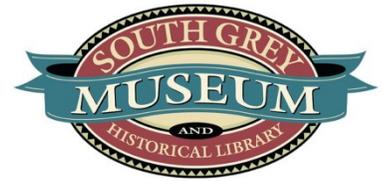




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**Sept. 10, 2014 – For Immediate Release**

## **Library and museum receive Cultural Development Fund grant**

Thanks to some creative partnering and a history of positive collaboration, the Grey Highlands community will soon benefit from project funding to enhance local culture.

The Grey Highlands Public Library and the South Grey Museum have received \$53,000 in funding from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport through the Cultural Development Fund.

“This is great news for our community,” said project lead Wilda Allen, CEO of the library system, which has had strategic cultural grants in the past to enhance online resources, digitize important community information and develop a virtual branch. “We can now build on previous community initiatives and really learn how to work together to promote culture in our area.”

Over a two year span, the library, in partnership with the museum and municipality, will build on previous ministry-funded projects seeking to increase the creative environment and capacity of regional cultural sector through a variety of project components.

Through hosting cultural roundtables the partners hope to attract individual and group participants from a wide-range of interest groups. A consultant will work closely with staff to investigating innovative models of collaboration and governance as well as develop integrated strategic planning to enhance the sustainability of the cultural sector.

“This project offers two perspectives on the same issue,” said museum curator Kate Russell, who coordinated a recent provincially-funded Creative Communities Prosperity grant for the municipality, in collaboration with the library, to develop a cultural assets database (online at visitgreyhighlands.ca); update the community profile; survey the community and reach out to various groups to develop a municipal Cultural Plan, approved by council in 2013. “Culture and heritage are so important to community development and economic prosperity this is essential work.”

Russell also coordinated the Chamber of Commerce community prosperity grant, which was essentially Phase 1 of the municipal project which culminated in the Cultural Plan. In that project, the Chamber developed the first cultural assets database, developed a community profile and hosted a 3-day municipal cultural planning workshop, which led to the formation of a volunteer Community Cultural Planning group, which has since disbanded.

“We need to pick up where others have left off,” explained Allen, who sees this as an excellent way to carry forward the Cultural Plan and bring more local individuals and groups into the community collective to promote Grey Highlands as a whole. “So many groups already work together, but there’s always someone or some group who may feel left out. We want to reach everyone we can and get lots of involvement from the community.”

***A Grey Highlands Cultural Development Fund Collaborative Project Initiative***

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The project will also see the partners enhance their use of digital tools and social media communications and other creative ideas to establish, maintain and expand local and regional networking. Resources on capacity building and tool sharing as well as board development workshops and training , will expose the larger non-profit sector and various people to the wisdom gained through the project.

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