

Museums and Technology Fund Post Project Report 2012-2013

PURPOSE: The Post Project Report assists the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport with assessing the effectiveness of funding provided through the Museums and Technology Fund. It also serves as a written record of accountability for the project.

NOTES: All information should be typed or printed legibly. Additional pages may be attached if necessary. Please ensure that all questions are answered.

All organizations that received support from the Museums and Technology Fund must complete and submit a Post Project Report to the Ministry within 3 months of completion.

Please return the completed Post Project Report with all supporting documentation to:

Museums & Technology Program
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport
Programs and Services Branch
101 Bay Street, Suite 1700
Toronto, ON M7A 0A7

inquiries:

Telephone: 416-314-7126
Email: mtf-fmt@ontario.ca

Grant Recipient Information

Name of Organization Corporation of the Town of Fort Frances – Fort Frances Museum & Cultural Centre		
Address 320 Portage Avenue		
City/Town Fort Frances	Postal Code P9A 3P9	
Contact Person Sherry George		
Position/Title Museum Curator		
Telephone No. (including area code) (807) 274-7891	Fax No. (including area code) (807) 274-4103	E-Mail Address sgeorge@fort-frances.com

Project Information

Name of Project - One Step Towards Full Digitization
<p>Project Description Briefly describe the project that was undertaken, and all major activities that were completed. Was the project carried out as originally proposed? If the scope of the project changed from the original project proposal, please indicate whether the Ministry was notified of any such changes.</p> <p>Our purpose was to increase the accessibility of our collection and begin the process of digitization. We wanted to transfer our old text files to a new searchable database. We also wanted to begin the process of photographing our over 100-year old collection of community newspapers, primarily to limit handling them and thus ensure their preservation, but also to make them accessible. In order to carry out the project, we needed to hire an individual to carry out the work and to purchase some necessary equipment. With funding approval, we hired a conscientious, technically savvy individual who successfully transferred our databases to PastPerfect software, and then designed and built a system to digitize our newspapers.</p> <p>There were no changes to the scope of the project, but there were some changes to items purchased and these were passed on the Ministry, via Nancy Tulloch. To ensure our database was accessible to all the computer workstations, we had to update our PastPerfect software to a network edition, an additional cost we did not foresee. Also, although we did purchase a smaller scanner that can reproduce up to ledger-size documents, we ruled in favour of Jeremy's (person hired) set-up for photographing the newspapers. He saw a need for a table that would flatten the papers through air suction (reducing harm), and that could be moved from left to right to allow the operator to photograph both halves of the paper without rehandling. The table had thousands of holes drilled in to it, so that when the reverse fan was turned on, the paper would lie completely flat without undue stress. The overhead camera arm also had a laser light attachment that ensured newspapers were perfectly aligned, meaning the resulting photographs required little manipulation.</p> <p>Several formats of the newspapers were saved, which allowed for search capability. The computer purchased for the project is still in use for continuing the project, so an additional computer was purchased through donations and set up for the public, allowing researchers to access our papers, something we could not previously allow. All our students have assisted with the project, adding information to the database from index cards and paper files, and attaching photos. Now that our digital records recorder has moved on, students continue the work he began on the newspaper collection. The museum also has several volunteers who will pick up where the students leave off in September.</p> <p>Overall, we are very pleased with the project for it has reduced staff time wasted in manually searching both database and newspapers, it has preserved our very fragile newspaper collection, and it has made information accessible to the public that was not available before.</p>

Project Financial Statement

- Outline all project costs and revenue sources. Total Expenditures *must equal* Total Revenues.
- If more space is required, please attach a separate statement.
- Indicate any project component(s) which received support from other Ontario government ministries, and other levels of government.
- Include the value of all donated services and materials, and the basis on which value was calculated.
- Attach copies of all invoices and receipts for project expenses.

Project Costs			Funding Sources		
	Budget	Actual		Budget	Actual
Cash expenditures (specify below):			Applicant funding (specify below):		
Project coordinator	47,206.25	42,067.09	MTF	39,879.79	39,879.79
Student help	4393.64	2023.04	Museum/Town of Fort Frances	23,151.87	10,475.95
Student help	4393.64	4224.66	Other non-government sources of funding (specify below):		
Student help	4393.64	3603.11			
Computer & monitor	1138.95	951.67			
Scanner	1049.99	365.68			
Studio lighting	454.55	277.36			
Vacuum table		768.98			
Laser calibration & wiring		240.67	Other government funding:		
Personal Protective Equipment (gloves & masks)		151.35	Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport		
PastPerfect software		569.33	Federal – student grants		5126.82
Misc computer hardware & software		239.62	Provincial		
			Municipal		
Donated Services and Materials (specify below):			Sources of Donated Services and Materials (specify below):		
Total Expenditures	\$ 63,031	\$ 55,483	Total Revenues	\$ 63,031	\$ 55,483

If the project involved the rental or purchase of goods or services, please confirm that:

- (a) a competitive pricing/tendering process was followed: ☒ Yes ☐ No (please provide a written explanation below)
- (b) the lowest price(s) were used: ☒ Yes ☐ No (please provide a written explanation below)

Explanation (please attach a separate statement if additional space is required):

Project Outcomes

Please identify the outcomes/results from this project in relation to those proposed in your original application. Indicate the project's quantitative and qualitative results, and how these were measured. Also include any additional and/or unanticipated outcomes, as well as any anticipated outcomes that were not accomplished, and explain why.

Our first priority was to transfer our old database to a new one. We transferred all computer data files and added information from index cards and paper entries to ensure all information at our disposal was entered. Our second goal was to digitize close to half of our weekly newspapers. We have digitized over 60 years. Digitization was to make the museum more efficient while making our collection more accessible.

The project allowed us to successfully transfer a cumbersome, unsearchable file system (all entries) to a museum-structured database that permits staff to manage our collection. This system enables us to move forward, adding items to our collection that up to now have been tabled. The new software allows us to add photos to each entry. We now know what is in our collection and can document pieces moved in and out of exhibits. We still have much work to do – storage location for pieces in the collection has not been entered - but at least we now have a functional system we can build on.

Our newspaper collection has well over 100 years of weekly newspapers and many years of dailies. We knew we could not digitize the entire collection over this past year, but were most concerned with the very earliest papers that are very brittle and often the only one of its kind (that we're aware of). Our local newspaper publisher cooperated with us, allowing us to use their sealed files to compare versions for the better copy. They sometimes had editions we didn't and vice versa. We have successfully digitized up to the 1960s, therefore more than half (3120 of 5200 newspapers), meaning those earlier years can now be safely preserved. Images are crisp and clear.

The project allows us to search the resulting digital files quickly using search criteria, increasing staff productivity, which was a priority. Results can be printed in several formats. The newspaper database makes the collection accessible with minimum instruction, meaning that staff can point researchers in the right direction and spend time doing other things. Researchers and the general public who have used the system are very happy with it. Our local newspaper publisher is interested in pursuing other grants and thus continue the process, but with our only industry (mill) closing here, have tabled the project for the time being. Our summer students are continuing the project.

Community Participation

What was the level of community participation and response to the project? Was the project successful in reaching its target audience(s)?

Since first announced, the project has been a focus for many of our community. The local newspaper publisher, a strong supporter, has written a number of articles that has generated a lot of local attention. We receive inquiries on a regular basis as to what's been completed and how soon the rest will be done. We have seen increased traffic since a computer was made available to the public in March. On most days we have someone (besides staff) sitting at the computer. We also have researchers (one doing his history thesis), coming in regularly to find information and verify dates.

At this point, other than occasional newspaper articles, our website and Facebook pages, we have depended on word-of-mouth to advertise that the project is up and running. Following summer, we are planning some simple workshops to explain the research process and allow beginners to try out the system. Besides offering the instruction, this will advertise its availability. By the end of summer our students will have many more newspapers digitized and added to the database, which can only increase its value to the community.

We also regularly receive inquiries as to accessing our collection on line – something we are working towards and is now possible with the museum-structured database.

Partnerships (if applicable)

List and describe briefly all partnerships with the non-profit, public and private sectors, and the partners' roles in the project outcomes.

We partnered informally with the local newspaper publisher to get the best copy of each newspaper. As mentioned above, they are interested in pursuing additional funding to continue the project, but are awaiting the repercussions of our mill closing. They have been involved in the project from the beginning, loaning us their sealed boxes of newspapers to ensure that between us we have the best copy possible. Their staff have dropped by often to discuss progress, which has resulted in several features in the paper.

Our local genealogy group was a partner on the project. They could offer no financial contribution, but have confirmed their support to see the project through to completion. Several members of the group are looking forward to taking over from the students once summer is over (and cabin season is at end :). We also have some retired teachers that have expressed a similar interest – individuals I am confident will follow through. Student volunteers have also signed up for fall.

Everyone involved in the project is anxious to see it through. When employees were laid off at our only industry last year, and there was serious concern that our mill would close, Town administration and council considered stopping the project. After hearing of the progress made, and seeing for themselves what was being done and what it would mean to our community, they allowed the project to continue into the new year. We are extremely grateful for the support that allowed us to carry it through to completion.

Project Outputs

What were the project outputs? Please provide copies of all materials, products and resources developed as part of this project.

Our new database is PastPerfect, museum software that was recommended to us. Our newspapers have been photographed, giving us the original tif files (very large), as well as jpg (smaller) and pdf formats that allow for optical character recognition. This means that the papers can be accessed using a search engine and that text files can be captured, making the information available to other programs. Digitized copies of the whole paper or simply the text itself can be saved to a jump-drive. The entire tabloid could be printed in the original size (off-site – we don't have the capability) or images reduced to smaller paper sizes – preferably ledger as smaller can be too small. The scanner we purchased gives us the capability to print to ledger size (11x17), which we could not do prior to the purchase.

Lessons Learned

What, if any, lessons (both positive and constructive) were learned as a result of doing this project? What best practices have been identified as a result of this project?

When we started the project, we were concerned that we would not have individuals with the right skills apply. I discussed with our HR manager the possibility that we might have to settle for someone who only had data entry skills. We feel very fortunate then to have someone with the right skill set undertake the project – not only someone with a strong computer background, but also who was meticulous and very concerned with doing the project right. It has ensured that our project is a resounding success. As much as designing and building the components for this project was somewhat unorthodox (and scared me to death!) I know that in future I will be very diligent about getting the right person for any project; I will not settle unless given no other choice. Jeremy's set-up will not only see us through to the last newspaper, it has also generated a lot of interest in our region for those thinking about doing something similar. It's possible we will be loaning the set-up out to others, but only after our next job – photographing 100 years of school attendance records!

Strategic Priorities

Please describe how and to what extent the project met *at least one* of the following strategic priorities:

- Use digital technology to engage Ontarians in new ways.
- Improve digital technology infrastructure and develop digital technology skills in the collections-based sector.
- Digitize heritage collections to give Ontarians better access to their history and heritage.
- Help eligible organizations to use technology to meet collection, research, program, education, stewardship and promotional needs.
- Help eligible organizations attract new audiences through the use of technology.
- Help eligible organizations generate revenue through the use of technology.

Our project has hit all of the above in some way, but we focused on two. *#4 Help organizations use technology to meet collection, research, program, education, stewardship and promotional needs...* With our PastPerfect database, we can move forward with accessioning that has been on hold. We can now add photos to our information files and have the means to move pieces in and out of our exhibit, along with the correct documentation that we have done so. We can use search criteria on our newspaper collection to find information quickly and productively, which increases efficiency to museum staff and others. Researchers, genealogists, or simply an individual looking for an obituary can, with a few easy instructions, access information themselves, which allows staff to do other things. The project has also improved our ability to preserve our collection. Without having to manually search through storage areas (lights, etc) or handle newspapers, our collection is being preserved, as is our mandate.

#3 Digitize heritage collections to give Ontarians better access to their history and heritage. Our databases (collection & newspaper) have given us a big start on our way to full digitization. The project has given our community access to our newspapers when previously we could not allow it. We hope that some day we can allow the general public to take virtual tours of our museum, which we could not even consider without the Past Perfect database.

Performance Measures

Please describe how and to what extent the project met *at least two* of the following performance measures:

- Improved capacity to use technology to enhance/support collections-based arts and heritage organizations.
- Community arts and heritage collections and stories will be more accessible to Ontarians.
- New partnerships or strategic alliances will be formed, and the partners will be actively involved in the project.
- Community arts and heritage organizations will gain more recognition.
- New or better educational opportunities for students and life-long learners will be offered.

Again, we've probably hit all of the above, but have focused on three. *Improved capacity to use technology to enhance/support collections-based arts and heritage organizations.* For most of the year, our museum runs with one staff. It is therefore very difficult to serve the needs of our community – managing the collection, designing exhibits that will engage our visitors, provide programming for children and adults, undertaking research – with a manual approach. Digitizing our collection makes every job easier and more efficient. Our collection will be properly documented and be handled less. Exhibits can be created on the computer first, saving valuable time and effort. Research using a search engine speeds up the process considerably. (We used to cringe when asked to look something up in the newspapers.) Even programming becomes simpler when we know what's in the collection and how it relates to something else. We can design a program around an artifact or a significant point in history, spending more time on making it interactive and less time just finding stuff!

Community arts and heritage collections and stories will be more accessible to Ontarians and New or better educational opportunities for students and life-long learners will be offered. We have many people of retirement age in our community and most have some computer skills; in addition they love anything historical. They want to know their genealogy and like to read about the old days. Our genealogy group was the initial group to make use of the newspaper database that became open to the public in March. I now see them bringing in others to do the same. Person A teaches Person B who teaches Person C. They rarely ask for help, but also take a look around while here. Often individuals have not been in before or not recently. They are always pleased with what we can offer. I'm building my visitor base, with little effort.

It is our hope that we can soon feature some of our collection on line. We have already added many photos to the information in our database. Using digital images and background description, we can present some of our more interesting pieces to a wider audience. As much as beaver pelts and top hats may be 'old hat' to many folks in our region, they can still generate interest in other parts of Ontario and around the world.

Acknowledgement


How was the support of this project by the Government of Ontario, through the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, acknowledged? (Please include a sample of materials where support has been acknowledged.)

We have acknowledged the support of this project in every way we can think of... through the local media, on our website and Facebook page and in the museum quarterly newsletters. We also have posted information at our public research computer station to ensure that those who use the database are aware of the considerable financial support that made it possible.

Statement by Grant Recipient

I hereby certify that the information provided in this report is true, correct and complete in every respect and that, pursuant to section 19 of the Museums and Technology Fund Terms and Conditions, all records of revenues, purchases and expenditures for this project will be kept and be available for review by the Ministry and its agents for a period of seven (7) years after the project is completed.

Authorized Signing Officer (for Applicant)

Name (print)	Position or Title	Signature	Date
Sherry George	Museum Curator		May 28/14
Name of Organization			
Fort Frances Museum & Cultural Centre, Town of Fort Frances			

Ministry Use Only

CIMS Project File #

IRIMS File #

Comments

Please provide any general comments or impressions on this project.

I have reviewed the Post Project Report and financial information, and deem them acceptable in all respects. I am satisfied that the funds given in support of this project were properly spent, and that the project was completed as originally proposed. I recommend that this file be closed.

Name (print)	Position or Title	Signature	Date
--------------	-------------------	-----------	------

Management Approval of PPR

I am satisfied that the funds given in support of this project were properly spent and accounted for. I approve the closure of this file.

Manager's Name (print)	Position or Title	Signature	Date
------------------------	-------------------	-----------	------



Sherry George/Frances

06/03/2014 11:46 AM

To "Museum and Technology Fund (MTCS)" <mtf-fmt@ontario.ca>


cc "Gushulak, Heather (MCI)" <Heather.Gushulak@ontario.ca>, Jason
Kabel/Frances@Frances

bcc

Subject Re: Notice of Final Payment and Closure of MTF File
#2012-08-1-6222557

MTF FILE
CLOSURE
NOTICE

History:

 This message has been replied to and forwarded.

Thank you so very much. I want you to know that this would not have happened without your very generous support. It truly was instrumental.

Sherry

Sherry George, Curator
Fort Frances Museum
259 Scott Street
Fort Frances, ON P9A 1G8
807 274-7891
fax: 274-4103

"Museum and Technology Fund (MTCS)" <mtf-fmt@ontario.ca>



"Museum and Technology Fund
(MTCS)" <mtf-fmt@ontario.ca>

06/03/2014 11:40 AM

To "sgeorge@fort-frances.com" <sgeorge@fort-frances.com>

cc "Gushulak, Heather (MCI)" <Heather.Gushulak@ontario.ca>

Subject Notice of Final Payment and Closure of MTF File
#2012-08-1-6222557

Sherry George, Museum Director
Corporation of the Town of Fort Frances – Fort Frances Museum & Cultural Centre
320 Portage Avenue
Fort Frances, ON P9A 3P9

June 3, 2014

Notice of Final Payment and Closure of MTF File #2012-08-1-6222557

Dear Mrs. George:

We have completed our review of your Museums and Technology (MTF) Post-Project Report detailing work undertaken in the Fort Frances Museum & Cultural Centre's *One Step Towards Full Digitization* project.

Your organization's grant file indicated above is now closed, and the second and final payment in the amount of \$3,988 has been submitted for payment to the account we have on file.

Please note that the financial records for the project must be kept for at least seven years from the date of this letter in case they are required for an audit.

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport is committed to fostering a prosperous creative economy and vibrant, liveable communities in Ontario, and we are pleased to see how the funds received enabled you to achieve your project goals.

Best wishes and continued success.

Michelle Sale

A/ Manager, Culture Programs Unit
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport
Programs and Services Branch
401 Bay Street, Suite 1700
Toronto, ON M7A 0A7
Tel: (416) 212-4013
Fax: (416) 212-1802
Email: michelle.sale@ontario.ca