

Inverness Miner's Museum & Community Archives Report

Project Start Date: 3 May 2013

Project End Date: 31 March 2015

Overview

Through the generous funding of The History Education Network, and the Inverness Miners Museum, our goal to build an interactive digital archive has been achieved. We used the domain name: www.invernessminersmuseum.ca since much of the current content of the archive, as well as much of the project's inspiration, comes from the Inverness Miner's Museum. Moving forward we will collaborate closely with the museum while the archive diversifies its content.

Results and Outcomes

As discussed in our grant application, we built an online archive for the community of Inverness, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Canada. This archive features a searchable database as well as resource pages which group relevant artefacts into separate research categories. These include: The Community; Immigration; IR&CC (which includes all information related to the railway lines operating there, which changed names several times over the years); Mining the Depths; Company Homes; Strike!; The Honorable Allan J. MacEachen; Cultural Activities. Within each resource page, visitors will find numerous artefacts in various media.

We also designed several historical activities for use with this online archive. Our vision is to have Social Studies teachers use the Historical Activities in their classrooms. However, these activities can be completed by any visitor to the website.

We created a space for an online community of those interested in local history. People are invited to create an account with us, or use their Facebook account to join our online community. Those with accounts are able to post comments on artefacts, documents, or photographs, and also share their own pieces of local history with our archive and a wider community.

The website is now accessible though we continue to welcome feedback and suggestions for improving the user-experience. We will also be adding some final elements before our official launch in July 2015. For our official launch, we will advertise in the local newspaper, *The Inverness Oran*, and conduct a presentation during the Inverness Miner's Museum's annual celebration.

Issues and Challenges

This has been a challenging and rewarding experience for me personally. As project coordinator, I found it more difficult than expected to get timely help from the project collaborators. Coordinating this project became more challenging when I moved to a northern Quebec community, and the others went back to their teaching positions. Motivation was very low for everyone while school was in session, and correspondence was sparse and infrequent. When summer arrived, it was equally difficult to have collaborators commit to doing much work due to busy and conflicting schedules.

Everyone involved had good intentions, but in reality, finding time for this project was a low priority for several collaborators. In the end, despite our difficulties, we accomplished what we had set out to do.

Moving Forward

We feel we have built a solid foundation on which we can grow our online collection and online community.