

The Museums Secret

by Charles Taws

Research assistance by
Doris Falls and Lois Whitfield

CLARINGTON MUSEUMS AND ARCHIVES

www.claringtonmuseums.com

Some call it our best kept secret, but it's not supposed to be a secret. In fact, we don't hide it from anybody. It's the fact that Clarington Museums has a pretty impressive doll collection. Some of you may have known that already, but did you know we actually have the best doll collection in Canada owned by a museum and we have the best collection of Canadian antique dolls in the world! That's pretty impressive for a community museum. So how and why did the Museum end up with this fabulous collection?

Well, before we get into that let's talk about dolls in general for a minute. I know some of you may find the topic uninteresting and some may perhaps even think it a bit frivolous for a local museum to collect such things. But listen to this. Every culture that has ever existed in the world had dolls.

Dolls are important cultural items that reflect the world of the maker. Dolls can be made of different materials and have different purposes such as playthings, religious objects and to showcase fashions of the time. But, the most important thing to us is that some dolls, especially the well loved ones, have incredible stories to tell. If you're still not interested in dolls another argument can be made that they are important because they can be exceedingly valuable. There is the

historic value alluded to above, but their market value can often be in the hundreds and thousands of dollars and in some cases upwards of \$50,000. So, dolls are interesting from many different angles.

When you check the museum's records you will see that the Bowmanville Museum has collected dolls since it began in 1961, but it was during the 1970's/ 80's under the curatorship of Marion Vienot that serious doll collecting began. The Friends of the Museum were instrumental in providing funds for doll purchases and ensuring appropriate selections were made. This was very fortunate as some dolls were acquired then that could not be obtained today. I think the dolls became popular not

just for their nostalgic value but also because by collecting these dolls it gave the museum another dimension. It gave visitors, who may not be interested in local history, a reason to visit the museum. It expanded our audience and gave us a profile beyond the borders of Clarington.

When you think of the Bowmanville Museum and its dolls it is hard not to think of a very special lady named Gladys Ashton. She volunteered at the museum for many years. She was on the museum's board and was a long time President of its Friends group, but she is best remembered for the great skill she used to take care of our dolls. She repaired, restored and ensured all dolls were appropriately dressed

(from undergarments to dress and shoes). One doll story about Gladys began when a lady who was from the Hampton area brought in some family dolls for donation. They belonged to her, her sister and her mother. Gladys grew up in Hampton too and when she came to see the dolls she immediately recognized one as belonging to a childhood friend of hers even though she had not seen the doll for almost 50 years! This girl, the donor's sister, died from a liver ailment when she was young. Gladys still had the last letter she ever wrote which was addressed to her. The little girl wrote the first half but her mother finished it as she was too weak. Needless to say it was an extra

A little girl's doll tells a story

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special work of love for Gladys to restore that doll.

If you were a little girl in Canada in the early 1900's the number one doll you would want was the Eaton's Beauty!

At a time when most dolls sold from 35 to 75 cents she could cost the princely sum of a dollar. But, she was first rate all the way. The best doll manufacturers from Germany were hired to produce these dolls and they had the best in quality and accessories. One such doll in the collection has a sad story to tell. It belonged to a little girl in Bowmanville whose childhood and life in general was not a happy one. Her Eaton's Beauty doll was one of the few nice things she could remember from her childhood. She never married and lived with her brother. Even as an adult she kept her dolls on display in her bedroom. One day she came home to find her Eaton's Beauty doll missing. Her brother said he gave it away. She thought the doll was long gone and while she promised to leave her other dolls to the museum she lamented she didn't have her Eaton's Beauty anymore because she would have liked to have left that to the museum as well. As time went on, the brother

This doll was the toy of a little girl in Hampton in the 1930's. Unfortunately she died young, but many years later her sister donated it and some other dolls to the museum. The Museum's doll restorer, Gladys Ashton, had been a friend of the little girl and instantly recognized this doll as belonging to her childhood friend even though she had not seen it in nearly 50 years! The doll was in very good shape, but Gladys did some restoration work to its cloth legs.



died and then the lady died, but she left no will. One day a local lawyer came to the Museum. He was handling the lady's estate and wanted to know if the Museum was interested in her dolls. I said "yes" and told him that she had verbally promised them to the museum. "No problem", he said "the lady had no heirs so I'll send my secretary around with the dolls." When they arrived among the dolls was a beautiful Eaton's Beauty doll in almost mint condition and in the original box. She still had her original clothes but she also had some homemade clothes with her. "Where did you get this doll?" I exclaimed! The secretary said, "It's funny you should pick out that doll. All these others were in her room, but that one was on a rickety old shelf in the basement. When I picked it up the shelf actually fell on the floor." So, in the end the lady got her wish and her precious dolls now reside at the museum.

We recently acquired a small German doll that belonged to a little girl in Germany. She grew up during World War Two. She used to sleep with an open suitcase on the floor by her bed. On one side of the suitcase she kept her clothes on the other, her doll. Should the air raid sirens sound she could jump out of bed, grab her suitcase, close it and head to the shelter with her doll for safety.

We have other toys too, not just dolls. The collection includes puzzles, games and even a 1980's Nintendo set. We even have a few teddy bears. I think teddy bears are hard to find because most got "loved to death" by their little owners. Also, they are highly collectible. One bear in the collection has an interesting history. It was said to have been bought around 1907 at Adolphus Nicholls' store at 19 King Street West here in Bowmanville. Mr. Nicholls carried everything in his store and people called it "Little Eaton's". I should point out that many years later the donor came back and refuted the early date and thought it was more like 1920. How this 1907 date got attached to this bear remains a mystery, but it is on the original donor form. Teddy bears first came on the market around 1903 so that would make it a very early bear. However, by looking at the bear I think the later date is perhaps more accurate. Mr. Nichols was in business until the late 1930's so it is likely the bear came from his store. It is also known that Dominion Toys of Toronto made some bears. They were in operation from 1911 to 1932. Canadian bears are very very scarce and I think this may be one. More research is needed to verify this claim. Another teddy bear in the collection is a beautiful English one from 1925. It was made by the Chad Valley Toy Company. It was ice blue in colour when new but has faded



This bear was purchased at A. Nicholl's store in Bowmanville. It is likely a Canadian made bear by the Dominion Toy Company of Toronto. Behind it can be seen the English Chad Valley bear from 1925. If you look closely you'll see a third bear in the background. It's a 1916 ideal Toy bear made in the United States.

to a grey over the years. The little girl who got this bear already had a "Teddy" bear so was not sure what name to give this bear. An adult suggested "Timothy" because the big discussion around this time was the opening of Timothy Eaton United Church in Toronto. The little girl thought that was a dreadful name to give a bear, but later decided "Timmy" would do just fine. That little girl was 80 years old when she donated her bears, dolls and toys to the museum. She was downsizing and she cried when the bear was carried out of her house.

All toys bring with them an air of nostalgia. In Europe many towns have popular doll and toy museums. A teddy bear that has had its paw pads replaced by a loving mother or a doll that has had its hair cut by a little girl all tell us something of what it was like to

Barbara Ann Scott was a Canadian champion figure skater who won a gold medal at the 1948 Olympics. Prime Minister Mackenzie said that her success story was one of the first positive news items after the war and she gave, "Canadians courage to get through the darkness of the post-war gloom." She went on to lead a successful equestrian career. Reliable Toys of Canada issued a Barbara Ann Scott doll each year from 1948 to 1953. Distinctive Dolls of Canada released one in 1991.



be a child long ago. The dolls and toys at the Museum reflect the childhood of people who grew up here and of people who have chosen to live here later in life. Either way we can all relate to the stories they tell. The museum has so many dolls now that we can't display them all at once. However the current exhibit "Children at Play" shows off a nice selection and is well worth seeing. It is on display at the Sarah Jane Williams Heritage Centre until the end of the year. For more information call us at 905-623-2734 or check out our website at www.claringtonmuseums.com. We're also on facebook and twitter.



This unusual doll was made by the Earle Pullan Company of Toronto in 1963. The Canadian doll industry was centred in Toronto and by this time dolls were made in plastic and vinyl. Pearl was not popular when first introduced so few were made. This makes her scarce today and she is highly sought after by doll collectors. This was one of Gladys Ashton's favourite dolls.

We have great local talent!



by **Jim Abernethy**, Publisher

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of the most exciting final series that we have seen for a long time. Thanks guys!

We should also acknowledge the many parents and volunteers who work countless hours helping to develop sporting skills in kids like Chris and Bryan. The results are showing. Clarington is becoming a mecca for recruits in the big league..... and even Don Cherry knows that Orono is not in Bowmanville.

It is NO SURPRISE the Stanley Cup is coming to town, again!

I have it on good authority from Bill Bickell (the guy who received more face-time on national TV than his son) that arrangements are now being made to display Lord Stanley in the Orono Arena one day later this summer..... the date has yet to be confirmed and Bryan asks that you bring a donation for one of our 3 local food banks.

Two other events have been confirmed - August 3, 2013 Bryan and his sweetheart Amanda will be tying the knot in the bride's hometown of Ottawa. Also, on Friday August 23 the Third Annual Bryan Bickell Charity Classic Golf Tournament will take place at the Black Diamond Golf Club located on Highway 115.

Congratulations are in order for two local lads who made our Clarington communities very proud during the Stanley Cup Playoffs. Chris Kelly (Boston Bruins) and Bryan Bickell (Chicago Blackhawks), both of whom came up thru our local hockey system, played a lot of ice-time and made for one



On, July 8, 2010 thousands of local residents came out to greet local hero Bryan Bickell & The Stanley Cup as a proud community paraded down the Main Street of Orono in celebration.

For golf tournament information, including sponsorship opportunities, contact Chad Maartense by email address: chadmaartense@gmail.com

Chanterelle's is now open ! Welcome back Derek and Marita.

Their recovery from a devastating fire last summer has been a long ordeal for each of them, perhaps longer for patrons. But now their team is providing quality and service as before. Drop in and say hello when you have a chance..... same location, Division Street in Bowmanville.

Our upcoming August edition will contain a special feature for the Clarington Older Adults Association which celebrates 15 years of service in their historical building located on Beech Street in Bowmanville. This association provides a wonderful service to the seniors of our community, for the most part by volunteers. It should be a good read.

Strategic planning is key for small business



by Peter Hobb

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To many small to medium sized business owners strategic planning seems like some mystical process that is far to complex to be understood. This is reinforced by some of the publications on the subject that you might have picked up at the local Chapters store or by some presentation you may have heard on the subject given by a strategic planning expert. Strategic planning does not have to be complex! For a large business with many divisions operating in a number of different industries it might be. For most small to medium sized businesses it is not.

Our ever changing business environment makes

regular strategic planning necessary. New products come on the market, the demographics of your market change, new competitors, past competitors leave the market, your company is moving into a different phase of its life cycle, etc. These are things that may indicate your strategic direction may need to change. Every business has strategies for doing business. These strategies may be reactive or proactive. A reactive strategist relies on their business environment not changing to ensure their company's survival and continued profitability. As we all know this is not a likely scenario. A proactive strategist recognizes their business environment is always changing and they want to stay ahead of the curve. By being proactive they will gain a competitive advantage.

In a previous article I wrote about the need for a business to have a clear vision that is understood by all the key constituents of the organization. The vision gives you a guiding light to

developing successful strategies. The strategies implemented must be aligned with the vision for the company and move the company towards its vision. If the strategies are not aligned it is very unlikely that the company's resources will be efficiently managed to maximize profits.

A first step in the strategic planning process is to analyse your current situation. What are you currently doing well; what are your strengths? You want to make sure the strategies you implement leverage the company's strengths. At the same time you want to clarify your company's weaknesses? The strategies you develop need to mitigate these weaknesses. In looking forward what are the opportunities available to your company? What does the company need to do to take advantage of those opportunities? Also in looking forward you want to make sure you become aware of any pending threats, e.g. new competition. What can be done to lessen the impact

of pending threats? The process of analyzing your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats will force you to critically evaluate your internal resources and your external environment helping you to make sure your resources are used to the best possible advantage to your company.

The next step is to develop or reinforce to everyone involved in the strategic planning process the factors that are critical to the success of the business. What does the company absolutely have to do every time to ensure its continued success? Does the company have to keep innovating (e.g. Apple Inc.), have excellent customer service, on time delivery, faster quoting, etc.

Once you understand your current situation and the things you must do that are critical to the success of your business you are ready to set goals for your business. The goals will align everyone in your organization so that they will all be working towards the same end result. Goals also pro-

vide milestones so that progress can be measured. As goals are reached your team will gain momentum and become more motivated to move the company even further forward.

With a clear and understood vision and goals to work towards you can now review your existing strategies to evaluate if they are appropriate and, where necessary, revise or tweak them or establish new ones for new initiatives. Normally when you go through this process you will likely have an overwhelming list of initiatives. I caution you not to try to tackle too much at once. Do it in small chunks. Accomplish one goal before going to the next. Start with the easily achievable goals. As mentioned your team will build momentum with each goal achieved. If you try to change too much at once everyone will just become frustrated and likely go back to what they were doing before.

Who should be involved in the strategic planning process will depend on

the size of the business. A smaller business could involve everyone where a larger business may only wish to involve executives and department managers. However, there will be elements of the process where you may wish to get input of some or all of the other employees (e.g. goal setting). You may find that hiring an outside experienced facilitator may be very beneficial, especially if your company has not gone through this process previously.

A formal strategic planning process should be done every two or three years. However, you need to be constantly reviewing your existing strategies and tweaking them or even abandoning them if appropriate. Also you have to commit to relentlessly implementing your strategies even if it means doing things differently. The easier route is to go back to how your company has always been doing things but this will likely not be best for ensuring its continued success.



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THE SELF-PROMOTER

I have a confession to make. My Dad never took me camping.

Nope, no bonding over the campfire, no hours under the old oak tree fishing and telling stories. None of that Ward Cleaver in the

woods with Wally and 'the Beave.'

Now it's not that the old man was inattentive he just lacked the traditional fatherly skills I grew up seeing on My Three Sons' and Leave to Beaver and such. For one thing, by the time I came along he was in his forties and what to do with a 5 or ten-year-old kid was, well, frankly beyond his skill set. But the old man could turn a phrase when he had to and I still remember one of his best.

I was whatever age you were to be in Cub Scouts which didn't last long because in my neighbourhood doing anything that required shorts, knee socks with garters and a scarf was taking your life in your hands every time you stepped out onto the street.

Each year they had a father and son camping trip and about the second year after he had politely opted out of the previous year the scout leader... approached the old man with a "don't take no for an answer kind of attitude."

Bad plan with my old man!

"Come on Tom why don't you come," he said. "You might find you like camping out."

"Did quite a bit of camping," the old man said with a deadpan look, "didn't like it."

"Now how could anyone not like camping," mister knee

socks said with a slightly condescending tone. Where'd you get all this camping experience?"

The old man never changed expression and just looked at him with a steady gaze and said.... "France and Belgium 1944 to 45. People kept trying to shoot me. Didn't like it."

End of discussion!

The old man saw my slight smirk at the leaders reaction and when we got out to the parking lot he said to me, "come on, I'll teach you how to shoot pool... don't tell your mother."

A bond was formed..... no Ward Cleaver for him.

Anyway, what I was leading up to was..... Red and I and the boss went camping last week. Took the pop-top north because 'the boss' was in the Canadian National dance competition in several categories including Munchkin solo, and it was a heck of a lot cheaper than the mortgage like rates at the local hotels. In fact we camped for about the cost of two beers from the 'honour fridge'!

And I had fun! It didn't start out as fun. It started out as, three tries to get out of town totaling about an hour while we kept forgetting things at home. Then, about 20 minutes from our destination... BOOM!!!! Rear tire on the land-yatch blew and Red and I got to change a tire on the side of a highway. Actually got the spare off the truck and even after 10 years of residence under said truck it actually came off and actually held air!

But once there.... great nights at the campfire, great days in the pool, and to cap it off the boss came in eighth in her class and took home some various ribbons and a trophy. And for the first time ever I had a Smoors! A heart attack in your hand to be sure, but very, very good. And no one shot at me! Course that usually happens closer to home anyway!