

# The Megaphone

October 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 feature the Saskatchewan African Canadian Heritage Museum. Read on as we introduce you to the organization and the many things they do to celebrate African-Canadians in Saskatchewan.

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The Saskatchewan African Canadian Heritage Museum is a provincial organization whose primary purpose is to explore, celebrate, document and preserve the history, heritage and contribution of people of African ancestry.

It began as an informal organization in 2002 and in 2004 formalized its status as a non-profit corporation under the provincial *Non-Profits Corporation Act, 1995*. An elected board of directors governs the organization.

Throughout the year SACHM's board, committees and members plan and implement activities in many areas such as the providing a virtual museum, celebration of Canadians of African ancestry and providing services for education and outreach.

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## Virtual Museum

The virtual museum came to be as a way of researching, documenting and sharing information, stories and photos of people of African ancestry. It is a collection of heritage, contributions and journeys of people of African ancestry who have lived or who now live in Saskatchewan.

There are currently 3 galleries within the virtual museum: 1.) Virtual Museum – Heritage Individuals and Families 2.) Living Members and 3.) Families.

The galleries list people of African ancestry. You can click on a name and photo and it displays a detailed profile of the individual. Each profile is divided up into sections: Life in Saskatchewan, Contributions, Ancestry and Biography.

Does this sound interesting to you? Click on the following link to see for yourself!  
<http://www.sachm.org/gallery1.htm>

There are also downloadable fact sheets available on the SACHM website of interesting biographies of The La Fayette Family, Dr. Alfred Schmitz Shadd, the Oklahoma Pioneers & the Shiloh Baptist Church, Baseball Heroes as well as a Historic Timeline and a Bibliography for Local Information. To view and download these fact sheets please see the downloads section of their website: <http://www.sachm.org/PDFgallery.htm>

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## Celebrating Canadians of African Ancestry

The Saskatchewan African Canadian Heritage Museum works to offer workshops, conferences, co-sponsoring cultural events and community celebrations as well as recognizing individuals, groups and organizations that have made major contributions to their community and/or province.



Image courtesy of Carol LaFayette- Boyd

One recent project focuses on the establishment of public art piece called The *Honouring Tree*. The *Honouring Tree* is a project initiated by SACHM Board and membership as part of the 2010 Centennial celebrations to commemorate the 1910 settlement of people of African ancestry in Regina and other parts of Saskatchewan. This project has been a close collaboration with the Regina Multicultural Council (RMC) with whom they were able to access Federal Government funding under Canadian Heritage: Building Communities through Arts and Heritage Program. The project has also received support through partnerships with the City of Regina, Wascana Centre Authority, University of Regina Sculpture Department, SACHM members' donations and Regina community at large.

The *Honouring Tree* is a symbol of life, legacy and diversity. It represents opportunity, freedom, hope and belonging. It is a polished, stainless steel kinetic sculpture reaching up to 13 meters. The pentagonal stars turn slowly in the breeze, flashing mirrored bursts of sun light on the snow and the Wascana green. The stars honour the African pioneers and those who came later, and those who will come. The points are the 5 elements, earth, air, fire, water and spirit, and the circle, representing the laws of the cosmos binds them all together to create life.

“This is not just a symbol, it is about building a community together.” - SACHM

The *Honouring Tree* was installed in Wascana Park near the Royal Saskatchewan Museum (RSM) on August 30, 2011. Wendy Fitch, our Director of Museum Development and Co-Manager attended the dedication and unveiling of the Honouring Tree on September 30, 2011.

“I felt a profound sense of respect for those individuals who came here, often from a great distance and alone, to build the place we all call home. Thank you.”

- Wendy Fitch



Image courtesy of Carol LaFayette- Boyd

Tree donations are still being accepted in the areas of:

**“Nurturing the Tree”** – funds to create a legacy and a future for the Tree, for their first event, a Regina Annual Family Walkathon to be held on every last Saturday of the month of June.

**“Legacy of the Tree”** – funds will be used to create Diversity Legacy educational packages. These packages will be prepared by two graduate summer students and will target elementary classes and junior high school levels. The packages aim to bring together the historical contribution of African Canadians who lived and worked in Saskatchewan.

**“Knowledge of the Tree”** – funds will be used to establish a Diversity Legacy scholarship fund. There will be 2 scholarship funds to support 2 students entering university or college education as follows: A student who has demonstrated commitment or plans to advance diversity, equality and equity as part of his/her studies/career.

**“Greening of the Tree”** – funds will be used to support the ongoing publicity, management, communication, and overall day to day activities of the project.

To donate please visit their website: <http://www.sachm.org/custom.htm>

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## **Education and Outreach**

SACHM provides speakers for schools, employers and other institutions; collaborates with governments and a variety of organizations on projects that enhance awareness of African-Canadian history and improved understanding of equity, equality and human dignity; collaborates with others in organizing events that celebrate diversity; works with individuals and other groups and organizations that undertake heritage and museum projects; and initiates activities that offer youth historical insights, useful skills, positive experiences and a better understanding of human dignity.

*Would you like to know more about SACHM?* Be sure to visit their website: [www.sachm.org](http://www.sachm.org)

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Would you like your museum featured in a *Megaphone*? Let us know! We can work with you to create a feature you are happy with. What can you talk about? Past, current or upcoming events, activities, collections or even something as simple as an idea you would like to share with the museum community.

If you are interested please contact: Brittany Knudsen, Communications Coordinator by email at [communications@saskmuseums.org](mailto:communications@saskmuseums.org) or by phone at (306) 780-9451.