



MUSEUMS
ASSOCIATION OF
SASKATCHEWAN
MUSEUMS ARE MORE...

Board & Staff QUARTERLY REPORT

Summer 2021

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 1



We gratefully acknowledge the support of:

Above: The family and friends of the live band, The Saltwater Penguins, enjoying the show as a part of the Kronau Heritage Museum's Simple(R) Fun Festival on July 17, 2021.

Photo by: Kay Mikolas.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello, summer! It has been a hot summer so far, and I hope most of you have had the opportunity to get outside and get

together with loved ones. This summer has a much different feel than last summer, and I think we are cautiously optimistic as we move forward without restrictions. It is my pleasure to greet you all as the President of the MAS Board of Directors for a second term, and I'm looking forward to hopefully seeing you all in person soon!

The Board of Directors has continued to meet virtually for the time being and has been committed to showing up to each meeting with smiles on our faces and an appetite to make a difference. The Nominations Committee worked very hard this year to update our list of potential candidates. The committee reached out to various interested parties throughout the spring, leading to our nominations slate consisting of nine people for six open spots on the Board! Thank you to Corinne, Vincent, and Valerie for organizing a stellar list of candidates.

On June 4th, we held MAS' second virtual and 53rd annual AGM. This year, we also hosted a virtual Member's Forum and used Zoom to break out into discussion rooms to connect with you, the members! Thank you to Em Ironstar for organizing the polls and the technical side of the entire event,

and to Brenda, Dan, Sarah, Terri, and Wendy for keeping the event running smoothly.

The virtual member's forum was a success, with many of the rooms reporting that they could have chatted more about the two discussion questions. It was lovely to connect more in-depth with you all and learn more about the new and innovative ways our members are adapting to moving forward through COVID-19. We will be using these answers to guide our Board Workplan in our August orientation meeting.

During the AGM, we thanked and acknowledged departing Board Members Kaiti Hannah (WDM-Corporate Office, Saskatoon) and Karen Grenier (Hudson Bay Museum, Hudson Bay). Kaiti and Karen worked very hard with the Board during their terms, and we hope to see them back in the future. We had an incredible slate of candidates from the heritage and culture sector who put their names forth for the Board, and we welcomed three new Board Members: Dr. Barbara McNeil (Saskatchewan African Canadian Heritage Museum, Regina), Delta Fay Cruickshank (Biggar Museum & Gallery, Biggar), and Dr. Angelina Weenie (First Nations University, Regina). We also welcomed back Dr. Tracene Harvey (Museum of Antiquities, Saskatoon) and elected Helanna Gessner (Diefenbaker Canada Centre, Saskatoon) and Andrew Whiting (Saskatoon).

These Board Members join me (Regina), Corinne Daelick (WDM-Corporate Office, Saskatoon), Vincent Houghtaling (Moose Jaw Museum and Art Gallery, Moose Jaw), and Valerie Mulholland

(Regina). After the AGM, I was elected to continue my term as President, and Tracene Harvey was also elected to continue her term as Vice President.

The Board of Directors was thrilled to have so many candidates put their names forward and are glad to see there is so much interest in guiding the organization into the future. We said goodbye to Katrina Howick (Moose Jaw), who served two terms with the Board. We hope to see her put her name forth in the future! As always, if you are interested, please let the staff at the MAS office know, as we are always looking for great people to serve on the Board and our committees.

Prior to the AGM, the Governance Committee conducted a review of the bylaws. The Committee recognized that updates were needed to ensure we can hold virtual meetings and to change our nominations process for AGMs in the future. The Board of Directors is responsible for the regular review of the Bylaws to ensure they clearly articulate how the Association regulates itself. Each change was presented to the members in a table format (emailed with the AGM Package) along with a presentation.

The MAS Board & Staff Quarterly Report is published in July, October and January. The Annual Report is issued in May.

For more information, please contact us:
mas@saskmuseums.org
(306) 780 - 9279
1-866-568-7386

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Merissa Scarlett
Regina

Vice President

Dr. Tracene Harvey
Museum of Antiquities,
Saskatoon

Past President

Corinne Daelick
Western Development
Museum (WDM) Corporate
Office, Saskatoon

Directors:

Delta Fay Cruickshank
Biggar Museum & Gallery,
Biggar

Helanna Gessner
Diefenbaker Canada
Centre, Saskatoon

Vincent Houghtaling
Moose Jaw Museum & Art
Gallery, Moose Jaw

Dr. Barbara McNeil
Saskatchewan African
Heritage Museum
Regina

Valerie Mulholland
Regina

Dr. Angelina Weenie
First Nations University of
Canada, Regina

Andrew Whiting
Saskatoon

The first changes were minor changes to wording to allow us to host our AGM in-person or virtually and remain legally valid. Another change to our bylaws was to remove nominations from the floor at the AGM and instead have the slate of nominees presented to the members 14 days before the AGM is held. This change was recommended for three reasons: to ensure AGMs run more smoothly (primarily virtual ones), gives the Nomination Committee a better opportunity to vet nominees to ensure they meet the criteria set by the Board. It also allows MAS Staff time to create and distribute nominee biographies/ video presentations to all voting members in advance of the AGM. The Election will still occur at the AGM. All motions were passed to update the Bylaws.

The Board is looking forward to the upcoming year, with cautious optimism that we will be able to meet in person soon, attend network meetings, and start moving forward from COVID-19. Don't forget to save the date for June 10th, 2022, in Estevan, where we plan to hold the 54th AGM and conference.

On behalf of the Board, thank you all for your continued support and enthusiasm for MAS. Have a great rest of the summer!

- Merissa Scarlett, President – MAS
Board of Directors

CONTACT US!

Phone:
(306) 780-9279

Toll-Free in SK
(866) 568-7386

Email:
mas@saskmuseums.org

424 McDonald Street
Regina, SK S4N 6E1

MAS respectfully acknowledges that our work and support reaches lands covered by Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 & 10, the traditional lands of the Cree, Dakota, Dene, Lakota, Nakota, and Saulteaux people as well as the homeland of the Métis.

STAFF

Wendy Fitch
Executive Director

Brenda Herman
Director of Finance

Dan Holbrow
Program Director

Sarah Durham
Museums Advisor

Em Ironstar
Community Engagement
Coordinator

Terri Morris
Administrative Assistant

OFFICE REPORT

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“Museums always take a point of view by what they choose to exhibit and what they decide not to exhibit.”

-Lonnie G. Bunch III,
Smithsonian Institution
Secretary – discussing museum
neutrality

”

Along with the rest of the country, we recently learned of the discovery of unmarked graves and burial sites at former residential school sites. Sadly, we expect to hear of many more similarly horrific announcements over the coming weeks and months. MAS readily acknowledges the harms and mistakes of the past. We are committed to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous Nations in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration, and we acknowledge that this has been a slow process. We know that there are many, many years of work ahead of us to be on a solid path towards reconciliation as museums are inherently colonial institutions. However, we also believe in living heritage and its ability to shape narratives and address critical contemporary challenges, including the ongoing impacts of colonialism and systemic racism.

We believe that museums can play an essential role in the truth-telling necessary for our country at this moment. All Canadians, especially settler Canadians, must educate themselves about the painful history and current realities Indigenous people face in our country as a result of the impacts of colonialism.

Read on and see some of the things we were busy doing between April 1st and July 1st.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP SaskCulture

Wendy Fitch, Executive Director (ED), attended the regular, monthly Eligible Organization meetings this quarter (virtually), where participants shared concerns and opportunities presented by the pandemic.

SaskCulture held its Annual General Meeting in June, and our Past-President, Yvonne Hotzak, was elected to the SaskCulture Board of Directors. Also, retired CEO Rose Gilks was presented with an Honorary Life Membership to recognize her many years of leadership of the organization. The ED has continued to be involved in activities at the national level during this reporting period.

Canadian Museums Association

The Canadian Museums Association (CMA) AGM was held in late May. After considerable discussion, the resolution – to recognise the seriousness of the climate crisis, was passed. For the first time in many years, an election was held in which an expanded number of new Board members were elected.

Before the CMA's AGM, the ED was involved in discussions with the 11 Provincial/Territorial Museum Associations (PTMA) EDs to determine how to best address the issues we saw within CMA. It

was decided that a letter would be sent from all 11 Provincial/Territorial Museum Associations to the CMA Board and CEO regarding what we feel are significant concerns regarding our national museum organization. We especially wanted to express our desire to assist the CMA in making the necessary changes to guarantee its future. Collectively, the PTMAs represent almost 2000 museums across Canada. We felt real progress towards a genuinely collaborative working relationship between ourselves and CMA, particularly on national advocacy issues. We look for assurances that these measures will continue. The PTMAs letter was sent before the CMA Annual General Meeting in tandem with a letter sent by a large group of key individuals within the Canadian museum sector; both letters were expected to be discussed at a member forum at the end of the AGM. Unfortunately, due to the length of the AGM, the letters were not addressed, leaving much work for the new Board and the CMA membership over the coming months.

The PTMA letter was received graciously, and a cordial meeting was held in late June between the PTMAs and CMA - which included both the EDs and the Presidents of all participants. This was the first of what is anticipated to be a series of meetings where the nature of our collaborative relationship will be defined and implemented.

Finally, it was announced that Dr. Vanda Vitali, CMA CEO, would not be renewing her contract and would be leaving at the end of June along with long-time CFO Sue Lamonthe who is retiring after 15 years with CMA.

In early July, it was announced that Massimo Bergamini would become

the Interim CEO. According to their announcement, Mr. Bergamini will lead the CMA as Chief Executive Officer until the end of the year and will assist the Board in the search for a permanent CEO.

PARTNERSHIPS

Museums for Me Consortium

This is a project to determine the value and meaning of museums to Canadians. The Alberta Museums Association leads this multi-year research-based project. It is expected to result in a much better understanding of what museums mean to the public, which will assist in advocacy activities at all levels. MAS participates on the steering committee and will promote project surveys and facilitate focus group sessions during the research phase. A report outlining the results of the first phase of this project is expected over the summer.

Heritage Audience Development Project

This project, led by the National Trust for Canada, is a multi-year project looking at better understanding the connection between Canadians and Heritage Places (historic sites, heritage places, and traditional landscapes). The findings of their national survey were recently released and will give insights into who is the current 'audience' for heritage places and who is the potential 'audience.'

These two projects are running parallel and will both provide valuable resources to the Saskatchewan museum sector.

Heritage Symposium

MAS is partnering with Heritage Saskatchewan to hold a Symposium on Living Heritage on November 2nd and 3rd. We are still in the early planning stages, but it's looking exciting! Stay tuned for details as they are finalized.

Saskatchewan Ecomuseums Partnership

The ED attended two meetings of the Saskatchewan Ecomuseums Partnership (SEP) during this quarter.

The SEP reaffirmed the importance of ensuring Indigenous communities are involved where ecomuseum development is concerned. Key issues to emphasize include connection to land, treaties, and Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action.

After reflecting on the Terms of Reference, the SEP focused its discussions on why it exists and decided that the current arrangement has done what it was set up for. Instead of continuing the SEP, as laid out in terms of reference or becoming even more formalized, the group decided that it made more sense to become an advisory body to MAS. MAS would call the SEP together periodically to garner insight about the pertinent issues, opportunities, and guidance that might affect the development of the Sask Ecomuseum Network, a MAS initiative that connects

ecomuseums around their province with their peers.

Networks

Most of the spring Network Zoom meetings were held virtually in April and May. The Qu'Appelle Valley Network held its meeting in person in late June. MAS staff were in attendance at each meeting. If you want to be a part of a Network or want to know more about the program, contact the MAS office at mas@saskmuseums.org or Em Ironstar at community@saskmuseums.org

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Courses and Workshops

One Certificate Program Course was held during this quarter: the newly revised Volunteer Management course. It was offered online and was well attended.

Currently, staff are finalizing the details for the fall education calendar. Watch for news in E-Phemera on what will be on offer this fall.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

for the 2022 MAS Annual General Meeting & Conference in Estevan

June 10th, 2022.

Roundtable Discussions on Tangible & Intangible Cultural Heritage

In a series of topical discussions, selected museum practitioners from various disciplines, together with stakeholders from other groups engaged in a series of roundtable discussions where some of the following questions were discussed:

1. How do objects in collections facilitate and/or impede engagement with intangible cultural heritage?
2. What changes would have to occur in traditional collection-oriented practices such as cataloguing, storage, or conservation in order to improve the usefulness and accessibility of artifacts with an important role in intangible heritage activities? What are the risks to collections in allowing artifacts to be used in these ways?
3. Can and should intangible cultural heritage be made tangible in the form of documentation, recordings, images, and other materials? Should intangible heritage be catalogued, and if so, how?
4. Is it possible or desirable to develop broad best practices for the documentation and preservation of intangible cultural heritage? What ethical questions are raised by these relatively new activities?
5. How can organizations like MAS best support Indigenous-led organizations in documenting

and preserving their ICH? Given the complex and difficult relationship between museums and Indigenous peoples, is there a role for settler-led museums in documenting and preserving Indigenous ICH?

Tangible & Intangible Cultural Heritage Symposium

The project culminated in a symposium that took the form of an online panel discussion where the topics articulated during the roundtables were discussed.

This project lays the groundwork for future initiatives, including the compilation of best practices for ICH documentation and conservation, the expansion of Standards for Saskatchewan Museums to address the relationships between tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and the sharing of these resources with other provincial museums associations.

Advisory

The Museums Advisor has responded to advisory requests via email and has offered to meet with members via Zoom as required. She continues to work with the new members of Saskatchewan Collections both in migrating their data to the new database and training them in how to integrate it into their collections management activities. She is also in the final stages of reviewing and revising *Standards for Saskatchewan Museums*. This has involved working with an Indigenous Review Panel and a Peer Review Panel. Watch for a new

edition of *Standards for Saskatchewan Museums* to be published in the fall.

MAS program staff meet regularly with their colleagues across the country to look for ways to share ideas and look for opportunities to collaborate on projects of mutual benefit.

As always, we would like to hear from you about your museum development needs. You can fill out the course request form or if you have any ideas or training requirements, or any questions about our education programs, contact Dan at programs@sask-museums.org.

Resource Library

Members may have noticed a [new library database](#) on the MAS website, which is much easier to navigate. We have also upgraded and expanded the equipment kits – both environmental monitoring and oral history, available for members to borrow. Details on the new kits and the loan procedures will be coming very soon.

COLLECTIVE VOICE

Community Chats

During this quarter, we celebrated the one-year anniversary of the [Community Chats](#). Initially launched as a vehicle for providing members with a way to stay connected during the pandemic's early days, the Chats have evolved into an essential virtual program. They have become the mechanism for providing brief informative sessions on a wide range of topics that are accessible to the widest possible audience because they are virtual and because the recordings of the sessions are posted on the [MAS YouTube channel](#).

Advocacy

The ED participated in a meeting on June 30th with the Minister of Canadian Heritage, at which he announced new heritage funding for 2021. \$41 million has been allocated to support ongoing operating costs for heritage organizations through the Museums Assistance Program. This funding is expected to follow the same criteria and process as was used for the 2020 Emergency funding.

In addition, \$23 million over three years has been added to the Museums Assistance Program for the digitization of information and collections. This new MAP program will use the regular MAP criteria. It was confirmed that Young Canada Works had received supplemental funding with \$2.4 million to go toward YCW in Heritage Orgs. (short-term jobs) and \$2.6 million will go for YCW

at Building Careers in Heritage (internships). Finally, the Minister announced that consultations would begin in the fall to revise the National Museum Policy. This is considered very positive news because the National Museum Policy provides the basis for all federal support for museums in the country, including the national museums, the Canadian Conservation Institute, the Canadian Heritage Information Network, and the Museums Assistance Program. This policy was first developed in the 1970s and has not been revised in almost 25 years. MAS looks forward to participating in the consultations.

Awards

The call for nominations for the 2021 MAS Awards was sent out in June. The deadline for nominations is August 15th, with winners to be announced in the fall. While it has been a very unusual year, we want to celebrate the ways MAS members have adapted to the difficult circumstances presented by the pandemic.

For more information about the MAS Awards program, contact Em at: community@saskmuseums.org.

OPERATIONS

The MAS staff will continue to work remotely, with some staff going into the office part of the time as necessary. The situation is being reevaluated, and appropriate protocols are being developed before everyone returns to the office.

With the assistance of SaskCulture, MAS has undergone an IT audit that reviewed our current computer/IT hardware and soft-

ware. The final report from the consultant will provide recommendations for improvements to functionality and security. This is important as part of the ongoing risk management activities of MAS.

MAS submitted the required Follow-up report to SaskCulture for the 2020-2021 Annual Global Funding operational grant in June.

As you are no doubt aware, MAS receives its operational funding from the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust for Sport, Culture, and Recreation, for which we are very grateful. We are particularly thankful this year because of the multi-year funding formula in place, which has meant MAS received stable funding to continue providing programs and services to museums throughout the province. As the only province in the country with an independent Trust distributing Lottery funding, I can assure you we are the envy of the rest of the country for both the stability and amount of funding the museum sector, including MAS, receives annually through the Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation.

A talented, creative team serves MAS, and I feel privileged to work with them every day. Because of their dedication and hard work, MAS has been able to continue to serve you throughout the pandemic.

Take care and be safe, and most importantly, enjoy the summer!

- Wendy Fitch, Executive Director, MAS

Events

Community Chats continued to be conducted bi-weekly with all staff attending. You can view a playlist on YouTube of all the [previously recorded Community Chats](#).

MAS staff attended the following virtual events during this quarter:

APRIL

- National Trust – Heritage Audience Development project meeting – Wendy
- PTMAs meetings – Wendy
- SK Ecomuseum Partnership meeting – Wendy
- ECO meeting – Wendy
- Multitype Library Board annual meeting – Em
- Special Meeting of CMA members – Wendy

MAY

- Volunteer Management online course begins
- MAS Board meeting – Wendy, Brenda
- CMA Directors’ Symposium – Wendy
- SK Digital Alliance meeting – Em
- CMA AGM – Wendy, Merissa
- ECO meeting – Merissa
- MAS AGM tech run through – Board & Staff

JUNE

- PTMA meeting – Wendy
- MAS Member Forum & AGM – all staff and Board
- Post-AGM Board meeting – Wendy
- IT Audit – Wendy, Brenda, Em
- SK Ecomuseum Partnership meeting – Wendy
- SaskCulture AGM – Wendy, President
- Tangible & Intangible Cultural Heritage Symposium – Em, Dan, Sarah
- CMA Leaders Summit – Wendy, President
- Department of Canadian Heritage Announcement – federal funding – Wendy

In addition, several staff members have also taken the opportunity to attend a variety of informative webinars.

E-Phemera has been completed and distributed as scheduled along with a variety of additional group emails on topics of interest.

SOCIAL MEDIA STATS



Facebook Followers
1,313
up from 1,024



Twitter Followers
1,804
up from 1,791



Instagram Followers
744
up from 643



Website Visits
15,000
Sessions
Apr. 1 - Jul. 1



Watch Time
43.8 hours
Video Views
349