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# AGENDA CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF INGERSOLL

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MUSEUM ADVISORY  
THURSDAY, October 8, 2009  
MUSEUM  
7:00 p.m.

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## (1) OPENING REMARKS

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## (2) MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

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- a) Minutes from July 9, 2009

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## (3) STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW

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Set a date for a meeting

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## (4) CORRESPONDENCE

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## (5) NEW BUSINESS/ROUND TABLE

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- a) Preparation for 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Pumpkin Festival - Update
- b) Committee organized and operated 2010 Spring Event
- c) Year End Reports
- d) Discussion on RFP – Interpretative Centre
- e) Santa's Village – November 20 – December 19 (Friday – 6 – 9 p.m.; Saturday – 1 – 9 p.m.) No Sunday operation Note: Daytime operation December 21<sup>st</sup> to December 30<sup>th</sup> for children's activities.

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## (6) NEXT MEETING

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## (7) ADJOURNMENT

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## **Supervisor and Exhibit Designer End of Season Report**

### **Chelsea Jibb**

This season was one of the most ambitious and energetic seasons of my employment with the museum. As the supervisor and returning exhibit designer, I was given the opportunity to participate in the ongoing growth of the Ingersoll Cheese & Agricultural Museum both in terms of the physical site and its role within the larger community. One of the primary goals of this season was to increase the accessibility of the museum's presentation mediums and to strengthen our identity as a professional institution devoted to preserving and exploring Ingersoll's unique heritage. The renovation of the Community Museum's gallery spaces and entrance provides visitors with an excellent introduction to the Community Building, as well as to the site itself. By opening up the lobby into the gallery and by placing a service window into the main office, a more welcoming environment was created in which to greet incoming visitors. The fresh coat of paint given to the main gallery, in addition to the widened gallery entrance, has provided the museum with an excellent space in which to showcase featured exhibits. These renovations, in addition to the renovations that took place in previous seasons, have made the museum more accessible to the public by creating clean and open spaces, and have served as well to move the museum's organization in a more modern direction. I look forward to the continued growth of the museum site with what I understand will be a new interpretation centre built on the site. I believe that this proposed building will provide a much needed space in which to conduct activities and events, as well as to provide a base from which to acquaint visitors with the site. It is my firm belief that this new building will be an asset to the museum site, as it will no doubt provide a location in which to house meetings, educational programs, and the offices of the staff. It also my belief that its placement will serve as a starting point for visitors who wish to tour the site but are unsure of where to begin. The proposed addition of another agricultural barn to the site would allow the museum to grow in operation, as well as to provide additional exhibition space for numerous artifacts that must be kept in storage due to a lack of suitable exhibit space. With all the plans and proposals for the museum, I am very excited to return in the coming years to see the progress made on the site, as well as within the community.

As the supervisor and exhibit designer for the 2009 season, I was charged with the responsibility of updating and organizing new exhibits, as well as supervising the organization of the museum and its staff. As supervisor of the site, I was given the task of supervising the daily operation of the museum site, which included such tasks as coordinating the site staff and their tasks, completing administrative duties, and handling the museum's correspondence and acting as the main liaison for inquiries about the museum's operation. It should be noted that I am exceedingly grateful to Elaine Clark for her guidance and support during my employment as the supervisor of this site.

In addition to my duties as the supervisor of the site, I was also responsible for the creation and installation of the museum's exhibits for the 2009 season. This season was marked by an ambitious exhibit schedule which allowed for the increased frequency of exhibit changeover, which in turn, afforded visitors with the opportunity to explore another aspect of Ingersoll's heritage and to interact with little seen artifacts. It may be noted that numerous visitors commented on the regular change as a positive and welcomed idea. Some of the season's exhibit highlights included a traveling exhibit from the Welland Museum exploring the Underground Railroad, an exhibit exploring the history of Ingersoll Movie theatres, and an exhibit celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Alexandra Hospital in Ingersoll. The increased frequency of exhibit installation and organization this season, allowed me to complete and reorganize a total of sixteen exhibits. Below I have provided a brief overview of the exhibits and other projects that I have worked on this season.

#### **Alexandra Hospital and the Noxon Family Exhibit**

Installed in May and on display until July, the Alexandra Hospital exhibit was an exhibit highlighting and celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the institution within the Ingersoll community. The exhibit, which explored early medical care in Ingersoll and the organization of Alexandra hospital as the first public hospital within the community, featured a number of medical artifacts, as well as some more personal artifacts that belonged to individuals who either served by the hospital or who worked there.

The Noxon Family exhibit was an exhibit exploring the family that was behind the successful Noxon Manufacturing Company which became a giant in the field of

agricultural implement production. This exhibit, which featured personal artifacts such as correspondence, photographs, and personal trinkets belonging to the Noxon family of Ingersoll, explored the history of the family within the Ingersoll community and their success and disappointment in the competitive world of manufacturing. This exhibit was installed in May and was display until July.

### **History of Ontario Movie Theatres & Theatres in Ingersoll**

Once again this year, the museum had the opportunity to host a travelling exhibit from the Archives of Ontario. This exhibit, which explored the history of theatre entertainment in Ontario, was accompanied by an exhibit showcasing the history of our local theatres. This exhibit, which featured numerous movie theatre artifacts including posters and early projectors such as the magic lantern, was set up in the main gallery space which was reorganized to have the appearance of a movie theatre and lobby complete with a concession stand. A number of museum visitors seemed to really enjoy this exhibit, with children especially enjoying the candy display.

### **It Came From the Collection**

This exhibit, which was located in the museum entrance, featured an unusual artifact from the collection. Information about the purpose and manufacturing of the artifact was supplied to the museum visitors, who were then invited to guess what the artifact was. This exhibit proved to be rather popular with a number of guests and I feel that it was a display that drew visitors into the lobby and the gallery spaces.

### **Schools in Ingersoll**

This exhibit, which was organized as a diorama view of a turn of the century classroom, was organized to highlight the history of education in Ingersoll. The exhibit, which features numerous educational artifacts such as school books, classroom resources for period teachers, and early era desks, explores the life and education of students and teachers in the early years of Ingersoll's history.

### **Blacksmith Shop**

One of the largest projects that the museum staff undertook this season was the reorganization of the blacksmith shop building. While the shop was functional, it lacked a display quality that a museum building ought to have and much of the exhibits were not accessible to the majority of individuals. Research was conducted by myself and the other museum staff in order to ascertain what a traditional blacksmith shop would have looked like at the turn of the century. Based on this research, the assistant exhibit designer and myself, cleaned and reorganized the entirety of the blacksmith shop building which not only made the building more accessible but also provided visitors with the opportunity to interact with the exhibits on a greater level.

### **North Barn**

This was without doubt the largest project that the staff of the museum undertook this season. The primary goal of this project was to reorganize and restore the North barn building to a state that would support its being opened to the public as an exhibit space at the end of this season. This building, which I believe has been closed for several years now to act as another storage facility, was reorganized to become a cohesive and comprehensible exhibit highlighting daily life on a farm and other agricultural pursuits including the tending of livestock, clearing the land for crops, and the production of agricultural goods. While much has been done to ready this building, the exhibit opening date has been set back due to the nature of the remaining work to be completed. I am confident that with the assistance of the museum volunteers and other individuals, this building can be completed within the next few weeks.

### **Additional Projects**

- Installation of the Our Sporting Past exhibit on loan from the Archives of Ontario
- Installation of the Ontario's Agricultural History exhibit on loan from the Archives of Ontario
- Reorganization of the Pioneer Cabin exhibit and the Loom exhibit
- Reorganization of the Military History exhibit and the Oxford Rifles exhibit
- Installation and creation of a General Store exhibit in the back gallery of the Community Museum
- Installation of an agricultural display in the Sherbrooke Barn
- Installation of a satellite exhibit highlighting the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Alexandra Hospital at the Town Hall offices

In addition to my duties as the supervisor and exhibit designer of the site for the 2009 season, I was also responsible for the regular maintenance of museum and its grounds. I also aided in the running and organization of special events such as Down on the Farm Day and Doors Open Oxford, as well as the museum's children's day camps. I was also responsible for answering general inquiries about the museum, taking bookings for tours and sign rentals, as well as the sale of merchandise in the museum gift shop area.

In conclusion, my experience this season has been invaluable in terms of the skills I have acquired and the developed while working in the museum. This opportunity has afforded me a glimpse into the organizational character of a museum and the cooperation it requires from all parties to keep it on task. The skills such as leadership, assertiveness, project management, and customer service that I have acquired while working here will prove very valuable in my future career in the heritage and culture sector. I would like to end this report by expressing my gratitude towards the unique community that is behind the scenes of this museum's operation. I understand and feel keenly that a museum is more than just an institution; a museum is a community of individuals who are committed to preserving our unique heritage. Thank you to Elaine Clark, the museum advisory committee, the volunteers, and finally the museum staff for this wonderful opportunity and a great season at the Ingersoll Cheese & Agricultural Museum.

## **End of summer report**

***Jodie Buttigieg***

***Assistant Exhibit Designer  
August 25, 2009***

Since the month of August I have been working on my major tasks of getting Sports Hall completed, cleaning and organizing the Blacksmith shop and finishing North Barn.

Sports Hall is almost finished. I have gathered everything to put in the cases and finished the labels. Sports Hall will be completely finished today or tomorrow. I have completed Blacksmith shop with Chelsea. We cleaned everything and organized all of the artifacts making it look better for visitors. The Blacksmith shop looks great. North Barn has been another major task to complete. We aren't all finished but we will be working on it the rest of the week.

I have also completed several little tasks around the museum. Working on Harvest Fest was one. I helped with crafts and games on the days of the event, helped with the setting up of the dinner and dance, helped volunteers as needed and greeted customers. Another was Krystina's kids programs. I helped with them each day by getting things set up, playing with the kids and helping pick up afterwards. The kids programs were a great success. Cleaning and organizing the museum and greeting customers are things I do daily.

In the end this summer has been very productive and successful. Working here has been a good experience and I have learned a lot of new skills.

**End of the Summer Report**  
**Julia Van Bommel**  
**Special Events & Activities Coordinator**

In the month of August, after 'Down on the Farm', my next task was to start working on Harvest Festival games & crafts as well as starting Pumpkin Fest.

The games & crafts for Harvest Fest were put together earlier on in the month as well as games and crafts for Pumpkin Fest. The games & crafts on the weekend of Harvest did not go over well as the weather was not on our side. With the bad weather games & crafts were put off on the Saturday. On Sunday we ran the crafts inside, the messy craft needed to be outside, which we had running for about 20 minutes until it started raining. Only one of the planned games, "Find the Pig" ran successfully despite weather conditions. The room that I thought I had for the games was taken, so the larger games were also put off until Sunday.

Jodie and I have been accessioning new artifacts in the back room and have been putting them into storage. Some of artifacts do not have donation sheets with them, so we are unable to finish accessioning.

At the beginning of the month donation letters were mailed to Hurley's, Foodland and Giant Tiger and I am still trying to get in touch with them. I also included with the donation request to Giant Tiger an information sheet regarding the company of the bouncy castle whom we had previously dealt with during "Down on the Farm".

I have typed out some Pumpkin Fest ideas including the needed supplies and instructions for each game, craft and contest. I have also typed out a press release for the Pumpkin Fest and created a pumpkin fest poster which is waiting for approval. With Pumpkin Fest so far away the press release and the poster might change however, the files are saved in the computer. A list has been made of what has been confirmed and what is pending for Pumpkin Fest.

I had also assisted Krystina with the Kids Programs, getting prepared and helping her on those days. I have prepared the office in the Cheese Factory Building for Chelsea and in addition, cleaning and maintaining the museum have been some of the small things that I have been doing throughout August.

## End of Summer Report- Programs & Promotions Coordinator

Upon accepting the summer position of Programs & Promotions Coordinator I was ecstatic about the position and being able to once again organize summer kids programs at the museum. Once I was instructed in what was expected of my role I began to plan the kids programs and got an idea of what I would like to do and created a flyer that was distributed to the schools in Ingersoll. The same day that the flyer was released we received many phone calls regarding the programs and there was a high level of interest and they quickly filled. The numbers for the programs were increased from 10 in 2008 to 20 for ages 8-12 and 25 for ages 5-8 as there was more demand for the younger age programs.

The programs in July (Sports Galore, Pioneer Palooza and Night at the Movies) went very successful and I received feedback from parents stating that the children enjoyed their time at the museum. Unfortunately the weather for one of the programs was not on my side and alternate plans were needed but nonetheless the program still ran effectively.

The more recent programs which occurred the week of August 10-14 (Barnyard Bash, I Am Canadian and The Wild West) also went successfully and as the weather was very cooperative and very warm we included water activities into the day which the children seemed to really enjoy. We did take breaks during the day to cool down inside as it did get quite warm outside and fortunately since the layout of the museum building was changed there is ample room for the group to come inside for quiet activities.

As these programs were more educational than other camps that I have done, they taught me a great deal about how to make education fun and still allow for the children to get something out of the program, which will prove to be very useful in my future. Also, as we increased the numbers for the groups this summer I also learned about dealing with bigger groups of children and a variety of different children at once and how to make programming accommodate for all children and for all their interests.

The cost of the programs remained at \$5/child/program this summer however it is possible that the price be increased for future programs as many more games and activities can be included into the programming. It is also suggested that prior to working with children a brief mention of working with children appropriately and what can and can not be done occur so that all staff working with children are aware of the same guidelines and that each child is treated the same and is given the same rules or guidelines during their time at the museum. It is also suggested that possibly some other tasks be incorporated in this position as at times throughout the summer the tasks that needed to be done would slow down and there would be little to do until it was closer to the days of the programs. Nevertheless, the programs went well and I really enjoyed my time and my experience in this summer position.

Thank you so much for the great work experience and opportunity,

Krystina Reiner