



Board & Staff Quarterly Report

President's Message



Rhonda Lamb

"Long-range planning does not deal with future decisions. It deals with the future of present decisions."

Peter F. Drucker (1909-2005)
U.S. management consultant and author

I was chatting with various members of the Board of Directors over that past several weeks when one individual posed a really good question: "Does the membership know what the Board does?" Sure, the Board is a group of people elected at the annual general meeting to work on behalf of the membership of MAS and they have meetings throughout the year to do some good 'stuff'. But what is that mysterious 'stuff' that the Board has been doing? Her question made me think that this may be a good venue to provide you with some insight into what the Board has been working on so far during this year.

As you know, 2010 was a big year in the development of a three year Strategic Plan for the organization. This was presented in Regina last May for the membership to review and

provide feedback. As I've mentioned in earlier reports, we took the feedback that had been provided and used it to fine tune the wording to better clarify the members' intent. This document is on the MAS website for you to see. The next steps are to determine what the goals are (or ENDS) that the Board wants to establish over the next three years and what work (MEANS) that the staff determines that they will take to reach (or operationalize) those goals. The Board is closing in on the final development of the ENDS policy related to the new Strategic Plan and we are looking forward to seeing the development of an operational plan in the near future.

The Board, however, first had to respond to the articulated need to transition the organization's operations from having two Co-Manager positions to having a single individual hired to be the Executive Director. I would like to thank both Brenda Herman and Wendy Fitch for the excellent job that they

have both done for the organization over this period of time in their additional role of Co-Managers. I am happy to say that we are in the very final stages of the hiring process and will soon be able to make an announcement about this position. The next step will be working with the Executive Director to make a smooth transition to the new operating model.

The Board has had 2 meetings since my report last fall; one in November 2011 and the other in January 2012. In addition to our usual governance processes, we have had some very good discussions related to our role as the Board and opportunities to enhance our effectiveness. In January, we spent a day looking at the skills and experience we have at the Board table (asset mapping) and identifying areas where the Board needs to focus to build our own board strategy related to the MAS Strategic Plan. The board strategy, staff operational plan and Strategic Plan

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- Rhonda Lamb - President
- Crystal Craig - Vice President
- Heather LeGars
- Janette Hamilton
- Carol Peterson
- Flo Miller
- Joan Searle
- Donald Stein
- Stephanie Kaduck

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Museums Association of Saskatchewan
424 McDonald Street
Regina, SK S4N 6E1
Toll Free: 1-866-568-7386
mas@saskmuseums.org
www.saskmuseums.org

President's Message

need to mirror each other to keep the organization moving forward, as well as for the Board to be effective in how it leads and supports MAS.

There are many different priorities to be considered, so we are now finalizing which take first precedence. The next step is to determine the actions that the Board needs to take to fulfill its responsibilities and enable the organization to continue to evolve. Be assured that the Strategic Plan is not just a pretty document that will be sitting on the shelf, but is being used as a tool to better the organization as we work towards the future.

As your Board, we are asking ourselves some great questions to help create a plan to move the Board's responsibilities into specific actions.

We have created ad-hoc committees to go away and 'workshop' various aspects of governance which they bring back to the Board for broader conversations. We have also had a series of board development sessions to ensure that we have a common understanding of our role and our direction. While it has been somewhat time consuming, ultimately, this will allow us to spend more time approaching the 'business' of being a Board and what that can mean for the organization. It is about getting our ducks in a row and the direction set now so that future Boards will have a roadmap ready for several years and can continue to grow the organization.

As the saying at the beginning of my report mentions, we are working to make decisions now that look towards

the future of MAS. The Board has rolled up its sleeves and is working to ensure that the processes are in place to help ensure that the governance of MAS continues to progress as our organization advances.

I encourage you to read the reports in this document and to contact us if you have any questions. You can reach any of the Board members through the MAS office.

The Board is committed to moving ahead, being open to our members and an exciting future for MAS. Stay tuned!

Sincerely,
Rhonda Lamb
President
Board of Directors

Staff Report

The following are the highlights of what the staff have been busy doing between October and December, 2011.

GENERAL

Database system

MAS has recently decided to update our database system. After some research and investigation we have begun the process of developing a new database from scratch. A consultant has been hired and we are in the planning stages of the database but we hope to have it developed sometime in February with a completion date of March. Having an updated database system will greatly enhance our ability to ensure our member information is current and safe.

Member Survey

MAS has engaged a market research firm to develop and conduct a comprehensive survey of member museums. The last time MAS surveyed members was in 2001 which means we really don't know what the current state of museums in Saskatchewan is in 2012. The survey will be conducted on-line only. Each member will be assigned a Personal Access Code (PIN) which will allow you to complete the survey over more than one session. Those members who are unable to access a computer to complete the survey will be able to contact MAS for assistance. We really encourage as many member museums as possible to complete the survey so we have the best information possible as we speak on your behalf.

Watch for more information about the survey in the coming weeks.

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COMMUNICATIONS

Queen’s Printers - Publications Centre

In October and November various MAS staff met with the employees of Queen’s Printers to set up a section, dedicated to MAS, on the Government of Saskatchewan’s Publications Centre website. This website enables us to provide a secure option for our members and the public to purchase MAS publications and merchandise online. We are very excited that our section of the website is now up and running and we hope to see our members take advantage of it. Visit our Publications Centre homepage at: <http://www.publications.gov.sk.ca/mas>

MailChimp



Soon in the new year you may notice a new look to the emails you receive from MAS. We have decided to go forward with using a new email client called MailChimp. MailChimp will make it easier for staff to organize email lists, provide members with more professional looking emails and receive feedback and reports on who are reading the emails. We are currently testing this program with various email recipients to ensure that there will be a smooth transition between the system we use now and MailChimp. If you are using dial-up, text-based emails will still be available using MailChimp.

Resource Library Changes

If you visit our website regularly you may have noticed a change to our Resource Library. In order to make it easier for users an additional category was added to the Resource Library called “Publication Date”. We hope that this change makes it easier for our members to find the correct resource that they require. Visit our Resource Library to view our books, periodicals, audiovisual materials and environmental monitoring equipment available for loan: <http://www.saskmuseums.org/resource-library>

In addition to the above E-Phemera and Megaphone were sent out as scheduled and the website was updated regularly.

MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT

We had a busy fall for museum development, and we’ve got an even busier spring coming up, with plenty of opportunities for refreshing and advancing your skills on a wide range of museum topics.

Mark your calendars for the 2012 MAS Annual General Meeting & Conference to be held in Melfort, May 31st - June 2nd.

Keep an eye on E-Phemera and our website www.saskmuseums.org for all of the updates and for your opportunity to register!

Staff

Brenda Herman - Co-Manager/Director of Finance
 Wendy Fitch - Co-Manager/Director of Museum Development
 Brittany Knudsen - Communications Coordinator
 Dan Holbrow - Professional Development Coordinator
 Eleanor Radbourne - Administration Assistant

Fall 2011

In November, we held a successful **Exhibit Design and Planning** course in Melfort. Participants learned a great deal about the exhibit design process. They also had the opportunity to apply their new knowledge and skills to their own facilities.

The Art of Grant-Writing workshop in Swift Current was also a tremendous success. By simulating the process of adjudicating a grant, the participants gained a new perspective that will be sure to help with future funding applications.

We also had the opportunity to offer **Standards: Tools for Good Governance** workshops for several museum boards. This useful course introduces museum boards to their role and obligations, and discusses how applying the Standards for Saskatchewan Museums can benefit their organizations.

The **Professional Development Questionnaire** provided us with useful insight into our members’ training needs and goals. We’ve already starting using this information for planning future training activities. (If you didn’t respond to the survey, or if you have more to add, we still want to know what

you think! Send your training ideas to pdcoordinator@saskmuseums.org, or call Dan at 306-780-9241.)

Staff has been able to attend most of the fall Network meetings this year which ensures that we can stay current with the issues and activities of a large portion of our membership. Staff also attends as many of the Special Interest Group meetings as possible for the same reason. A meeting of the Network Representatives had been set for early December in Saskatoon but was cancelled due to low registrations.

Spring 2012

Coming up, we have a range of courses and workshops for all levels of expertise.

We're going to offer **The Art of Grant-Writing** once more, this time in Prince Albert, on March 24. We'll be offering three courses from our Certificate Program in Community Museum Studies. **Museums 101** and our **Organization and Management** course will be offered back-to-back on March 9 and 10 at Wanuskewin Heritage Park. We'll also pilot our newly-revised **Collections Management** course April 13 at the Mann Art Gallery in Prince Albert and April 27 at the Godfrey Dean Art Gallery in Yorkton. Our **Online**

Museums 101 course will be offered this spring (date TBD). Look for more details in your MAS Winter Calendar.

We'll also offer several workshops on specialized topics, including a workshop on **The Visitor Experience: The Active Prolonged Engagement Approach** by researcher and museum educator Sue Allen, and a forum on **Curatorial Practices: Aboriginal Voices**.

Our series of webinars on **Museums and Technology** will explore easy, low-cost ways that your museum can benefit from new technologies. The series kicks off on February 15 with a presentation on **Social Media for Museums**. Other topics will include how to make your own interactive whiteboard for a fraction of the cost of commercial models, and how you can build your own low-cost electronics. For updates, watch <http://learningtimesevents.org/engagingtech/>.

Finally, our next issue of **Museums and Sustainability**, this one focused on environmental sustainability, is on track to be released on Earth Day (April 22). In it, you'll find information about how various museums from around Saskatchewan are incorporating environmental sustainability, and ideas for your own museum.

ADVOCACY

Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA)

In early January staff participated in a meeting with Alain Pineau National Director of CCA as part of his cross country consultation sessions. CCA is currently in the process of significant change as it prepares to move to a financially self-sufficient model and away from reliance on federal government funding. He shared the proposed vision for CCA and a list of potential programs and services members could see in the future. Its interesting to note that CCA is transforming into a much more inclusive organization which recognizes that culture is more broadly defined than the arts alone. MAS will be supporting CCA as it redefines itself.

Municipal Elections

Wednesday, October 24th is the date for municipal elections in Saskatchewan. MAS will be developing background materials to assist members wishing to take advantage of this opportunity to discuss their ideas and issues with municipal candidates.

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