

2011

ALBERTA MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION

AWARDS

40th Anniversary



LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S AWARD:

recognizes the extraordinary contributions of an individual to Alberta's museum community and their achievements in culture and heritage at the provincial, national, and / or international level. Recipients are nominated and selected by the AMA Secretariat and Board of Directors.




Dr. Robert Janes

CANMORE, ALBERTA

Dr. Robert Janes has worked in the museum sector for thirty-five years as a museum director, consultant, author, board member, and volunteer. From 1989 to 2000, he held the position of President and CEO of the Glenbow Museum, Art Gallery, Library, and Archives and currently is the Editor-in-Chief of *The Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship*. Dr. Janes is the author of many articles and books, including *Museums in a Troubled World: Renewal, Irrelevance or Collapse?* (2009); *Museum Management and Marketing* (2007); *Looking Reality in the Eye: Museums and Social Responsibility* (2005); and, *Museums and the Paradox of Change* (1995). He has also received numerous awards and honours for his contributions and achievements in the museum community, including being elected a Fellow of the Canadian Museums Association in 2002.

Dr. Janes has challenged and shaped the sector by compelling museums to look at their work from the perspective of sustainability, relevance, and testing long-held assumptions. He has not shied away from questioning his own work or reflecting on established practices within the museum sector; rather, he explores alternate understandings of why we do the work we do.

The dedication and passion consistently demonstrated by Dr. Janes throughout his career has made him one of the pre-eminent scholars in the museum field and an example to museum leaders everywhere. His vision for the role of museums in their communities exemplifies why he is a deserving recipient of the Alberta Museums Association's Lieutenant Governor's Award.



Bob Janes has been a tremendous leader in the advancement of museology in Canada and has done so much to encourage and influence up-and-coming professionals in the field. We all owe him such a debt of gratitude.

**- JANET PIESCHEL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
YOUTHLINK CALGARY – THE CALGARY POLICE
INTERPRETIVE CENTRE**

Bob was one of the first museum leaders to challenge the roles of the 'traditional' museum. He challenged us to consider the costs of keeping our collections and he challenged us to consider de-accessioning as an important, if not necessary, aspect of collections management. Bob also led museums in challenging the traditional role of the curator as the unilateral subject expert, in favour of the role of curator as community facilitator – helping community members to tell their stories in their own words. Bob's view of the role of the museum in its community was an inspirational one for many museums and museum professionals. His publications on the subject are key resources for contemporary museum professionals.

**- LORNA JOHNSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
RED DEER MUSEUM + ART GALLERY**

How can museum professionals change their fundamental assumptions about the role of museums in society? How can we ensure that our institutions are relevant and serving their communities? These are questions that Bob Janes has been pursuing his whole career and we in the museum community are fortunate that he has kept asking them. His tenacious writing and criticism have continued to provoke thought and debate in our work; and the sector is better for it.

**- KIRSTIN EVENDEN, PRESIDENT & CEO,
GLENBOW MUSEUM, CALGARY**

For many years, Robert Janes has been working to convince museums that they need to be engaged in sustainability work, or risk a continued slide into irrelevance. This is not about adding 'green' policies or programs, he argues; these are often out-competed and rarely lead to lasting change. Facing the double-barrels of overconsumption and over-population in a globalized world, museums need to re-envision why they exist and work with communities to solve shared problems. Much needs to be done and time is short, but museums are ideally placed and, thanks in part to Dr. Janes, many are starting to listen.

**- GLENN SUTTER, HEAD, BIOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL
STUDIES UNIT, ROYAL SASKATCHEWAN MUSEUM, REGINA**



LEADERSHIP AWARD

recognizes exceptional leaders in the museum community who possess the vision and dedication that guides success.



Red Deer Museum + Art Gallery

RED DEER EATS!

In 2010, the Red Deer Museum + Art Gallery (MAG) opened its newly renovated space and, armed with their new strategic direction, reaffirmed their commitment to being a leader in the field of innovative object-based learning experiences for visitors of all ages. One of the MAG's new priorities was to develop exhibitions with a social conscience; therefore, when the touring exhibition *Hungry Planet: What the World Eats* (which chronicles the food consumption of twelve families throughout the world) became available in 2010, it seemed a perfect fit as well as an excellent opportunity to explore a complimentary story about the food of central Alberta.

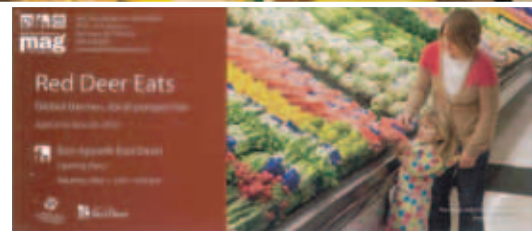
Red Deer Eats!, the MAG's companion piece to *Hungry Planet*, portrayed the local stories of the "bread basket of Alberta" by presenting the food habits of three Red Deer families as well as the Red Deer Food Bank and the ways in which they relate to the global issues illustrated in the *Hungry Planet* exhibition.

The development process of *Red Deer Eats!* became the catalyst for using this type of multidisciplinary approach to develop exhibitions in the future.

Through the programming that surrounded *Red Deer Eats!*, the museum was able to engage a variety of community groups and create mutually-beneficial, long-lasting, and meaningful relationships that have prompted them to continue to look to the community for current issues and respond to them in multifaceted ways. This exhibition solidified the Red Deer Museum + Art Gallery as a leader in the sector and a model for community engagement to be used by others throughout the province.

The MAG's leadership gave me the opportunity to show how I manage food consumption and sustainability on a daily basis.

~ **RETHINK** RED DEER



ENGAGEMENT AWARD

recognizes creative ways of engaging communities, building relationships, fostering collective visions, or promoting museums to the general public.



Bobbie Fox

When the Galt Museum & Archives reached out to the community to gather input on what they would like to see in an exhibition about Lethbridge from 1906 – 1913, the community responded that they wanted to be immersed in the time period, using as many senses as possible. The curator was immediately inspired to use music as a component of the upcoming exhibition. Volunteer Bobbie Fox then took it upon herself to recreate the music and the feelings it inspired.

Bobbie planned, researched, and oversaw this project, which included an in depth look into musical events and trends in Lethbridge in the early twentieth century. Using her multitude of connections in Lethbridge's arts and heritage communities, Bobbie found period music that the Lethbridge Community Band then learned, performed, and recorded, in costume, at the Historical Society of Alberta's annual conference in 2011. This performance brought this moment in Lethbridge's history to life for a wide audience. The recording of the performance was also added to the exhibition for visitors to enjoy.

This would not have been possible had Bobbie not worked so diligently to have the three groups...work together. And through this unique partnership she achieved many goals, such as entertaining the conference attendees, taping music for the exhibition, and starting relations that will build in the future.

~ **BARRY SNOWDEN**, PRESIDENT,
LETHBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Her passion is to promote history to as wide of audience as possible and to not only talk about history but to engage people in it through as many different media as possible.

~ **BELINDA CROWSON**, MUSEUM EDUCATOR,
GALT MUSEUM & ARCHIVES, LETHBRIDGE

Bobbie used her personal and professional connections as well as her passion for history and music to bring the museum, music, and historical communities together to pool their talent and resources to create an engaging and multi-sensory exhibition that directly responded to the expressed needs and desires of the museums community.

ENGAGEMENT AWARD

recognizes creative ways of engaging communities, building relationships, fostering collective visions, or promoting museums to the general public.



Tofield Historical Society

ENGAGING THE TOFIELD MUSEUM IN OUR COMMUNITY

After many successful years operating in the community, the Tofield Historical Society embraced their new mission statement to “collect, preserve, research, exhibit and interpret the objects and artifacts that best portray the history of Tofield and District” in order to rediscover how to effectively engage their community. As the museum is physically removed from the centre of town, the Society realized that costs and mobility challenges were the main prohibitions for increased visitorship from the local schools and seniors centre.

We are fortunate to have such an active volunteer organization committed to promoting Tofield's history in our community.

~ **KAI KRISTENSEN**, PRESIDENT,
TOFIELD AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

To address this challenge, the museum developed programs such as *Museum in the Box* and *Museum in the Community*. For the *Museum in the Box* program, a staff person from the museum brings a collection of audience-specific artifacts to a community organization so that those who cannot physically visit the museum can still experience their history and engage in stories and conversations about the past. The *Museum in the Community* program is a series of exhibitions located in businesses and municipal offices in town that deal with the history of the specific building, site, or enterprise.

By bringing the museum to the community, the Tofield Historical Society has expanded their impact and presence in the community and responded to a vocalized need for culture and history in their everyday lives. It is by surveying the needs of the immediate community and responding to them that the Tofield Historical Society has used community engagement as their model for sustainability.

SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

recognizes those who are dedicated to ensuring museums are healthy and self-sustaining through the execution of resourceful long-term planning.



Heritage Park Strathmore Standard Journeymen Trades Interpreters

HERITAGE SKILLS PRESERVATION PROJECT

Skills such as those possessed by newspaper pressmen and linotype operators were once considered relatively common. Today, however, these skills are quickly disappearing. The possibility of not having journeymen pressmen available to maintain the Strathmore Standard exhibition at Heritage Park Historical Village in Calgary provided the impetus for the *Heritage Skills Preservation Project*, an interpreter-driven project to ensure the sustainability of the pressmen trade and this exhibition.

The Strathmore Standard Journeymen Trades Interpreter team — Greg Lafave, Dave Shiells, Gordon Campbell, and Jack Sheedy — contributed countless hours to the development and production of extensive training videos and manuals regarding the operation, maintenance, and repair of the historic equipment so that the exhibition can be operated by new staff. New interpreters undertake three years of training before operating and maintaining the machinery on their own. After the three years, more training is still required to be qualified to repair the machinery, which demonstrates the wealth of knowledge required to operate these machines.

The process of producing the training videos and manuals has revealed several things: how much knowledge is required to continuously operate these machines, the dedication of the existing Journeymen Trades Interpreters, and the importance of sustaining this knowledge so that generations to come can experience this form of newspaper production. These manuals exemplify succession planning and sustainability in Alberta's museum community.

The newspaper at Strathmore Standard will continue for many years due to the efforts of these four endearing volunteers who have taken upon themselves to preserve not only the operations of the newspaper but in giving their knowledge to bring a new generation of newspaper people to the Standard.

- **BONNIE PRITCHARD**, VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR,
HERITAGE PARK HISTORICAL VILLAGE, CALGARY

The Alberta Museums Association gratefully acknowledges the ongoing financial support of Alberta Culture and Community Spirit through the lottery-funded Alberta Historical Resources Foundation.

Nominations were adjudicated by the Awards Selection Committee, comprised of Individual Members of the Alberta Museums Association. Thank you to the committee members for their time and thoughtful considerations.

“The secret of joy in work is contained in one word—excellence. To know how to do something well is to enjoy it.”

- PEARL S. BUCK

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