



**City of Kingston  
Information Report to Council  
Report Number 15-010**

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<b>To:</b>	<b>Mayor and Members of Council</b>
<b>From:</b>	<b>Cynthia Beach, Commissioner, Corporate &amp; Strategic Initiatives</b>
<b>Resource Staff:</b>	<b>Colin Wiginton, Cultural Director</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>December 16, 2014</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>2014 Update on Kingston's Civic Museums and City Hall</b>

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**Executive Summary:**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update as it relates to Kingston's civic museums and City Hall in relation to the 2014 Priority Status Matrix. The Matrix identifies three initiatives as part of Kingston's Strategic Plan 2011-2014 that are concerned with programming and exhibitions at these City-owned sites that includes Kingston City Hall National Historic Site, MacLachlan Woodworking Museum and the Pump House Steam Museum.

***Priority 37:** Enhance Kingston City Hall National Historic Site and provide venues to showcase artworks, artifacts and stories.*

***Priority 38:** Develop expanded program, education and exhibits for the Pump House Steam Museum.*

***Priority 39:** Develop expanded programming, education and exhibits for the MacLachlan Woodworking Museum and surrounding Grass Creek Park."*

This report provides updates on the initiatives included as part of the Matrix, and in particular, on activities identified for completion in 2014 and 2015:

Kingston City Hall National Historic Site: (2104) Develop an interpretive plan and 4-year work plan; complete first interpretive project (City Hall Chronicles); (2015) Develop and complete temporary exhibition to honour the Sir John A Macdonald Bicentennial and public programming.

2016: Develop temporary exhibition using new exhibit showcases

Pump House Steam Museum: (2104) Develop and pilot new education programs (Grades JK-6), produce three new temporary exhibitions and redevelop the Gordon C. Leitch Discovery Centre; (2015) Review and enhance existing education programs, new temporary exhibition (Gift of the Nile), related programming.

MacLachlan Woodworking Museum: (2104) Develop and pilot new education programs (Grades JK-6), enhance existing temporary exhibitions and develop a new Children's Space; (2015) Review and enhance existing education programs, new temporary exhibition (Hands on Nature), related programming.

**Recommendation:**

This report is for information only.

**Authorizing Signatures:**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Cynthia Beach, Commissioner,  
Corporate & Strategic Initiatives**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Gerard Hunt, Chief Administrative Officer**

**Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:**

Lanie Hurdle, Community Services	Not required
Denis Leger, Transportation, Facilities & Emergency Services	Not required
Jim Keech, President and CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Desiree Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required

## **Options/Discussion:**

### **Background**

A tangible realization of the heritage component of the City of Kingston's motto, "Where history and innovation thrive," is in part played out at Kingston City Hall National Historic Site and the two civic museums (MacLachlan Woodworking Museum and Pump House Steam Museum). The Kingston Culture Plan places particular attention on these sites and the need for their ongoing renewal and enhancement so they can play an effective and innovative role in telling the Kingston story.

Since the Kingston Culture Plan was approved in 2010, the Cultural Services Department has completed a review of existing exhibitions and educational and public programming at the three sites in the context of the interests and needs of schools, specific groups and the general public. In response to this work, staff has introduced significant improvements to the interpretive and programmatic offerings at City Hall and the two civic museums. Specific capital improvements (such as the refurbished Engineerium gallery space at the Pump House Steam Museum) provide appropriate, adaptable and attractive spaces for presentation and delivery. Staff has implemented new planning cycles and community feedback systems to ensure that exhibitions and programming remain responsive to community interests and needs, enhance the individual sites, and fulfill the larger mandate to reflect Kingston and its stories.

### **1) Exhibitions Mandate**

An important function of the City of Kingston's two municipal museums and Kingston City Hall is the development and presentation of exhibitions and associated public programming on diverse themes related to the mandates of these sites and the broader interests of the community. The role of exhibitions is clearly set out in the Consolidated Civic Collection and Municipal Museums Policies (AP-13-022):

*"Kingston's municipal museums preserve the heritage of Kingston and Canada and provide a historical lens through which to engage with the past and present so we can learn for the future...Heritage cannot be preserved in isolation, without effective presentation (i.e. community engagement, interpretation, education, and exhibition), to diverse audiences...Kingston's municipal museums have a primary mandate to present the heritage resources they hold in trust through exhibits...Kingston's municipal museums are a leader in the presentation of heritage to Kingstonians, Canadians and others."*

### **Exhibition and Programming Planning Cycles**

Prior to 2012, the exhibits at the two civic museums changed infrequently and there was extremely limited scope for any change of displays at City Hall. No framework existed for a systematic analysis of existing offerings or forward planning for new displays and larger exhibitions.

The first phase of the transition to a regularized system of exhibition and program development included the analysis of existing exhibitions and site interpretation at all three sites. In almost all cases, the offerings were found to be dated in display style, content and public accessibility. There was little scope for changing temporary shows. Educational and public programming was more active, although not necessarily tied to exhibition content or other community themes and needs. City Hall programming was restricted to its longstanding tour guide program.

A formal planning framework has now been implemented with the overall goal to develop solid 'core' exhibits telling baseline information about the sites and their main stories as well as a regular changeover of 'temporary' interpretive content such as seasonal and travelling exhibitions. These exhibitions should be appropriate to the site's mandate (and/or supportive of larger Cultural Services goals), responsive to public interest and need, take advantage of objects in the civic collection, and within allocated budgets and staff resources.

As much as possible, the new exhibitions planning framework will be enhanced by specific educational and public programming to improve public visibility and visitor experience, and help educators to meet core curriculum goals for their students. Curatorial, collections and programming staff now meet annually to review exhibition planning on a two-year cycle. An annual review of associated educational and public programs also occurs. Educational programming is tied to provincial curriculum guidelines; public programming links with exhibitions, site mandates, and broader programming initiatives with the Cultural Services Community Engagement and Education Division mandate.

### **Community Consultation for Potential Exhibition Themes**

During the summer of 2014, curatorial staff began planning for its 2015 to 2016 exhibition cycle. As part of the long-range planning process, community input was sought from members of the Museums and Collections Advisory Committee as to possible future themes and directions relevant to the museums and Kingston City Hall. As representatives of the broader Kingston community, Committee members brought a fresh perspective to the planning process.

### **Goals of Consultation**

Exhibitions presented through City-owned heritage facilities are guided by the mandates of each site as well as the collections they house and the available resources. As civic entities, municipal museums and Kingston City Hall also bear the responsibility of sharing the broader narrative of Kingston and, when appropriate, exposing Kingston residents and visitors to other topics and themes beyond the local story (for example, two travelling exhibitions at the Pump House Steam Museum: *The Vikings* in 2012 and *Canada's Waterscapes* in 2013 sourced from the Manitoba Museum and the Canadian Museum of Science and Nature respectively).

Through a staff-led exploratory process at the July 2 and September 3 meetings of the Museums and Collections Advisory Committee, Committee members were asked to consider exhibition themes and directions they would like to see the museums and City Hall include the next five years. Part of this process was to identify areas of need, interest, trends, gaps, challenges and opportunities that staff can take into account when considering long-range

exhibition plans. Of particular interest to staff is feedback concerning specific areas of interest not being addressed as part of the current exhibitions program.

Committee members were asked to look at the specific mandates and qualities of each site and, at the same time, to think about them in relationship to each other and more generally as members of a Kingston-wide museum community. They were also asked to consider two specific questions: (1) how do exhibitions and associated programming at Kingston's civic sites fit into the broader context of Kingston and its heritage resources?; and (2) how can the civic sites be mirrors of the community, safe places for the community to gather, and venues that challenge community to consider new possibilities and perspectives?

The goal of this process was not necessarily to determine specific exhibition titles but, rather, to assemble a list of broad areas of study and possibilities for community engagement, both in the development of future shows, and as consumers of exhibitions presented. Committee members were asked to consider themes and subjects that can be viewed through a multiplicity of lenses (visual and performance art, history, science and technology) and expressed using vehicles such as in-house exhibitions, travelling shows, on-line exhibits, apps, etc. At this stage of planning, the discussion was kept to a high-level and very broadly focussed. The result of the consultation was a list of potential topics organised by themes and civic locations best suited to their presentation. Staff will use this list as a tool when planning future exhibitions and other interpretive materials for City Hall, the two civic museums, and other appropriate sites in the city (such as community centres).

## **2) City Hall National Historic Site**

***Priority 37: Enhance Kingston City Hall National Historic Site and provide venues to showcase artworks, artifacts and stories***

### **City Hall Exhibition, Public and Education Program Plan**

In 2014, staff introduced an initial plan for the development of a formal exhibition and public and education program at Kingston City Hall. With the goal to improve and enhance visitor experience at the site, this document lays out the basis for interpreting the history and function of Kingston City Hall National Historic Site, its former and current occupants, and its role both in the community and as a "gateway" to Kingston. Along with a formal City Hall interpretation plan, staff is developing a four-year work plan for the implementation of the plan's objectives. This program of interpretation also considers the historic role of Market Square, a key community gathering space in Kingston that predates the construction of City Hall in 1844.

The basis for this document is the visitor experience. This report looks at City Hall, Kingston's premier heritage venue, through the lens of the visitor and explores possible means that can be used to communicate the site's many messages and heritage attributes. Ultimately, the goal of a successful interpretation program is the creation of an environment in which the visitor's experience is shaped by engagement, discovery, understanding, enjoyment and response. In this report, particular focus is placed on a preliminary plan for exhibition-based interpretation, but this emphasis should be taken in the context that a holistic and integrated interpretation and

public and education program involves a wide array of accessible delivery mechanisms, including the traditional and the innovative, including public and education programming, exhibitions, and various forms of interpretation, ranging from the tour guide program to digital media. As the plan is developed, it will be phased in over a period of years and integrated with existing resources.

Today, Kingston City Hall National Historic Site serves two distinct purposes that can present challenges: it functions as a heritage 'museum' space and at the same time, as a working environment in its role as the seat of local government. A successful exhibition and education plan will accommodate, capitalize upon, and bridge these distinct and complementary purposes.

Communication of the heritage values of a site is an integral part of any comprehensive heritage program. This issue was specifically noted in the Commemorative Integrity Statement for Kingston City Hall. The interpretive and education program at City Hall requires a re-conceptualization and revitalization in order to better communicate why the site, its collections, and its place within the community is important. As noted within several of the assessments for City Hall, the site is exceptionally important not only in a local context, but also nationally, and it should have an exhibition and public and education program that reflects this importance. The first steps over the next five years must be foundational, and seek to create a framework for engaging both citizens and visitors. In this regard, of particular note are the long-standing volunteer tour guides who are key and cost-effective components in the implementation of any enhancements of the heritage presentation program at City Hall.

### **History of Interpretation and Programming at City Hall**

Improving the interpretation of Kingston City Hall has been identified as a priority in several recent City plans and reports. Chief among these, the Kingston Culture Plan recognizes the historic significance of City Hall and suggests its potential future role as a Kingston civic museum preserving local history, strengthening community identity and fostering civic pride.

Although long respected as a prominent heritage site in the community, a formal program of interpretation of the history and attributes of Kingston City Hall National Historic Site is fairly recent. Exhibits have tended to be limited to small temporary displays in various parts of the building presented without much in the way of historical content or quality design. Research to date indicates there has been no comprehensive system or program of interpretive labelling on painting, furniture or other artefacts. There is also been no means to balance the requirements of an operating government facility and a visitor attraction effectively and in ways that accommodate accessibility, security and health and safety.

Until recently, there have been limited programs available designed to support the visitor experience and education. In 1996, a volunteer tour guide program was established to provide free visitor tours of the public areas of City Hall on a seasonal basis and throughout the year by request. As ambassadors of the site, the volunteer guide program continues to be an effective and cost-effective delivery mechanism for the site's rich story building heritage awareness and encouraging civic pride.

## Potential Themes of Interpretive Focus at City Hall

Identified in the plan are four potential themes for interpretation and programming at City Hall:

- **Core Story:** Celebrating the symbolic centre of Kingston – history of the building and environs including historic Market Square, its architecture and fittings, its occupants, events, activities and ideas associated with the place (e.g., Police department and holding cells – an architectural space representing a municipal function, criminal justice, and social and cultural realities). A “biography” of a building and place.
- **Introduction to Community:** Providing an overview of Kingston and linkages to its heritage, the arts, and resources (e.g., other museums). A chance to showcase tangible artefacts documenting the larger Kingston story that come to the civic collection and intangible stories of community.
- **Introduction to Municipal Government:** Telling the story of how a city works, its functions and responsibilities, the work of Mayor and Council, municipal government and its citizens. This program is linked with other city objectives to increase civic engagement and pride.
- **Temporary Displays & Exhibitions:** Exploring a variety of topics of relevance to City Hall, its history and architecture and the larger Kingston community.

## First Steps at City Hall (2013-2015)

**Exhibits:** Some initial steps have been taken recently with the introduction in 2014 of a series of interpretive panels entitled *City Hall Chronicles* at various strategic locations throughout the building. These panels record previous occupants and activities within City Hall spaces and offer historical vignettes of past events and personalities. The presentation is also accessible from the City’s website. In 2015, a special temporary exhibit marking the bicentennial of the birth of Canada’s first prime minister titled *Sir John A. Macdonald’s Kingston* will showcase artefacts and images documenting his life and connections with the community. As a capital upgrade, new showcases are being designed to outfit City Hall’s many beautiful architectural niches as display cases to exhibit objects and works of art that can help tell the story of City Hall and the city more generally.

**Programming:** City Hall has served as a backdrop for live performance, some dramatic and some interpretive. In the autumn of 2013, the police holding cells in the basement became the stage for a play performed by local theatre company Blue Canoe. Another local theatre company, SALON Theatre, has presented historical dramatic vignettes in support of school programming at City Hall, most notably on Local Government Day in October 2013. In 2014, another dramatic performance entitled *The Lockup* based on the history of the police holding cells was staged by the Cellar Door Project theatre company in those spaces. An art show featuring the works of local artists was also held in the cells area. In the run-up to Macdonald’s bicentennial, City Hall played host to “Adventures in History” organized by the Rotary Club and Community Engagement and Education staff. With the assistance of local experts, students had

opportunity to engage in learning and decision-making around the role of Sir John A. Macdonald. In 2015, City Hall will host two classes participating in “Beyond Classrooms”, an innovative educational model where City Hall becomes the working classroom to teachers and their student for a week. Under the guidance of “Beyond Classrooms” personnel and City staff, classes benefit from the range of resources that City Hall and civic government more generally, can offer. This program was piloted to great success at several Kingston museums in 2014.

There has been ongoing support of the City Hall tour guides and the gradual enhancement of the overall program through ongoing research and integration of new information into the existing tours. Over time, specialized thematic tours may become a standard offering. The guides program was further enhanced in 2014 with the introduction of summer interpreters who developed and delivered specialized tours of First Capital Place (City Hall, Market Square, and Confederation Park). Another new initiative in 2014 was the creation of a City Hall ‘MoTour’ in support of the annual moustache-inspired Movember charitable campaign building awareness around men’s health. The MoTour features the history of facial hair as captured in many of the Mayors’ portraits on view in City Hall.

### **3) Pump House Steam Museum**

***Priority 38:** Develop expanded program, education and exhibits for the Pump House Steam Museum.*

#### **Capital Projects**

Since 2011, continued capital investment has maintained the building fabric and adapted the Pump House Steam Museum into appropriate, adaptable, attractive and accessible spaces for presentation and delivery of exhibitions and programs. As a result of enhancements to the building envelope and heating, cooling, and ventilations systems, the museum now has the ability to remain open to the public for eight months a year (April-December), significantly longer than in previous seasons. Capital improvements to the Gordon. C. Leitch Discovery Centre space have restored the historic space and renovated it into a play-based learning space for children. Future projects in 2015 will improve public and staff accessibility and efficiency (front ramp and an addition containing accessible washrooms, workshop, and office and storage space.

#### **Exhibitions**

Since 2012, staff has developed both long-term and temporary exhibitions at the Pump House Steam Museum. The long-term displays focus on the Museum’s core story, that is, the historic Kingston Water Works building, its former function, roles of the staff, its architecture and the role of a regular service of pumped water in the life of the community. A series of temporary seasonal shows have also been introduced to expand the Museum’s ability to fulfill its mandate and to bring other subjects of interest and relevance to the community.

## Exhibitions (2013)

- ***I Am Water*** was a month long, multimedia art exhibition, curated by local artist Su Sheedy. This exhibition featured works inspired by water created by a multitude of community artists. This exhibition attracted a new crowd of art lovers to the museum. The exhibition also included supplementary events and programming.
- ***Canada's Waterscapes—Yours to Enjoy, Explore and Protect*** was a travelling family oriented exhibition on loan from the Canadian Museum of Nature, the second travelling exhibition borrowed by a City of Kingston museum. This show explored different waterscapes in Canada through artefacts and electronic interactives. The exhibition was the Pump House's largest to date and had to be housed in the both the Museum's Engineerium and Discovery Centre. The exhibition was accompanied by an opening event that included a sing-along program by a local musician as well as three supplementary weekend lectures.
- ***People of the Pump House***, produced in-house, told the story of Kingston's first water pumping station, and paid tribute to the volunteers who made the Museum possible over the forty years since its opening in 1973.

## Exhibitions (2014)

- ***Shoreline Shuffle Revisited*** was an art exhibition curated by photographer Wayne Hiebert and artist Su Sheedy that commemorated the *Shoreline Shuffle* public art event at the Kingston waterfront in 2013.
- ***Phoebe: A 100 Years of Love*** was produced in-house and co-curated with the Friends of the *Phoebe* volunteer group. This exhibit celebrates the centennial of the Kingston-built steam launch *Phoebe*, now housed at the Museum.
- ***Ashes to Innovation, Fighting Fires in Kingston*** was produced in-house in partnership with Kingston Fire & Rescue, *Ashes to Innovation* is a major exhibition exploring several historic fires in Kingston and their impact on the City and the firefighting profession. This show has been accompanied by special school tours and several public programs sharing information about improved fire safety.
- **Gordon C. Leitch Discovery Centre.** The first phase of the Discovery Centre redevelopment was completed this year including interactive tables, trapezoid wall activity and reading nooks installed in spaces around the museum. Activities foster play based learning around the themes of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Mathematics) for children aged 3-6 and 7-12.
- **Museum's Core Story.** Additional interpretive panels were added to the museum highlighting more of the core story around the themes of community, technology, people and architecture.

## Exhibitions (2015)

- An art exhibition organised jointly with **Queen's University International Centre** will feature the dynamic and engaging images created by student photographers in the international program.
- **Gift of the Nile** is a travelling exhibition from the Royal Ontario Museum. Linked to the Pump House Steam Museum's chief theme of water, visitors will learn about the birthplace of a remarkable civilization along the Nile River Valley 5,000 years ago. Innovative programming and events will enhance the visitor and student experience throughout the summer.

## Programming

Staff worked closely with Community Engagement & Education staff of Cultural Services to develop and deliver newly created community and school programs that compliment museum themes and temporary exhibits and that better match school curriculum requirements.

## Programming (2014)

Community Engagement & Education staff piloted new core educational and camp programs with its foundations firmly rooted in inquiry-based learning and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Mathematics) foundations for students in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6.

- **Engines, Cars & Cabooses**  
Grades JK-3; Ages 3-7  
Thomas the Tank© explores the evolution of shapes & patterns, measurements, movement and structure & forces. Through inquiry-based learning methods classes work with Thomas and his friends to understand and appreciate STEAM in a new and exciting way.
- **Routes of Power**  
Grades 4-6; Ages 7-10  
Classes spend time exploring the simple machines found all around us – pulleys, wheels and axles, levers & screws, and gears & compound machines – as a means to expand their STEAM knowledge and use of everyday household simple machines.
- **Water, Water Everywhere** Grades JK-3; Ages 3-7  
Participants celebrate the history of the museum with the Steam Pump Interpretive Dance and explore their water footprint. Children will begin to think about water and water responsibility in a different and dynamic way.
- **Junior Environmentalist**  
Grades 4-6; Ages 7-10  
From building their own water pump to exploring water sanitation and stewardship around the world, youth begin to think about how important water is to all aspects of life.

- **Guided Tours-Adults**

Adult Guided tours lasting one hour are offered as a booked tour.

- **Drop In Programs**

Several public programs are offered with admission to the museum or free of charge.

- **Tales from the Rails:** Included with admission to the museum, children under six are invited to travel the railway with their imaginations through the art of storytelling and craft making.
  - **All Aboard:** Participants watch the impressive O and HO scale layouts come to life as the museum's Train Volunteers animate the tracks, repair locomotives and landscape train sets.
  - **Forts on the Fortnight:** New in 2014 were free Thursday nights. During the summer the Pump House Steam Museum launched the *Forts on the Fortnight* series on the front lawn every second Thursday night. The museum provided the supplies and the public provided the creativity and enthusiasm.
- **Pump House Steam Museum and Kingston Fire & Rescue Family Fun Day**  
This free public event in August complimented the ***Ashes to Innovation, Fighting Fires in Kingston*** exhibition in the museum. Organised jointly with Kingston Fire and Rescue, participants had the opportunity to explore fire trucks, a Jaws of Life rescue apparatus, a fire boat and various games, crafts and activities.

## **Museum Statistics**

Museum attendance (general admissions and programs) continues to grow each year. Attendance for 2014 is estimated to be nearly 8700 visitors the best year since the City assumed control of the museum in 2006. The museum's changing exhibitions, family-oriented programs, downtown location and longer season have proven to be positive factors in the rising numbers.

## **4) MacLachlan Woodworking Museum**

*Priority 39: Develop expanded programming, education and exhibits for the MacLachlan Woodworking Museum and surrounding Grass Creek Park.*

## **Capital Projects**

Since 2012, significant capital investment has maintained the historic building fabric and upgraded the overall site infrastructure to create appropriate, adaptable, attractive and accessible spaces for presentation and delivery of exhibitions and programs. A new accessible outdoor terrace with overhead sunshades now links the two buildings and provides sitting and activity space for the museum. The ground floor of the historic Log House has been completely

refurbished with new floors, walls and gift shop and exhibition display cases and shelving. New heritage-style exterior doors improve the building's appearance, reduce heating costs and improve security. A partial reorganization of the interior layout of the main exhibit building has increased much needed wall and gallery space, created a new children's zone, realigned storage spaces and provided an accessible washroom. Electrical and lighting upgrades improve the presentation of displays and reduce site running costs.

## Exhibitions

Since 2012, staff has developed both long-term and temporary exhibitions at the MacLachlan Woodworking Museum. The long-term displays focus on the Museum's core story, that is, the historic Log House, the role of museum founder Sandy MacLachlan, the impressive collection of wood-based tools and objects and the beautiful site in Grass Creek Park. Temporary seasonal shows expand the Museum's ability to fulfill its mandate and to bring other subjects of interest and relevance to the community.

### Exhibitions (2013)

- ***My MacLachlan: 30 years of history at Grass Creek Park*** opened in 2013 and runs until to the end of 2014. This temporary exhibition was curated jointly by the current Curator together with nine previous staff members going back to 1982. Each person selected an artifact from the collection and contributed interpretive text. An 11-minute documentary film was commissioned and displayed; supplementary interviews are shown at an iPad station. Members of the public are also invited to share their views on a special "magnet wall" and on custom postcards that are displayed. Both these methods have produced valuable feedback from visitors.
- ***Foundations: The Making of a Museum*** is a renewal of the small exhibit on Sandy MacLachlan that was installed in the Log House in 2009. The 'Sandy' theme was expanded to include a history of the Log House, Sandy's collection and the Grass Creek site where the house currently sits. Three airtight cases were designed in-house and fabricated by a local craftsman to house several artefacts significant to the history of the museum.
- ***Ivor Blower: In the Mind of a Collector*** showcases some of the 240 planes from the late Ivor Blower's collection donated to the museum between 1990 and 2001. In a newly refurbished gallery space, new attractive and versatile professional cases have been designed to meet conservation standards for artefact display. Dimmable LED track lighting was installed and the planes mounted on individually made mounts created in the museum's shop. An interactive digital kiosk plays recordings of interviews of Ivor Blower and includes two activities that encourage visitors to share their own stories of collecting.
- ***Local Trees*** is a small exhibit designed to replace the single panel *Timbers of Tradition* exhibit installed in 2009. This new exhibit uses actual wood disks rather than images.

Also, icons are used to explore the uses of the different species and additional information has been added to contextualize the discussion of trees in Canada.

- **Shayne Dark** the first ever artist-in-residence to be by the Museum. Over the course of six weeks, Dark created a series of large-scale sculptures in wood on the museum grounds. This residency provided an opportunity for visitors to meet the artist and to experience the creative process firsthand. Dark is internationally recognized for his numerous public art projects and was also featured in a companion exhibition at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre. The artist-in-residence program brings together the arts and heritage as a way to engage with and interpret the historical story through the eyes of an artist. Shayne Dark was able to work with and create using wood, the core theme of the MacLachlan Woodworking Museum. This program is also an effective means to bring non-traditional audiences (in this case, the arts community) into a heritage museum setting.

### **Exhibitions (2014)**

Staff recommended that new exhibits created in 2013 should be left in place in 2014 to allow time for the development and launch of new programming at the MacLachlan Woodworking Museum. Several new additions to exhibitions are described below.

### **Exhibitions (2014)**

- **The Forest** is an interactive play-based learning space for young children. Created out of a former staff office space, this gallery opened in 2014. Creatively designed to replicate a forest environment, children and caregivers are encouraged to explore and create within the space as they learn about nature and the surrounding environment.
- The hands-on **Workshop** has been enhanced with artefacts from the collection and interpretive signage to supplement the colourful 'how-to' panels animating the space.
- **Exhibit Discovery Bins** geared to children under five have been added to several exhibition galleries within the museum.

### **Exhibitions (2015)**

- **Hands on Nature** is a travelling exhibition from the Royal Ontario Museum. An excellent fit with the natural environment of Grass Creek Park, this exhibition focuses on various aspects of biodiversity such as the broad perspective of habitats, the relationships between species within food webs, and the gene pools of particular species. This exhibition is accompanied by various learning materials ranging from skulls to spiders, and introduces the topics of biodiversity, classification, adaptation, and species at risk through active learning. Staff will also be presenting live animal specimens to accompany and enhance this exhibition.

## **Programming**

Staff worked closely with Community Engagement & Education staff of Cultural Services to develop and deliver newly created community and school programs that complimented museum themes and temporary exhibits, that better match school curriculum requirements and take advantage of the site's location at Grass Creek Park.

### **Programming (2014)**

Community Engagement & Education staff piloted new core educational and camp programs with its foundations firmly rooted in inquiry-based learning for students in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6.

- **Trees, Seeds & Feathers**  
Grades JK-3; Ages 3-7  
Students investigate the properties of natural textures, natural & built spaces, and diverse communities while exploring local bird life and papermaking. Through inquiry-based learning methods, classes have all their senses ignited in new and exciting ways.
- **First Nations Legacy**  
Grades 4-6; Ages 7-10  
Students and teachers open discussion and investigation of wild life and forests with an opportunity to explore space & direction, conservation & preservation, sharing the land and traditions. Participants have an opportunity to map the site and manipulate wood to build symbols of respect.
- **Drop-in Programs, Little Tree Huggers**  
With a focus on opening a child's eyes to the wonders of the natural world through various activities, the traditional drop-in children's program, Little Tree Huggers, continues to be offered.
- **Campfire Music Series**  
A new initiative in 2014 the MacLachlan Woodworking Museum launched its free Thursday nights. Programming included the Campfire Music Series featuring local performers. Families were encouraged to bring a picnic dinner and a singing voice.

### **Programming for Underserved Community Groups**

- **Tink Tank**  
A new programming initiative was developed in collaboration with Community Living Kingston. What began as ad-hoc drop-in sessions in 2013 became a formal program in 2014. Called *Tink Tank*, this innovative program was designed for Community Living clients to encourage problem-solving and creativity through challenge-based learning. Over the course of several months, participants learned basic woodworking skills and by the end of the program had designed and constructed a simple structure. Deemed a

success, the *Tink Tank* model will be applied in future years for groups of various ages and abilities. This program has helped the museum to address the needs of non-traditional museum visitors and users.

## **Special Events**

- **WinterLight**

Now in its third season, WinterLight is a season-end celebration of light and creativity. The museum's arboretum is lit with festive lights and families enjoy holiday-themed indoor and outdoor woodland crafts and events. Presenters include a storyteller from the Kingston Frontenac Public Library. Run in early December, this event has grown in attendance each year.

## **Museum Statistics**

Overall attendance at the museum (general admissions and programs) has grown modestly over the past two years. Attendance in 2014 is estimated to be about 3400. Innovative programming has helped boost numbers, but the museum's location beyond City bus routes makes access for people without transportation a challenge. Staff continue to look at ways to improve content and activities relevant to community needs and interests to increase interest in and use of the museum and its site.

## **The Kingston Museum Community**

The two civic museums and City Hall are part of a large local network of museums and historic sites in the Kingston region. As a whole, this community of approximately twenty cultural heritage organizations acts in a sense as the "Kingston Museum", each component site telling a chapter in Kingston's rich historical story in a way that no one organization can do alone. As members of the Kingston Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites (KAM), the City's two museums and City Hall participate in a variety of joint educational and public programs, marketing, professional development, sector profile building and analysis, exhibitions and partnerships. Together, the members of KAM make more effective connections with the Kingston community. As organizationally stable municipally funded bodies, the City's museums have sometimes had opportunity to play the role of mentor to colleagues in the sector.

### **Existing Policy/By-Law:**

Not applicable

### **Notice Provisions:**

Not applicable

### **Accessibility Considerations:**

Not applicable

**Financial Considerations:**

Financial resources required for the completion of capital projects, exhibitions and programming initiatives are included in annual capital and operating budgets approved by Council. Staff apply annually for additional funding to help operate the sites from various government grant programs including the Ontario Government's Community Museum Operating Grant and the Federal Government's Young Canada Works Program that helps hire summer student staff.

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**Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:**

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Martha Kroeker, Program Coordinator – Public, Cultural Services

Gordon Robinson, Curator, Pump House Steam Museum

Tom Riddolls, Curator, MacLachlan Woodworking Museum

**Exhibits Attached:**

Not applicable