

# Name change

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A contentious name change will stay for Bruce County's new museum.

The new name for the facility that re-opens in September will see the word Archives dropped and replaced by Cultural Centre.

Members of genealogical and history societies in the county fear the name change signals a loss of support and prominence for the Archives located at the Bruce County Museum.

Resistance to the change was expected, curator Barb Ribey told the museum committee, but the new name was recommended by the museum's communications consultant as a way to create a more dynamic image for the museum.

Ribey described genealogy as a "vital component" of what the museum has and continues to offer, but said it's one of several special interests including heritage and marine history that deserve attention and attract volunteers to the museum.

"It seems to be their greatest fear is the Archives will disappear," Arran-Elderslie mayor Ron Oswald said about the four calls he's had on the issue.

That won't be the case, said museum chair and South Bruce Mayor Ralph

Kreutzwiser. Archives will continue under the museum's cultural centre designation.

"We spent major money upgrading the archives, the reading room, and in our advertising we are going to make sure the word archives is in all our contents," he said.

The museum also has two staff devoted to the archives, Kreutzwiser said.

"We're not going to walk away from it."

An attempt to put Archives back into the title was made by Brockton Mayor Charlie Bagnato and supported by Kincardine Mayor Glenn Sutton and Northern Bruce Peninsula mayor Milt McPens.

"If it will keep peace in the family I have no problem adding one more word," Sutton said.

But that move would run counter to the marketing effort the museum and its consultants have launched, Ribey argued.

"We have to look at the demographics," she said.

The attempt to put Archives back in the name failed in a four to three vote.

"Through this whole process we wanted something different. We wanted a new look," said Huron Kinloss Mayor Mitch Twolan, who supported the new name.

Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre

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reflects the new building and the many activities the museum will host as it reaches out to existing and new visitors, Kreutzwiser said.

"It's going to be music, it's going to be theatre, plays, it's going to be student programming, adult programming - so it's going to cover a lot of activities and we want the place to be known as a lively spot," he said.

Warden Mark Kraemer compared worries about the name change to worries a few years ago that amalgamation would mean loss of identity for historic municipalities.

"The fact that the names changed did not in any way fail to protect the historical significance of the 32 municipalities," he noted.

buildings. Three levels will be connected by elevator, with wheelchair accessibility throughout.

Exhibition galleries, artifact storage, reception and work rooms will be on the lowest level; storage, walkways overlooking galleries, gift shop, and theatre on the second level; archives, research room, offices on the upper level.

The new reading room is planned to occupy the present marine gallery space, giving a much larger facility for researchers. An archives staff member will be on hand full-time.

Project museologist Claus Breede, Director of the Huron County Museum, says the new layout will allow precious paper artifacts to move from archival stacks to reading room without the stress of leaving controlled atmosphere. This will give longer life to the letters and records that are such an important resource for researchers.

Museum staff have been involved in planning use of the space "from Day 1" as Barbara Ribey puts it. Along with Collections Registrar Vicky Cooper and Archival Assistant Ann-Marie Collins, Barbara has tested the design by following the path of both exhibit materials and people within the new and renovated building. "It's beautiful and functional," she sums up.

While most museum visitors realize that only a part of the collection is exhibited at any time, the new building will allow seeing items even while they remain in storage. Large artifacts, such as the notable glass-sided hearse, can be on view in their secure

environment. Some may be suspended overhead. Sensitive materials, such as textiles, must remain wrapped for protection, but the storage area will be visible from the walkway.

Barbara says the highlight for her is the potential of the new building for offering new programs. "We can partner with others, such as post-secondary education, or work with the community in offering theatre events."

The new facility will offer a more stable environment. That's an advantage in attracting travelling exhibitions of high quality.

Of course, exhibitions aren't the only visitors that come to the Museum. Tourism is a vital part of the area economy, and Barbara sees the Museum's expansion as continuing the attraction. That's just one reason for keeping the Museum operating right through the coming construction period.

## Exhibits return

"Once Upon A Time..." the Museum's hands-on exhibit of medieval life, returns April 8 until June. During summer 2003, a travelling exhibit called "The Great Storm of 1913" blows into Bruce County. One of the most devastating storms on Lake Huron, this infamous gale lasted three days. Its ferocity cost 19 ships and 244 sailors lives.

Summer also features the return of the ROM Dinomobile, which will stop in several communities throughout Bruce County during July and August.

Summer 2003 will see "business as usual", although the packing of artifacts not on display has already begun. Volunteers are photographing every item they wrap. Digitized records will be used in organizing storage and exhibit space.

Tenders for construction are to be called in August 2003, with the dismantling to start in October. The move into the new quarters is planned for early fall 2005.

## BC Museum

In the meantime, starting in September 2003, six rented classrooms at neighbouring G.C. Huston School will house the Archives, reading room, offices, and one room of exhibits. Off-site locations are expected to serve as temporary homes for some artifact displays.

School programs will also continue in the rented space, and the popular

Volunteer Tania Gilchrist photographs a tagged artifact before packing the tool for storage.



summer and school-holiday programs for children. Kids' enthusiasm, for everything from dinosaurs to bicycles to medieval life to the pioneer experience, is something the museum continues to foster. An outdoor area at the new building is designated for a simulated dig-site for young archaeologists.

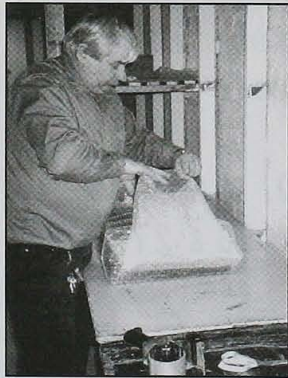
Bruce County has committed 6.2 million dollars to the project, and the Ontario and Canadian governments each are pitching in half a million. That's enough to construct the building envelope. Interior development and installations are to be funded by a campaign that kicks off this May. A further \$1,500,000 is the goal.

Money is not the only way Bruce County people can help realize the dream of this new museum. There will be plenty of opportunities for volunteers, both now in the packing and moving and once the new facility opens.

To promote museum awareness in each municipality in Bruce County, Museum Committee chair Mark Kraemer and Director/Curator Barbara Ribey are embarking on a road tour. Talking to all councils, they want to find out what would make the Museum more relevant and valuable to each community.

"It's important to see the Museum & Archives as assets of the County," Mark says.

Barbara is eager for residents to see the plans first hand. "Most people feel very positive once they understand what's involved," she says. "We're looking forward to being Bruce County's hub of cultural and heritage activity."



Museum maintenance technician Bill Hicks prepares a sound-recording machine for storage.