of almost 100 per cent of our programs, became opportunities for OMAH to assert itself as a leader in the fields of arts, culture and heritage in the City of Orillia and surrounding area.

*OMAH 2021: Our Future Together* updates our strategic aims for governance, fundraising, programming and community engagement to reflect how best OMAH can support the community through 2021 and into the future.

We believe this document will not only set a clear path for OMAH, but will enable the museum to increase its community engagement, both in-person and online, and refine its cultural leadership in this new world.



# THE STORY OF OMAH

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In 1999, a remarkable marriage took place in Orillia, one that created a unique local entity that has provided continued inspiration through the ensuing years for those dedicated to the arts, culture and home-grown history.

In that year, the Orillia Historical Society (incorporated June 16, 1953) and the Sir Sam Steele Art Gallery Foundation (incorporated March 11, 1991) merged to create the Orillia Museum of Art & History.

The Sir Sam Steele Memorial Building, the home of OMAH, was designed by Thomas Fuller and completed in 1894. This clock-tower building, made of red brick and limestone, served as a federal customs house and post office until bought by the City of Orillia in 1956.

Dedicated that year as the Sir Sam Steele Memorial Building, it served as a police station, courthouse, jail and office space for various organizations.

In 2004, the building underwent Phase One, a \$1.1 million renovation. In 2012–13, OMAH underwent Phase Two, a \$2.1 million renovation. As well as a grant of \$975,000 from the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund, matching funds were secured through the City of Orillia, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and community supporters.

The renovations enabled OMAH to increase its programming, create climate-controlled spaces, provide additional exhibition galleries and offer barrier-free access to all floors.

By enlarging the footprint of OMAH in the community, we have increased engagement and provided an emotional connection with our constituents.

We will continue to do so. OMAH provides an essential service to our community. We make culture and history matter.



PHOTOGRAPH © ORILLIA MUSEUM OF ART & HISTORY

# OMAH VISION

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*To be the anchor for the significant and growing arts, local-history and cultural community in Orillia and surrounding area by offering exciting exhibits, events, innovative programming and activities that reach out to and engage citizens, seasonal residents and visitors of all ages.*

# OMAH MISSION

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*The Orillia Museum of Art & History will be a cultural centre and digital hub open to all that will inspire creativity and celebrate history by creating excitement and wonderment for the arts, history and culture communities.*

# OUR OBJECTIVES

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The Orillia Museum of Art & History's four strategic objectives, as outlined above, are interconnected in their outcomes. Governance, Fundraising and Programming fuel each other, while Community Engagement forms the central core of their function.

The following pages outline each strategic objective in detail.

# GOVERNANCE

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*Ensure OMAH embodies best-in-class, not-for-profit policies and practices.*

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## DESIRED OUTCOMES

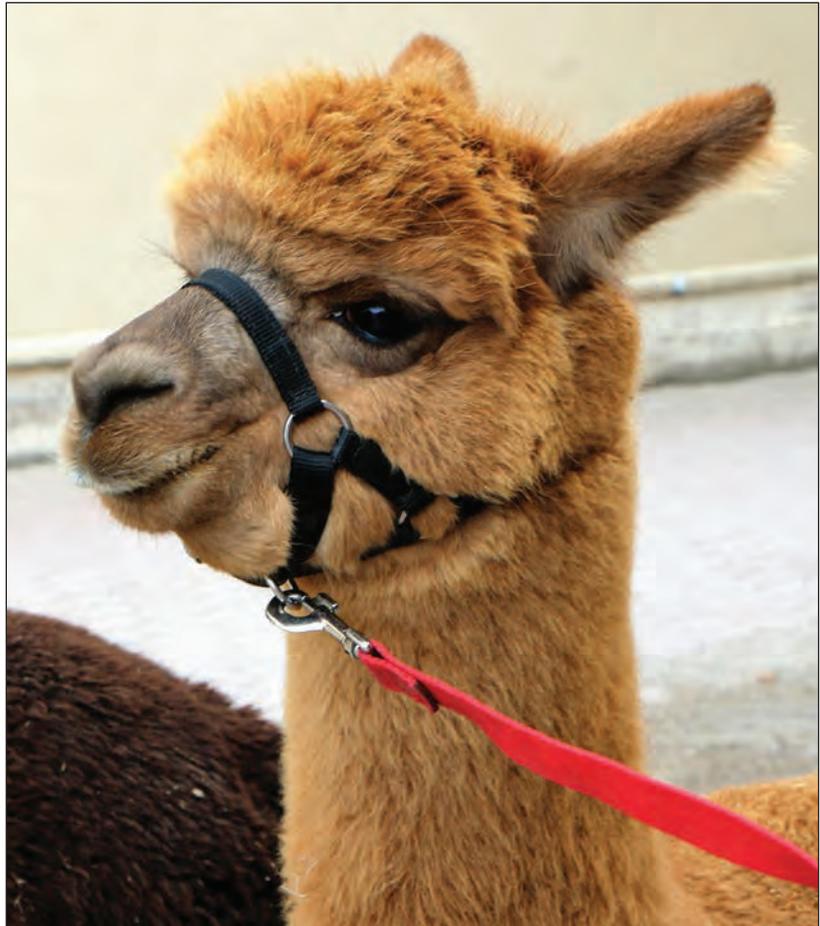
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Review and update policies on a regular basis

Support a committee structure with member representation, clear responsibilities and staff resources

Seek continuous improvement through evaluation, surveys and feedback

Pursue evolution of staff towards greater operational autonomy and executive leadership



# FUNDRAISING

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*Strengthen OMAH's development practices that increase return on investment*

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## DESIRED OUTCOMES

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Annual fundraising plan that sustains growth and increases membership

Sponsorship program for events and exhibitions

Create a corporate membership program

Annual events for special fundraising and donor/sponsor recognition

Create a Development Officer position



# PROGRAMMING

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*Be Orillia and area's centre for artistic inspiration  
and celebration of our history*

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## DESIRED OUTCOMES

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Balance representation of art and history in dynamic and contemporary ways including online programming and topical exhibits

Diversify programming to broaden our appeal for all ages and interests

Manage and show the collection to increase visitor appeal

Enhance engagement for visitors to OMAH through the docent program and virtual/interactive programs and exhibits

Strengthen partnerships in community

Review programming and exhibition plan annually

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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*Strengthen relationships with our communities (including First Nations and groups differentiated by culture, age and special needs) to ensure OMAH meets their needs*

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## DESIRED OUTCOMES

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Create a process to generate community feedback on a continuous basis using a variety of feedback and survey techniques

Attract active members of the community for committees/volunteers/board members and recognize their contribution

Increase visibility of OMAH ambassadors in the community

Increase digital engagement through program offerings, social media and an updated website

# IN CONCLUSION

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The Orillia Museum of Art & History is an essential service in our community. OMAH's job is to hold a mirror up to Orillia and area to stimulate and guide discussions around heritage and culture. We make culture and heritage matter, inspiring creativity and celebrating history.

*OMAH 2021: Our Future Together* is a blueprint that will help us meet our goals today, tomorrow and into the future.



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### 2020-21 OMAH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ted Duncan • Liz Kernaghan • Douglas Frost • Jim Cotnam • Ted Emond  
Stephen Davids • Steph Dunn • Janet Houston • Ann Kennett • Donald N. Philip

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Ninette Gyorody, Executive Director

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*INSPIRING CREATIVITY AND CELEBRATING HISTORY*