

District 6290 Grants Committee

District and Global Grants

Approved November 13, 2018 for Rotary Years 2018-2019

DG-11

Blind River

District Local Grant

Grant Title: Display Panels for the Timber Village Museum in Blind River

Amount Awarded: \$1,550 USD (\$2,000 CA)

The Timber Village Museum, owned and operated by the Town of Blind River, is accessible from and visible to Highway 17, which is the Trans-Canada Highway and the single most important thoroughfare across this part of Canada. The Museum has various exhibits, both permanent and temporary, that focus on the social and economic history of Blind River and area. Blind River was once home to one of the largest white pine sawmills in all of North America. Among other items, the Museum exhibits artifacts from this sawmill and affiliated logging camps.

In 2017, the Museum underwent a complete re-vamp of its heritage displays. The layout of the Heritage Gallery was re-worked to better tell the story of Blind River's history. The gallery was painted, partitions were constructed, and artifacts were re-grouped to make better use of the space. Furthermore, several artifacts were retrieved from storage and accommodated in the new exhibits. Phase I of the project was completed in June 2017 by the Museum Curator and a team of volunteers.

The Museum is looking to move forward with Phase II of the project: improve existing labels and create a series of interpretive panels, of which at this time there are none.

The goal of this project is to enhance the Museum's heritage exhibits with a series of educational and informative display panels. This will be achieved through the creation of fifteen professionally designed interpretive panels that contain information

and photos printed on aluminum/plastic composite. The text on these panels will correspond with the themes of the artifacts on display and will include the following exhibit topics/themes: pre-fur trade history, fur trade, natural history, seasonal logging practices, logging camp life, McFadden Mill, transportation (logging), Mississagi forest fire, railway, entertainment, pioneer lifestyles/agriculture, medical, downtown merchants, police services, and mining.

Because of space constraints in the Heritage Gallery, information on these interpretive panels will be printed in English, only. Translation into French and Ojibway is a goal for the future. The Museum is open to the public ten months a year (March – December) and sees, on average, 4,000 visitors each year, including numerous visits from school groups. Given the location of the Museum, it sees visitors from all over the world, with peak tourist season occurring from May to October. In the offseason, the Museum services the local communities and hosts school programming, art exhibitions, and special events. Since most tours are self-guided, informative text panels for each heritage display would greatly enhance the visitor and educational experience, and we expect these improvements will encourage more people to visit the Museum.