

MASSILLON MUSEUM

121 LINCOLN WAY E.
MASSILLON, OH 44646

WWW.MASSILLONMUSEUM.ORG

I. CONSERVATION CASE STUDY:
THE IMMEL CIRCUS

II. EXHIBITION CASE STUDY:
THE ODDITORIUM



MASSILLON MUSEUM

CONSERVATION CASE STUDY: THE IMMEL CIRCUS



CASE STUDY OUTLINE: THE IMMEL CIRCUS

- Acknowledgements
- History of The Immel Circus
- Justifying Reasons for Conservation
- Identifying Conservation Needs
- Consulting with Experts
- Project Management
- Research and Project Planning
- Developing a Realistic and Flexible Timeline
- Team Development and Training
- Implementation
- Celebration and Education

HISTORY OF THE IMMEL CIRCUS



- The Immel Circus was donated in 1996 in conjunction with MassMu's move to a new building.
- This 100-square foot miniature circus contains 2,620 pieces: 36 elephants, 186 horses, 102 assorted animals, 91 wagons, 7 tents, and 2,207 people.
- The circus was hand-carved by Dr. Robert Immel using tools from his dental practice over period of 50 years.
- The Immel Circus is one of the few permanent displays at the Massillon Museum, and has dedicated gallery space.

JUSTIFICATION FOR CONSERVATION

- The Immel Circus is on permanent display.
- It is among the favorite exhibits for visitors.
- The diorama occupies largest square footage of any permanent exhibit.
- The circus diorama is a valuable educational tool, with vast opportunities for interpretation.

JUSTIFICATION FOR CONSERVATION



IDENTIFYING CONSERVATION NEEDS

- The circus is always on view, and therefore exposed to light during all hours of operation.
- The circus was enclosed on all sides but the top, subjecting it to dust and debris.
- The circus had never been cleaned since being installed in 1996.
- Original model lights within the diorama in need of replacement and electrical rewiring.



PROJECT MANAGEMENT



- Identify a project lead.
- Determine a means of documenting the project along the way.
- Clearly establish responsibilities and a reporting structure.

RESEARCH AND PROJECT PLANNING

- Gather all existing archives and documentation on the project to reference in advance and along the way.



RESEARCH AND PROJECT PLANNING

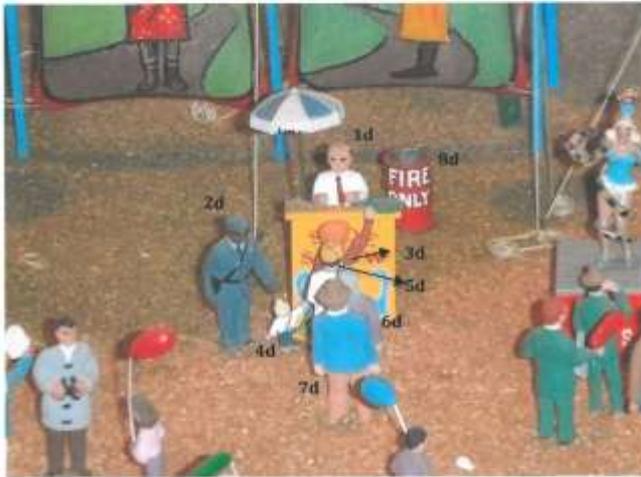
- Document existing condition with photographs and written records.



RESEARCH AND PROJECT PLANNING

4/6

Section 2 2C (d) Ticket Stand 1



- 1d. Man #1
- 2d. Man #2 (Police Officer)
- 3d. Man #3
- 4d. Baby #1
- 5d. Man #4
- 6d. Man #5
- 7d. Man #6
- Bd. "Fire Only" Barrel

Section 7 Tent #4



- 1. Tent #4
- 2. Woman #1
- 3. Man #1
- 4. Man #2
- 5. Man #3
- 6. Man #4
- 7. Woman #2
- 8. Woman #3

**1 Tent
7 People**

RESEARCH AND PROJECT PLANNING

Section 1 1Y Bell Cart



1. Horse #1
2. Horse #2
3. Horse #3
4. Horse #4
5. Horse #5
6. Horse #6
7. Driver
8. Cart

6 Horses
1 People
1 Cart

Section 1 1V a & b Golden Age of Chivalry Cart



- 1a. Horse #1
- 2a. Horse #2
- 3a. Horse #3
- 4a. Horse #4
- 5a. Horse #5
- 6a. Horse #6
- 7a. Driver
- 8a. Woman on dragon
- 9a. Man #1
- 10a. Man #2
- 11a. Cart
- 1b. White Horse #1 with Knight #1
- 2b. White Horse #2 with Knight #2
- 3b. White Horse #3 with Knight #3
- 4b. White Horse with Knight #4

10 Horses
8 People
1 Cart

CONSULTING WITH EXPERTS

- **Larry Sisson, Sisson Fine Art Services (Cleveland Heights)**
 - Helped identify process and team needs
 - Made recommendations for tools and equipment needed
 - soft, round sable brushes and cotton-tipped applicators
 - Well-lit areas
 - scaffolding
 - Suggested method of documentation
 - Photographing entire circus diorama and creating a grid from which to work in sections

DEVELOPING A REALISTIC & FLEXIBLE TIMELINE

- Set yourself up to SUCCEED!
- Wanted to coincide with opening of “Sawdust and Spectacle” exhibit on May 19, 2010 – also National Circus Day!
- Divide into manageable phases and attainable goals with projected victories.

Blog posts:

- *Among the things they notices were minor areas of paint loss and great deal of dust! But, the very satisfying end result of a day's cleaning is **a container full of dirty cotton swabs.***
- *The horse-drawn carts around the perimeter of the circus are almost **complete.** The helpful volunteers have done a wonderful job making them look like new again.*

RESEARCH AND PROJECT PLANNING

- **Budgeting and Fundraising**
- **Public Relations**
 - Press Releases
 - Newsletter articles
 - Gallery signage
 - Communicating updates to Museum staff, front line volunteers, and visitors
- **Social Media**
 - Website
 - Project Blog – Google Sites
 - Not worthwhile if you don't update regularly!
 - Facebook

TEAM DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

- Identify team and skill sets required.
- Post a call for volunteers or invite individuals to take part.
- Schedule a training session
- Cover project needs, timeline, and expectations thoroughly.
- Document your meetings.
- Develop a clearly communicated schedule.
- Log all hours and document progress.
- Require condition reporting.



First team meeting, February 24, 2010

TEAM DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Condition Reporting Terms

Abrasion: A wearing away of the surface caused by scraping, rubbing, grinding, or friction; often superficial.

Adhesive Residue: May be from glue, paste, pressure-sensitive tapes.

Chip: A defect in the surface caused by material that has been broken away.

Crack: A surface fracture or fissure across or through a material, either straight-line or branching in form, no loss is implied. A crack may be described as **blind** when it stops part way; as **hairline** when it is a tiny fissure; and as **open** when it is a large fissure.

Discoloration: A partial or overall change in color caused by aging, light, and/or chemical agents.

Fraying: Raveled or worn spot indicated by the separation of threads, especially on the edge of a fabric.

Scratch: Linear surface loss due to abrasion with a sharp point.

Massillon Museum - Circus Conservation Project

Project Supervisor: Alexandra Nicholis

Project Coordinator: Cristina Savu

Volunteer Information

- Sign in - let Cristina or Alex know you are here
- Make sure hands are clean and free of any jewelry
- Push sleeves up, and remove any dangling accessories
- Carefully look at and study each piece in grouping before you begin
- With the tip of your brush, carefully check to see if piece is stable before you attempt to clean it
- Start from highest point and work your way down
- Make sure micro cloth is not touching the sawdust
- If you see any damage, document and report it to Alex Nicholis or Cristina Savu immediately. Review condition reporting terms
- If you are unsure about anything, please ask!

IMPLEMENTATION

- Progress tracking
 - Photo documentation
 - Blog and website updates
 - Communication with funders
- Evaluation
 - Project manager reviewing work and condition reports



IMPLEMENTATION



Project Manager, Cristina Savu Teeters, supervising volunteers

IMPLEMENTATION



- Using the project as an interpretive tool
 - Educating the public about conservation as important museum function

CELEBRATION AND EDUCATION



May 19, 2010 – National Circus Day and Immel Circus unveiling

CELEBRATION AND EDUCATION



CELEBRATION AND EDUCATION

■ Project blog

The Immel Circus Conservation Project

- Home
- Conservation Updates
 - Cleaning Update**
 - Finishing Touches
 - First Week of Volunteer Cleaning!
 - Look for these vignettes
 - More pictures
 - Unlabeled Post
 - Volunteer Meeting - February 24, 2010
- Related Media
- Sitemap

Conservation Updates >

Cleaning Update

posted Apr 9, 2010, 11:44 AM by Cristina Savu @wash.edu [updated Apr 9, 2010, 2:14 PM by Massillon Museum]

On Wednesday, a scaffold was set in place to help reach the interior of the circus easier. Below is a picture of Intern, Cristina Savu, on the scaffold cleaning the tent below her.

The horse-drawn carts around the perimeter of the circus are almost complete. The helpful volunteers have done a wonderful job making them look like new again.



1142
days since
National Circus Day

CELEBRATION AND EDUCATION

- Gallery labels/photos and interpretation
- Creating meaningful internship experiences
 - Partnership with Walsh University Museum Studies program
 - Allowing for interns to identify capstone project



FOLLOW-UP AND PHASE 2

- Installation of an acrylic cover to protect the diorama
- Fundraising efforts
- PR



FOLLOW-UP AND PHASE 2



PROJECT COMPLETE!



CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS!

Museum registrar is keeper of the big top

Next »  Zoom Out



*Independent, January 23,
2013*

IndeOnline / Kevin Whitlock

INDEPENDENT KEVIN WHITLOCK n Cristina Savu Teeters, registrar at the Massillon Museum talks about her favorite pieces of the Immel Circus that recently has had an acrylic top for viewing and keeping the pieces dust free and lighting levels down.

MASSILLON MUSEUM

EXHIBITION CASE STUDY

BRINGING OUT THE SKELETONS IN YOUR CLOSET: *THE ODDITORIUM*



CASE STUDY OUTLINE: BRINGING OUT THE SKELETONS IN YOUR CLOSET: *THE ODDITORIUM*

- Summary of Exhibition Concept
- Collections projects present opportunities for exhibit development – be open-minded!
- Staff-curated exhibits and the importance of TEAMWORK



About magazine article, 2008

EXHIBIT CONCEPT

What to do with those “oddball” artifacts?!



TEAMWORK



TEAMWORK



THE ODDITORIUM



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