

# The Megaphone

July 28, 2011

**meg·a·phone** [**meg-uh-fohn**] –*noun*

1. a cone-shaped device for magnifying or directing the voice, chiefly used in addressing a large audience out of doors or in calling to someone at a distance.

www.dictionary.com

Hello everyone,

In this month's Megaphone we talk about a fun, engaging activity for visitors of museums: scavenger hunts. We feature hunts developed by the Bengough & District Museum and Government House.

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Krista Kaufman, a student at the University of Regina, recently started working for the Bengough & District Museum for the summer. During the first week of working she was in the process of cleaning and preparing the museum for guests when she came up with the fun idea of creating a museum scavenger hunt.

Wandering around the museum she came up with a list of items of interest, focusing on items that were not usually noticed. These items were not main points of interest and were items that were not necessarily easy to find. The list turned out to be about a page and a half in length and includes items such as:

- The Canadian Maple Leaf (actual leaf);
- Bengough School Banner;
- \$.25 bill;
- Steam Whistle;
- Miners Certificate;
- Barber Chair;
- Old Movie Projector;
- Ad for 1954 Chevrolet;
- Miniature Bobsleigh;
- WWII Medals;
- J.W. Bengough Caricatures;
- Confederation Plaque.

The scavenger hunt was created for people of all ages and can take anywhere from 3 hours to a few days to finish. There is even a draw for a prize that will take place at the end of August for those who were successful in finding all of the items on the list.

“When I made it (scavenger hunt) I was not thinking about difficulty or background knowledge a person may have. I was surprised by some of the reactions I got. Kids told me it was hard (but they enjoyed themselves... I know that even if they never said so), adults did it too, and everyone had fun. The strangest part is, no one asked me about prizes. Not until I mentioned it. I think people just liked the challenge.” Krista says.

To spread the word about the hunt, Krista announced it at the school and also during the Bengough Centennial Celebrations. She even took a few copies of it to their local library. From there kids started to pass around copies to each other.

“The hunt has gone on all summer, and I currently have 15 in progress, 25 completed and a handful that took a sheet, started and left. This does not include the number of kids that did multiple hunts or did the same one more than once.” Krista notes.

Krista has since done up 2 more shorter hunts for smaller age groups and for kids who have already finished the first hunt. She also believes that this hunt was such a success because it not only helped visitors learn about the museum but it helped her to learn about the museum.

“When I did this hunt up, I could not have told you much about the items, I could not have found them again if I had tried. But doing the hunt with everyone I learned where everything was, what people thought of it, and it made me want to learn more.”

MAS would like to take this opportunity to celebrate Krista’s efforts on this unique idea and we encourage other museums to try it for themselves. It is something that museums of all budgets and sizes can develop and that people of all ages and backgrounds can participate in. This is a great example of an activity that engages youth and brings in more visitors, strengthening the bond between the museum and the community.

Krista is also currently putting together temporary displays for the museum. Some of the displays include the JW Bengough exhibit, a display on the royal family, a display on baseball and a display featuring clothing through the centuries. She is also working on a display which features new, local artists which will coincide with the upcoming Gateway Festival, put on by the Bengough Municipal Art Council. The Festival features local clothing, food and artists and will be coming to Bengough on July 22<sup>nd</sup> through the 24<sup>th</sup>.

For more information on The Gateway Festival please visit: <http://gatewayfestival.ca/>

For more information on the Bengough & District Museum please visit:  
<http://www.southcentralmuseums.ca/bengough.html>



Another MAS member, Government House, has developed an outdoor version of a scavenger hunt called “Geocaching in the Garden”. Geocaching is a free program available for all individual visitors and pre-formed groups. It involves using a GPS (Global Positioning System) to navigate the Government House Edwardian Gardens.

The program begins with an introduction to the GPS receivers and geogaching and then visitors are able to explore the 8.5 acres of Edwardian Gardens. Clues and GPS in hand visitors navigate around the property solving puzzles and learning about the significance of historical landmarks and features in the Edwardian Gardens.

Some feedback from visitors include:

“It’s a fun activity that we don’t get to try anywhere else... plus, it’s free!”

“The high-tech scavenger hunt was awesome”

“Combining history and technology for a fun adventure”

“It was a great way for our family to learn together”

MAS would also like to congratulate Government House on their recent win at the 2011 Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan Heritage Architecture Excellence Awards for Landscaping. Their win was based on a recent project to rehabilitate the historic Edwardian Gardens to the Edwardian style that was popular when the gardens were originally planted. They now provide a welcoming green space, allowing visitors to further enjoy the richness and beauty of this heritage-landmark. The grounds are a family-friendly, accessible public space available at no cost.

For more information on the Government House please visit:

<http://www.governmenthouse.gov.sk.ca/>

Does your museum have a good idea, program or activity that you would like featured in a future issue of *Megaphone*? You can even feature a previous program that you felt was successful and might be beneficial to other museums. This is your chance to share your museum's great ideas with the museum community.

*Megaphone* is released on the last Thursday of every month so if you contact us by the middle of the month we can make sure that your item makes it into the *Megaphone*. We can even work on it with you. You can give us content as well as pictures and together we can create something you are happy with.

Feel free to contact me, Brittany Knudsen, the Communications Coordinator by phone at (306) 780-9451 or by email at [communications@saskmuseums.org](mailto:communications@saskmuseums.org).