



REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA MUSEUMS' POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

JULY 1, 2006 - JUNE 30, 2007

Executive Summary

The 2006-2007 academic year was a demanding timeframe for the University of Alberta Museums, and has resulted in an abridged version of the U of A Museums Annual Report. As well, we are in transition as we change the format of the report to better reflect the accomplishments and activities of the U of A Museums in relation to *Dare to Discover* and *Dare to Deliver*. These changes are to be implemented in the 2007-2008 academic year. This report therefore covers the key activities of the University of Alberta Museums' Policy and Planning Committee from July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007:

- Work continued on the business and operations plan for the proposed Curatorial Research Facility, a facility intended to house all of the U of A's 35 collections which will be designed to improve accessibility, discovery learning and research opportunities, and storage for the collections;
- In conjunction with the plans for the new Curatorial Research Facility, research and planning also continued for a proposed new academic program to complement the new facility;
- Ramifications resulting from the report by the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board continued, with ongoing work to ensure retention of the Category A Designation of the U of A Museums;
- The University of Alberta Museums and Collections Policy and Procedures were further vetted with various parties on campus, with a goal towards completion of the approval process and implementation of the new policy in the 2007-2008 academic year; and
- Research was conducted nation-wide in regards to the repatriation of cultural property, in order to improve the University of Alberta's approach to these types of requests and issues.

Report of the University of Alberta Museums' Policy and Planning Committee:

The University of Alberta Museums Policy and Planning Committee met formally on four occasions: September 20, 2006; December 7, 2006; February 13, 2007; and April 27, 2007. Several issues identified in the last report are ongoing to this academic year. One issue that has been deferred but is still of importance is the discussion of curatorial duties as they relate to Faculty evaluations.





Ground Beetle *Carabus granulatus* Linnaeus is one of the more than one million specimens housed in the E.H. Strickland Entomological Museum in the Department of Biological Sciences.

Activity One: Curatorial Research Facility (Ongoing)

Part A: Business Plan for Facility

During this past academic year, Museums and Collections Services' staff provided information for the development of a business plan for the proposed Curatorial Research Facility. The following data were submitted to the Office of the University Architect and HOK Urbana Architects by July 2007:

- A museums strategic/operational plan for the next four years identifying broad program areas with their anticipated outcomes that align with the University's strategic plans;
- An organizational model for the Curatorial Research Facility and a revised central service unit, developed as a result of brainstorming sessions with various stakeholders including staff, curators, and members of the Policy and Planning Committee;
- A summary of the Cultural Property Audit and Report of the Canadian Conservation Institute site-visit identifying non-compliance issues including environmental deficiencies and policy implementation issues;
- A summary of the implications of the new museums policy and procedures indicating best practices necessary to comply with provincial, federal, and international laws, treaties, and granting agency requirements;
- An identification and categorization of stakeholders and their primary needs, including U of A faculty, staff, students, and researchers, government agencies, educational institutions, and various community partners;
- Summary of how the facility will align with selected and relevant government agency planning documents including:
 - » The Alberta Government's focus on Alberta becoming a world-leader in innovation, research, development, and commercialization of new ideas;
 - » The Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology's *Building and Educating Tomorrow's Workforce*;
 - » The Provincial government's strategy of *Preparing Albertans for Lifelong Learning*;
 - » The Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Recreation, and Culture's goal of building a culturally vibrant province;
 - » *A Place to Grow*, the Alberta government's rural engagement strategy.



- Impact of missed opportunities (partnerships, funding, grants, research projects, etc) as a result of deficiencies in facilities including, among others:
 - » \$2.5 million in missed grant opportunities through the Department of Canadian Heritage Digital Future: Canadian Culture Online Program;
 - » Over \$500,000 in missed grant opportunities through the Alberta Foundation for the Arts Operating Grants and Project Grants;
 - » \$500,000 in missed grant opportunities through the Canadian Heritage Museum Assistance Program.
 - » \$1 million in missed grant opportunities through the Canada Council for the Arts / Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council new media initiatives.

All information requested was submitted in a thorough and timely manner. The U of A Museums are still awaiting the business plan from HOK and the Office of the University Architect.

Part B: Academic Plan

As part of the move toward the new Curatorial Research Facility, the Provost created an advisory committee under the leadership of Dr. Olive Yonge (Vice-Provost, Academic) to assess existing academic programs and to propose new academic programs that will complement the development of the facility and connect with both the U of A vision and mission and the provincial rural engagement strategy.

Research Findings to Date

- A course survey to determine current and potential use of museum objects in collections in academic programs was conducted with all 113 U of A academic departments. Following are the results from the 30 departments that responded:
 - » There are currently a reported 89 undergraduate and 11 graduate courses using museum objects.
 - » There are currently a reported 11 undergraduate and 16 graduate courses related to museum issues.
 - » There are currently a reported 58 undergraduate and 20 graduate courses with the potential to use museum objects.





A model facility for discovery learning, the Print Study Centre celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2006.

- A global internet-based search of English-language post-secondary Museum Studies Programs at graduate and undergraduate levels was conducted. For Canada, the search also included a survey of all Museum Studies training via associations, colleges, and universities. The following results were noted:
 - » One of the most significant findings was that Museum Studies programs are predominately generalist in focus.
 - » Other than museum studies, post-secondary training is associated with other traditional programs:
 - Cultural Administration
 - Public History
 - Art History/Curatorial
 - Conservation (artifact and buildings)
 - » Emerging Areas of Study:
 - Communications/Marketing
 - Exhibitions/Museum Education
 - Multimedia/Internet
 - Leadership/Management
 - Social Responsibility
 - » While there is an emergence of some science-focused museum studies programs, most are primarily humanities-based programs.
- A literature review of museum-based publications was conducted to determine trends and best practices in areas of museum education, business trends, and leadership. Emerging issues centre around leadership/management, social responsibility, and technology opportunities and impacts.
- A community consultation was conducted with the Alberta Museums Association to determine the training, skills, and knowledge needs of Alberta's museum community.
- Subsequent focus group meetings were held with Chairs, Faculty, Deans, and Technical Staff with identified potential program ties, including representatives from Anthropology, Biological Sciences, Computing Sciences, Art and Design, History and Classics, Modern Languages, Human Ecology, Elementary Education, Education Policy Studies, Library and Information Studies, Native Studies, Law, and the School of Business.



- Based on consultations, focus groups and research, a proposed interdisciplinary graduate program with four specializations emerged:
 - » **Specialization One: Investigative Techniques.** This specialization would centre around digital technologies and imaging research, forensic science research, and DNA Banks and related research.
 - » **Specialization Two: Legal Issues/Cultural Property.** This program would focus on issues of repatriation, return of cultural property, intellectual property and copyright, and bio-safety issues.
 - » **Specialization Three: Communication/Education/Exhibitions.** This specialization would focus on learning theory and visitor evaluation studies. Students would study exhibition and environmental design, experimental presentation and interpretation, as well as the applications and implications of technology on learning.
 - » **Specialization Four: Knowledge Creation.** This program would centre around cultural memory and living tradition, historical experiences and sense of place, research/field research methods, human history and sciences, and building the knowledge capacity of Alberta's research collections.
- In addition to the proposed specializations, there was also discussion of:
 - » Creating a research institute or centre to advance leadership and innovation in object-based theory, deliver advisory services, and provide mentorship partner programs;
 - » Implementing a graduate certificate program;
 - » Allowing open access for students enrolled in other graduate programs;
 - » Providing discovery and experiential learning, partnering with the community to include research internships, scholarships, and paid employment.
- Following the emergence of the areas of specialization, meetings were held with faculty members to determine potential course offerings under each specialization.

There is great interest in and support for the academic program as proposed, although some administrative hurdles surrounding the development of interdisciplinary programs need to be addressed (resource allocation, team teaching, etc.).

The University of Alberta Museums are currently developing an organizational structure for the proposed academic plan as identified above. Concurrently, in partnership with the Provost and interested faculties and departments, the team is developing Template D, a document used to propose new academic programs to government.





Conservation staff preparing artifacts from the Mactaggart Art Collection as part of the move to the new facility in the TELUS Centre.

Activity Two: Review of Category A Designation (Ongoing issue until the following points resolved)

As mentioned in previous reports, the University of Alberta Museums' Category A status, conferred by the Department of Canadian Heritage, was under review. Staff from Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board (CCPERB) completed a site visit in October 2005 in which facilities in all areas were identified as substandard. The need for the U of A Museums to address problems such as inadequate environmental controls has been labeled "paramount." The Policy and Planning Committee continues to work with Museums and Collections Services on the following issues to ensure the U of A Museums retain Category A status:

Part A: Facilities

- As above in Activity One, the U of A Museums are continuing a business plan for the Curatorial Research Facility, acknowledged as progress towards a solution to facility problems.
- The Print Study Centre, cited as a model facility, was required to upgrade the HVAC system. A request was submitted to Facilities and Operations. The completion of the project is still outstanding.
- The development of the TELUS Centre space continued as an acceptable interim storage solution for certified cultural property. Construction was mostly completed by June 30, although several deficiencies are still outstanding including inadequacies in door sweeps, air leaks, and the HVAC system. No new certified acquisitions can be made until the space has met the approval of CCPERB.
- The move of the Mactaggart Art Collection into the TELUS Centre space began in June 2007.

Part B: Policy and Procedures

- We continue to share our drafts of updates to our policies with CCPERB staff. See Activity Three for the section on policy.

The University of Alberta Museums have been asked by CCPERB to provide a summary of the progress in addressing the deficiencies in facilities and improving collections policies. This report will be completed in 2007-08.



Storage of specimens in the Zooarchaeology Collection in the Department of Anthropology.

Activity Three: U of A Museums Policy and Procedures (Ongoing)

The new University of Alberta Museums and Collections Policy and Procedures were further vetted by Risk Management, Internal Audit, Financial Services, Development / Advancement, and also discussed with the Curators' Committee. The following issues arose:

Compliance

The committee stressed that, in order to avoid placing Museums and Collections Services Staff and the U of A Museums Policy and Planning Committee members in a conflict of interest when ensuring compliance under the new policy, there must be a transparent implementation process, complete with a communication and training strategy to ensure those affected by the policy and procedures are well informed and sufficiently trained.

- In response to the concerns regarding policy compliance, a new position of Museums Advisor was created and advertised to assist with the implementation of the new policy and procedures once approved.

Loans Process

A loans procedure was added to the Policy.

The Policy and Procedures are still awaiting approval through University governance.



Activity Four: Repatriation Report

(New issue)

To improve the University of Alberta's approach to repatriation requests and issues, a survey was conducted of policies and guidelines at various institutions across Canada in order to gather information and share best practices about the repatriation of cultural property and human remains by First Nations groups in Canada. The research was conducted by Anthropology graduate student Corinne Marceau under the guidance of Janine Andrews, Executive Director, Museums and Collections Services, and Dr. Owen Beattie from the Department of Anthropology, and presented to the Policy and Planning Committee in April 2007.

- Currently, the University of Alberta Museums hold a variety of cultural property that could possibly be requested for return in future, including objects of cultural patrimony in the ethnographic collections, Nazi-era prints and other artworks obtained in uncertain political circumstances, and material collected abroad in ways that may not be consistent with current ethical standards.
- Un-accessioned objects and works of uncertain provenance could also become the subject of a claim if more information about their acquisition history became available.
- Various human remains, held in trust at the University of Alberta Museums, could also (and have in the past) become the subject of a repatriation claim.
- As evidenced in the survey responses, most participating institutions have some form of cultural property or human remains in their collection, which could become the subject of a request for return.
- All of the respondent institutions have returned cultural property and/or human remains in the past, and most related that these were positive experiences.

As a result of this research, the U of A Museums are now better equipped to deal with repatriation claims in a manner consistent with national practices, ensuring the maintenance of the University of Alberta's reputation as a good community leader and partner.





Science Sunday is an annual event that attracts over 600 children aged 5-12 to take part in “junior” research activities.

Activity Five: Funding Needs Adjudication (Annual activity)

One of the annual activities of the Policy and Planning Committee is the adjudication of funding requests solicited from the curators of the 35 collections under the U of A Museums. There is continual discussion of the need for a larger endowment fund to ensure the fulfillment of requests for acquisitions, projects, and equipment needs.

- Of the \$73,054 in funds requested between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007, requests were primarily concentrated in the areas of collections management and digitization, in order to improve access to collections for current and future students and researchers.
- Based on available monies, \$33,004 was distributed. Needs were assessed based on merit and recommended for funding through several limited and/or competitive sources including the following:
 - » Community Outreach Endowment Fund: a U of A fund which generates approximately \$12,000 annually;
 - » The Friends of the University of Alberta Museums who raise funds for projects through several methods totaling \$20,979 in 2006-07;
 - » Museum and heritage grant programs such as Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations.

Due to the limited funding available through the U of A Museums modest endowment fund, we were unable to fund \$40,000 in proposed projects this year. The Policy and Planning Committee continues to discuss the need for a larger U of A Museums endowment, and this will remain an ongoing concern until we develop and implement a plan to address this issue.



Appendix One: Committee Membership

Chair

Dr. M. Caldwell, Department of Biological Sciences, and Chair,
Curators' Committee

Ex Officio (voting)

J. Andrews, Executive Director, Museums and Collections Services
J. Boberg, President, Friends of the University of Alberta Museums

Curators' Committee (elected)

Dr. C. Herd, Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences
Dr. A. Nahachewsky, Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies
Dr. C. Paszkowski, Department of Biological Sciences
Dr. H. Proctor, Department of Biological Sciences

General Faculties Council (elected)

D. Jones, Science and Technology Library
Dr. J. Shaw, Department of Chemical and Materials Engineering

Graduate Students Association (elected)

N. Shykoluk, Department of Anthropology

Undergraduate Student Representative

A. Hibbert, Department of Anthropology

Secretary (non-voting)

F. Blondheim, Museums and Collections Services

