



## ENVISIONING A FUTURE MUSEUM COMMUNITY: THE TOWN OF MARKHAM EXPERIENCE

The 39th Annual Ontario Museum Association's Conference was held in Toronto from October 6 to 8, 2010. The theme of this year's conference was Convergence: Attracting Visitors, Transforming Lives. The co-chairs of the Conference, John Dalrymple (Treasurer & Acting Director, Textile Museum of Canada) and Yves Theoret (Councillor & Managing Director, Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art), stated that this year's theme addressed two converging issues museum professionals face to-day: balancing financial matters with mission-related priorities. Whether museums are large or small they have a constructive impact on people's lives: "We inspire, educate, preserve and engage, and must continue to assert and expand our role as this positive engine in society. Convergence will bring together innovative thinkers and committed 'doers' from across our field to explore these two fundamental and converging threads."

Helene Moussa and John Ryerson, Director of Culture, City of Markham made a presentation to about 40 museum professionals at the conference. The presentation was entitled "Envisioning a Future Museum Community: The Town of Markham Experience."

John spoke about the St. Mark's

Coptic Museum as professionally operated, interpreting Coptic history in an historical context, as reflecting the Diaspora and as a living cultural centre open to the GTA. The new cathedral building on the Coptic-Canadian Village (CCV) contributes to Markham's community by creating a gateway landmark on one of the most used routes into Markham.

plans and the Coptic Museum, its plans and its relationship to the larger museum community. Some in the audience want us to come back again and update them on our progress.

The Town of Markham is undertaking a ten-year culture plan for Markham that will encompass the Coptic Museum as one of our community's important cultural heritage assets.



St. Mark's Coptic Museum is seen as adding value to Markham through its participatory activity, volunteer opportunities, relevant and engaging displays, a place for meeting and celebration and perhaps most importantly a place for lifelong learning.

Helene took the audience through the scope of the collection artefacts and the vision for the future museum building in the CCV's site plans. The audience asked many questions about Markham's cultural heritage

Please take three minutes of your time and complete the survey at [www.markham.ca/culture](http://www.markham.ca/culture) to show your commitment and interest in being part of Markham's cultural community.

John Ryerson,  
Director of Culture  
City of Markham

## Canadian Society for Coptic Studies Fourth Annual Coptic Studies Symposium

The Fourth Annual Coptic Studies Symposium will be hosted by the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Arts on 26 February 2011. The theme of the symposium is "Coptic Heritage: Dynamics and Diversity." This year the keynote lecture will be given by Prof. Dr. Jacques van der Vliet of Leiden University (the Netherlands). Prof. Van der Vliet is one of the foremost scholars of the Coptic language, art and culture in the world and currently the President-Elect of the International Society for Coptic Studies (IACS).

For more information contact  
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and St. Mark's Coptic Museum's website

On Saturday November 20, 2010 the Museum received nineteen visitors. Our visitors came from British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Ontario and will be travelling to Egypt, Jordan, and Israel on the "Bible Lands Discovery Tour" from February 14 to March 3, 2011. The tour hosts are the Reverend Dr. Murray Henderson and Mrs. Diana Henderson from Christ Church St James, Etobikoe (Anglican).



On Sunday November 28, St. Mark's Coptic Museum organised a clay workshop at the Gardiner Museum in Toronto. Ian Symons, studio artist was the instructor. Twenty volunteers and "friends" of the Museum created a variety of objects. This programme is part of a Museum venture to position the Museum as a "cultural hub." The aim is to cultivate an appetite for culture through visual art, film and music. The Museum will offer monthly events throughout the year. The airing of the internationally acclaimed documentary "Garbage Dreams" last July and October, and the "Egyptian Fashion Show" at the September Coptic Festival were part of this initiative. Stay tuned to the "Cultural Hub" 2011 schedule!



## *Exhibition of Crèches Around the World*

Recreating the scene of Jesus Christ's birth had its origins in the middle ages, but came into bloom as popular culture only in the 17th and 18th centuries. Originally rooted in three centres: Naples Italy; the Provence, France; and Southern Germany and Austria, nativity sets spread around the world, including Egypt, spearheaded by missionary efforts.

For the past ten years, the St. James Cathedral (Anglican) Archives & Museum has been collecting crèches (nativity scenes) from around the world — over 300 crèches to date. A selection of these crèches will be exhibited during the coming Christmas season:

1. Main Rotunda of City Hall on Saturday, December 4 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, December 5 from noon until 4:00 p.m. The exhibition will be under the auspices of the Community Folk Art Council's "Christmas Traditions from Around the World." The programme will also include folk dancing and singing.
2. St. James Cathedral on Saturday, January 1, 2011 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Sunday, January 2, 2011 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

The Cathedral Archives & Museum recently purchased a terra cotta Coptic folkloric style crèche from St. Mark's Coptic Museum. It may be part of the exhibition in the Cathedral.

**Address: North-east corner of King and Church streets.**