President’s Report
by: Kathy Priddle
Second floor, Please!
I can’t wait to say those familiar words as you enter a full elevator! The exciting part is I’ll be saying it in your very own Mississippi Valley Textile Museum elevator in June, 2014!
Your museum will soon be the most accessible it has ever been. Thank you Jean Down for your inspiration since 2007 in seeing the need of an elevator in the museum. That passion of Jean’s also led her to write with Michael both the Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant and the Department of Canadian Heritage grant to fully finance the elevator. That passion is now being realized as a fully functional elevator in the first half of 2014.

2014 has started off with a fabulous start and we are all excited to see what else will be on the way. Our “Soup for Thought” fundraiser, our exhibit from Japan, and our ever growing Fibrefest are just a few of the exciting adventures the museum will be involved with this year! Make sure you join in all the excitement.
From Transformations to Elevation
by Michael Rikley-Lancaster, Executive Director/Curator
What an exciting winter exhibition we have at the MVTM – felted works by Maggie Glossop and Andrea Graham titled “Transformations”, January 21 – March 15, 2014.
Maggie’s landscapes will take you to a place you have been before or would like to be, relaxing by the water or nestled under a tree, a pure sense of relaxation and beauty.
When you enter the Norah Rosamond Hughes Gallery, you will immediately be captivated by Andrea’s imagination. Her works speak to Life, Growth and Beyond, with seeds, roots, bulbs, and a sense or rebirth. Be entranced by ghost trees, as you wander through the forest beside Maggie’s waterfall.
What an exciting time at the museum! After over a year of grant writing and planning, the museum will soon lift you to new heights. The Mississippi Valley Textile Museum has received funds from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Department of Canadian Heritage to install an elevator and elevator shaft, as well as push buttons for all doorways leading to the elevator. The museum will finally be completely accessible to all.
Michael Rikley-Lancaster, Brad White and architect Peter Mansfield.

Thank you to all my wonderful volunteers for your support in writing the grants and to the Board of Directors for supporting the grant application process.

I could not be more excited about the great efforts of all of the energetic volunteers and staff of the museum. They make all these wonderful things happen.

I love my job!!!

Make Your Own Unique Felt Bag

If you have worked with felt before and want to build on skills at the intermediate or advanced level, join artist Andrea Graham at the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum on March 15th and 16th for the workshop “Bags with 3D Elements”. In this two-day workshop students will use a flat resist technique to create a functional and fashionable bag that incorporates 3D elements such as fins, loops, spikes and fibre surface details on either the flap or the front of the bag. Options for handles will be discussed, and either a felted rope handle or grommets and rings will finish off the bag.

Art & Faith: Armenian Church Collections of Constantinople

A lecture by: R. Marchese, Professor Emeritus, University of Minnesota

Ron Marchese was co-director of the excavations at Plataiai from 1999 to 2009, carried out by the Austrian Institute of Archaeology and the Thebes Archaeological Museum, the University of Minnesota-Cambridge University, University of Vienna – Thebes Archaeological Museum. He has also worked on archaeological surveys in Russia and Turkey and excavated in Israel and Turkey. Prof. Marchese is the author of numerous books and articles, and is the recipient of awards for two recent books on textiles and relics from Armenian Orthodox churches in Istanbul. He is recently retired from the University of Minnesota, Duluth, where he is now Professor Emeritus.

His lecture will be held in the Museum Multi Purpose Room on Wednesday, March 19, 2014, at 7:30 PM. For more information please call the MVTM at 613-256-3754 Ext.6.

Friends of the MVTM Report

by: Nancy Giardino

The Friends began the new year with a meeting on January 8th at the MVTM. Our special guest at the meeting was Carolyn Gibbs, coordinator of “Soup for Thought”. She filled us in on the plans for the March 22nd fundraiser. New this year will be a two seatings format, which will hopefully solve some of the “traffic” problems in and around the museum. Soup makers will come from Almonte restaurants, new chefs in the area, and even from Carleton Place. The Friends will be making lots of squares and cookies to serve with tea and coffee.

We have decided to participate in the Perth Classic Theatre Festival once again. It is a good fundraiser for the Friends, so look for ticket sales to begin in April or May.

The Friends have one change to announce in our officer team. Long time Treasurer Elizabeth Gillis handed the books over to the capable hands of Bobbie McCormack. Bobbie has had years of experience doing the books for her son’s business, so she is the ideal Friend to take over as Treasurer.

On February 1st the Friends catered for the opening reception for “Transformations”, a fabulous exhibit by two exceptional feltmakers, Maggie Glossop and Andrea Graham. At the February 5th meeting our special guest was Board President Kathy Priddle.

We are super excited about the coming of an elevator in
the museum. It will make our catering jobs so much easier. We have to carry so much food and equipment up and down stairs to entertain guests in the Norah Rosamond Hughes Gallery, so an elevator will be a blessing!

Finally, the Friends have nominated three members for Ontario Volunteer Service Awards: Jeanette Scott (5 years), Marg Spriggs (10 years) and Nancy Giardino (15 years).

The next meeting of the Friends is on March 5, 2014, 9:30 am at the MVTM. Interested MVTM members are invited to attend.

New Artifact at the MVTM
by: Matthew Moxley

Local lawyer William Chapman is getting ready for his retirement in November of 2014, after serving Almonte clients for many years. With this life milestone comes cleaning up the office. He is currently going through his old files and has found several documents that pertain to the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum. One of those items is an old insurance map of Almonte from 1950. This map marks out properties, mills, businesses and roads of the town. We thank Mr. Chapman for this important donation and are eager to find out what else he may have that can add to our artifact collection.

Historic map of Almonte donated by William Chapman

The Almonte Gazette Digitization Project

The digitization project completed in 2013 by MVTM Administrative Assistant Matthew Moxley allows people to use the museum’s website to search back issues of the *Almonte Gazette*. One of our volunteers, Irene Emig, found a funny and interesting advertisement in the October 6, 1911 edition of the paper. A new idea for a fascinating dish: ice cream and Kellogg’s toasted Corn Flakes. Place a cone of ice cream in the dish and smother with Corn Flakes at serving. You will find this delightfully refreshing. Another ad for Kellogg’s on July 14, 1911, hopes you will try peaches and cream with Corn Flakes. Use ripe peaches, peel and cut them in slices and sprinkle with Corn Flakes and add a little cream if desired. A dainty dish fit for a queen! Kellogg’s Corn Flakes sold for ten cents a box and was made in Canada in London, Ontario.

Go on line to www.mvtm.ca and use the searchable database of the *Almonte Gazette*. We bet you will find many funny and interesting facts and information about all kinds of topics. Also searchable on line is the Mary Lettner Textile Research Library, one of the most complete and specialized textile libraries in Canada, as well as the MVMT’s artifact and research collection. Log on to www.mvtm.ca and follow the links to experiment with these exciting features.

March Break Children’s Workshops:
“Needle Felted Critters”

Calling all crafty kids between the ages of 7 and 12! Don’t miss this chance to work with artist Andrea Graham at the MVTM during March Break. Andrea is an internationally acclaimed artist and teacher whose three dimensional felt creations are on display at the museum’s gallery. In this workshop, children will learn to felt (create) their own “critter” using wool and a felting needle. Please note that this technique uses a sharp felting needle in a jabbing motion.

The three hour workshop runs from 9 am to noon on Friday, March 14th. The cost is $15 to register plus $10 for materials used on the day of the workshop. Register by calling the MVMT at 613-256-3754, ext. 7, or drop by the museum at 3 Rosamond Street East in Almonte. Registration deadline is February 28th. Come out, learn from an expert, and have a morning of fun.

“Little Landscapes”

On Friday, March 14, 2014, children aged 5 to 12 will have the chance to work with felt artist Andrea Graham at the MVTM. In this workshop, children will lay out dyed wool fibre to create an image and will use wet felting techniques to create a felted fabric landscape.

The three hour workshop runs from 1 to 4 pm. The cost is $15 to register plus $10 for materials on the day of the workshop. To register please call the museum at 613-256-3754, ext. 7 or drop by the museum at 3 Rosamond street East in Almonte. The deadline for registration is February 28th. Call your friends now and plan for your children to have an afternoon of fun while they create their own little landscapes.
Transformations: Taking Felt in New Directions

If you thought felt was used only in hats and other fashion accessories, the newest exhibition at the MVMT will be an eye-opener. “Transformations” opened on January 21st and runs until March 15, 2014. The exhibit fills the Norah Rosamond Hughes Gallery with the works of Canadian fibre artists Maggie Glossop and Andrea Graham who use the ancient art of felt making to create unique works that fascinate and delight. Both are inspired by nature but are very different in approach and style.

Maggie Glossop has been working with fibres since the mid-1970s. She first explored the creative uses of fibres as a spinner and weaver, and then, 25 years ago joined the vanguard of textile artists exploring felt making as a medium for fine art. Using wool and other natural fibres that she has dyed, she creates wonderful textured landscapes and sculptured wall pieces. Maggie shares her enthusiasm and creativity with young and old and has received many awards and grants to support and further her outreach as a teacher as well as for her artworks, which are displayed in public, corporate and private spaces.

“Rocks, water, trees and sky – these are the subjects of my art,” says Glossop. “I am drawn to the ever-changing natural environment that surrounds me. I invite the viewer to focus on the beauty that is all around us but is often overlooked. I hope to awaken the viewer to see again or perhaps to see for the first time with new eyes and, having seen, appreciate what was always there.”

Andrea Graham is a multimedia artist residing in rural Ontario. Andrea exhibits, teaches and lectures internationally and is recognized for her technical skill and innovation. She is a 2013 Niche Award Finalist and was also named one of the top influences in contemporary fibre art by Fibre Art Now magazine. Andrea was Artist in Residence at Queen’s University in 2011 and has taught workshops for numerous guilds and conferences throughout North America and Europe. Using both traditional and modern felt-making techniques, she transforms wool fibres and produces sculptures that evoke living organisms.

“She cycles silently occur and often go without notice,” says Andrea. “We acknowledge these cycles at times of transformation, which can elicit feelings from awe and reflection to unease and denial. These transformations remind us of life’s dichotomy of persistence and surrender. Whether we neglect or intervene, we are at the mercy of these processes. In expressing these transformations using humble materials and simple form, I seek to bring about these primal emotions we feel at these pivotal moments.”

Do not miss this joint exhibit by two exceptional artists.

Painting with Fibres: Felt Workshop at the MVTM

Join award winning artist and teacher Maggie Glossop at the MVMT on Sunday, February 23rd, as she shares the techniques that she uses to create her amazing felt artworks, some of which are currently featured in the museum’s gallery. Workshop participants will learn how to produce a landscape, still life or abstract picture using fibres rather than paint and canvas.

Participants will begin by laying out a base of fine wool and will then create an image using commercial and hand-dyed wools, silks and other natural fibres. They will then employ the ancient techniques of wet felt-making to process the fibres into a piece of linted fabric. At the end of the
workshop, they will have a finished “painting”, which they may choose to embellish with embroidery or other stitching techniques.

“Land Days Journey Into Night” by Maggie Glossop

No experience in either felt-making or painting/drawing is necessary. The workshop will run from 9 am to 4 pm in the museum’s multipurpose room. Participants are asked to bring a bag lunch and a towel or two. The cost is $60 to register plus $10 for materials on the day of the workshop. To register please call the museum at 613-256-3754, ext. 6, or at info@mvtm.ca, or drop by the museum at 3 Rosamond Street East in Almonte during business hours 10 am to 4 pm, Tuesday to Saturday.

The Birth of the Friends of the MVTM
by: Nancy Giardino

While organizing and sorting files recently, I came across a document dated October 8, 1987, which reported on a meeting held on September 17, 1987. Diana Hughes, Helen Pragnell, Orchid Reid and Fred Whitehouse submitted a proposal to the MVTM to establish the “Friends of the Museum”. The following is a summary of their discussion:

The Friends Group should have its own executive and set of by-laws, be in control of its own finances, and manage the finances its raises. The decisions concerning the Friends Group would take into consideration the views of the Board. There would be one member from the Board as a representative on the Friends, and similarly there would be one member from the Friends as a representative on the Board.

The Friends Group would absorb the pool of volunteers and be active in recruiting, training and using volunteers.

The Friends Group would be responsible for raising funds from a variety of endeavors with some funds contributed to general funds and some funds for specific special projects.

The payment of the MVTM membership fee would entitle the payee to be a member of the Friends Group, and every effort should be made to encourage both men and women to participate in the Friends. The Friends would be responsible for its own program and public relations. The Friends would like to see the Board from time to time give an overview of planning and direction so that this information could be used by the Friends in its activities.

On February, 9, 1988, the Friends held their first meeting with a small but keen group in attendance. Their first fundraiser was a Spring Fashion Show.

By January, 1989, the Friends of the Museum were very active and included Orchid Reid, Helen Pragnell, Kay Lewis, Doug Lewis, Herb Pragnell, Mona Harris, Gerry Theoret and Sheila Symington. Several projects were underway including the showing of the film “Les Portes Tournantes” (The Revolving Doors) which was filmed in Almonte. The Friends were active in staffing the Museum Visitor Centre on Mill Street, running a Gift Shop, hosting Fashion Shows and Christmas Parties, and organizing an Artist Studio Tour each May. Mary Lawson donated a hand-made afghan for a raffle. The second Tuesday of every month was designated for regular meetings.

The Friends of the MVTM are still a small group of dedicated volunteers who raise money for the museum and support the MVTM in all events and activities. We meet on the first Wednesday of each month at the museum at 9:30 AM. At this time, not all volunteers are Friends of the MVTM, but are coordinated by Director Barb Dickson. Thanks to those early Friends of the MVTM for their efforts and foresight in establishing a hard working and dedicated group of people who really care about the MVTM.

Coming Events

- February 23, 2014: “Painting with Fibres” with textile artist Maggie Glossop. A felt workshop for adults. Total cost per person: $70
- March 11 – March 13, 2014: March Break Children’s Workshops. A collaboration between the Almonte Potters’ Guild and the MVTM
March 14, 2014: “Needle Felted Critters” children’s workshop with Andrea Graham, 9 am to noon at the MVTM. Total cost per child: $25

March 15 – 16, 2014: “Bags with 3D Elements” workshop with Andrea Graham. Total cost per adult: $190


March 22, 2014: Soup for Thought fundraiser

March 27, 2014: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 7 PM at the MVTM. All members invited.

April 1 – June 28, 2014: Exhibition by Pattie Dolan, Roberta Murrant & Jean Down

July 5, 2014: “Antiques Roadshow” fundraiser

Soup for Thought
March 22, 2014
Seatings at 11:30 AM and 1:30 PM

The Mississippi Valley Textile Museum’s “Soup for Thought” Lunch Fundraiser aims to satisfy two appetites: your hunger for food and your aesthetic sense. Food and museum lovers attending the lunch will enjoy gourmet soup from the best restaurants in Almonte and Carleton Place, and take home the handmade stoneware bowl it is served in, courtesy of the Almonte Potters’ Guild and Chandler Swain of the General: fine craft, art and design.

Due to the extreme popularity of “Soup for Thought” there will be two seatings this year. Seating one will take place from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. The second seating will be from 1:30 pm until 3:00 pm.

Tasty soups will be prepared by Ballygiblins, J.R’s Family Restaurant, Mill Street Crepe Company, The Chef’s Table, Foodies Fine Foods, Heirloom Café Bistro, Palms Coffee Shop, Café Postino and Robin’s Nest Tea Room. Desserts and coffee/tea will be served by the Friends of the MVTM. The lunch will be served in the Norah Rosamond Gallery with overflow seating in the Admissions Office. Tickets are $20, with children 12 and under free. (Please note: children will not be receiving a pottery bowl with their free meal.) Posters are up around town, the ad is in the February Humm (page 11), and tickets are available at the MVTM. All proceeds from this event go to the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum. Museum Director Carolyn Gibbs is the driving force and coordinator; the museum thanks her for her hard work and effort on “Soup for Thought”.

Snow Plowing Accident: Someone pushed a giant snowball on top of one of the MVTM’s new HVAC units, causing quite a bit of damage.