



Musée Fairbairn Museum Newsletter No. 4

Wakefield, March, 2009

Dear Members of the Solidarity Cooperative of Musée Fairbairn Museum:

It has been a long time since you heard from your Board of Directors. The year 2008 has been a difficult and crucial one for us. We had to face and resolve some important issues concerning the Cooperative's role and its agreement with the Municipality of La Pêche before we could proceed with the project. The year 2009 begins with a brighter outlook and under the best omens.

Municipality of La Pêche

After much discussion and many meetings, by November 25, 2008 the Board was in a position to sign the necessary protocol with the Municipality of La Pêche. This crucial step allowed us to get the first disbursements of promised funding, and to hire an architect and to renew our contract with our business plan director, Chantal Belleau.

At our request, the Municipal Council created a Working Group consisting of Mayor Robert Bussière, Director Charles Ricard, and Wakefield Councillor Lynn Berthiaume, to provide support and information for our Board and ensure closer ties as we progress towards completion of the project. Already, this working group has provided needed counsel as we venture forth.

Fund-raising

Start-up grants from the Municipality and the CLD des Collines-de-l'Outaouais have allowed us to hire professional contractors needed to set site infrastructure work in motion. A new contract with Chantal Belleau from Belleau Management and Planning, Gatineau, was signed in January 2009. As a first step, she has made a grant application to Tourisme Outaouais to request funding for the museum. Other applications for funding will be sent to the Ministère de l'Éducation; Loisir et Sport (MELS) of Quebec;

the Société d'aide au développement de la collectivité de Papineau (SADC Papineau); the Conférence régionale des élus de l'Outaouais (CREO); the Réseau d'investissement social du Québec (RISQ); the Caisse Populaire; and the Ministère de la Culture, Communications et de la Condition féminine de Québec.

The cost of the project has been estimated at \$558,000. Under our approved Business Plan ten per cent of this total, or \$60,000, is the amount that the museum committee is required to raise from community donations, membership fees, and sponsorship agreements.

Construction

A contract with architect Alan Hopkins to draw up plans for renovation of the Fairbairn house as a museum space was signed on July 9, 2008. His work is divided into five phases:

1. Reviewing the proposed layout
2. Schematic design of new work
3. Development of the chosen design
4. Basic contract drawings for tenders
5. Detailed drawings for construction

Phases 1 and 2 have been completed . Alan Hopkins presented the schematic design to the Board in early January, and it was met with great enthusiasm by the Directors. At this time, we are in the process of approving the design to allow the architect to proceed with the final drawing of the chosen design.

Also, the Board has contacted the Fondex Shermont Company to take soil tests in the area of Hendrick Park that surrounds the Fairbairn house, and the on-site test samples were taken in early February. These soil tests are required for locating sites for the well and septic systems.

The Community Memories Project

This is a Gatineau Valley Historical Society project, still under development as a virtual exhibition in cooperation with our Board , for showcasing on the Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN) and the Virtual Museum of Canada websites. When completed, these sites will provide a rich and useful source of historical photographs and information on the natural and human history of the Gatineau region. Themes explored include the history of the William Fairbairn family, as well as of the Fairbairn house and the grist mill William built in Wakefield in 1838. The working title of the exhibition is "The William Fairbairn House: A Witness to Change Along the Gatineau."

Charitable Organization

Our application to become a charitable organization has been refused by the Canada Revenue Agency. The Board is now studying the possibility of creating a foundation, which would become the listed charitable organization.

Board of Directors

In January 2009 we welcomed two new directors to fill vacancies on our Board: Jean K. laFlamme and Janet E. Long. The Board is now made up of six directors. They are:

Michael Cooper
Jean K. laFlamme
Janet E. Long
John Lowden
Fabian Mugny
Anita Rutledge

Members Jonathan Murphy and Anne Robillard left the board in 2008. We offer them a big "thank you" for the tremendous contributions they have made in setting up and developing the framework for the project.

Website

The Musée Fairbairn Museum website is now being revised to reflect recent changes in the project, and provide the latest news on our progress.

Next Steps

- Completion of more grant applications to obtain additional funding
- Exploring the possibility of securing a loan for the total financing of the project
- Signing a contract with the Colterman Marketing Group to produce a marketing study and develop a sponsorship partnership program
- Presentation by the architect of the basic contract drawings for tenders, and detailed drawings for construction
- Construction of the well and septic system in the spring of 2009.

Membership

Our Cooperative now has 60 members, coming from the Gatineau Valley as well as other areas of Canada. Any assistance or suggestions that members can offer to further the progress of the project will be much appreciated.

We wish to thank all of you for your support and look forward to hearing from you -- and seeing many of you at our next Annual General Meeting to be held in the Fall.

For further information, please e-mail Fabian Mugny at fabian.mugny@fairbairn.ca Or write to the Musée Fairbairn Museum at Box 195, Wakefield, QC, J0X 3G0. Or telephone Michael Cooper at 819-459-2787.

Enclosed please find our new brochure on the project entitled "A Museum in the Making."