

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
7TH COUNCIL, 48TH SESSION

TABLED DOCUMENT NO. 12-48

TABLED ON JANUARY 26, 1973

MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT - NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Why should the people and the Government of the Northwest Territories develop Museums in the Northwest Territories?

Possible answers to the above question are:

1. To preserve the cultural and historical artifacts of our forefathers, the present generation and future generations where they are available to the people whose history and culture is being preserved firstly, and secondly, where they are available to tourists and visitors.
2. For educational purposes. Where the maximum number of Northern children and adults are afforded the opportunity of being able to view, study, research and appreciate their history and culture and where Southerners may do likewise.
3. For economic reasons. Constructing and operating museums provides employment for carpenters, machine operators, artists, curators, Directors, janitors, etc.

Museums in an age of greater affluence and leisure time have become major tourist attractions to the areas in which they are located, thus bringing the tourist dollar to the tourist service industries, creating employment opportunities and generally providing more economic opportunities to the regions or areas involved.

All of the above mentioned objectives for museum development would be best achieved through well constructed and well operated Regional or Community museums as opposed to a major central museum facility.

Regional museums with major displays portraying the history and culture primarily of that area; examples --

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| Delta Area | -- Loucheux Indian and Eskimo, trapping, hunting, oil development, explorers, etc. |
| Yellowknife Area | -- Mining, bush pilots, explorers, Dog Rib and Yellowknife Indian, etc. |
| Fort Smith Area | -- Chipewyan, Cree and Slavey Indian, early transportation, missionaries, etc. |
| Coppermine Area | -- Eskimo, history, culture and crafts, Arctic explorers, etc. |
| Frobisher Bay | -- Eastern Arctic Eskimo culture, early explorers and traders, etc. |

would create a superior, more natural museum organization. Traveling exchange displays to each area would provide greater opportunities for Northerners to know their neighbours' history and culture

in greater depth. Regional museums, properly co-ordinated, would maximize the benefits to the majority of Northern people as opposed to a central museum that would maximize the benefits to one community, namely Yellowknife, but would minimize the benefits to the majority.

Who should logically be in the most informed positions to make recommendations as to what Northerners want for their museum Policy?

It would be reasonable to expect that the people in Northern communities who are already involved in planning and operating museums would be consulted. The Northwest Territories Historical Advisory Board, appointed by the Commissioner in 1969 and made up of residents from across the North with great interest and knowledge on matters in this field -- people like Chief Cazon of Fort Simpson, Rev. J. Sperry of Coppermine and Fort Smith, Rev. F. Ebner of Hay River, Mr. V. Allen of Inuvik, Rev. Ducharme of Eskimo Point, Brother H. Sarreault of Fort Smith, to name a few, should certainly be consulted. However, such was not the case in formulating our Museum Program as presented to the 46th session of Territorial Council.

Why was the "Ad hoc Committee" composed primarily of southern people, no offense meant to their ability, with little or no northern representation?

Dr. W.E. Taylor, Ottawa, National Museum of Man

Miss B. Taylor, Ottawa, National Museum of Man

Mr. L. Martin, Halifax, Nova Scotia Museum

Dr. R. Carney, Edmonton, N.W.T. Dept. of Education at that time

Mr. A. Stevenson, Ottawa, D.I.A.&N.D.

Why was the "ad hoc committee" instructed by the Commissioner, "...to provide a short term operational plan with the construction of a central museum by 1973 as a major theme."? *#1

This very important limitation given the committee pre-determined the direction which any program could take and is the major objection of those involved with Regional and Community museums.

Why is the Territorial Council, the elected representatives of the people, not shown as having any authority or responsibility in the "Suggested Organization Chart Northwest Territories Museum"? *#2

*#1 Museum Program, page 1, Recommendation to Council #4-46

*#2 Museum Program, appendix 3, Recommendation to Council #4-46

What is the justification of a \$1,000,000 construction expenditure on one central facility plus an annual operating cost of \$247,500?

How much money is specified for 1973 construction, upgrading and operation of Regional and Community Museums in the N.W.T.?

Did the people of Yellowknife and/or members of Territorial Council approve the N.W.T. Government takeover of The Museum of the North?

Why would the N.W.T. Government not provide any monies for construction or operation of existing N.W.T. museums in 1972, yet totally finance the operation of The Museum of the North?

Why has the office of the Commissioner of the N.W.T. interfered with the request, by the Northern Life Museum at Fort Smith, for assistance from the Secretary of State's National Museum Policy Fund?

The Northern Life Museum committee has made communications with all Communities in the N.W.T. who have museum operations as well as members of the N.W.T. Historical Society and N.W.T. Chambers of Commerce. Replies give overwhelming support to Regional Museum Development with circulating displays as opposed to a major central museum with an extension program.

We therefore request the Council of the N.W.T. at the 48th Session to pass legislation that will:

- (a) halt planning that would construct a major central museum at Yellowknife;
- (b) produce legislation for development of a Regional/Community Museum Policy involving Northerners;
- (c) give the Northwest Territories Historical Advisory Board greater means and authority to speak on behalf of N.W.T. Museum Societies with its recommendations going to Council; and
- (d) involve the N.W.T. Council in the Organization Chart of the N.W.T. Museum Policy.

Thank you,
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CLARKSON/jg

Darrell F. Clarkson,
Chairman