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MOD marks International Museum Month online

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The month of May marks International Museum Month, and this year's theme looks at how museums have reimagined their work and plan to recover for the future.

While the Museum of Dufferin (MOD) has been closed to visitors due to COVID-19 restrictions, the local institution is using International Museum Month to share how they've used online platforms to continue their work for the community.

?For us, the online space is really becoming the most important way to reach people,? said Sarah Robinson, curator for the MOD. ?Something that people might not think right away about a museum is to go online to find stories or check on social media to find out more about a specific family in our community.

?We've been such a place to go to physically, you want to see the artifacts, you want to experience the history around you, and we can still do that online.?

The MOD's Learning Hub, which launched in March of 2020, has become one the museum's biggest online spaces for educational resources. The Learning Hub features a number of electronic documents focused on Dufferin County history, as well as games and activities.

Robinson said their Spanish Flu resource, which looks at the 1918 pandemic and what was happening in Dufferin County at the time, has been one of their most popular with the community.

?People are really interested to know about the number of people who were sick, how it spread in Dufferin County, if there was a vaccine, and to do the comparison of what was going on during a pandemic 100 years ago,? said Robinson.

Over the last year, the Museum of Dufferin has also launched various digital exhibits for the community, where in the past they've focused exclusively on on-site exhibits.

?We saw our website traffic go up crazy in the first few months of the pandemic, and that really told us that this is something we need to pay attention to,? said Robinson. ?For us, putting exhibits online was a no brainer.?

The MOD launched their first digital exhibit called ?Stay In and Create? in March of last year, which encouraged the community to make 2D and 3D art out of recycled materials. They later launched ?Beyond Your Eyes?, an exhibit focused on climate change in Dufferin, and ?Solidarity In My Community?, a collaborative art exhibit for Black History Month.

Amongst launching new online resources and exhibits, the MOD has been dedicated to sharing local history from fashion, to architecture, to local families, and artifacts on social media.

?Keep an eye on social media. We're really fortunate that we've had so much support through social media this year, and we're going to keep going with stories about the community, and stories about artifacts in our collection,? Robinson noted.

Looking forward to how the MOD plans to recover from the pandemic, she explained the importance of continuing work with digital components.

?We know that having digital components for exhibits is crucial, the amount of people was saw with the Solidarity in My

Community exhibit, we probably wouldn't see that many in the museum for a traditional exhibit, our reach is so much further,? said Robinson. ?We're hoping in the future that we'll always include a digital component and that will hopefully translate into bodies coming into the museum.?

The MOD is currently working on a new main gallery exhibit, which Robinson says will hopefully be ready when the Museum reopens.

The gallery will take a look at significant conversations from 2020, and will offer a ?now? and ?then? comparison. The exhibit will include a digital component.