

2015

Five Year Strategic Plan
for the
Community Museums Association of PEI

The following Five Year Strategic Plan
for the
Community Museums Association of PEI
has been prepared by
Lesley Caseley

This Strategic Plan is based on discussions with
the Association Board and Members

Institutional Description

Community Museums Association of PEI, Inc.

Vision

The Community Museums Association of Prince Edward Island will through the use of leadership in training, innovation and empowerment contribute to the enhancement, promotion and protection of Prince Edward Island's heritage.

Mandate

The Community Museums Association of Prince Edward Island was formed in 1983 and grew out of a need for stronger support services for the community museums. From its inception, the major goal of the Association has been to promote high standards, and whenever possible, increase the level of excellence in the museum community.

The most obvious and crucial need recognized by the Association from its inception was the necessity to provide adequate opportunities for professional development and training in the various aspects of museum operation and development. In response to this, a study funded by the National Museums of Canada and the Provincial Government, was prepared by museum consultant, Dr. Lee Jolliffe. Over the years, the program has evolved to include a number of teaching strategies ensuring that museum staff could access the professional development opportunities they required to maintain and upgrade their facilities. Professional development strategies have included seminars, newsletters, a resource centre, individualized training, mentoring, and museum advisory and support services. The movement towards high museum standards through professional development activities and the sharing of information is central to our very existence. A movement towards excellence and awareness is a natural result of the activities the Community Museums Association of PEI has undertaken over the years.

The following goals encompass the primary objectives of the Association:

- 1) To promote high standards, and whenever possible, increase the level of excellence in the museum community
- 2) To facilitate communication and cooperation among members, other heritage organizations and government agencies.
- 3) To promote a public awareness of the functions of museums to collect, research, exhibit and interpret aspects of the past.

This year, in a study commissioned by CulturePEI, entitled " The Culture Sector in PEI: A Labour Market Study" from February 2015 noted that CMAPEI had made significant progress in advancing the museums and heritage discipline on the Island. This echoes previous studies such as the Department of Education's Ministerial Steering Committee on Culture's report titled

“Culture, Itself a Treasure” noted the important role the CMA/PEI plays in museum development on Prince Edward Island.

In 1996, the CMA/PEI contracted an evaluator, Dr. Tom Connor & Associates, to conduct an analysis of our program and to make recommendations for the future. This study found that the Association's program had raised museum standards, improved policies, improved the quality of exhibits and increased the skill and confidence of personnel. Dr. Connor's study made a number of recommendations which included maintaining professional development/training and support services, enhancing our ability to use new technologies, developing stronger cooperation and collaboration within the Atlantic Region museum community, and taking a stronger role in promoting museums and museum work. In recent years, in part as a result of this study, we have encouraged the use of new technologies in our community, participated as an equal partner in the Heritage Network Atlantic (a collaborative initiative of the Atlantic region museums associations), and assisted our members in evaluating their museums and the creation of museum plans.

This current strategic plan builds on the work we have achieved to date.

Many Island collections have national importance since PEI is the birthplace of Canada and part of the story of Canada and the Canadian identity. Our activities promote both awareness and high standards in the Island museum community. Through fostering the development of museums and museum services with high standards, we help ensure that collections of significance will be developed and maintained for future generations of Islanders and Canadians. The Association strives to promote regional and national professional exchanges and dialogue. The development of a regional professional expertise exchange through seminars; the creation of greater internet capabilities; the development of provincial, regional and national **listservs** and the regular dialogue amongst members of the Association all contribute to the awareness that we are part of a greater museum community and indeed part of the diverse Canadian mosaic which makes up our Canadian identity. These initiatives also allow us to exchange information and expertise more freely encouraging both partnerships and excellence.

Organization

The governing body of the Association is the Board. This Board consists of nine members, two from each of Prince Edward Island's counties and three members-at-large. This representation on the Board ensures that the concerns and needs of the provincial museum community are represented.

The day-to-day operation of the Association is conducted by the organization's Director/ Training Coordinator, the only full-time staff member. Support staff is provided through short-term grants and projects.

The Association's primary audience is the museum/heritage community. We have been very successful in bringing this community closer together. For example, the Heritage Passport developed by the Association in 1994, which was updated and reprinted in 1996, featured all 31 museums/heritage sites on Prince Edward Island. All the museums in the province have membership in the Association. Membership includes the P.E.I. Museum & Heritage Foundation, the Confederation Centre Art Gallery & Museum, the Acadian Museum, community museums, educational institutions, private museums, museum professionals and volunteers, as well as interested individuals.

Role in Relation to the Museum Community

Today, the Community Museums Association is an integral part of the museum community of Prince Edward Island. The Association conducts workshops, seminars and study tours; liaises with museums, government, other agencies and the public; develops and manages a museum resource centre; initiates special projects; adjudicates special grants to community museums.

Other initiatives that the Association has undertaken have resulted in the adoption of a Provincial Museums Policy by the Province; the development and adoption of a set of voluntary provincial museum standards; the creation of Bare Essentials for Museums training DVD's; and Museum Operations Training Certificates.

The Association strives to develop projects which allow the museum community to work together making the maximum use of valuable time and resources. For example, in 1995, the CMA/PEI through its Museum Development Project enabled the Island's community museums to develop and update their policy statements, evaluate themselves according to the voluntary provincial museum standards and create 3 year museum development plans. As a follow-up to this, the Province made museum development money available for community museums which are ~~is~~ administered by the Association. This project was evaluated and in 2003 the Association worked with the Island's community museums to reassess the museums according to the provincial standards, develop new 3 year plans and update each museum's policy statements. We have always attempted to identify a need in the community and then create a tool through which our members could address that need.

In recent years, we have expanded our program to include a number of support services such as a museum advisory, access to conservation and exhibit materials at cost as well as access to a dry-mounting press and computers for upgrading labels. Individual training is available to any member wishing to use any of these materials or pieces of equipment. Unscheduled individualized professional development and training is also available to members upon requests in specific areas of museum study.

Volunteers play a crucial role in the operation of museums throughout the province. Each year, volunteers contribute over 16,000 volunteer hours to community museums in Prince Edward Island. It is the volunteers who make it possible for many community museums to operate. As

an Association, we both help ensure that training is available and when possible assist museums in developing effective volunteer programs.

The Association has also developed better use of new technologies to help serve its members. We have developed a comprehensive website, helped our members learn how to use technology, worked on special initiatives such as virtual exhibits and e-learning strategies and continue to grow in our use of technology.

In addition to working with the Island museum community, the Association liaises with other sectors of the Island mosaic such as tourism, the arts, natural history, education, etc. to promote awareness and develop ways that we can work together. Through our program we have encouraged an awareness in our members of their connections to each other, the regional and the Canadian museum community.

Financial Management

The CMA/PEI currently benefits from the support of the Museums Assistance Program, the Province of Prince Edward Island and our membership. In recent years, we have felt the need to stabilize our funding since to date our services have been project based. We have approached the Provincial Government a number of times and have had considerable support from our members. We have been unsuccessful in receiving the core funds from the Province to meet our basic operational needs. The Museums Assistance Program of Canadian Heritage has been undergoing considerable changes in recent years which mean we are finding it more difficult to take advantage of the program.

Closing

We are in a time of transition. As we build on what we have accomplished over the last thirty years, the ways that we can best serve our members are changing. We look forward to these future challenges and opportunities.

Community Museums Association of PEI SWOT Analysis

Strengths of CMAPEI

Province Wide Membership: Our membership covers the entire province, is inclusive and all encompassing. CMAPEI can act as their common voice

Reputation: The organization is recognized as professional, values all aspects of culture and has a credible reputation.

Source of Information: CMAPEI is an established organization with resources, knowledgeable staff and board members.

Weakness of the CMAPEI

Unstable funding: Funding is project based, which determines our priorities. Government funding polices largely ignore our reality. We also don't want to compete with our members by conducting fundraisers.

Lack of real Influence: Do to our small size, staff transition period, lack of visibility and dependence on funding; we lack real influence with governments in providing assistance to museums.

Board Member Apathy: Board members do not meet all of their commitments and it is difficult to recruit and retain new members.

Opportunities Facing CMAPEI

Staffing Changes: New, fresh ideas come from changes in staff. It is also a good time to re-think policies, restructure board members and add marketing to board priorities.

Government Changes: A recent provincial election and upcoming federal election could change government funding opportunities and policies.

Continued Leadership in Technology: Updates to the website, expanded programs in technology, movement to tech-based communications.

Visibility: Expand Board outreach in the community to add visibility. Publicly praise and recognize the volunteers which play a vital role in community museums.

Continuing Partnership Development: Grow our net-work of strategic partnerships especially with, Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture as well as PEI Museum and Heritage Foundation and Confederation Centre of the Art. A future goal is to have a co-location with all cultural organizations under one roof.

Threats Facing CMAPEI

Funding Structure: Instability of funding, especially in hard economic times. Accepting government funding could mean compromising our priorities, vision and mandate. We are constantly competing with other organizations lobbying government for funds.

Volunteer Burnout: The public does not truly value heritage. Museums are in competition with other organizations for volunteer recruitment.

Member and Board Member Apathy: The time that members have to devote to the association is in competition with their work and volunteer schedules. CMA needs to convince members of its continuing relevance, and the value participation in our association.

Leadership Development and Continuity: CMAPEI staff must continue to take part in professional development/ learning opportunities to be a leader in museum operation and development. Succession planning within CMAPEI must be done to assure continuity.

Goals

CMAPEI established the following goals based on the associations priorities:

Financial Stability

To have stable core funding and appropriate diversified revenue sources to achieve CMAPEI's mission.

Leadership

To be an example of efficient and strong governing practices to our membership.

Museum Excellence

To administer programs and professional development opportunities that meets the needs of our membership and promotes high museum standards.

Visibility/ Engagement

To engage with the public and government of PEI in order to build support and recognition for the Island's museum community.

Objectives

To achieve the set goals CMAPEI has the following objectives:

Financial Stability

- Increase memberships
- Secure stable core funding
- Develop money generating strategies

Leadership

- Review governance policies to ensure they are effective and up to date.
- Succession planning
- Board and CMAPEI staff visits each member to understand and meet members needs.

Museum Excellence

- Create a training plan based on the "2015 Training Survey"
- Promote the use of new technologies in museums
- Offer one on one training and museum advisory services
- Develop new programs that respond to identified needs of membership.

Visibility/ Engagement

- Strengthen ties with government departments, provincial and national museum organizations.
- Build an appreciation amongst Islanders of the value of museums.
- Promote and maintain CMAPEI sponsored awards.

Action Plan & Development Prioritizes

In discussions with members of the Association and the Association Board , the following have been identified as priorities over the next five years. (*Note: Training for our membership remains a on-going priority to assure excellence in the museum community. It is also important to note that tasks not achieved within one year will be carried into the next with an appropriate increase in priority.*)

O= ongoing H= High M=medium L=Low

Year one

Priority	Action Steps	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome Measurement
O	Stabilize funding for Association		B / D	Stabilized funding
O	Develop money generating strategies which serve the Association and museum community.		Appointed committee	Increase income
O	Develop effective and formal communication with Department of Education, Early Learning & Culture		D/ EB	Establish working relationship
O	Increase/ stabilize long term support staff		D/B	Hire more staff
O	Assist members in development of social media / web presence.		D	All members have web presence
O	Offer ongoing community identified museum training sessions		D	Have training sessions
O	Continue to offer one on one training and museum advisory services		D	Members benefit from training
O	Continue regular annual visits to all member museums.		B /D	Connect with all members
O	Maintain the Award of Merit for Museum Volunteers and Dr. Willie Eliot Award		B/D	Awards given as appropriate
O	Board reviews governance policies and procedures to ensure they are effective and up to date		B	Effective governance
O	Expand membership by advertising and actively seeking Associate members		B/D	Obtain new members
H	Develop a 3-5 year plan based on training survey	2016	B/D	Training Plan developed
H	Play a role in governments Cultural Strategy Plan	2017	B/ D/ members	Representative on committee
H	Assist museums in the development of disaster preparedness & recovery plans	2017	D	Members have emergency plans
H	Strengthen electronic communications, social media and use of traditional media	2017	D	Members on web and social media
H	Initiate the Rev. Dr. Barry King Bursary	2016	B	Award to member

H	Upgrade and maintain CMAPEI website	2015	D	Increase views
H	150 Fund Project	2017	B/ D	Obtain funding
H	Initiate a media relations committee with board and community members	2016	B/ D	Increase media coverage

Year Two

Priority	Action Steps	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome Measurement
O	Board strengthens ties with PEI Museum & Heritage foundation		D/B	Strengthen Partnerships
O	Ongoing visits of Board to community museums members.		B	Strengthen relationships
O	Offer IT support to museums relating to museum operation and PastPerfect		D/ Staff	Increased use of Information management
O	All ongoing activities stated above			
H	Create a point system tying training sessions to eligibility for grant .	2016	B/D	Increase attendance at training events
H	Strengthen ties with government departments, provincial and national museum organizations.	2016	B/D	Build partnerships, attend CMA AGM
H	Assists museums in evaluating their conservation needs.		D / Staff	Safer collections
H	Work with museums to ensure their collections management processes are current, accurately entered and complete.		D / Staff	Safer collections, current collections Information Management
H	Develop Made in PEI antique Farm Machinery content.	2017	B/ D	Use information to promote members
M	Promote the sale of training CD-Rom		D/ Staff	Increase revenue
M	Promote targeted training initiative level 2 & 3 certificates. Level 1 certificate add a written evaluation process for a fee.		D / Staff	Have members achieve certificates
H	Participate in the annual teachers conference to strengthen use of museums services in Island schools.	2016	B/ D	Develop partnerships
L	Provide access for members to environmental monitoring equipment by getting new equipment		D	Increase longevity of collections

Year Three

Priority	Action Steps	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome Measurement
O	Strengthen ties with government departments, provincial and national museum organizations.		B/ D	Stronger relationships
O	Ongoing term projects to support special initiatives and community projects		B/ D	Support members and continue training
O	All ongoing activates previously stated			
H	Coordinate museums to participate in museum and heritage days.	2018	D/ Staff	Increase visibility
H	Offer on-line / e-learning training opportunities		D / Staff	Offer more training in off season
H	Standardized succession planning CMAPEI	2018	D/B	Have a written succession plan and knowledge transfer
H	Work with museums to develop policies and three year development plans.		D	Have workshop training/ sessions
H	Look for new collections software		D	Increased use of collections information management.
M	Promote twice a year meeting of Island museum personal (formal or informal).		B/D	Enhance networking
M	Develop online content to promote Island Museums (e.g. virtual exhibits)		D / Staff	Increased awareness of Island Museum Collections
M	Assist museums in development of volunteer and personnel policies		D/ Staff	Written guidelines for volunteers and personal

Year Four

Priority	Action Steps	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome Measurement
O	All ongoing activities stated previously			
M	Investigate curatorial program to act as advisory/ support personnel for community museums.		D	See possibilities
M	Investigate PEI Museum Day to promote Island museums.		D / Staff	See possibilities
M	Investigate the successful admissions passport of community museums.		D / Staff	See possibilities

Year Five

Priority	Action Steps	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome Measurement
O	All ongoing activities stated previously			
H	Wrap up of any unfinished action plans		B / D	Finish current strategic plan
H	Start the strategic planning process for 2020-2025		B / D	Create new strategic plan
L	Work with members on product development to create online store.		D	Develop products