

Museums & the Community Course Assignment

submitted by

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To

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## Community Assessment

### History of the Community

Brant County consists of a unique environment within Southern Ontario giving it complex factors that affect business, social life, and how the community interacts with different community organizations. Brant County consists of three municipalities, each contributing to the rural, urban, and First Nations. Within the last decade, all three levels of local government have found ways to support each other with our shared outcomes.

The Six Nations were the earliest residents to arrive in Brant County as refugees of war. In the US War of Independence, several First Nations allied themselves with the British Crown. As a result of the war, these loyalists were kicked out of the states and the Crown reassured they would be provided with new lands in Canada. In 1784, the Haldimand Treaty gave the Five Nations of Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca, 6 miles either side of the Grand River from its source to its mouth. They also guaranteed the construction of a church, Her Majesty's Royal Chapel of the Mohawks, which Captain Joseph Brant encouraged white settlers, Thomas and Smith, to come to the area to build the Chapel in exchange for land. Joseph Brant also brought with him African-American slaves

The Five Nations were later joined by the Tuscaroras to form the Six Nations. Many of these First Nations Adults were residents of the oldest residential school in the country operating from 1830 until it was closed in the late 1970s, in four buildings on two parcels of land, all of which were destroyed by fire. This community comprised roughly 6,500 First Nations residents.

The County of Brant is a city of 37,000 that completely surrounds the City of Brantford. During the forced amalgamation of the Harris government in the late 1990s, local governments believed that it was only a matter of time before amalgamation would be forced on them. This resulted in the coming together of several small towns of Paris, Burford, St. George, Oakland, and Scotland. These communities all have a strong sense of local identity and do not wish to lose it to the big neighbour next door, but have an understanding of equally distributing resources over the vast land area that the County of Brant serves. Recently a land agreement was signed between the City of Brantford and the County of Brant to transfer land for the ever-expanding urban centre.

Lewis Burwell officially laid out the town of Brantford into town lots after Captain John Brant had ceded the land to the government on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1830. The Diary of the Survey of the Indian Surrender (1994) published by the Brant Historical Society, has the details of the surrender of the land from Six Nations to the white settlers in the area. The first settler of Brantford in 1805 was John Stalts, who was described as a half-breed (Reville, 1920, pp. 69), suggesting that Brantford has been a multicultural community since its inception. In the 1830s, linking Brantford to the canal system was seen as a way of opening the land to development. The land

required for the canal was appropriated from Six Nations and they were major shareholders in the company, with their funds managed by the white man. As railroads were constructed, the canal went defunct and Six Nations lost their invested money as it went bankrupt by the late 1860s.

At this time Brantford was also developing into a major industrial power. From the Victorian era through until the end of WWII, Brantford was the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> largest producer of Gross Domestic Product in the country. On May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1877, Brantford became a City and by the 1881, it was 3<sup>rd</sup> in economic output, punching above its weight beating cities about 6 times larger. During this time period, Brantford was an innovative hub witnessed by the creation of two telephone systems and the fire hydrant system created by Waterous Engine Works.

By WWI, it has earned the title of the “Birmingham of Canada” as a manufacturing superpower, shipping products throughout the British Empire and the United States. The decline in manufacturing after WWII, hit Brantford hard and the economic recessions of the early 80s and the late 90s wiped out the remaining manufacturing companies resulting in high unemployment and large drug use and social issues. With the establishment of Laurier Brantford in 2000 and after recovering from the 2008 recession, Brantford has started to turn a page to making its new identity.

Recently, the museum reached out to a Haudenosaunee representative about a Hado'ih or False Face that we possessed. After looking at the records, we were given this ritual mask by the ROM. When the representative came to meet with us, we explained the reasons why we possessed it and the intent that we had in returning it. He confirmed it was a replica that would be destroyed. He also made a comment that the others he speaks with infer that the BHS has a poor reputation in the past when dealing with the Confederacy. This shows the struggles that the museum has in connecting with our local First Nations.

An equally pressing problem is the lack of youth engagement with the museum. In 2008, the BHS took over operations at Myrtleville House Museum and education programming was moved where it would have more usable space. When students leave Myrtleville at Grade 8, we do not introduce them to the Brant Museum & Archives location and expect them to come back and visit as teenagers or adults with children. Making the museum relevant to these younger communities is needed for the sustainability of the organization.

These interweaving and complex stories have helped shaped Brantford's identity. The interactions between the City of Brantford, the County of Brant, and Six Nations are all integral factors that must be understood about the community. An understanding of these challenges and resiliencies in the community are integral in breaking down systemic problems and the successful and unsuccessful attempts to deal with these problems that have occurred in the past. By acknowledging the community's past, this gives us an understanding of the arrival to the current situation, and will allow us to make better decisions for future generations.

## Current situation

Transplants, people who haven't grown up in Brant County, but have moved into the community, often have issues starting and establishing businesses. Transplants often try to implement from their experiences in Toronto, Hamilton, or Kitchener-Waterloo into the Brantford market and are shocked when they do not work. Brantford residents expect solutions to their problems to be driven by former Brantford residents, Brantford companies, and/or creating Brantford jobs.

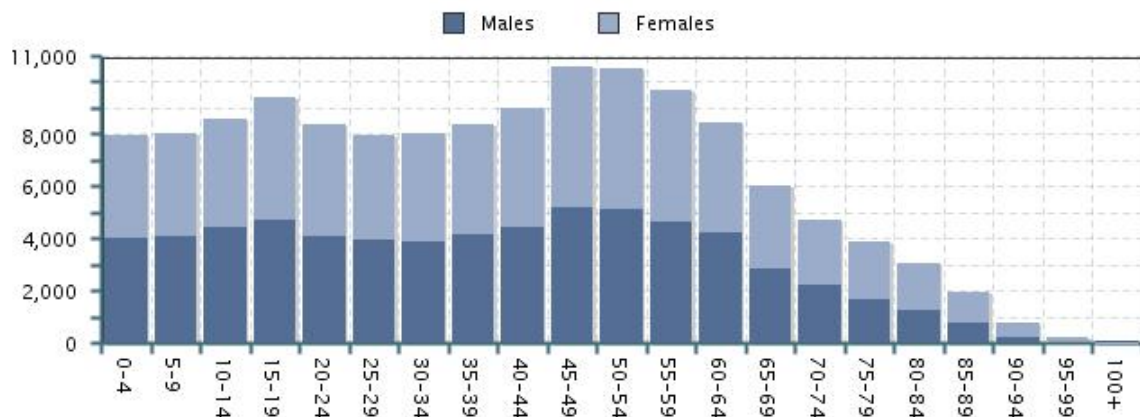
New events or festivals that are created within the City of Brantford often see issues within the first decade. This stems from there being no one media centre that people go to for information. This results in a difficulty in marketing and communication with the community as much time is spent getting information to a dozen to twenty different places, rather than focusing more strategically on media that reaches the intended audience demographic.

A crowd of 50 for a first time event in Brantford is seen as "successful", where in other communities this may be a poor turnout. The Brant Historical Society hosted a Fathers of Confederation Picnic at Myrtleville House Museum on the Saturday of Father's Day weekend. Much effort was spent in hopes of a crowd of 1,000 people, but only 300 attended this one-off event for a free community event that cost about \$3,000. Well established events, such as Canada Day at Lion's Park, see crowds of over 10,000 with virtually no advertising spent; People just know to show up to Lion's Park on Canada Day. These above factors are critical in setting up first time events in the community.

## Community Demographics

According to the 2011 Census, Brantford's Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) ranks as the 13<sup>th</sup> largest in Ontario and 30<sup>th</sup> in the country. Brantford is comparable to the Cities of Kingston, Guelph, and Peterborough in Southern Ontario. Population growth was considerably higher than other CMAs at 8.7%.

The community has is dominated by women in every 5-year cohort. Brantford's median age is similar to the national and provincial average. The population pyramid for Brantford is shown below in Figure 1 (Statistics Canada, 2016):



Brantford's family dynamic does differ substantially from the Canadian average. It is 2.5% above in the number of lone-parent families and about 3% below the number of common-law families. When planning community events, we should ensure that costs for these lone-parent families is not a barrier to engagement.

About half the population is married, a quarter is single, and another quarter is common-law, widowed, divorced, or separated. A higher proportion lives in single detached homes than compared with the country.

English is the dominant language (95%) of residents of Brant County with 4% reporting to be bilingual. Other minority languages spoken are Polish, Italian, Dutch, German, Portuguese, Hungarian, Punjabi, Vietnamese, Spanish, and Ukrainian. These culture communities are often celebrated during the Brantford Villages in July every year since 1974 as a salute to the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the invention of the telephone by Alexander Graham Bell.

The above community demographic when combined with the history of the community and its current state should be considered when creating all programming to ensure that it will be able to respond to the needs of the community.

## **Community-Curator Exhibit Program (C-CEP) Proposal**

The area currently used as the gift shop also contains six display cases. In the past, these have been used for temporary exhibitions, community-driven exhibits, and student led displays. While the sizes of these vary slightly, they are roughly 108”(width) x 78” (height) x 10” (depth). Often the depth of the displays is an issue as long skinny objects (skis and walking sticks) or 30-40 small objects make an effective display.

The C-CEP would accept applications for community-driven and community-curator exhibits using the Brant Historical Society’s vast collection. Through a simple 5-question proposal, community respondents can apply to create their own display on their own topic. A committee will read proposals and 6 submissions will be recommended to be implemented. Each of the 6 displays will get receive 10-15 hours of staff time over an 8-week period or a total of 60-75 hours of staff time.

A work plan has been generated to ensure an equal balance of staff resources and staggered start of participants to cover a 12-week period. This will end in a gala launch with an opportunity for participants to speak about their experience.

Interpretation materials will be generated by participants of the program with a BHS PowerPoint Template. This will ensure that all interpretation material is done in a consistent manner. Each display will receive its own digital display to assist them in telling their story.

### Program Goals

The goals of the C-CEP are:

- To engage new audiences in the museum by allowing their voice to be heard through their display;
- To demonstrate to the community that the museum can be a place that reflects the needs and the demands of the community; and,
- To increase community engagement with the Brant Historical Society.

### Program Objectives

The program objectives of C-CEP are:

- The creation of 6 community-driven displays in a 12-week period using the Brant Historical Society as its basis;
- Survey results of participants will show that the museum is reflective of the community that it serves; and,
- Attendance and admission donations will show an increase Year-over-Year.

### Expected Outcomes

The C-CEP will have the following outcomes:

- The creation of 6 displays of high quality as survey by participants of the program and visitors of the exhibit
- The survey of visitors will score that the museum is reflective of the community above 3.5/5.
- Attendance over the same period will increase by 20% and admission donations will increase by 5%

Success Indicators

Success of the C-CEP may take several forms and should not just be measured by a single metric. We wish to create tiers of success indicators highlighting what can reasonably be achieved or a WOW factor of success that may not be attainable, but closer to an ideal of the best possible outcome. In this manner, we will likely hit somewhere between the target and the ideal. Our success table is found below:

Success Indicator	Target	WOW-Factor
The C-CEP will create 6 displays of a high quality ...	With an average rating for the quality of the displays will be above 4.0.	With an average rating for the quality of the displays will be above 4.5.
The survey will show that the museum is reflective of the community ...	With an average rating of 3.5 or higher.	With an average rating of 4.0 or higher.
Attendance over the same period will ...	Increase by 20%.	Increase by 50%.
Admission donations will ...	Increase by 5%.	Increase by 10%.



## Timeline

A copy of the Timeline is provided in Appendix A. The timeline is centered on the Week 3 deadline of the Grant Submission. The Brant Community Foundation Grant cycle accepts applications at the end of January, March, June, and September. This means that this Project could be selected at the start of these months to fit in with scheduling other normal museum tasks. The recommended start of the project would be in June, resulting in the exhibit launch in January, and the Grant Report Submitted by the beginning of April.

The timeline is broken down into four phases or components: 1) Pre-Planning; 2) Main Program; 3) Exhibit; and 4 Evaluation. Across the top is the number of weeks, suggesting that all 4 phases will take 43 weeks. Each week where a task is required, the number of hours per task is written in each cell as a guideline. We used three time periods per task per week, allocating time as half day (4 hours), full day (8 hours), or two days (16 hours). At the end of the timeline is the total number of hours of each phase and the cumulative hours spent on the project. This is translated into the total staff cost for the project of about \$4,500.

## Marketing Outline

Whom	What	Where	When	Why
Media Contact List	Media Release	Brantford Expositor, Brant News, School Board, Chamber of Commerce, City of Brantford, County of Brant	August 1 <sup>st</sup>	Communicate to media before reaching out the next week for follow up
Older Adult Members of the Community	Request for Applications	Brantford Expositor or Brant News Article	Beginning of August	To communicate to the general public an opportunity to be involved with the BHS
Young Parents in the Community (Post-University to under 40)	Request for Applications	Face book Campaign with Flyer for applications	Beginning of August	To attract young people to the organization and allow them to contribution
Children	Request for Applications	Flyer Campaign with Schools	Mid-August	To create involvement with local school groups to participate in the program as part of their History Curriculum
Local Businesses	Request for Applications	Chamber of Commerce Communications	Mid-August	To encourage involvement from the local business community
Members of the Brant Historical Society	Request for Applications	BHS Newsletter; BHS Mailchimp communications	Late August	To communicate to Member an opportunity to be involved with the organization

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Whom	What	Where	When	Why
Local Community Organizations	Request for Applications	City of Brantford Blog Post	Late August; to be spent out before Labour Day	To encourage involvement from not-for-profits
Marketing Firm	Exhibit Poster Design	Octopus Red	Early October	To create advertising materials for the exhibit to have in hand mid-November.
Commuters between Paris and Brantford	Exhibit Promotion	Digital Billboard on Paris Road	Mid-January & Heritage Week	Announcing the opening of the exhibit to the community
Mall Visitors	Exhibit Promotion	Tourism Centre Board	Mid-November	Announcing the opening of the exhibit to the community
Children & Young Families	Exhibit Promotion	Flyer with coupon for special family rate	Late-November	Announce the Exhibit to children and young families as low cost event
BHS Members	Exhibit Promotion	Newsletter and Mailchimp Notifications	Late November	To allow members to visit the exhibit
Facebook Followers	Exhibit Promotion	Facebook Posts	Starting Mid-December	To inform people who follow the museum on Facebook about the upcoming exhibit
General Public	Exhibit Promotion	Rogers TV	Late December	Announcing the opening of the exhibit to the community
General Public	Exhibit Promotion	Brantford Expositor Article	Early January	Announcing the opening of the exhibit to the community

For Immediate Release – Brantford, Ontario (August 1, 2017)

Have you ever wanted to curate your own exhibit for people to see? The Brant Historical Society is accepting applications for its Community-Curator Exhibit Program that will provide participants to create their own displays on topics they propose. A family history, a favourite building, company histories, specific community events or celebrations, and community organizations are just some suggestions of topics that could be used. An individual, a group of people, a local business, or a local community organization, can submit proposals.

To apply applicants must:

- Visit [www.brantmuseums.ca/community-curator](http://www.brantmuseums.ca/community-curator) to apply
- Fill out the online form with your contact information and the answer to 3 simple questions:
  1. What is the title or theme for your proposed display?
  2. Why is this story an important part of Brant County's History?
  3. How are you an expert knowledge on your proposed topic?

Applications must be completed by online submission by 5PM on Friday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The program will run over an 8-week period from September until December. Selected participants to be eligible to receive a \$500 budget for materials in putting your display together, up to 15 hours of professional museum expertise in planning your display, and invitations to the opening gala of your exhibit in January 2018!

For media comment, please contact

Nathan Etherington  
Programming & Community Coordinator  
Brant Historical Society  
(519) 752-2483  
[nathan.etherington@brantmuseum.ca](mailto:nathan.etherington@brantmuseum.ca)

## **Schedule of Events (Main Program)**

### Group Preliminary Meeting Schedule (4 hours)

1. Introduction of program and expectations (15 minutes)
2. Handling of museum artifacts (20 minutes)
3. Researching using Past Perfect (25 minutes)
4. Artifact Scavenger Hunt Activity (30 minutes)
5. Break (15 minutes)
6. Results of Scavenger Hunt (10 minutes)
7. Expectation for midpoint meeting (5 minutes)
8. Free Time (1.75 hours)
9. Wrap-up and Questions (15 minutes)

### Group Midpoint Check-in

1. Review and Check work providing feedback on work to this point (40 minutes)
2. Laying out your display (25 minutes)
3. Creating your interpretation material (25 minutes)
4. Break (15 minutes)
5. Expectations for final meeting (15 minutes)
6. Free Time (1.75 hours)
7. Wrap-up and Questions

### Final Check-in

1. Expectation of display to be complete by the end of the week (5 minutes)
2. Review and Check work providing feedback (40 minutes)
3. Free Time (3 hours)
4. Wrap-up announcing survey and gala invitations (15 minutes)