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Chair

Ms. Julie Dabrusin

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● (0850)

[Translation]

The Chair (Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.)): I now call the meeting to order.

[English]

I know that everyone is excited to get started with this meeting. I am going to jump in, because we have a lot of people to hear from today.

Welcome, everyone, to the 99th meeting of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage—one away from 100.

Hon. Peter Van Loan (York—Simcoe, CPC): It doesn't feel like more than 97.

The Chair: We're continuing our study on museums today.

I would like to welcome our witnesses.

We have, from the Royal Ontario Museum, Josh Basseches; and from the Canadian Federation of Friends of Museums, we have Bruce Bolton, Dennis Moulding, and Anastasia Pivnicki.

[Translation]

Lastly, we have Lydie Olga Ntap, from the Musée de la Femme.

Welcome everyone.

We'll start with presentations. Each witness will have 10 minutes.

First, we'll hear from the Royal Ontario Museum representative.

Mr. Josh Basseches (Director and Chief Executive Officer, Royal Ontario Museum): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good morning everyone.

[English]

Thank you for the invitation to speak with you today. As the chair mentioned, my name is Josh Basseches, and I'm Director and CEO of the Royal Ontario Museum. It truly is an honour to be here with you this morning.

I believe that museums are vital community builders and trusted sources of information. In our complex and media-saturated world, where facts compete with alternative facts for attention, they are more important than ever. Museums were curating our understanding long before Instagram and Facebook. Canadian society is undergoing rapid change. If museums are to remain essential sources of insight, wonder, and knowledge, if they are to be catalysts for our

diverse, informed civil society of the future, then they must evolve as well. They must refocus outward toward our communities even more.

I've dedicated my 30-year career to museums. I've worked in such art institutions as Boston's Museum of Fine Arts and the Peabody Essex Museum, the oldest museum in North America, and in such science institutions as the Harvard Museum of Natural History. For the past two very exciting years, I've had the privilege to be at the ROM. Armed with graduate degrees in both art history and business administration, I look at museums from a vantage point that integrates the content of what we do with management and financial awareness.

Museums steward our past, interpret our present, and help shape our future. They have a vital impact on people's lives. In fact, overall annual attendance at museums typically exceeds that of all professional sporting events combined. Museums are change agents and springboards to happier, healthier lives and stronger communities. They have great potential to help transform society in the 21st century.

Let me share some of the approaches we're using at the ROM as an example of one institution's efforts to navigate our rapidly changing times. The ROM, as you may know, is our country's largest and most comprehensive museum of art, culture, and nature. One of the top 10 museums in North America by many metrics, it is among the most internationally respected encyclopedic institutions. We are also proud to be a recognized leader in research, learning, community outreach, and accessibility.

Just a few numbers tell a compelling story about the ROM in recent years. In 2017 almost 1.4 million people visited the ROM, a 49% increase over just three years ago, which is the highest annual single museum attendance in Canada. Our membership has also grown by almost 30% and now includes 117,000 members. More than 300,000 children annually attend our programs, which foster a lifelong passion for learning. I should mention a couple; I was told by committee members just recently that their children were there.

Our experts currently undertake research in 32 countries around the globe. Perhaps most importantly, in partnership with 75 community organizations, we annually provide over 100,000 free ROM passes and extensive programming to vulnerable populations, ranging from indigenous youth to new Canadians from Syria.

Museums promote scholarship, innovation, and knowledge locally, nationally, and internationally. Museums also enable Canada to tell its story globally, enhancing knowledge and cultural diplomacy. For instance, building on our century-long relationship with China, ROM exhibitions were seen last year by more than one million people in three Chinese museums. The ROM is also honoured to be part of Minister Joly's creative industries trade mission to China next month.

Given the evolving community demographics and expectations of our audiences, museums must become even more responsive to the public, more inclusive and democratic, more engaging and relevant. A recent Culture Track study asked 4,000 people what culture means to them. The findings were unexpected, and suggest a changing view of why people attend cultural activities. The study showed that people want culture for four top reasons: to broaden their perspectives, build community, provide educational experiences, and foster empathy. That's quite different from what the same study found only 10 years ago. Simply providing intellectual, aesthetic, and historical experiences is no longer enough.

Consider these words: perspectives, community, empathy. They focus on engaging the heart as well as the mind. They necessitate presenting users with material and topics that feel relevant to their daily lives and concerns.

Towards this new paradigm, the ROM and many of our most innovative peers are changing the way our institutions look, feel, and interact with the public. We're leveraging the strengths and excellence of our collections, research, exhibitions, and facilities to engage with and stay relevant to our diverse public; to open our doors even wider, both figuratively and literally; and to become a critical gathering place for community activity.

The ROM's strategic vision is to be a hub of civic engagement, to present multiple voices and diverse perspectives, to embrace innovation and change, to infuse digital thinking across all levels, and to engage the public in dynamic ways that they find meaningful. This vision is the foundation of our evolution into a truly 21st-century museum, one that is at the heart of our community and is vibrant, inclusive, and participatory.

To survive and thrive, I believe every museum, whatever its size and location, will need to embrace the changing landscape of cultural consumption. There is no substitute for authentic objects and for experiences that are etched into people's hearts and minds. However, institutions must continue to find relevance in a tech-obsessed, digitally-disrupted environment.

The predictable response about how to best foster a thriving Canadian museum ecosystem is simple: just increase annual operating support for museums. However, I suspect that this is not sufficient for this committee's current purposes, nor does it offer any new or creative thinking.

I do believe there are opportunities to leverage comparatively small financial investments for big impacts, impacts that will help our museum sector. Here are a few ideas for your consideration, and I'd certainly be happy to discuss them either in the question period or at some other occasion.

First, expand the endowment-matching program of the Canada cultural investment fund to include museums, since it currently principally covers performing arts organizations. Donors are attracted to matching gift opportunities and will often give, or give more, if their gifts will be matched. Endowments—for everything from positions to operations—provide institutions with financial support in perpetuity. Extending this program to museums would leverage finite public funds to maximize private support. These endowment funds would also secure the financial future of museums, assisting them in weathering changing economic times.

Second, create a program to fund technical assistance for the museum field. Many museums need to rethink their positioning to succeed in the current environment that I've been describing. They need to develop a new business plan, consider merging with another institution, test the feasibility of an innovative program or a facility renovation. Creating a competitive program where museums can seek smaller targeted support for this kind of technical assistance has proven in other places to be an efficient way to leverage modest resources for outsized impact.

Third, create a talent mentoring program for the museum sector. Right now, the talent pipeline for key leadership and curatorial jobs in Canadian museums is not robust. Large museums often look abroad for talent, and emerging professionals regularly head to American and European institutions to develop their skills. Creating new programs and scaling up existing ones that encourage seasoned museum leaders to mentor emerging professionals would enhance strong domestic museum leadership capacity for the future.

Museums play a unique role in fostering engaged citizens. In a flourishing pluralistic society, people need to know their past, ask critical questions, take thoughtful action in the present, and build for the future. In a thriving democracy, we need more and varied voices, not fewer. Our cultural institutions ensure that lesser-known stories and marginalized perspectives are heard. This creates understanding and empathy for our fellow citizens. Museums can help us be our best selves—today and for tomorrow.

I thank you, the committee, for the opportunity to speak with you this morning. Your work will help to define the vision and vital role that museums and other cultural institutions will play in assisting all of us to learn, participate, and understand ourselves and our world.

Thank you.

• (0855)

The Chair: Thank you very much for that. We now have three witnesses from the Canadian Federation of Friends of Museums.

You have 10 minutes between the three of you.

Mr. Bruce Bolton (President, Canadian Federation of Friends of Museums): It's simple; I'm talking.

The Chair: Perfect. We look forward to hearing from you, Mr. Bolton.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bruce Bolton: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good morning everyone.

[*English*]

We thank the committee for inviting the Canadian Federation of Friends of Museums to appear as witnesses for this important study the government is undertaking.

With me today are Dennis Moulding, a long-time supporter of the organization and a former museum director—

• (0900)

Mr. Dennis Moulding (Former Director, Canadian Federation of Friends of Museums): I was a senior manager.

Mr. Bruce Bolton: —senior manager, and Anastasia Pivnicki, from our summer youth employment program, under the graduate program. Without people like Dennis and Anastasia, we wouldn't exist.

It was Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, who said that Canada was a country that suffered from too much geography and not enough history. However, as Canada celebrates its 150 anniversary, Sir John would have been pleasantly surprised to note there are now more than 2,600 accredited museums, public art galleries, and related heritage institutions that are preserving and promoting our Canadian heritage in various ways. Museums employ more than 28,000 people, made up of part-time and full-time employees. However, over 106,000 volunteers far outnumber the paid employees and contribute over 5.6 million hours per year across the country to help heritage institutions, museums, and art galleries to meet their mandate.

While the Canadian Museums Association represents the interests of most of the accredited museums and heritage institutions in Canada, the Canadian Federation of Friends of Museums, the CFFM, was created in 1977 to be the national voice of the thousands of these selfless individuals who so willingly give their time to the majority of the same museums and heritage institutions that have to rely on them for their existence, in particular the small local and community museums.

Many of the museums and heritage institutions have organized their volunteers and associations of friends as legal entities, registered as non-profit corporations that can issue tax receipts for donations, both monetary and in kind. This applies to large museums as well as to the smaller institutions. The CFFM considers all those individuals who volunteer their time, such as trustees and donors, and not only front-line volunteers, to be friends of museums. In the last few years, the CFFM has noted an increase in retired professionals, such as doctors and lawyers and trained museum specialists, volunteering in both large and smaller museums. Dennis worked in a museum. I worked in a museum for 40-some-odd years. This is due to the so-called baby boomers reaching the age of retirement and wanting to give back to their communities.

We understand that the standing committee is particularly interested in reviewing the state of local and municipal museums,

and the CFFM welcomes this focus. While the larger federal and provincial museums have their own issues with inadequate resources, it is the smaller museums that are in desperate need of help. An analysis of the data contained in the "Government of Canada Survey of Heritage Institutions: 2015" reveals that about 42% of heritage institutions that are archives, art galleries, and museums have an operating budget of less than \$40,000, and that slightly larger institutions, about 19%, have an operating budget of between \$40,000 and \$99,000. Thus, over half of heritage institutions in Canada must get by with less than \$100,000 per year, which means the collections are generally poorly stored and maintained, exhibitions are not very sophisticated, and professional staff cannot be hired, which of course increases the reliance on volunteers.

The number of these smaller museums and heritage institutions known for their importance is not well understood or appreciated. There is some anecdotal appreciation of the cultural importance of preserving local history, of them being invaluable resources for local schools, of them being gathering places for communities, of them reconnecting and remembering places for an aging population, and for offering opportunities to newcomers and immigrants to learn about the history and culture of their new home; however, there has been no definitive or in-depth study to determine and to articulate the real economic and social impact of this vital sector.

We like to refer to our museum volunteers as "unsung heroes", and the CFFM, together with the CMA, has a modest program to recognize a volunteer each year from a slate of nominees submitted by the host institutions, the Museum Volunteer Award. Two years ago our winner was Doreen Romanow, from the Manitoba Museum, with 45 years of volunteer service at the museum, and it's estimated that she taught and worked with 60,000 students.

• (0905)

The CFFM welcomes a recent initiative by the Governor General and the Chancellery of Honours to recognize volunteers by awarding those chosen with the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers. The CFFM collaborates with the CMA to identify and nominate museum volunteers for this medal.

Finally, at the international level, the Canadian federation is an active member of the World Federation of Friends of Museums, where it is a member of its council. Reciprocal support between the Canadian and world federations has been strong, with a prominent Canadian, the late Edmund Bovey, being elected president of the world federation in 1984; and the CFFM hosted the WFFM congress in Toronto in 1987. The world federation membership consists of national federations of friends from many countries around the world. As president of the Canadian federation, I will be attending the world federation congress in Madeira in May, and we're hoping to have the council meeting in Montreal next May.

We have some recommendations. Given the close relationship between the CFFM and the Canadian Museums Association and the fact that we represent the same community of museums and heritage institutions, the CFFM is pleased to endorse a number of recommendations submitted by the CMA. In addition, the CFFM recommends the following.

We recommend that the committee undertake a more in-depth and complete study of Canada's museums sector than what is already proposed. We believe there has to be recognition of the economic benefits of museums and heritage institutions, and we call upon the federal government to increase its financial support to museums, especially local and municipal institutions, through its museums assistance program.

I'm just going to insert something here for a moment. Imagine this scenario. In a small museum, a volunteer curator has to put together a grant application for the museums assistance program. I used to do that in the 1970s when it was first introduced. The volunteer has an eight-page Excel spreadsheet to fill in that looks like a small corporation, and then will have to wait for eight to 10 months to get an answer. I think something has to be done there.

Most volunteers in museums are self-trained, with minimal support from paid employees who are busy with their respective duties. The CFFM recommends that funds be made available to provincial museum associations to develop training programs for volunteers, and also recommends the production of training materials at the national level that could be shared across Canada.

The CFFM is very interested in encouraging young people to become involved with heritage institutions. It strongly supports the young Canada works program and urges the government to increase its funding. Small museums depend on whatever summer staff they can afford, and in this regard we recommend that a means test be applied so that some of the smaller museums can receive 100% of financing as opposed to the current 75%.

We recommend that the expertise of the Canadian Conservation Institute be better shared, with more training seminars, more webinars, and more in-depth training sessions, not only at its headquarters in Ottawa but also at locales across Canada, in particular as it applies to the maintenance of artifacts in storage and on display and the identification of risks to museum objects. Many of these tasks are performed by volunteers in local and municipal institutions, with little or no training.

We support the recommendation that the museum insurance and indemnification program be reviewed and expanded to provide immunity for certain types of civil liabilities for those who serve on non-profit boards of directors, as well as to protect volunteers from personal liabilities.

We support the proposal to establish a new council of museums and indigenous people to undertake a two-year review of the status of the various recommendations resulting from a task force struck in 1992 under the title Task Force on Museums and First Peoples. The CFFM is particularly interested in recruiting indigenous youth to participate as volunteers in their local museums.

The Chair: I'm just going to let you know you're at 10 minutes, so please wrap it up.

Mr. Bruce Bolton: I have one paragraph left.

● (0910)

The Chair: That's great.

Mr. Bruce Bolton: Similarly, a task force was created in 1990 to examine the development and care of various military history collections in Canada. The terms of reference of the task force were

expanded, with the consent of DND, to study the facilities, needs, and other requirements of the Canadian Forces museum system. While the care and maintenance of priceless military artifacts in regimental museums improved because of the recommendations in the task force report, much remains to be done. Thus, the CFFM recommends that the museum study currently under way also include military museums managed by DND.

In conclusion, we thank the committee again for inviting the Canadian Federation of Friends of Museums to attend the hearing, and we sincerely wish you the very best in this important undertaking.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

We will now go to Lydie Olga Ntap, from the Musée de la Femme.

You have 10 minutes.

Mrs. Lydie Olga Ntap (Founder, Musée de la Femme): Great. Thank you.

On behalf of the museum's board, team of volunteers, and myself, I'd like to thank the committee for inviting us to be here today and giving us the opportunity to contribute to your study on the state of Canadian museums.

In our brief, we focused on the relationship between museums and the government and, of course, the responsibility of the government to ensure museums have a guaranteed minimum revenue, this being vital to their survival. As you can tell, this relationship between museums and the government attests to the public responsibility for museums and the role they play. Funding is of paramount concern, because, in order to fulfill their mission and promote their relevance, museums need grants, sponsorship, merchandise, and admission revenue.

The federal government has made significant investments in national museums, but at the expense of the country's other museums, which have had to make do with little to no funding.

Women's museums emerged during the height of the feminist movement, in the 1970s. They tell the story of women against the male-centric or gender-neutral backdrop of history. The first museum of its kind, the *Frauenmuseum*, the women's museum in Bonn, was created in 1981.

The International Association of Women's Museums, of which I am vice-president, was founded in 2008 in Merano, Italy, and brings together some 80 women's museums around the world.

Women's museums are mirrors of social transformation, showcasing female emancipation models and combatting stereotypes by shining a spotlight on women and their achievements. Spread across four continents, women's museums focus on a variety of themes but have a common mission: telling the stories of women.

Our museum is located in Longueuil. It is Canada's first women's museum. We opened our doors in 2008. We have a permanent exhibit that showcases 400 years of women's history. The exhibit helps visitors discover the relationship between women and history, as we endeavour to reclaim women's stories and achieve historical balance. It exposes an often overlooked part of history: the women who built Quebec and Canada, the silent, ordinary women who are all extraordinary in their own way. I am talking about grandmothers, mothers, wives, daughters—all of us women.

I would like to point out that, during its 10-year existence, our women's museum, the first of its kind in the country, has never received any federal funding, be it for operating costs or status of women projects. That is inconceivable for Canada's women, their heritage, their history, and their stories. The Government of Canada has a special duty towards the women of this country.

What makes us different is our curatorial approach. Like that of other women's museums, our strategy is built on an avant-garde, or experimental, approach to museology. This approach is in step with the dematerialization of male and female heritage, respectively, cultural tourism, and sustainable development. The approach now also takes into account the important issue of human rights and people's advancement towards social change.

This new approach has set the stage for the emergence of institutions such as our women's museum and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, as well as the Empathy Museum, in London, and the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, in Chile. These are structurally meaningful museum institutions that have shifted the perspective from "us" to "I" in order to promote empowerment, awareness, and action.

I will now turn to the issue of funding.

As you endeavour to make constructive recommendations that will benefit Canadians, I encourage all of you to visit the women's museum, as well as all the small and medium-sized community-based museums that find dynamic ways to carry out their mission.

The women's museum runs on donations, the support of dedicated volunteers, and private partnerships. We do not receive any government funding whatsoever.

As the museum's founder, I give of my time, money, and expertise. I am also a museologist. I do this for free for the greater good. It is simply unacceptable that the Canadian government, and all other levels of government, have provided no support, neglecting us completely.

The only member of Parliament who has visited the museum is NDP member Pierre Nantel. In fact, I didn't realize he was going to be here today. What a nice surprise. Back on March 19, 2010, former Bloc Québécois MP Jean Dorion, who represented the riding of Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, rose in the House of Commons to describe the grassroots efforts of our women's museum. We received an ovation for our work, but no money came with all of that enthusiasm. It is now 2018, and the government has to take action.

• (0915)

Changing economic, political, and social conditions mean that museum personnel need special training. They need to be well-

skilled in management in order to cope with the lack of funding, seek out partnerships and philanthropists, promote social inclusion, and reach out to a broader clientele in order to attract more visitors. The effort to expand their clientele base is also clear in the programming various museums offer. The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts recently developed programs focused on well-being and mental health, for instance. The women's museum focuses on promoting the status of women. That work requires funding contributions from a number of departments: Canadian Heritage, Health Canada, Public Safety Canada, and Status of Women Canada. Clearly, institutions like ours may require the support of several organizations.

As for training, it is no secret that the curator's role has become complex, involving much more than collection recovery, preservation, and restoration. The new fundraising reality calls for new skills. We have become entrepreneurs, marketing experts, community managers, public relations officers, and beggars—yes, museums have beggars as well. What about scientific research, professional development, and activities for target populations?

Museology students from the Université du Québec à Montréal and the Université de Montréal, and their work around our curatorial approach, have helped shape the museum's position, perspective, exhibits, impact, and outreach.

The Université de Montréal recently created a research chair position, held by Yves Bergeron, in order to examine museums through the lens of museology, management, and the law. Museums must therefore cope with realities that have nothing to do with their primary role, as defined by the International Council of Museums. Control over their image and the whole issue of financial administration are at play.

These factors cannot be addressed without regard for major societal changes involving economic gender disparity, social inclusion policies, and cultural diversity. Museum governance takes all of this into account.

Turning now to our volunteers, I will say that their support is essential. They play a significant role in what we do. To help keep the museum running, we turn to volunteer centres—such as the Centre de bénévolat de la Rive-Sud—and social media to find volunteers. They are an important resource, but managing volunteers takes time. On top of our already enormous workload, we have to spend time training them.

How do we have an impact, add value, as well as acquire and secure collections that are in the public interest? How do we ensure our volunteers—most of whom are retired—have a constructive and positive experience?

The government must consider how it can provide help and support. What criteria are used to grant funding to museums? What vision of society do certain museums promote? What cultural, social, educational, and historical contribution do they make? Do they put forward an outdated perspective? What counts as an outdated perspective? It's important to think about that. Some museums, regional and others, have, for years, received recurring funding, and yet, no one has ever questioned whether their perspective or contribution is in line with today's reality. The time has come to examine a number of things.

I will now share with you our recommendations.

The first is this. In recognition of the fact that today's visitors demand more and more from their museum experience and that museums must operate in a new climate dominated by the Internet and the virtual world, the committee should clearly define the criteria that determine whether a museum is eligible for funding. It is time to rethink the whole notion of museums as eternal institutions that go on forever. We must not be afraid to go there.

Small and medium-sized museums are the big losers in the current museum universe. Even though we lack their infrastructure and human resources, we still have the same management goal: balancing our budget. When all is said and done, we have to provide a service, secure collections, raise the museum's profile, and put on exhibits.

• (0920)

For example, at the women's museum, our exhibit budget is \$4,000, and we have now put on 27 exhibits. We can make that happen with just \$4,000 because we recycle everything possible and ask the major museums for help with furniture and museum support. I, myself, am in charge of research and graphic design. Four or five of us, together, provide the communications function for free, working on such things as press releases. By harnessing all of our energy, we manage to save the museum about \$45,000 per exhibit.

The Chair: I'd just like to let you know that your 10 minutes are just about up.

Mrs. Lydie Olga Ntap: Okay.

I was going to touch on the crucial role that the Société des musées du Québec and the Canadian Museums Association play. Suffice it to say, the support is great on that end.

I'll move on to our second recommendation.

It is recommended that the government set up—yet another—organization, one that would have a mandate to support museums and include members of the public. To do this, the organization would identify what the needs of target populations were, as well as recommend which museums should be given funding and how. Such a body would open the door to more insightful thinking by a broader stakeholder community, no longer limited to a select few government employees and museum experts.

The mandate of museums is to serve the public. It is to preserve the collective heritage of our communities, and yet they don't figure anywhere in the process. Nevertheless, it is often the volunteers or friends of the museum who provide that service. Knowing what they want and need matters a lot.

I will stop there. You can find more detailed information in our brief.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

We have some time for questions, so you may have a chance to tell us more in your answers.

[English]

We are going to start with Ms. Dzerowicz for seven minutes of questions and answers.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Thank you so much.

[Translation]

Thank you for your presentations.

[English]

They were excellent. There are so many questions for three completely different organizations.

I'm going to start with the Royal Ontario Museum. I'm familiar with it. I grew up maybe about a 20-minute walk from the museum, and I know the before and the after. I used to visit the planetarium all the time, and I know it's gone. That's kind of what I associate the ROM with.

One of the things we have heard quite a bit about is the fact that a number of leaders in our bigger organizations, the bigger museums, across Canada are international, so I find your recommendation for creating a talent mentoring program for the museum sector very interesting. I would love it if you talked a bit more about why we don't have a talent pipeline, and maybe be a little more specific about what you think we can do at the federal level to help support that, because I do think it's important.

Mr. Josh Basseches: I know there's certainly something a little ironic perhaps in someone who is, in fact, not Canadian by birth representing that point of view, but I'm very glad to be here in Canada, very glad to be at the ROM. I have noticed, as I talk with colleagues, the fact that many of the senior managers in museums, particularly larger museums, are not necessarily from Canada.

I believe that is also because there's a bit of a leap between the fair number of small to mid-sized institutions to many of the largest institutions in the country. There isn't the same way for people to make their way up a kind of a chain of leadership to develop the skills that might be necessary in the more complex, largest institutions.

I think what I've seen elsewhere and basically have in mind is the need for a perception of—not discouraging, by the way, international talent from coming to Canada, because I think that infuses different insights into the Canadian museums sector—of how we can build mentorship programs and consider what the role of the federal government is in supporting endeavours to increase these mentorship programs? By that I mean—just very quickly—where someone in a senior role could be partnered with someone who represents emerging talent in a different level of institution, scale, or size, and if that could be encouraged both by the federal government as a conceptual advantage and something to be supported.... Also what I've seen in these programs is that there often needs to be a small amount of money to set up that program and then to continue to encourage the interaction and to pay things like travel if there's some distance between us.

There are a variety of steps. I think it's partly conceptual and partly about providing some small financial support to make that happen.

• (0925)

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Do any museums in Canada that you know of—either large, small, or medium-sized—form any relationships with local universities or colleges to help maybe build some of those programs into some of their local programs?

Mr. Josh Basseches: Without question. We, for instance, are very closely tied to the University of Toronto and have collaborations with other schools in the area. One of the University of Toronto's programs is a museum management and museum administration program. I think that's a little bit different. I'm proposing something that's sort of peer to peer at different levels, with someone being in a mentoring role as opposed to formal training programs at universities. They are both valuable, by the way.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: The ROM benefits quite a bit from tourism. What more can we do at the national level to promote tourism that would benefit not only the ROM, but maybe also some of the other medium-sized museums that might be in Toronto?

Mr. Josh Basseches: There is no question that tourism is critical to most museum institutions. About 30% of our attendees are tourists, either Canadian or international, mostly international.

In terms of support for that, I think of the work that is already being done to encourage local chambers of commerce and other groups, such as those in Toronto working internationally, to bring people who are in foreign affairs roles or who are involved in the tourist industry to Ottawa or other cities. All of that supports recognition of these wonderful institutions.

Furthermore, I would say that another piece to bringing people in is projecting the Canadian story outward and finding ways to support programming, exhibition travel, and exchange of expertise, so that someone who is thinking about coming here from Europe or from South America will perhaps have encountered a Canadian exhibition, program, or activity. That would have the same impact.

The Chair: Julie, you have two minutes.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: I'm going to move on to our next group.

How can we at the federal level help to acknowledge, encourage, and support the important work of museum volunteers in this country? I ask because there are a lot of them and we hear a lot about how volunteers are very much the heart and soul of museums whether large, small, or medium-sized. What can we do at the national level to be supportive of that?

Mr. Dennis Moulding: One of the most critical pieces is that we are still struggling with the idea of exactly what our impact is so we can really make the case.

Just to pick up where you left off, when I was with the National Gallery, we were getting short shrift from the Ottawa community at the time of the major Renoir exhibition. We did a study and found that we had injected into or had had an approximately \$34 million impact on the community. To support your point, it wasn't just that we benefited from tourism; we made tourism, we had an economic impact. That's for a big institution.

For the smaller institutions, we know anecdotally about the impact they have on their communities from all the things we've said, but there is no definitive study, report, or exploration of that with some rigour and some vigour that would bolster the case.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Okay, great.

The Chair: That is the end of your time, so thank you very much.

We will now go to Mr. Van Loan for seven minutes.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: Thank you. I thought those were great presentations, with a bunch of good, focused recommendations, which the committee will appreciate.

In my travels, I've encountered many museums, some of which are entirely volunteer-run, and some of whom their paid staff is a summer student, and an even larger number that at the management level are entirely volunteer and maybe pay a few people to man them.

One of the things I've heard from those people about the museums assistance program is that it's not just difficult to apply to, but that they aren't allowed to apply to it because they don't satisfy the qualification for a full-time curator, which seems to be a condition.

Is that, in fact, the case, and is it something that should be changed?

• (0930)

Mr. Bruce Bolton: My understanding is that you could still apply, but I think it's the kind of organogram now where really it's the professionals who makes the difference. When I was mentioning earlier the eight-page Excel spreadsheet, for a small museum to do that is next to impossible.

When I started in the museum world in the 1970s, the museums assistance program began then. In the 1970s it was simple, easy to get to, and it was certainly open to every museum in the country. We got our answers within two or three months. It made a huge difference and actually encouraged all the museums at the time.

The impression I get now is that a lot of the museums just don't bother applying because it's turned into a bureaucratic nightmare, and this is the same for all of the museums. You have medium-sized museums that employ people to do grant applications because they have become so sophisticated now.

I think every effort should be made to get the museums assistance program to encourage small museums. For example, one of my things I've been discussing for years is project management. You can only have a project when you apply to MAP. You can't put in underlying factors. I would like to see the program add, say, something like 10% to every grant that is approved, and it's strictly for underlying factors—the furnace, the electricity—just to help the museum get through the basics as well as the actual project.

Yes, every museum in the country should be eligible for the MAP program.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: What is the number of volunteers in the country and what proportion of the labour that museums get is volunteer, as far as you can tell?

Mr. Bruce Bolton: That varies.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: I'm just saying to take the country as a whole.

Mr. Bruce Bolton: If we take the country as a whole, our figures here show that there are 106,000 volunteers. However, when you consider the number of friends of museums—the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts has 100,000 friends.

Do you have any idea how many—

Mr. Josh Basseches: It's 117,000.

Mr. Bruce Bolton: You see that the numbers change radically with the big museums and at the smaller museums, something like the Château Ramezay, which has an annual budget of \$600,000, has 70 to 100 volunteers.

One of the points that we made in the presentation is that we just don't know. The study that should be undertaken vis-à-vis the survey of Canadian museums has to include all of these different factors. Yes, there's a financial factor, but there's also the social factor and I think that's very important.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: In Canada, I think we see this voluntary sector on the fundraising, finance, and contributions side. What you see strongly in the United States is that the volunteers who are front of shop, if you will, are called “docents” and are treated like the learned people they are. You really recognize and know they are there. They're a very visible and well-known presence. I don't see the same thing in Canada.

Do we have the same number of front-of-shop volunteers? I know that when I talk to the folks in Atlantic Canada and I ask about volunteers, a lot of them tell me that they actually can't put volunteers front of shop because it creates the perception that we're taking away somebody's job. I've been told this by several museums and museums associations in Atlantic Canada.

Mr. Bruce Bolton: I would say that's unusual. From what I can see, there are many museums, especially the smaller museums, that have the volunteers up front. There's an emotion with a volunteer that you don't necessarily get with—

Hon. Peter Van Loan: I've discovered it, but you have to ask about three questions before you will find out they're a volunteer.

Mr. Bruce Bolton: Exactly. Some of them are very—

Hon. Peter Van Loan: In the States, you have a way of recognizing them and really showcasing them.

Mr. Bruce Bolton: We hope to do that through these two programs, our volunteer recognition program and the sovereign's medal program. Of course, in the sovereign's medal program, the museum sector is a very small part of it, but we are very active.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: Do you want to say anything Martin or Jim?

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): How much time do you have?

• (0935)

Hon. Peter Van Loan: I have a minute and a half.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: I know when we started this study—

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Lydie Olga Ntap: I'd like to answer the previous question, if I may.

Volunteers in small and medium-sized museums are on the front lines, but we need to have the resources to look after them. At the women's museum, we organize a dinner every month. Everyone attends, and we all chat. We are trying to foster a positive workplace culture. However, when everyone is exhausted and overworked because of a lack of resources, we obviously cannot look after them the way we would like.

We can give them T-shirts and training here and there. That is all well and good, but if we don't have the basic tools we need, there is absolutely nothing we can do. We can host dinners and other events of the sort, but we can't do anything to publicly recognize their contribution, much to our dismay.

For instance, a local representative will soon be honouring one of the volunteers. As wonderful as that is, we can't invite everyone to a reception afterwards. We can't put together a press release to let people know that the person is being honoured or give the volunteer some public recognition, because it takes too much time. We wish we could, but we simply don't have the resources.

The Chair: Thank you.

That's all the time we have for this round.

Mr. Nantel, you may go ahead for seven minutes.

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, gentlemen, for letting Mrs. Ntap have the floor.

[*English*]

I think we have a very interesting panel.

[*Translation*]

We have with us today museum representatives at the national and provincial levels. We also have with us representatives of the Canadian Federation of Friends of Museums, in other words, museum volunteers. Also here is someone who represents a small, entirely local, museum with national ambitions. That's unusual. Quickly, I'd like to take advantage of the expertise each and everyone of you has.

Mr. Basseches, you talked about endowment funds. It's something that's come up repeatedly, and we will no doubt keep it in mind. Every museum institution could, in fact, benefit from an endowment fund, like symphony orchestras and other such organizations.

Mr. Moulding, you talked about how museums were a special draw for people, generating tourism. The comments of both you and your colleagues, as volunteer representatives, show just how much support can come from people who are passionate about a cause.

That brings me to Mrs. Ntap and the Musée de la Femme. I did indeed have a chance to visit some of the museum's exhibits. I was able to see Mrs. Ntap's determination in action, and her charismatic ability to encourage people to take part in exhibitions and be part of the team, despite often challenging conditions.

Something you said really struck me. It was a proposal I hadn't heard until now. You said that, if the government recognizes the legitimacy of a museum's existence, the government should give that museum a guaranteed minimum revenue. The government shouldn't recognize an institution and then expect it to survive on a wing and a prayer.

Is that indeed what you were saying?

Mrs. Lydie Olga Ntap: That's entirely correct.

Although I'm very glad to be here today to tell you about our museum, at the end of the day, it is funded by money we, ourselves, put in for the common good. The museum, which is located in Longueuil, has a reserve fund and receives wonderful donations. That said, for the past five years, my family and I have been putting \$750 a month towards preserving our common female heritage. That's unthinkable, and something needs to be done.

You said that our museum had national ambitions. I should tell you that our ambitions are actually international. It's straightforward. The Musée de la Femme is recognized internationally. I have taken three paid trips to give talks on the curatorial approach I described earlier, our avant-guard or experimental approach. In fact, I consider that international recognition to be my pay.

The reason I care so much about the museum is that I founded it. If I was just a member of the board, the connection I feel might be different. Because I believe in this initiative, I put my heart and soul into the Musée de la Femme, using precisely those qualities that set women apart. That is how we reach everyone.

Through our curatorial approach, we are able to reach everyone, because the visitor becomes an actor and is no longer a spectator. I like to say that the focus of the museum is the visitor, the public. There is no doubt that the public, the people, and the community make up the foundation on which the museum rests. They are the ones who have the museum's well-being at heart.

We can't always start over again and look for sponsors and partners. Each of us, being born of a mother—biological or otherwise—has that responsibility, the duty to take ownership of institutions that tell the story of women. That is all the more crucial in the current climate. At the museum, we've built a permanent exhibit around the quote “Too many women in too many countries speak the same language—of silence.” Their reflex is to give up the floor, the opportunity to speak. The exhibit is a space for empowerment.

When we ask the ministry of health and social services for funding, people ask us what our museum has to do with health and social services. Most of our visitors are seniors, so we also contribute to social reintegration. In fact, some organizations send individuals who are rehabilitating or doing community service to the museum. For instance, the justice ministry sends us women who have to do community service for unpaid fines. We also put on activities in seniors homes. Our outreach spans generations. Certain aspects of the work are beneficial for memory.

● (0940)

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Mrs. Ntap, do you think things would be different if there was an endowment fund? Right now, departmental

envelopes are compartmentalized. So a department in charge of social affairs will not give money to museums, for example.

I remember talking to the representatives of another very local museum, the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, in Halifax, Nova Scotia. That museum is located right next to a major shipyard belonging to Irving Shipbuilding. I asked them whether the shipyard helped them financially to stress the importance of shipbuilding.

In your case, one would imagine a business or a department could support you. Do you think an endowment fund would be an opportunity to seek perhaps not departmental funds, but at least funding from private sponsors?

Anyone can answer my question.

Mrs. Lydie Olga Ntap: Absolutely. I think that is the exercise that needs to be done. Both large companies and local companies have a social responsibility. Policies are also needed to support local initiatives that emphasize a common heritage. In my case, it is the notion of “common” that makes me flip out.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Flip out?

Mrs. Lydie Olga Ntap: But of course, it's clear. It is a common good; it is our history, our heritage. I feel that much is being said about personal histories and stories, but we are forgetting about preservation and the transfer of information. That does take a minimum amount of charge being taken.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Nantel.

Ms. Dhillon, you have seven minutes.

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to thank all the witnesses for being here today.

Mrs. Ntap, we can see and feel your passion.

Mrs. Lydie Olga Ntap: It's good that I am radiating it.

Ms. Anju Dhillon: Yes, and we are grateful to you for that. We can see that you have worked with all your heart to ensure that your museum can teach people about history.

I have a few questions for you. What would you do with the funding? What kind of projects would you like to present to those who come visit your museum?

Mrs. Lydie Olga Ntap: In 2009, we developed a business plan, which I am following, even though the money is still not forthcoming. Nothing has changed, and the vision has remained the same. We want to continue doing what we are already doing, despite the lack of funding. I'm talking about things like social reintegration and workshops in seniors residences. I cannot imagine creating a museum that people do not feel belongs to them. It is public first, and everything else after. We have to think about sustainability. Work must be done to create that link, and we are putting the public at the heart of the institution.

The funding will not be used to build facilities. Yes, we have a building project. That said, we purchased 16,000 square feet of land, and we have no mortgage because people managed to pay it in cash.

That charge-taking must come from the public. Funding is not the only thing that matters, although it does matter for hiring professionals or setting up leadership training programs for women to help them reach decision-making positions. Since 2008, we have already been doing everything I just talked about, without the funds needed. We visit seniors residences. The majority of seniors who participate in our activities are women.

● (0945)

Ms. Anju Dhillon: Do you also encourage men to participate?

Mrs. Lydie Olga Ntap: Of course, we like men. We have nothing against them; we like them a lot.

We are all engaged in this exercise. When we go to those residences, we do it for free. In exchange, we film them, we get their testimony and gather memories. It's free. It's amazing.

Ms. Anju Dhillon: I think that everyone here is very impressed by you.

Have you ever worked with other museums and other women's organizations from outside Quebec, from elsewhere in Canada?

Mrs. Lydie Olga Ntap: Yes. For example, a lady from Alberta started a small group. The city loaned her a space to start a women's arts museum. We know about this because I am the vice-president of the international association of women's museums. Another lady contacted us because she wanted to establish a women's museum in Vancouver. We encourage them and we keep abreast of what is happening, but visibility....

Ms. Anju Dhillon: Do those people provide you with assistance or are you doing it alone?

Mrs. Lydie Olga Ntap: Are you talking about the association of women's museums?

Ms. Anju Dhillon: Yes.

Mrs. Lydie Olga Ntap: It's about training. In 2024, our museum will host the international congress of the association of women's museums. So there is some scientific work involved, as well as broadcasting and visibility. On International Museum Day, we are very active through our hashtag #IAWM. We do it on social networks and it is coordinated. There is a mouvement and an energy that helps people discover the existence of women's museums.

Ms. Anju Dhillon: That's great, thank you very much.

[English]

My next question is for Mr....

Mr. Josh Basseches: Basseches.

Ms. Anju Dhillon: Basseches, sorry about that.

You spoke very eloquently about the importance of museums. You brought home the point why museums are needed in our society.

Can you explain how the ROM became such a successful museum? How can museums like Musée de la Femme also benefit from your experience and expertise to help them even further bring such an important matter to light.

Mr. Josh Basseches: On the last point, I do think there's a lot of collegiality in the museum sector and with museums of different sizes. There are ways in which museums with different kinds of capacities can partner or collaborate with each other, or even, as I

mentioned, use mentoring staff to staff. There can be ways in which an institution like the ROM or some of the other important institutions in the country can be supportive of their colleague museums, which we are.

In terms of your initial question, I'll focus on the last one. I mentioned in my brief remarks that the museum has seen a nearly 50% increase in attendance over just the last three-plus years. That, to me, has to do with our refocusing—and this was the point of my observation—from only the very important activities of collecting, conserving, and presenting to doing that very much with a mind toward what it is that the people we engage with want to see, need to see, and what matters to their lives. I talked about the need to engage people's hearts and not just their minds. There is a deep and very significant need in these complicated times that we're living in for people to have the opportunity to go into spaces that give them a sense of their place in the world, using the word I used, “empathy”.

The short answer is that we have redoubled and refocused our efforts to say how we can be a civic hub, how we can focus our activities outward. As one museum theorist said, museums need to stop being only about something but being for someone. I think that very much supports the observations of my colleagues, and that's what has allowed us to have a lot of success in recent years.

The Chair: Would anyone else like to add anything in the last 30 seconds?

[Translation]

Mrs. Lydie Olga Ntap: I will use these 30 seconds and will talk quickly.

Yes, we are collaborating with museums such as Château Ramezay. We are loaning items. There was an exhibit with the McCord Museum. We loaned items from the women's museum. Other institutions have had exhibits. For example, Loto-Québec had an exhibit on Michel Tremblay's *Les Belles-soeurs*. We loaned items and helped with set designs.

Yes, we collaborate with both universities and museum institutions and local women's organizations, which make it a duty to visit the women's museum. We participate in women's groups' round tables, like the one in Montérégie, and we work with the Fédération des femmes du Québec. We are really rooted in the community and institutional academia. We are not operating in a vacuum. We are really not only focused on the local aspect.

● (0950)

[English]

The Chair: That's a good note for us to end on with this panel.

Thank you very much to all of the witnesses for your testimony. It was very helpful.

I'm going to suspend, but I'm going to ask you to suspend very briefly because we need to catch up a little and be on time.

Thank you.

• _____ (Pause) _____

•
• (0955)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: We will continue the meeting.

We are hearing from a group of three witnesses.

Joining us are Anne-Julie Néron, from the Société d'histoire du Lac-Saint-Jean, and Guylaine Perron, from Musée Louis-Hémon.

[*English*]

In British Columbia, we have Jack Lohman from the Royal British Columbia Museum. Thank you so much for the early morning visit.

For the sake of technology, why don't we start with you, Mr. Lohman. You have 10 minutes for your presentation.

Professor Jack Lohman (Chief Executive Officer, Royal British Columbia Museum): Good morning.

[*Translation*]

Good morning, everyone.

[*English*]

I speak to you from Victoria, British Columbia. My name is Jack Lohman. I'm the Chief Executive Officer of the Royal British Columbia Museum, but I'm also Vice-President of the Canadian Museums Association.

The mission of the Royal British Columbia Museum was drafted by the citizens of British Columbia back in 1886 when they petitioned the lieutenant-governor that a museum be created. It is the only case in Canada where citizens have demanded a museum, and one of the very few in the world where the patriotic culture of citizenship leads the formation of a museum and its mission. The mission states that the museum should protect, interpret, and preserve the living cultures and landscapes of British Columbia.

In 2003, that mission was reinforced when, through the provincial Museum Act, the museum was merged with the BC Archives. It is as if you merged the ROM with the Archives of Ontario. It is a unique merging of functions that only appears in one other location in our country, and that's in Newfoundland at The Rooms.

The Royal British Columbia Museum is home to some of the most pre-eminent, important, and best-loved artifacts, treasures, and paintings. Indeed, two of its collections are the pre-Confederation Douglas treaties and the Ida Halpern collection, the earliest audio recordings anywhere in the world of indigenous people. These collections are so important that they are being inscribed on the Canada and UNESCO memory of the world registers.

We are open to the public 362 days a year. We welcome 750,000 visitors. Educational and learning outreach touches 35,000 pupils on site. Our learning portal and website is used by over seven million users.

The museum exists as a crown corporation. Each year it receives \$11.9 million in support from the province, and it makes up the other

\$8.7 million itself through admissions revenue, commercial activities, gifts, grants, and investments.

The museum, I should say, is also a research institute that employs 12 scientists and curators, and its first nations and repatriation department is headed up by Lucy Bell of the Haida Nation. It is currently assisting with 75 calls for repatriation and assisting in the repatriation of 778 ancestral remains back to their community.

Allow me to touch and highlight three key issues that directly affect my museum and, by extension, smaller museums across our province here. Each issue, in a way, points to a broader issue, and I offer a recommendation for each.

The first issue is how do we future-proof our smaller museums? How do we provide future generations with sustainable and resilient museums that can serve all our publics better?

As you are aware from my initial remarks, the provincial government funds the Royal British Columbia Museum to protect and provide public access to collections and archives, and to preserve them in perpetuity. Since 2003, successive provincial governments have reduced their support of the museum from 67% 10 years ago to 47% today. That's a reduction in funding of 20%, which when adjusted for inflation, etc., is more like 24% in real terms.

The museum has always responded to such cuts by reducing its back of house, reducing its specialist knowledge, and reducing its specialists who actually know something about the collections in order to keep the front of house, the visitor operations, going on.

My point here is not to moan, but to propose that we become clearer about what income these institutions require, why, and what the alternatives are, so that we do not sleepwalk into the future.

• (1000)

Funding reviews are not something we're familiar with in Canada when it comes to museums. We don't even peer-review our own institutions. We do not even have a robust set of indicators to measure our institutions. We have no baselines to measure their performance. We have standards developed in the 1990s, but no one has ever thought of looking at issues that affect us today when it comes to measuring performance, for example, looking at underused collections.

We need to take an interest in strengthening our museums and challenging them to move with the times. I would recommend that, as an urgent priority, the museums assistance program be overhauled and that we consider creating a series of networked museum hubs; that we move away from this tiered system of museums with nationals at the top, provincials somewhere in the middle, and smaller museums somewhere down at the bottom and create a series of strengthened hubs and strengthened core funding.

Let me turn to a second related issue that affects our museums. It relates to the quality of our leadership and management, which I would argue is insufficient to deliver on the expectations of our publics. I think we have a malaise of averageness that is leaching away able but disillusioned people. For senior museum leaders and for indigenous staff, we need more exposure to external thinking. We need to update leadership practice and create more opportunities for learning from our peers. I would urge government to consider supporting all initiatives for cultural leadership training, and looking at museum training in particular.

My last issue concerns the slow progress being made toward reconciliation. Our museum displays are still riddled with stereotypical display information, displays of indigenous life emphasizing and privileging white history over indigenous history. Repatriation is inadequately funded. Our museum culture is still predominantly white.

In another life I should say that I ran the national museums of South Africa. The government of Mr. Mandela gave me just 12 months to update and clean up all the displays across 15 national museums. The Employment Equity Act insisted that I measure my performance then in terms of how many black people came through the doors and what percentage of black people I was employing. Change happened, and I think Izeko Museums of South Africa now is seen as a pioneer.

All three issues point to one thing that I would urge government to consider, namely a national policy for museums, a framework that outlines why we have museums, what they do for us, the learning, the education, the regeneration, the issues of identity and reconciliation. I would start holding culture ministers across our country accountable for their implementation, if that were possible.

We do need to promote access and inclusion. We do need to champion learning and education, and we do need to ensure excellence in the delivery of all our museum services.

Thank you very much for listening.

• (1005)

The Chair: Thank you very much for that presentation.

[*Translation*]

Now, we will go to Anne-Julie Néron, from the Société d'histoire du Lac-Saint-Jean.

Mrs. Anne-Julie Néron (Executive Director, L'Odysée des Bâtisseurs, Société d'histoire du Lac-Saint-Jean): Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I want to thank you, as well as the committee members, for inviting us to introduce l'Odysée des Bâtisseurs this morning.

I will start with a short history of our institution.

In 2004, the Société d'histoire du Lac-Saint-Jean, which has been in existence since 1942, moved into the municipal building of a company town that has now been merged with Alma. Across from the building is a forested range with an old water tower. On the river next to us, the Isle-Maligne hydroelectric plant, built in the mid 1920s, is still in operation. It is a site that has played an important role in the development of major industry in the region. It is also the

starting point for our museum, opened in 2004, l'Odysée des Bâtisseurs.

Today, in our exhibits and in our interpretive elements on the outdoor range, our mission is to showcase Lac-Saint-Jean's industrial, cultural, built, intangible and natural heritage. Our permanent exhibit focuses on the influence of water on our regional territory, the development of the hydroelectric network, and the challenges involved in water management. Our museum is open year round, but the outdoor range is only accessible during the high tourist season, in the summer.

In addition to its museum, the Société d'histoire du Lac-Saint-Jean has an archive and genealogy program, as well as advisory services in heritage renovation. The management of those three elements helps us develop larger projects, which aim to promote heritage and land, but through different activities. Our museum operation is supported by the town of Alma and, since 2016, by Quebec's department of culture and communications.

We have partnerships with a number of public and private institutions.

For example, the students of the Lac-Saint-Jean school board visit for free thanks to the boards's grant and a Hydro-Québec sponsorship. That partnership is actually causing a lot of envy in our region, since the recent cuts to school budgets have ended educational visits to other museums. However, since the Quebec education program does not focus on local or regional history, our educational involvement is very important for students, as the promotion of history of their community is fundamental to developing their sense of belonging.

In addition, we get regular sponsorships from companies or foundations for special activities and site development. Since we promote hydroelectric heritage, we often receive donations of industrial artifacts from regional businesses.

We are members of the Réseau muséal et patrimonial du Saguenay Lac-Saint-Jean, which brings together some 15 museum institutions. The region has 276,000 people, 166,000 of whom live in Saguenay and 110,000 in Lac-Saint-Jean.

Regional museums have been working in a network since 1986 in order to share their expertise and development tools.

In order to draw a more regional picture, I will share with you some thoughts that were expressed in briefs submitted during the 2015 regional economic summit and in public consultations on the renewal of Quebec's cultural policy held in 2016.

Most of the region's museum institutions concern history. Exhibit themes are complementary, and we take care to respect everyone's niche, in order to inspire people to visit more than one institution. Since the region developed through agriculture and the development of natural resources for major industry, the areas most often covered by our regional museums are industrial and technological heritage, agriculture, forestry, agrifood, cultural history and science.

We also cover aboriginal history, since the region includes the Mashteuiatsch ilnu community, which has its museum and its historic site. Our museums are managed by professionals with degrees in a variety of higher education areas.

Through heritage conservation and the transmission of knowledge, and because they are the carriers of collective identity, museums are players in regional development. They are also tools for raising awareness and collective understanding, as they are rooted in the life of the communities they belong to. They help the public better understand its roots. They are also key places for welcoming newcomers and for transmitting local culture to them. They help everyone understand the land they live on, frequent or visit.

By fostering a sense of belonging and by stimulating citizen engagement, museums create pride and make community life more dynamic. Because they are a reflection of what is happening in the region, museums promote key economic sectors, in addition to explaining the past, the present and the future.

● (1010)

Museums constitute a major cultural sector in our region. They account for 60 permanent jobs and 240 seasonal job, and their total sales amounted to more than \$13 billion in 2014. They generate autonomous revenue through their ticketing, their shop, their service contracts, as well as sponsorships and donations. In addition, most of them are supported by Quebec's department of culture and communications and by municipalities. Nearly all their revenue is reinvested in the local economy.

Over the past few years, the region has been experiencing an increase in tourism. That impacts museums, which are mostly experiencing an increase in visitation. From 2010 to 2015, visits to the region's institutions increased by 16%. Visitors from Quebec account for 85% of our clientele, but visitors from the rest of Canada account for only 4%. Foreign tourists account for about 10% of the visitors. The percentage is higher on the Saguenay side, especially since cruises have been more and more numerous since the Saguenay port of call was built. The vast majority of our tourists visit museums between June and October. Some institutions are actually only open to the public during that period.

In recent years, the Quebec government transferred to the municipalities many responsibilities related to culture and heritage. However, for museums to be seen by the entire regional community as key elements of local vibrancy, local elected representatives and local development stakeholders must first take ownership of them and recognize their value.

In Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, tourism stakeholders have decided to focus on the draw of the landscape and nature to attract a variety of clientele. The aim of the adventure tourism and ecotourism niche of excellence is to position the region as a four-season tourist destination. However, in this context, museums are struggling to hold their head above water, and history and heritage are rarely mentioned by stakeholders.

In a marketing study carried out in 2017 solely on Lac-Saint-Jean museums—so excluding Saguenay—we noted that regional stakeholders were mostly satisfied with what was available at museums in terms of diversity and quality, but that they were not very familiar with them and considered them complementary to major attractions. In other words, they did not consider them to be tourist attractions.

So we are suffering from a lack of visibility among tourist stakeholders and other regional decision-makers. They are all very happy to have us, but do not really grasp the extent of our potential in terms of tourism, social matters and identity.

Over the past few years, various changes, including the review of funding programs and the disappearance of some regional consultation spaces, have weakened the region's museum institutions.

For visits to museums to continue, we need to constantly reinvent ourselves. Newness is a permanent challenge for us. Few museums in the region can perform all museum functions optimally, since they require significant human and financial resources. With limited resources, it is difficult to ensure the sustainability of heritage collections and goods while updating the tourism supply and offering new things every year.

In addition, being located in a region far from major centres makes it difficult to offer certain activities. Training, skills development or networking activities almost always require trips of a few days, involving considerable costs, and it is difficult to convince our associations to provide activities locally.

It is also less possible for us to meet with department officials. Of course, distance is much less of an obstacle than it used to be, thanks to digital technologies, but it still prevents us from speaking to decision makers as much as our colleagues from Montreal and Quebec City, for example.

The funding we are currently receiving from the federal government to support our activities helps us hire our summer guides and sometimes young professionals for a few months. It also helps institutions that have space for temporary exhibits—not all of them have the space—to develop and host travelling exhibits. They make it possible to develop special projects based on calls for projects and, finally, to maintain our infrastructure.

The Department of Canadian Heritage is often our first confirmed financial partner for a project we are relying on to seek out additional funding from public or private sources. So the support is greatly appreciated. Our experiences with the department are always positive.

However, the federal support does not enable us to maintain our regular activities, develop our expertise or strengthen our anchorage in the community.

We feel that programs that encourage working in partnership, including the strategic initiatives component, are a very interesting option for museums. That kind of work improves our clout with partners. Common projects also help share expertise and achieve complementarity. In addition, they help save money and break the isolation of museum professionals.

● (1015)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We are now going to hear from Mrs. Guylaine Perron, who is the Executive Director of the Musée Louis-Hémon.

Mrs. Guylaine Perron (Executive Director, Louis-Hémon Museum): Thank you, Madam Chair.

My Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean colleague presented a very accurate picture of the reality for the institutions in our region, and spoke at length about their importance. For my part, I am going to present our museum, the Louis-Hémon Museum, which is located in Péribonka of the north shore of Lac Saint-Jean. Péribonka is a small municipality of about 500 residents. It has for several years counted on tourism to diversify its economy, which depends on potato cultivation.

The Museum was founded in 1938, which makes it the oldest museum in the region. It was created to commemorate the Breton author Louis Hémon. When he visited the region in 1912 and 1913, he was inspired by Péribonka and the Bédard family with whom he stayed in the summer of 1912 and wrote his novel *Maria Chapdelaine*. The book was very popular in France and in Quebec, following its publication in France in 1921, and it was then translated into about 20 languages and thus went around the world. It is a tragic love story, and it realistically depicts the life of colonial settlers in the beginning of the 20th century, and it contributed to making our area, and Quebec, known the world over. From its inception, the museum occupied the Samuel-Bédard house, where Louis Hémon stayed, which is depicted in the novel, as are the living conditions of the settlers at the time.

The Museum has, of course, evolved and now includes two buildings.

The first is the contemporary pavilion which houses a permanent exhibition entitled *Maria Chapdelaine, vérités et mensonges*, and relates the incredible journey the *Maria Chapdelaine* novel, as well as the life story of author Louis Hémon, and the consequences of the popularity of his work, which continues to be studied today. In that same building, every year we present a new temporary or travelling exhibition.

The second building is, of course, the Samuel-Bédard house, of which I spoke, which is hosted and receives visitors during the summer. This historic house is heritage-listed by the Ministry of Culture and Communications of Quebec under the Cultural Heritage Act.

To complete our programming, we offer various activities and an educational program which aligns with our mission. Our mission has three parts. The first part is to preserve and transmit the quest of Louis Hémon to future generations. The second is to promote the country of Maria Chapdelaine. Since our museum is the only one in the RCM, it has an important role to play in preserving and showcasing this area. The third part is to offer a creative space that can facilitate discussions and favours the spoken word, and reading and writing in the French language.

To our knowledge, our museum is the only one in Quebec which exploits a literary theme. Obviously, it is based on the *Maria Chapdelaine* novel; this approach is interesting, but is perceived as being more urban than rural.

The Louis-Hémon Museum is recognized and supported financially by the Ministry of Culture and Communications of Quebec. For its operations, the Museum counts on the financial support of the

municipality of Péribonka, and it is considered a supra-local infrastructure by the Maria-Chapdelaine RCM, which recognizes its unique character in our region.

For its summer jobs, the museum benefits from assistance from the Canada Summer Jobs and Young Canada Works initiatives of the Government of Canada. Over the past five years, the museum also received support from the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund and the Exhibition Circulation Fund of the Museums Assistance Program.

After the revision of the Quebec museums assistance program, the Aide au fonctionnement pour les institutions muséales program of the Ministry of Culture and Communications of Quebec, the Louis-Hémon Museum, just like 33 other Quebec institutions, experienced a decline in its financial assistance; we lost close to \$30,000 over three years, out of a total yearly operational budget of \$230,000. That loss, which may worsen over the next triennial cycle, presents a considerable challenge to our institution, whose resources were already quite limited.

The financial assistance from the municipality of Péribonka is precious, but a small municipality of 500 residents clearly does not have the same financial resources as a larger city to sustain its cultural and heritage environment.

- (1020)

In addition, attendance has stagnated for several years, as the annual number of visitors to the museum has not gone beyond 2,500. A study carried out by our region's tourist association in 2016 showed that the northern road around the lake, where our museum is located, was the one that is used the least by tourists who visit the area.

Of course, the low population numbers in our sector also constitute a considerable challenge for attendance, and that is also a challenge when it comes to looking for private sponsorship and donations, which are more difficult to find in small rural areas. We think that there is real benefit in working with other museum institutions of the area on that front and in pooling our efforts to attract more potential sponsorships, and thus be able to find ways of increasing our sources of private funding.

As for human resources, it is difficult to find people to occupy the more specialized positions. Most of this training is given in large centres, and there are very few young people who want to experience rural life, and those who do are generally looking for a one-time temporary experience, which does not provide stability for our institution. Moreover, small museums like ours have trouble offering competitive salaries and working conditions. For instance, in our case, we do not provide any insurance to our employees, and that includes the executive director.

The seasonal nature of several frontline jobs is another problem. We can guarantee our seasonal employees between 17 and 20 weeks of work a year. Even with their accumulated hours, it's difficult for them to qualify for employment insurance, and when they do, they can't receive benefits to cover the rest of the year, which of course makes it difficult for us to recruit.

Given the fragility and precariousness of our financial and human resources, it is difficult for us to fully discharge our conservation mandate, and our mandate to showcase, do outreach and educate. I consider that we really perform miracles with the few resources we do have, but it is currently impossible for us to renew what we offer in any meaningful way so as to increase the number of visitors to our institution.

In addition, maintaining our buildings, including the Samuel-Bédard house, is a constant challenge. Since its construction in 1986, the contemporary building has not had any major repairs, and today there are problems with water leakage, air conditioning and heating. We made the decision recently to pack up our collection objects in order to protect them against humidity in the museum reserve, as it is difficult to control that environment. In addition, last year we had to make the decision to close one of our buildings permanently because it was in an advanced state of decrepitude.

As you have heard, our little institution is facing many challenges. Despite all of the difficulties, we are sure that our institution has its place in our milieu and that it plays an important role in the culture and heritage of the region. Fortunately, we have the good fortune of being able to count on the crucial support of the elected representatives of the Maria-Chapdelaine RCM.

In order to ensure a better future and the sustainability of our institution, we are currently working in close co-operation with the Péribonka municipality on an important development project for which we have high hopes. This is an innovative and defining project for our municipality which will give us leverage to attract more tourists, in addition to maintaining services for the community, consolidating the Louis-Hémon Museum and preserving the parish church.

In summary, the project consists in giving the municipality of Péribonka a new city hall with spaces that will be shared by the museum and other community organizations. The museum is currently six kilometres away from the village, and this would allow us to redeploy it in the core of the village, and its permanent exhibition would be set up in the Péribonka church. This would echo the *Maria Chapdelaine* novel, which actually begins on the steps of the Péribonka church.

To us, the two options are clear: either this project comes to fruition and we survive, or we maintain the status quo and we close.

And in closing, I would like to point out that I share my colleague's ideas concerning the assistance and support the Canadian government can offer regional museums.

Thank you for your attention.

•(1025)

The Chair: We will now begin our question and answer period.

Mr. Hébert, you have the floor.

Mr. Richard Hébert (Lac-Saint-Jean, Lib.): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I want to congratulate the three witnesses, Mr. Lohman, Ms. Néron and Ms. Perron.

I am going to ask my questions quickly so that you have more time to explain your points of view.

Ms. Perron, you undoubtedly know that museums must constantly adapt so as to maintain their clientele. Moreover, there are only 500 inhabitants in the town of Péribonka, and your museum receives 2,500 visitors yearly. This means that the majority of your clientele does not come from the area.

Can you tell us how your museum is adapting or will adapt to constant changes, given its rural location?

How are you maintaining a constant flow of visitors, despite the small population of Péribonka and the fact that your museum is far from the larger cities and also from the village centre?

Mrs. Guylaine Perron: As I mentioned in my presentation, we are working on a project which we hope will come to fruition. It's a matter of survival. We hope to achieve economies of scale by sharing resources and services with the municipality of Péribonka. We also want to share certain operational costs. There are savings to be made regarding heating and electricity, certainly. The project really consists in giving a new dynamic impetus to the whole village core, and in offering an important lever in order to attract a larger clientele.

Péribonka is located on the shores of the Péribonka River, at the mouth of Lac Saint-Jean. The landscapes and vistas are magnificent. The idea is to amalgamate culture and nature, as well as encourage people to visit and discover the area. That is the general idea underlying the project, which as I mentioned is a defining project for our municipality.

We believe that by reducing certain costs we will have greater means, and that that will allow us to showcase certain achievements. We want to have a greater presence, not only in Péribonka, but also in the RCM—the regional county municipality—of Maria-Chapdelaine. As I said before, our museum is the only museum institution in the area. Given the resources at our disposal, it is difficult for the time being to play our role in the entire area. That is what we hope to achieve through this project.

Of course, we also want to offer new projects and create a new image. Since our permanent exhibition goes back to 2002, it goes without saying that the time has come to renew it. That is also what we hope to achieve in the context of this project.

We do a lot of co-operative work with the other museum institutions. The Louis-Hémon Museum is also part of the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean Museum and Heritage Network. Over the past two or three years, we have tried to form an alliance with the other museums in the Lac Saint-Jean area in order to pool some resources and marketing strategies. We also want our offer to be better integrated so that there is more complementarity and to make it possible to achieve joint projects in order to...

Mr. Richard Hébert: Unfortunately, Ms. Perron, we are a bit pressed for time. In his very eloquent look about Quebecers, Louis Hémon talked about a race that does not know how to die. From that perspective, I hope that you will continue your mission, and that is my wish for you.

•(1030)

Mrs. Guylaine Perron: Thank you.

Mr. Richard Hébert: Ms. Néron, in 2012 at the Grands Prix du tourisme québécois, your museum won the gold medal for the *Odysée des Bâisseurs* exhibition in the category of tourist attractions for fewer than 25,000 visitors. I congratulate you.

As you mentioned in your 2016 annual report, the *Société d'histoire du Lac-Saint-Jean* ended its year with a surplus. I have two questions about that.

First, which of your museum projects allowed you to win that prize? Can your recipes be exported to the rest of the country, especially to regional museums?

Secondly, what measures have you taken to make your institution dynamic?

Mrs. Anne-Julie Néron: In fact, the prize we received in 2012 was in connection with the renewal of our permanent exhibition, and our multimedia film, which was projected on the water tower outside.

As for our surpluses, they were due to the fact that in 2016, we were eligible for the renewal of a subsidy from the Ministry of Culture and Communications of Quebec. Since the early 2000s, there had been a provincial moratorium on operational subsidies. Since our institution was created into 2004, we had not had the opportunity of accessing that funding before. In 2016, the department revised its eligibility criteria and provided more objective funding criteria. At that point, out of 90 museums that did not receive support, six new museums became eligible for operational subsidies. On the other hand, 21 Quebec museums lost their funding, and as Ms. Perron was saying, 33 museums had their funding reduced.

Our museum was among the six lucky ones that finally received an operational subsidy. This was a recognition of our work. Since it was announced in August 2016, the tourist season was almost over. In fact, we prepare our tourist seasons from January to April. Since we received the funding in August, this explains the large surplus we had in 2016.

This financial support will allow us to breathe a little easier over the next years. Previously, we kept the museum going without operational subsidies from the department. So, our exhibitions were a little dated. Thanks to the operational subsidy, we were able to join the 21st century, and this allows us to have better museography.

We also have a role to play as cultural mediator. We were not always able to play that role because we did not have enough employees. Now, we provide more activities, for children, for instance, but we also have some intergenerational projects. All of that has allowed us to be more dynamic.

You asked me if our recipe could be exported. In our case, it's simple: we had access to new financial support, which allowed us to create new projects.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[English]

Now we are going to Mr. Eglinski, please.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses who are here today.

I just want to read our motion:

That the Committee undertake a study to review the state of Canadian museums, with a focus on local and community museums as opposed to major national or provincial museums. That the committee report the findings to the House and... this motion be studied....

We have so much time and yet almost all of our witnesses have come from large provincial museums, large or major urban museums, with just a very small portion from smaller museums, the museums federation, such as from the Maritimes. I'm glad to see the witnesses we have here today.

To me, I really see two studies here. We can't compare the small museums, like those represented by two witnesses here, with the Royal British Columbia Museum, which I've been to many times. I appreciate what you do there. I'm mostly aware of the museums in the province of British Columbia, and I'll just use a comparison. In a sense, the Royal British Columbia Museum in no way compares to, say, the museums at Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, or Fort Nelson, which attract thousands of visitors each year who are travelling through on the Alaska Highway.

I think we need to focus on where we're supposed to be, and we're spreading it out a lot further.

To Mr. Lohman, I noticed that the RBCM receives \$11.86 million in funding from the B.C. government, and you have a number of other funding methods. Do you assist in training programs or providing assistance to the smaller museums, such as Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Fort Nelson, the Chilcotin museum, and so on? Does any of your money from the province go there?

Prof. Jack Lohman: We invited the British Columbia Museums Association to nest within our museum and to assist them directly because, in a way, they have tentacles across the entire province, a very deep and close partnership.

Obviously, one of the issues is aboriginal museums. You mentioned in your catalogue various typologies. What we seem to have left out altogether is the aboriginal museums, because they're not museums, but cultural centres. The whole definition of museum becomes quite an interesting challenge.

Of course, a critical part of being a provincial museum is that you act. We push outward each exhibition that we create, with the help of the Department of Canadian Heritage. You've been very good at supporting the pushing out of these smaller exhibitions, lecture programs, and so on. We push out all our experts, but obviously it's a challenge.

As we heard at the Chapdelaine, we have problems with our infrastructure and so on. You've been to the museum. You know that the only way into the gallery is via escalators. Those escalators were put in however many years ago and are breaking down all the time, etc. etc.

•(1035)

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Do you see a need, sir, for a specific kind of federal funding program for the smaller museums, outside the of the funding for larger urban or provincial ones?

Prof. Jack Lohman: I wouldn't distinguish. I would say that what we need to do is get museums to work together. We heard from the other witnesses that there's a need to collaborate far more and, by the way, for the nationals to step up to being nationals. They should not just offer services that they want to sell particularly, but actually find out what smaller museums need and act as a midwife or a homing opportunity.

I think it should be strategic challenge funding where partners need to come together for a joint project that enables a collection of museums...or to look at different distribution methods. I don't think the distribution method for these grants really responds well to the needs of smaller museums.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Thank you, sir.

Go ahead.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Thank you.

I'd really like to follow up on that. You mentioned something specifically about creating hubs rather than tiers. I have an idea that you must have some experience in your background that would tend you towards making that kind of statement.

Could you expand on that?

Prof. Jack Lohman: I have to say that when I was director of the Museum of London, we brought 35 smaller museums together into a group. We created a very close knit.... Government had funding available to bring in. You had to apply for this funding, but it was significant for a museum. As you can appreciate, two million British pounds goes a long way in a museum. They had that type of funding available, but you had to have a minimum four or five partners.

We created special interest groups around technology, around joint promotion. We started seeing how we could procure things together. Could we collapse various departments together? Even though some of us were urban museums, some were university museums, and some were local authority museums, it didn't matter when we came together.

I know that in South Africa, the law simply said, "These national museums that have never worked together will now be put into one hub," and off you go.

Because of the size of the country, there's something about having to create clusters of museums where you can have centres of excellence. We don't have to have everything in the Royal BC Museum. We can push out conservation, for example, to Prince George or somewhere, where there may be a greater call for it, or there may be a greater call for our archives.

I think there's a different way of looking at our heritage that needs to happen.

The Chair: Thank you.

[Translation]

Mr. Nantel, you have the floor for seven minutes.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Thank you, Madam Chair.

[English]

I have to commend Mr. Eglinski for his remark. I think it's a good reminder of the mission of this study.

[Translation]

The mission of the committee is to find support, particularly for small regional museums.

Mr. Lohman, I won't put any questions to you, but I just want to say that I understand that you were an advocate for the museum federation. You seem to want the large national museums to act as big brothers—you even spoke of midwives. I thank you for your very relevant comments. In fact, I note that you are also part of a network that offers its members a 20% discount when they visit other museums in the region, which is a very good thing.

I think Ms. Perron offers a perfect example of an organization that is trying to find a way to keep things afloat, because there is an inherent danger—and not in Louis Hémon's house, but in the house of the family that welcomed him. I only learned this morning that Louis Hémon was not a Quebecker; I apologize. But in my opinion, any proud Breton who visits Lac-Saint-Jean will be happy to go and visit the house where a great novelist from his area lived, one who spoke so elegantly about our country.

That being said, I would like to hear more from you about the idea that the Canadian government could institute a program to support museum admissions. I think this idea has already been raised. We quite understand that projects become wearying for museums because they are not recurrent, and you always have to jump through hoops to get them approved.

Personnally, the only trip I ever made with my father was around Lac Saint-Jean. Isn't there some way of having a Lac Saint-Jean map that would direct visitors to the museums, hotels and restaurants in the area?

• (1040)

Mrs. Anne-Julie Néron: We are really happy to hear you say that. It's the gist of a project we have just submitted under the department's Strategic Initiatives program. We are working on that.

People visit the large institutions, but there are a lot of other ones. We are not as big as the Zoo sauvage de Saint-Félicien, which is the big attraction in the region. Individually, we seem a little small, but with nine institutions we become much more visible, and this enhances the number of visits for all of us. It's an ecosystem. We are happy that the big institutions exist and that the large museums share their expertise with us. We are happy that the zoo attracts people to the area. For our part, we then extend the tourists' stay. It's all interrelated.

Indeed, these past few years, we have worked very hard together to attract people and share our clientele.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Unless I am mistaken, the creation of a kind of network can also increase your local clientele. As opposed to clients from the outside, the people in your area of course will not go to the Louis-Hémon Museum; the 499 other people of the village have all already seen it. However, it could be made more attractive if you offered them memberships in the museum.

We talked about endowment funds. Of course the support has to be as important as the heritage. If we don't want to empty out the regions, we have to make room for these institutions.

Mr. Eglinski, thank you for having reminded us that that is indeed the purpose of our study. We learn from the large ones like the Royal British Columbia Museum. Let's hope that some day there will be an IMAX cinema at the Louis-Hémon house.

Mrs. Anne-Julie Néron: We have a multi-sensory 360-degree film, if you would like to see it.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: The Odyssée des Bâisseurs is a community museum. You have a good mediation program to teach people how to renovate whilst respecting heritage. Could you tell us more about that?

We can talk about the contribution a museum can make to early childhood, but for your part, you are directly addressing people who live in a heritage neighbourhood. I believe I understood that you are teaching them how to renovate.

Mrs. Anne-Julie Néron: Exactly. The service has existed for 20 years and is directed by a built heritage architect. Twenty years ago we realized that we were always having to put out fires in connection with built heritage. So, we work with owners who are renovating their homes. The services are paid for by the municipalities. For our part, we do sketches of their work. We mediate between the municipalities' regulations, which are often very strict, and the owners' needs. Those regulations may concern the windows or doors that the owners can install, and the materials they can use.

This service is unique in Quebec. To our knowledge, there are not many services of this kind elsewhere in Canada, and there is a crying need. That too is a kind of mediation.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Is it also a source of revenue?

Mrs. Anne-Julie Néron: Yes. The service is totally self-financed, 100% of it.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: That's super!

Mrs. Anne-Julie Néron: It's a revenue source which can vary from year to year. Sometimes, other services are more profitable. Normally, this type of service is offered by private architects' firms. Our organization is a non-profit organization. We also manage a museum and an archive centre. We have the historical spirit and context, and we can improve our interventions in that way. We can provide architectural mediation because we have the necessary personnel in-house. This does serve to complete our services very well.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Bravo!

I expect my speaking time is over.

I want to wish you good luck so that we can begin our visit to Péribonka, just like in the *Maria Chapdelaine* novel.

•(1045)

The Chair: I thank all of the witnesses.

[*English*]

Thank you for joining us so early in the morning, Mr. Lohman.

That ends this meeting. I think we have perhaps just one more panel on museums, and then we'll be done.

Thank you very much.

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