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## More Stuff, Less Space: the Museum Upgrade Project

By Paul Robertson, Curator of Known Space and Other Stuff



*Renovations begins on the Anne Baillie Building.*

Museum staff members eagerly await the start of the long anticipated renovations in the basement of the Ann Baillie building. When complete, the revamped space will provide environmentally controlled storage for thousands of museum artefacts and work areas for artefact treatment and exhibit preparation. All of this will occupy less space than is now possible with existing facilities.

The upgrades to collections storage and curatorial and exhibit workspace are part of the first phase of major improvements and restorations to the museum building. Details of the larger project were outlined in the July 2004 issue of *The Bailliewick*. These long-term plans include a sensitive adaptation of the historic Ann Baillie building as a modern museum facility and the restoration of its fine century-old heritage architectural features.

When speaking of the Museum of Health Care's extensive artefact collection, we could perhaps describe ourselves as

victims of our own success. Since the formation of this institution in 1991, the enthusiastic public response to the call to develop a health care collection has been overwhelming. Our artefact holdings have grown from approximately 8000 items in 1996 to over 28,000 in 2004. At the same time, however, we have been unable to keep up with the infrastructure to house this material properly and long ago exceeded storage capacity in the upper floors of the Ann Baillie Building.

The collection of historical health care objects is clearly the museum's greatest asset, without which this institution would not exist. This is not a new revelation, but the realities of caring for artefacts and archival materials, often with very specific physical needs, are major challenges financially, spatially, and in staff time.

Gaining access to the basement level of the Ann Baillie building in 2003 expanded our storage capacity in this building tremendously. Needless to say, this century-old building was not constructed as a museum and conditions are far from optimum for environmentally safe artefact storage. That is why the "dungeon" as I affectionately call it is the focus of our first renovation wave.

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*Curatorial Staff survey the 'Dungeon' in preparation for the transformation into an optimal storage space for artefacts.*

## From the Chair

by Alan Grant, Chair, Board of Directors

It's a great honour for me to follow Don Neil as President and Chairman of the Board. Don, the Board of Directors, Dr. Jim Low, staff and volunteers have already transformed the Museum by consolidating and cataloguing thousands of artefacts into the Anne Baillie Building, which KGH generously provided for this purpose. Our Vision is to be Canada's premier museum devoted exclusively to the story of health and a key element in a local centre of excellence for health care history.

Remarkable progress has been made since Dr. Low and the professional staff first accepted the challenge by devoting remarkable energy and intellect to collecting, cataloguing and displaying health related artifacts and archives. Local support has been enthusiastic and generous during these formative years, but we now find ourselves at a "cross roads". If we are to achieve our Vision and fulfill our Mission the Museum must become a national resource. To do so, the Museum has created a "National Advisory Board" of distinguished individuals from across Canada

– whose interest and influence will help us attain a national profile and attract the needed resources. The National Advisory Board have met, by teleconference and several members have already visited the Museum to talk with Dr. Low and me.

To help the Museum achieve its ambitious goals, the Board and Staff held a series of workshops during the past year – brilliantly facilitated by Nancy Matheson. The outcome of these deliberations have been consolidated into a Five Year (2004-2009) Strategic Plan which lays out, in detail: Our Vision, Our Mission and Our Values. From these fundamentals Strategic Initiatives have been articulated, with clear, measurable Outcomes. Some of these have already been launched and more will follow.

I am delighted to be involved at this critical, exciting time and appreciate your continuing input and support. I look forward to keeping you informed of the Museum's progress as the Strategic Plan moves forward.



Mr. Alan Grant, Chair, Board of Directors

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A major improvement in this area will be the refurbishment of two storerooms with controls for temperature and humidity, essential components of proper museum artefact storage. This will create safer areas for environmentally sensitive materials, such as the collection of medical moulages (wax anatomical models), and objects made of degradable rubbers and plastics.

Normally one would cringe at the thought of having reduced space to store an ever-expanding collection, but in the case of the new compact-shelving units, that is exactly what we will end up with. In actual fact, the storage surface area will be vastly expanded, but will take up significantly less floor area than we have now.

The new mobile units run on in-floor tracks that allow the shelving bays to be pushed together when staff are not working with them, thus leaving room for more units in the space than fixed shelves would. A system of movable shelves and

shallow trays will allow maximum flexibility for storage arrangements and provide space for future expansion of the collection.

As part of the basement renovation, we are taking this opportunity to completely reorganise the collection based on functional groups such as cardiology, patient care, and dentistry. In physical storage terms, this classification will then be further refined so that items of similar object type, size or other physical characteristic can be placed together on storage units best suited to particular spatial and environmental requirements (for example, all microscopes together, large equipment together, clothing and textiles together).

Once initiated, the new classification system will serve as the framework for the storage of new artefacts as they are received into the collection and will go far in assisting curatorial staff in determining the future development needs of mu-

seum holdings. We anticipate this reorganization and move into the refurbished storerooms to be ongoing over at least the next eighteen months.

Although the improved collections reserve storage downstairs will not completely replace the storerooms upstairs, we will be able to free up some significant areas to house newly acquired objects waiting to be accessioned and to present other important museum activities such as school programmes and public lectures.

The ultimate goal of any curator is to be able to work with his or her "largesse", that is, the wealth of objects in the collection. The whole point of developing a well-housed and documented collection is then to be able to use it as a basis for historical research, publication, and exhibition. With the renovations in Ann Baillie's basement, we are literally getting to the bottom of this task.

## Forward Planning: A Critical Exercise

by Dr. James Low, Executive Director

During the last two years, the Museum has been actively engaged in forward planning.

This process started with a Capacity Development Project in which Kathryn Pankowski was commissioned to build the Museum's capacity to plan, deliver and market public programs. This began with a review of the museum programs and marketing. A review of the current audience, potential audience and audience priorities followed. The third step examined the characteristics, wants, needs of the regional and national target audience and the types of programs that might attract these groups.

Based on this background, a strategic approach for public programs, exhibits, Internet projects and education programs was developed. The criteria for these programs and an annual plan for the period 2004 to 2006 was prepared. This plan was endorsed by the Program Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. Similarly, the importance, goals and strategies of marketing within the Museum were determined. A marketing plan for 2004-2005 was prepared, endorsed by the Public Relations Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

The preparation of a Strategic Plan to identify the direction of the Museum over the next three to five years began in January 2004. The Board of Directors agreed with the proposition that goals must be set and a work plan to achieve these goals determined.

The Museum was fortunate to have Nancy Matheson agree to serve as a facilitator of this project that involved the Directors, museum staff and volunteers. Four valuable sessions were held throughout the spring.

In these sessions, the mission and vision of the Museum was articulated. The environment of the many aspects of the

Museum was examined with questionnaires, a SWOT analysis to determine strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The results of these assessments were used as a basis for a vigorous discussion during these sessions. Emerging from these discussions was agreement on a range of priorities that were important to the Museum.

With this information in hand, the drafting of the Strategic Plan began. This includes a refinement of the mission and vision statement for the Museum. Goals have been set for the Museum. These include actions to: recruit, manage and retain museum personnel; strengthen financial resources; strengthen the curatorial service, encouraging excellence in collection management and research; reposition public programming to inspire a diverse and national audience; and build awareness of and support for the Museum.

A final report with a work plan for each goal is being prepared. When approved by the Board, this plan will be the road map for the Museum for the next three to five years. This plan will be of value only if it is effectively implemented and the milestones of progress are monitored on a regular basis. This plan will not be fixed but rather will, on review, be revised when necessary.

The process of developing a Strategic Plan has provided the Directors, staff and volunteers valuable insight into the Museum and the challenges to be met if the Museum is to achieve its goal of serving as a National resource. The Museum owes a great debt to Nancy Matheson for the leadership provided in creating this plan.



# Museum Program Update

- Over 90 visitors dropped by to experience special tours as part of Doors Open Kingston on September 18, 2004. KGH Nursing Alumnae gave visitors a sneak peak at life in a nursing residence, and Research Fellow Jen Walker and KGH Walking Tour Guide Jen Young gave special tours of the Fenwick Operating Theatre.
- Plant enthusiasts experienced the Museum's Horticultural and Garden Day program in August. A hands-on interactive display showcased plants used in traditional remedies, and our "Potions, Pills and Prescriptions" exhibit was highlighted.
- We joined forces with the Kingston Historical Society on August 1<sup>st</sup> for Murney Tower Family Fun Day, despite some nasty weather on the original program date. Kids were invited to get a 'fake wound' (made of yummy strawberry jam), and to become a medical detective.
- Over 500 visitors experienced our fascinating walking tour, "Plagues, Politicians and Prisoners of War" The Astonishing Past of Kingston General Hospital" in 2004. Regular tours will once again be offered starting in May 2005. If you'd like to book a group tour in the meantime, please give us a call at 548-2419 or email [museum@kgh.kari.net](mailto:museum@kgh.kari.net).



Summer students Melinda and Kate having a blast at Murney Tower Family Fun Day.

## Bringing History to Life: Dr. Fenwick and the Margaret Angus Research Evening

by Dr. Hugh Pross, Chair,  
Program Committee

There is nothing like youth and enthusiasm to bring life to an historical subject. The museum has been fortunate to have had both for many years in its Margaret Angus Summer Research Fellows. This year was no exception. On Thursday evening, November 11<sup>th</sup>, Jennifer Walker presented the results of her summer work, which she entitled " '...a blessing to the citizens and neighbourhood at large.' – Dr. Kenneth Fenwick and the Fenwick Operating Theatre at Kingston General Hospital." With a standing-room-only crowd of almost 60 people, including descendants of Dr. Fenwick, Jennifer described the life of Kenneth Fenwick and his zeal in pursuing his dream of putting the Kingston General Hospital and Queen's Medical School at the forefront of surgical practice with a new surgical amphitheatre.



Research Fellow Jennifer Walker and Curator Paul Robertson celebrate a lively research evening at a museum reception.

Funded largely by Dr. Fenwick himself, with additional funds from the hospital, the new operating theatre was second to none when it was opened in 1895. There was seating for up to a hundred students who accessed the amphitheatre via a separate entrance and stairs, an anaesthetics room, a sterilizer, and sinks along the sides so that the surgical team could scrub-up close to the patient. In addition to overhead electric light-

ing, illumination was from a novel cupola roof, with a glass ceiling that allowed light in, diffusing it gently over the area.

Jennifer held her audience spell-bound as she took us back more than a hundred years, describing events that took place in the very room in which we were sitting. One of these events led to Dr. Fenwick's early death only a few months after he began operating in the theatre, which had already been named after him. He died in 1896 from septicemia that began in a scratch infected during surgery to remove a young boy's abscessed appendix. Dr. Fenwick was truly '...a blessing to the citizens and neighbourhood at large.' He left a legacy that that still lives – the Fenwick Operating Theatre is now the last remaining Victorian surgical amphitheatre in Canada. At one time a library, then a coffee shop, and now a conference room, perhaps one day we will see it restored to its original state – a monument to one man's vision, drive and generosity. Thanks, Jennifer, for a job well done!



## Coming Up...

- An exhibit on the history of the Kingston General Hospital Auxiliary will open in the Hall of Honour at Kingston General Hospital in late March. You'll be amazed at the incredible historic legacy of these Volunteers!
- Join us Thursday, February 17<sup>th</sup> at 7pm for the return of our popular "Name that Artefact Game Show Night". Come on out for fun, prizes, excitement and of course, some intriguing objects. Get your imagination going and thinking caps on – there are points for creativity!
- Our Annual General Meeting will be held at the Museum on Tuesday, April 19, 2005, at 4pm.



## Now Playing...

- For a unique experience, visit our outreach exhibits at Kingston General Hospital! "Fighting the White Plague: the Battle Against Tuberculosis" and "Beyond Ether: 150 Years of Anaesthesia" can be found in the Hall of Honour, just inside the main entrance of the hospital. "From the Bedrooms of the Nation: A Short History of Contraception in Canada" can be found on Fraser Armstrong 5. And on Kidd 3, you can learn about "The Development of Cardiac Pacemakers". If you'd like a guided tour, please give us a call at 548-2419 or email [museum@kgh.kari.net](mailto:museum@kgh.kari.net).

## Trouble with . . . Tonsils! Latest "Mini" Exhibit at Museum

by Paul Robertson, Curator

Have you ever wondered what that strange little pair of organs at the back of your throat is really for? Do tonsils have a purpose, or are they just there to annoy us when they become infected?

For most people, tonsils are perhaps best known for their absence: did you know that tonsillectomies are one of the most common operations performed around the world today?

Learn about this and other exciting tonsils facts when you visit *Trouble with . . . Tonsils!*, the museum's latest "mini" exhibit opened in September 2004. Curated by two of our summer students, Irina Skvortsova and Melinda Richka, the exhibit features a selection of tonsil removal instruments drawn from museum collections.



Billings Tonsillotome, one of the artefacts featured in "Trouble with Tonsils".

## What's New in the Collection: The Forecaster

by Paul Robertson, Curator

An interesting new contraception artefact has recently arrived at the museum. "The Forecaster" is a cardboard cycle slide designed to help a woman forecast the days of the month when pregnancy is possible and impossible. It was produced by the Forecaster Co. and available in Canada after 1949.

Many forms of counters have been used by women all over the world to keep track of their fertile and "safe" times of the month, otherwise known as the rhythm method, the most natural form of contraception. "The Forecaster" is essentially a modern "scientific" version of cycle



beads or other form of cycle counter.

This donation comes to us from Ms. Sarah Allison of Burlington, Ontario via the History of Contraception Museum at Janssen-Ortho Inc. of Toronto.

Speaking of contraception, don't forget to visit the exhibit *From the Bedrooms of the Nation: A Brief History of Contraception in Canada* still on in the Obstetrics and Gynecology Clinic, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Fraser Armstrong Patient Centre, Kingston General Hospital.

## Artefacts on the Road!

by Paul Robertson, Curator

Artefacts from the Museum of Health Care's collection are being featured in upcoming exhibitions in Montreal and Gatineau, Quebec in 2005 and 2006.

*Growing Up in Montréal / Grandir à Montréal* is a major new exhibition at the McCord Museum in Montreal that explores the behaviours and rituals, habits and games of young 20th-century Montrealers, from birth to the pre-teen years and is scheduled to run until 5 September 2005. Visit the McCord Museum website at <http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca/en/>.

Of special interest to Museum of Health Care regulars, *The Caring Profession / Les soins infirmiers - L'histoire d'une profession* is an exciting new exhibition at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, Quebec that will explore the history of vocational and professional nursing in Canada, from New France to the present. It will bring together the two parallel but separate nursing traditions in Canada, the religious Catholic model and the secular British-inspired model. The day-to-day practice of nursing, as well as the struggle for recognition of the profession will be represented through artefacts, photographs, interviews, and personal anecdotes. Opening 17 June 2005, the show runs to 7 August 2006. Get a show preview at <http://www.civilization.ca/tresors/nursing/ncehx01e.html>.



Carbolic Spray device, one artefact that will soon be on the road with the Museum of Civilization's *The Caring Profession* Exhibit.

## Welcoming New Faces



The Museum of Health Care has another new face! Tim Gregory began as the new Curatorial Assistant on October 18, 2004 and will be helping Curator Paul Robertson with a range of collections management and documentation and exhibit development activities. Tim comes from Halifax, where he obtained an honours degree in anthropology from Saint Mary's University. He has also completed the Museum Management and Curatorship program at Sir Sandford Fleming College in Peterborough. Tim has previously worked at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in Halifax, and has just recently completed a tour of duty with the Canterbury Museum in New Zealand. Tim is excited to be a part of the team and looks forward to learning about the fascinating history of medicine and the health care.

Queen's Work Study Students – Making a Key Contribution!

Last year, we were introduced to Soodabeh Salehi, who joined the Museum team as a Digital Photographer funded through the Queen's Work Study program. We are pleased to announce that Soodabeh was able to continue her work photographing our artefacts for this school year. In addition, we are pleased to welcome three more students to our busy environment. That brings our total to four students for 2004 – 2005. We are very grateful for their contribution!



Christopher Webb joins us as our second Artefact Photographer. He is a fourth year History and Concurrent Education student at Queen's University. Chris is interested in pursuing

further education in the fields of Public History or Museum Studies. In his spare time, Chris enjoys writing and theatre.



Kranti Koganti joins us as a Collections Assistant. Kranti is pursuing his Bachelor of Computing at Queen's. He holds a Bachelor of computer Applications from Wesley Boy's Degree College in Secunderabad, India with a major in computer science. He has participated in a Mathematics Olympiad, as well as various debating activities.



Michelle Redwood is pursuing her Bachelor of Music (Hons.) at Queen's, and also joins us a Collections Assistant. She enjoys music and drama, as well as sailing and skiing. She hopes that her work at the Museum will complement her "music-heavy" schedule!

## Onions: A Traditional Cure-All

by Viviane Paquin, Education Officer

The onion (*Allium cepa*), like its cousins garlic, chives, scallions and leeks, is a member of the lily family (liliaceae). It has been cultivated for over 5,000 years and today the onion is the most important horticultural crop after tomatoes.

Onions have been prized throughout history not only for their culinary value but also for their therapeutic properties. Like garlic, onions are rich in powerful sulfur-containing compounds that give them their pungent odor and health promoting benefits.

One of the traditional therapeutic uses of onion is for the treatment of asthma, bronchitis, coughs and colds. In folk medicine, raw onions were chopped and stewed in milk to clear congested airways. Onion syrup, made by slicing onions and covering the slices with brown sugar overnight, was given out liberally at the first sign of a cough or sore throat. In Asian medicine, onions have been used for centuries to treat coughs, bacterial infections, and breathing problems and according to medical papyri the ancient Egyptians were also familiar with the use of onions to prevent colds.

The more pungent varieties of onion appear to have the best health promoting properties. Strongly flavoured onions will make an especially good addition to soups and stews during the cold and flu season. If you can't stand the taste of onions then enjoy the health benefits of a topical application! According to folk medicine the onion had many benefits when used topically:

- A hot onion put in your ear will soothe an earache
- A raw onion placed on a wasp or bee sting will take the pain away
- The inside of an onion placed on cuts and scratches acts like an elastoplast
- Onion Rubbed on the head is a cure for baldness
- Carrying a small onion in your pocket can ward off rheumatism
- A cut onion hung in the house in winter will destroy germs

## Summer Programming at the Museum: Hands on Heritage

by Viviane Paquin, Education Officer



*Education Officer Viviane Paquin explores the mysteries of a Doctor's Bag with excited students during this summer's "Hands on Heritage" Camp.*

This summer the Museum of Health Care was one of nine heritage sites that participated in "Hands on Heritage", a Kingston museum summer camp program. Other participating museums included Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Bellevue house, Fairfield House, Kingston Archeological Centre, Maclachlan Woodworking museum, Marine Museum of the Great Lakes, the Military Communications and electronics museum and the Miller Museum of Geology.

The camp is a great opportunity for children to explore their local heritage. In one week they visit seven museums, each with a different program and a variety of hands-on activities. At the museum of Health Care the theme was pioneer health

and health care. Children learned about the diseases and injuries of pioneers, how they were cared for in the home, and about the medicines and tools that doctors had for treating pain and illness. They did some hands-on investigations of an antique trephine, scarificator, and various diagnostic instruments. They made pioneer crafts including a herbal insect repellent sachet and a whirligig and enjoyed a guided tour of the museum.

It was a great afternoon and the feedback from the campers was very positive. The museum is looking forward to participating again next year. The program runs for six weeks beginning the first week of July. Registration forms will be available at the museum in April 2005.

## List of Donors

The Board and Staff of the Museum thank the following for their generous donations of time and resources to Museum activities from July - December 2004:

### Foundations and Major Financial Donors

Ballemagh Foundation  
KGH Nursing Class of 1954  
and Brockville Chapter  
Ontario Heritage Foundation  
Ontario Trillium Foundation  
Page Foundation  
Toronto General and Western  
Hospital Foundation  
Ruth Connell  
Elaine and Michael Davies  
Michelle Podhy

### Granting Organizations

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### Project Partners

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Nancy Matheson  
Murney Tower  
Queen's University Faculty of  
Health Sciences  
Staff at Kingston General Hospital

### Artefact Donors

Susan Alford  
Barbara Dewar  
Jacalyn Duffin  
Richard Gillis  
Dorothy Grant  
JoAnne Hawley  
Doreen Mainse  
Dr. John Spencer  
Akemi Yoshizawa

and all of our new and renewing Members, Sustaining Patrons, and Volunteers.

We are grateful to all who have helped the Museum. If we have omitted someone, please let us know, and we will be sure to add his or her name to the list in the next Bailliewick issue.

## Do you shop at A&P?



**Save your A&P cash register receipts and help the Museum of Health Care benefit from the A&P "Save-A-Tape" program. Our mailing address is: Museum of Health Care, Ann Baillie Building, George Street, Kingston, ON, K7L 2V7.**

## Now Available in Our Gift Shop!

Thanks in part to the many emails and letters sent to Downtown Kingston! from our Members and supporters, the Ann Baillie Building has been made into a commemorative pewter ornament. Many thanks to everyone who made this possible – what a wonderful way to commemorate the building's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! This lovely representation of the home of the Museum of Health Care is available for sale in our gift shop.

## We Need Volunteers!

Volunteers are an important part of any museum. However, for an organization that has collected over 27,000 artefacts, and produced over 15 exhibits, all in the past 15 years, volunteers are not only important, but also essential! If you have an interest in health care history, or in an opportunity to work with enthusiastic staff and volunteers, the Museum of Health Care is looking for you! Commitment ranges from 2 to 12 hours per month. Positions available include Museum Interpreter, Collections and Exhibits Assistant, Special Events and Public Relations Assistants. If you have an interest in volunteering for the Museum of Health Care, give Mary a call at 613-548-2419 or email [museum@kgh.kari.net](mailto:museum@kgh.kari.net) to learn more.

## "Thank you", and "Welcome"!

We would also like to extend our thanks to our current Interpretive and

Collections Management Volunteers, for all of your hard work during the last 6 months. Donna, Carol, Connie and Marilyn ensured that our late summer and early autumn visitors were warmly welcomed and informed, and Mary and Claire our large collection.

The Museum is pleased to announce that two new volunteers have joined our team. Joan Sharpe is currently embarking on a project to research museum gift shop issues. We hope she'll come up with a few tips to maximize our merchandizing potential! Steve Vollick has been an 'un-official' volunteer for the past several years, and we are pleased to formally welcome him as a 'Special Projects' volunteer. We are grateful to Steve for performing handiperson duties, by salvaging our Stuart and King Street signposts after they nearly became casualties of the construction on George Street! Welcome Steve and Joan!

## THE BAILLIEWICK

Editor: Mary-Kathleen Dunn  
Layout: Mark Howes  
Phone: (613) 548-2419  
E-mail: [museum@kgh.kari.net](mailto:museum@kgh.kari.net)  
Website: [museumofhealthcare.ca](http://museumofhealthcare.ca)