



## FRIENDS' NOTES SPRING 2009

Newsletter of the Friends of Royal Alberta Museum Society  
Supporting the programs and exhibits of the Royal Alberta Museum

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*FRIENDS' NOTES*  
**EDITOR:**  
Marla J. Daniels



Godfrey Huybregts  
President, FRAMS

### MISSION STATEMENT

FRAMS will support and enhance the objectives and activities of the Royal Alberta Museum through a mutually beneficial relationship.

**Friends of Royal Alberta Museum Society (FRAMS)** is incorporated under the Societies Act and is a Federal Educational Charity registered as #118933225RR0001.  
**Address:** 12845 – 102 Avenue NW, Edmonton AB T5N 0M6  
**Tel:** 780-453-9103 **Fax:** 780-422-5681  
**E-mail:** [marilyn@framsociety.ca](mailto:marilyn@framsociety.ca)  
**Web site:** <http://www.framsociety.ca>

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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's been quite a ride. Six years ago, I joined the Friends of Royal Alberta Museum Society as a Director with little knowledge and a lot of enthusiasm. Through the kindness of members and Board directors, I quickly found my feet though and have enjoyed my three terms, most recently as president.

During my tenure, I was able to cheer the government's commitment to renew the museum, I witnessed the Queen rename it and was a part of the Society's move from gift shop and cafeteria operator to a strong non-profit community organization.

Our bylaws say you can only stay on as a director for a maximum of six years and so this is my final year on the Board. I'm confident that the directors who remain will do a tremendous job of making the Society bigger and better; in sponsorship, membership and advocacy. Being an advocate is particularly important because - as a branch within a department within a government - museum staff do not have the freedom to speak publicly about policy issues that might negatively impact them. As the community's voice, this is the Society's job and, over the last few years, I think we've done a better job of doing that.

The major disappointment for me is that the promise made in 2005 of Museum Renewal has not come to pass. The 2009 Alberta budget capital plan called for \$56 million over three years to continue work to 'refurbish' the Royal Alberta Museum. This is 75% less than was previously allocated. We are in touch with Minister Lindsay Blackett's office to gather more details, but we have had no response to date (at the time this message was written). As a private citizen and member of the Society, I hope you will join me in asking government to honour its original commitment. It's the least we can do for a facility that means so much to Albertans.

Godfrey Huybregts  
President, FRAMS

PS – Please join us at the 2009 Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, June 24, as we elect your new FRAMS Board of Directors for 2009-10.

## MUSEUM DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Dr. Bruce McGillivray  
Executive Director  
Royal Alberta Museum

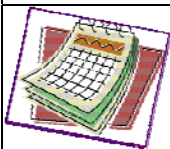
The team at the Royal Alberta Museum is gearing up for another exciting summer! We're honoured to host the North American premiere of the *Wildlife Photographer of the Year* exhibition, 2008 edition. Hailing from the Natural History Museum in London, England, and co-produced by *BBC Wildlife Magazine*, this installment of the long-running contest features more than 80 of the very best images submitted from around the globe in 2008. This will be the third time we've hosted this ever-changing show, which is always met with rave reviews from our patrons.

I hope that this new exhibit will inspire Albertans to venture outdoors with camera in hand to discover and to photograph their own images of the natural world. After all, inspiring wonder and curiosity is a major role played by museums everywhere.

For the second consecutive year, your Museum is giving kids mammoth opportunities for inspiration and exploration in a full slate of exciting summer camps. The camps are filling up quickly, so if you're a Friend looking to immerse your children in meaningful and fun summer activities, I encourage you to visit our website for all the camp details and registration. The summer camp program has been made possible through the direct support of the Friends Society. One of the Society's (and the Museum's) most passionate supporters, Godfrey Huybregts, has dedicated a great deal of effort seeking the funds required to support Museum programs.

Godfrey has been with the Friends of Royal Alberta Museum Society for the past six years. When I asked him why he's dedicated his time to our facility, he replied, "I've always enjoyed history and culture and so the Museum has always been an attraction for me and my family. As a person who believes volunteering is an important part of life, it seemed a natural fit to join the Friends and try and help the Museum grow."

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## FRIENDS' CALENDAR

Please mark these dates on your calendar! Unless otherwise noted, all events are at the Royal Alberta Museum.

May 23 to September 13, 2009: *Wildlife Photographer of the Year*

June 20 to October 31, 2009: *Hummingbirds of the Americas*

June 24: **Friends of Royal Alberta Museum Society Annual General Meeting**

October 31 to January 17, 2010: *Diamonds*

## BOARD BUZZ

- ❖ The Friends of Royal Alberta Museum Society (FRAMS) is grateful to receive \$9,712 in funding from the \$20 million **Community Spirit Program**. This new donor-driven grant program can be used to help fund an organization's operating costs, programs and/or capital projects.
- ❖ More good news! The **fundraising casino** held in October 2008 generated \$81,000 in revenue for the Society and Museum programs. Thank you, once again, to those who volunteered and stay tuned for our next casino in 2010!
- ❖ The Board has agreed that FRAMS will support the Royal Alberta Museum's **Discovery Room** with a contribution of \$30,100 from the casino proceeds for 2009-10.
- ❖ Enclosed with the print issue of this newsletter is a copy of the **new Friends' membership brochure** produced by the Membership Committee and the Communications Committee. Please share your copy with a friend and help us grow our member numbers!
- ❖ The Board has appointed the chartered accountant firm of **Radke Professional Corporation** to conduct a review engagement for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2009.

## WILD ALBERTA GALLERY UPGRADES WITH FRIAA FUNDS

In July 2007, the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA)\* and the Friends of Royal Alberta Museum Society (FRAMS) announced an exciting new partnership that would support environmental education at the Royal Alberta Museum for the next decade.

FRIAA is investing \$1.25 million through FRAMS to enrich the Wild Alberta Gallery, allowing the Royal Alberta Museum to develop new interpretive elements that will help Albertans and visitors to better understand our forests, the issues they face, and how industry, researchers and government are working to ensure a healthy future for our forests. FRIAA's generous gift also helps create and sustain new programs in the Wild Alberta Gallery through 2017.

The project team has been working on two gallery upgrade initiatives: the entry area and Life Cycle of a Forest.

The entry area, including the boreal forest diorama grouping, has been upgraded to provide a better welcoming and orientation experience for visitors. Key upgrade elements include:

1. New entry sign that suggests outdoors, wilderness and parks.
2. Installation of a new photo-mural backdrop of a forest over the marble wall to suggest that the visitors are entering an outdoor experience.
3. A new welcome and orientation sign inside the gallery that, like the entry sign, suggests outdoors, wilderness and parks. This sign gives visitors a general orientation to the gallery (i.e. trail head map) and information about FRIAA sponsored programming in the gallery.
4. Installation of three additional pine trees around the welcome sign to further create the sense of being outdoors on the trail.
5. Installation of new log seating further reinforcing the outdoor wilderness theme.
6. Installation of three new video projectors to create the effect of dappled forest light.
7. Consolidation of the donor recognition information on the back side of the information panel so it is naturally seen on the exit of the gallery.



The Life Cycle of a Forest initiative calls for the conversion of the *Species at Risk* section into a dynamic and changing forest experience. Through a combination of synchronized video screens, theatrical lighting, audio speakers and special effects, visitors will experience a full life cycle of a forest from fire to old growth in less than 5 minutes.

*\*FRIAA was established in 1997 to promote and initiate projects that enhance Alberta's forests. Its sponsorship gift was made in celebration of the Association's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and is an expression of FRIAA's commitment to the promotion of responsible environmental stewardship.*

## **Museum Director's Message continued from page 2**

And grow it has. Godfrey and his fellow Board members have instituted many changes, and one that he's particularly proud of is the introduction of the Society's *GO! Program*, which allows disadvantaged people to visit the Museum for free. The Society has also been the major sponsor of Museum School, allowing full classes of schoolchildren to experience a week of immersive – and fun – learning in our galleries and behind-the-scenes places. “A hard working Board and a committed membership made this happen,” said Godfrey.

In 2006, Godfrey's desire to contribute as much as possible led him to the role of President of the Friends Society. During his tenure as President, Godfrey helped facilitate what stands as the largest single donation in Museum history – a gift of \$1.25 million from the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA). Fruits of this gift can be experienced right now in *Wild Alberta* in the form of new interpreter-led programs, and, in the near future, physical upgrades to the gallery will immerse our visitors in aspects of Alberta's rich natural environments without having to venture outdoors!

Although his role as President is coming to an end, Godfrey will remain an active member of the Friends Society. He once described the Museum as “the one place where the spirit and essence of who we are as a people and as a place is captured and modeled for all to see. Having, preserving and interpreting cultural treasures all in one place is a priceless asset to Alberta.”

It's my belief that the real assets are the Albertans like Godfrey who continue to support your Museum's vision and goals through the gift of time. On behalf of everyone at the Royal Alberta Museum, I express our deepest gratitude to Godfrey for the leadership and passion he displayed during his time as President. My reluctance to see him step down is tempered somewhat by two facts: he will remain an active member of our Friends, and that the Society is made up of others who share his enthusiasm and passion. - WBM

**CURATORS' CHOICES will return in a future issue of *Friends' Notes*.**

### **Help us grow our membership!**

Enclosed with the print issue of this newsletter is a copy of the new FRAMS membership brochure produced by the Membership Committee and the Communications Committee. Please share your copy with a friend and help us grow our member numbers!

**After enjoying this issue of *Friends' Notes*, please forward it to friends, family and colleagues.**