



MUSEUMS
ASSOCIATION OF
SASKATCHEWAN
MUSEUMS ARE MORE...

Board & Staff QUARTERLY REPORT

Winter 2024
VOLUME 15, ISSUE 3

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a rejuvenating holiday season and is ready to take on the opportunities and challenges that 2024 holds for the museum sector. Taking time at the beginning of a new year to identify your plans and goals is an age-old practice. There is no one right way to do this – just the act of identifying one thing that is important for your museum or your professional development can start you on the path to achieving that goal. The Museums Association of Saskatchewan (MAS) offers educational programming, professional development opportunities, and a comprehensive resource library and equipment loan program to meet the needs of Saskatchewan museums. We have an incredible team at MAS who want our museums to thrive so don't hesitate to reach out to the staff so you can achieve your 2024 goals.

Winter programming is well on its way in museums throughout the province. I am always eager to see what events and programs are being promoted through the MAS E-Phemera newsletter. If you have an upcoming event, this newsletter is a great way for it to reach a wide audience. If you want a Board member to attend your event, contact the MAS Office, and we will do our best to attend. For our smaller museums who close in the winter season, don't forget to check your museums regularly for any problems that can occur when temperatures drop as dramatically as they have. This simple task plays an important role in collections risk management and can save you time and money in the future.

The Board of Directors met in Regina in November and December, with smaller committee meetings taking place regularly. It is always a pleasure to work with the Directors and engage in policy governance and discuss the current trends we see across Canada in the cultural heritage sector. It is also an opportunity for the Board to meet with Emma and hear about all the amazing things the staff is doing for our membership. The Board is confident in the direction MAS is taking under Emma's leadership, and we look forward to all that is to come. If you haven't had a chance yet to read through the Safer Space Guidelines, I encourage you to do so and ask yourself: how can I help make my museum a safe and welcoming space for everyone? As you ponder this question, talk with the dedicated and knowledgeable staff at MAS and with the other museums in your networks. As the idiom goes, "many hands make light work".

Keep an eye out for the save the date for the MAS Annual General Meeting and for all the exciting events MAS is planning for the year. I look forward to seeing you all there and for the opportunity to hear all about what your museums have done and experienced since we last met. Until then, the Board of Directors wishes you all the best in this new year!

Helanna Gessner (she/her)
MAS Board of Directors, President

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Helanna Gessner
Diefenbaker Canada Centre,
Wakaw

Vice President

Joanna Munholland
Strasbourg

Directors:

Delta Fay Cruickshank
Biggar Museum & Gallery,
Biggar

Ally Forand
Western Development
Museum, Saskatoon

Vincent Houghtaling
Moose Jaw Museum
& Art Gallery, Moose Jaw

Nathanial Day
Regina

Cat Woloschuk
Saskatoon

Courtney Tuck-Goetz
Western Development
Museum, Saskatoon

Dr. Barbara McNeil
Saskatchewan African
Canadian Heritage Museum,
Regina

Dr. Angelina Weenie
First Nations University
of Canada, Regina

OFFICE REPORT

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a safe and joyful holiday season. Often the new year brings with it new energy and inspiration, and we are so grateful for the energy boost after a busy fall. Museums continue to work and develop in an effort to be more accessible, inclusive, and reflective of the stories that have built our sense of identity, our diverse cultures, and our shared experiences.

As with many of our members, MAS staff were busy this quarter with funding applications, reports, and wrapping up business before the new year. We hosted an Open Day and were thrilled to chat with many of you about challenges and priorities. It also provided us with the opportunity to hear directly from our members about gaps we can address through training and resource development.

We are continuing to focus on our new strategic direction to serve our members, respond to shifts within the sector, and work more closely with several similarly-aligned non-profit organizations in Saskatchewan. We are also committed to our Advocacy Statements, increasing accessibility through our new website and communications, and implementing and sharing our Safer Spaces guide. The program and content review for our Certificate Program in Community Museum Studies is well underway, and we are looking forward to continuing to provide relevant and contemporary educational content for museum professionals in Saskatchewan.

As we begin 2024, we are proud of the work we accomplished last year and are excited about everything the new year brings. We continue to embrace change through the ways we work and connect. We remember that each person brings a completely unique perspective and set of experiences, and that together we build a valuable perspective to better serve Saskatchewan's museums. We look forward to hearing directly from our members about challenges and successes, as well as opportunities for engagement, resource development, and education.

Read on and see some of the highlights from October 1st to December 31st.

STAFF

Emma Morris
Executive Director

Sarah Durham
Museums Advisor

Tim Panas
Learning Program
Lead

Brenda Herman
Director of Finance

Amber Hanover
Community
Engagement Lead

Terri Morris
Administrative Assistant

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

HERITAGE CONSORTIUM

We are continuing to work closely with other organizations in the province who share similar mandates, models, and especially those whose membership has a lot of crossover with our own. One of the most exciting initiatives to come out of this is the founding of the Heritage Consortium. We have aligned with other similar non profit organizations in Saskatchewan in order to collaborate more effectively on topics of significance, such as the shifting social responsibilities that are affecting the sector, funding, shared projects, and some of the more far-reaching policies.

NATIONAL, PROVINCIAL, AND TERRITORIAL MUSEUMS ASSOCIATIONS

MAS staff have been involved in several activities at the national level during this reporting period, including regular meetings with other Provincial and Territorial Museums Associations and the Canadian Museums Association (CMA). As a PTMA, MAS participated as much as possible in the renewal of the National Museum Policy. Additionally, MAS continues to support and promote the CMA's "Moved to Action" report among our membership, including linking directly to the report on our website and providing all of our Institutional Members with hard copies of the report.

Emma was pleased to attend the National Council Meetings and National Trust Conference in Ottawa in October, where she had the opportunity to share about Saskatchewan's many innovative initiatives, special challenges, and collaborative approaches to tangible and intangible cultural heritage. It was wonderful to learn from museum professionals, policy-makers, cultural knowledge keepers, students, and art and heritage sector leaders from throughout the country. We are all dealing with very similar challenges with regard to shifting priorities and expectations, funding, and aging demographics, so the topics were extremely relevant to MAS and our membership.

TECHNOLOGY MICROGRANTS PARTNERSHIPS

MAS received \$45,000.00 again in 2023 from the Province of Saskatchewan to provide Technology Micro-Grants. The program was extremely successful, with 59 applicants for a total request of \$62,059.70. All of the applications were adjudicated based on the application criteria, and each received a letter outlining the funding decision, with recipients getting a maximum of \$1,200.00 each. The impacts of this fund cannot be understated for our members and the communities that support them.

We wish to thank the Government of Saskatchewan's Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport for investing in Saskatchewan communities through museums.

NETWORKS

The Fall Network meetings were held throughout October and November, mostly in-person, with many networks choosing to include a virtual accessibility component as well. MAS staff and Board were able to attend most of the meetings and it was wonderful to catch up with members. While you are aware of the changes to the Museum Networks program, many of the Networks are choosing to continue on with the model and are looking forward to meeting again this Spring. We will be conducting another Question and Answer session this winter to help everyone understand the changes to the program, so stay tuned for that announcement.

“ *...remembering alerts us to the idea that heritage is a culturally directed process of intense emotional power, that is both a personal and social act of making sense of, and understanding, the past and the present.* ”

- Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (2006)

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

COURSES AND WORKSHOPS

With the coming of the fall months the new term of MAS course offerings began, with two modules in our Certificate program. The first of these was an in-person session of Museums 101 on November 4, facilitated by Tim Panas and conducted in partnership with the Department of History at the University of Regina. Open to both University students and members of the general public, this session allowed for early-career heritage professionals and current museum staff members to collaborate within an educational format to share experience, knowledge and new perspectives on the operation of cultural institutions. This session proved to be a large success, with MAS looking to further our relationships with other post-secondary educational institutions to further the goals of providing individuals with the knowledge and experiences they need in order to strengthen and promote heritage institutions across the province. Our second course offering, Volunteer Management, was provided online on November 25. Facilitated by Kristine Flynn of the Western Development museum, this session provided participants with the knowledge and supports to better recruit, train, and assist volunteers for their heritage institutions. The one special topics class scheduled for the fall, Archaeology and Saskatchewan Museums – Collections, Interpretations, and Ethics, was postponed until early 2024 due to scheduling issues.

The fall has also seen the organization of further courses for the first few months of 2024. On January 25 Introduction to Basic Archives will be presented online, in partnership with the Saskatchewan Council for Archives and Archivists (SCAA). March 8 will see the online delivery of our Museums and Education Certificate class, with our Marketing the Museum Certificate class being conducted online on March 23. As well, a Special Topics course on conducting oral history is in the final stages of organization. Slated for April, it is being sponsored by the Department of Anthropology at the University of Saskatchewan, and will be delivered by Kristin Catherwood, their Director of Living Heritage at Heritage Saskatchewan.

Please contact Tim Panas, Learning Program Lead programs@saskmuseums.org with any questions you may have.

RESOURCE LIBRARY

Work on cataloguing our extensive library collection to the Library of Congress system continued over the winter. During these efforts all resources are still available to members, and our online database is being updated regularly with new acquisitions. If you can't find a volume you are looking for please contact us and we will track it down and add it to our collection!

For more information about the library, please contact Tim Panas at programs@saskmuseums.org or by phone at 306-780-9241.

If you wish to stop in to the office to have a look at our library, we invite you to do so. Please contact Emma at ex.director@saskmuseums.org or by phone at 306-780-9280 ahead of your visit as we continue with a hybrid work model.

ADVISORY

Advisory Services are available all year to MAS Members. Requests are frequently made via e-mail and phone and are similarly followed-up with phone calls, e-mails, zoom meetings, or site visits where appropriate.

From October to December there were 76 inquiries, with submissions slowing down towards the December holidays. All submissions to the Advisory are carefully tracked to help MAS to continue to provide assistance that complies with best practices and standards established within the heritage field, and to help MAS further develop necessary guidelines. Broadly speaking, inquiries for this quarter have included questions on resources for museums undertaking reconciliation work, insurance, human resources management, inventorying collections, photographing collections, developing a collections management policy, collections storage, exhibition fabrication, and much more.

Inquiries to the Advisor predominately come from MAS Members, approximately 12% of inquiries this quarter came from non-members, being members from the general public.

The SaskCollections initiative also falls under the oversight of the Museums Advisor. The total number of participating museums in this initiative is 37 across the province. You can find more information about SaskCollections and how to join, on our website (<https://saskmuseums.org/>)

[saskcollections/](https://saskcollections.org/)). The SaskCollections Research Portal (<https://saskcollections.org/>) is open for any current SaskCollections participants to join to share their collections publicly. For more information on the Research Portal, contact the Museums Advisor (advisor@saskmuseums.org) to begin the process.

Interest in SaskCollections is steady and the Museums Advisor continues to work with interested parties. Any Institutional Voting Member with MAS is eligible to join. Any questions about joining and expectations of the program may be directed to the Museums Advisor (advisor@saskmuseums.org).

It has been a year and a bit since MAS launched the Indigenous Materials in Saskatchewan Museums survey to our members. If you have not yet completed this survey, you are strongly encouraged to do so, the survey is still open and can be found on our website (<https://saskmuseums.org/indigenous-material-in-saskatchewan-museums-survey/>) or e-mail the Museums Advisor directly (advisor@saskmuseums.org). In this survey and in MAS publications, "Indigenous" is used as an inclusive term referring to the diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis groups of Canada, and ask our members to keep this in mind as they complete this survey.

And as a reminder, you can find PDF copies of all of our Tip Sheets, Bulletins, and the latest edition of *Standards for Saskatchewan Museums* as well as copies of Collections Documentation Forms available for free to download on our website from the Member Area under the Online Resources section (<https://saskmuseums.org/members/online-resources>).

COLLECTIVE VOICE

ADVOCACY

MAS has been working steadily to implement our new strategic plan and values. This has informed changes to our priorities as we explore our organization's role in ensuring the value, sustainability, and relevancy of museums in Saskatchewan. Some of the new focuses we have identified include training and resources to support museums as they strive to serve their communities through accessibility, inclusion, diversity, equity, and justice. We are particularly engaged in supporting our members as they navigate collections management, policy development and

implementation, community engagement, and equitable storytelling. We are also actively supporting our members to undertake repatriation processes. This includes identifying cultural objects that should be repatriated, initiating repatriation processes, and navigating incoming claims for repatriation. We have expertise and many resources available to help our members align with UNDRIP and global best practices with a Saskatchewan-specific approach.

Finally, we are continuing in our commitment to making museums safer spaces for everyone with a variety of resources and examples, including our Safer Spaces Guidelines. For more information, please visit our Advocacy page and find some resources we have made available on our website at <https://www.saskmuseums.org/services/advocacy/>.

SAFER SPACES GUIDELINES

MAS is dedicated to providing a safer space for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, age, language, body size, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic standing, or otherwise. This applies to all MAS spaces and programs, including workplace, in-person and online events, in-person online synchronous and online asynchronous programming, as well as all online platforms, emails, and any other spaces that MAS hosts.

MAS does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or any inappropriate conduct. This includes but is not limited to: racism, white supremacy, sexism, heterosexism/homophobia, cissexism/transphobia, sizeism, ableism and ageism, sexualized violence, and harassment. Anyone who acts in any type of behaviour that is considered harmful, violent or aggressive may be prohibited, expelled, or banned from these spaces.

MAS acknowledges that the work of creating safe, welcoming, and inclusive spaces and experiences for everyone is an active process.

Please read our full Safer Spaces Guidelines here: <https://saskmuseums.org/about/safer-space-guidelines/>.



EVENTS

October

- 3 - North East Network Meeting, Tim
- 4 - SaskCulture Eligible Cultural Organizations' meeting, Emma
- 4 - Virtual Historical Thinking Institute Series: Historical Significance, Sarah
- 5 - South Central Network Meeting, Tim
- 13-15 - OSAC Showcase, Sarah
- 14 - River Valley Network Meeting, Tim
- 16 - Quill Plains Network Meeting, Amber
- 17 - Prairie Trails Network Meeting, Amber
- 18 - Seneca Root Network Meeting, Amber
- 18 - Virtual Historical Thinking Institute Series: Evidence and Interpretation, Sarah
- 19 - De-Accessioning and Disposal Webinar pt. 1, Sarah
- 23 - West Central Network Meeting, Amber
- 25 - South West District for Sport, Culture and Recreation Cultural Gathering, Amber
- 25 - OMA All Good Things Come to an End: Closing a Museum Well, Sarah
- 25-28 - National Trust Conference and National Council meetings, Emma
- 30 - Living Heritage & Sustainable Livelihoods Discussion, Emma

November

- 1 - OMA More than a Checklist: Decolonizing Historical Narratives, Sarah, Amber
- 1 - Virtual Historical Thinking Institute Series: Historical Perspectives, Sarah
- 4 - MAS Board Meeting, Emma; Museums 101 U of R, Tim
- 8 - Heritage Saskatchewan Awards Ceremony, Emma
- 15 - MAS Open Office Day, all staff
- 15 - Virtual Historical Thinking Institute Series: Continuity and Change, Sarah
- 25 - Volunteer Management CP Course, Tim
- 29 - Balboa Park Online Collaborative - Dreaming of Building More Inclusive Art Collections, Sarah
- 30 to Dec 2 - National Gallery of Canada Acquiring Differently Colloquium, Sarah

December

- 9 - MAS Board Meeting, Emma and Brenda
- 12 - NCTR Beyond Ground Penetrating Radar, Sarah
- 19 - Museums Study Let's Talk Unmanaged Collections, Sarah
- 27-29 - MAS office closed

In addition, several staff members have also taken the opportunity to attend a variety of informative virtual courses and web series. There were also regular meetings, such as bi-weekly all staff meetings, CMA and PTMA meetings, and Program Staff Meetings.

SOCIAL MEDIA STATS

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



Website Visits

15,000
Sessions
Sept 30 - Dec 31

Youtube Watch Time

27.5 hours
Video Views
158

Facebook Followers

1572
up from 1553

Twitter Followers

1765
down from 1776

Instagram Followers

1111
up from 1102

OPERATIONS

MAS staff are available to chat, answer questions, and respond to our members' needs and concerns by phone or email during our regular office hours: Monday – Friday, 8am – 4pm. If you need to reach us outside of those hours, please send an email or leave a phone message and we will get back to you.

As you know, MAS receives its operational funding from the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust for Sport, Culture, and Recreation, for which we are very grateful. As the only province in the country with an independent Trust distributing Lottery funding, Saskatchewan is the envy of the rest of the country for both the stability and amount of funding that the museum sector, including MAS, receives annually through the Lotteries Trust Fund.



- Emma Morris, Executive Director, MAS

We gratefully acknowledge the support of:



MAS's work and support reaches lands covered by Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 & 10 currently known as the Province of Saskatchewan, comprised of the territories of the Nêhiyawak, Anihšînāpēk, Dene, Dakota, Lakota, Michif/Métis, and Nakota nations. We are committed to focus on repairing the relationships between immigrant Canadians who have settled here over centuries and the First Nations people who have walked these lands since time immemorial. MAS recognizes the roles of museums in perpetuating colonial practices in Canada both directly and indirectly through collection and display practices, policy, and harmful rhetoric. We commit to explore our roles in nurturing meaningful relationships and building understanding. We dedicate our efforts to working together in a spirit of collaboration and reconciliation. We are all treaty people.