

## Behind the Scenes at the Museum

by Claire King

So now that it is autumn and the doors of the Museum are closed, what the heck goes on there, you may wonder (or may not). Well, plans continue to unfold, and action taken. There have been reactions to an action that were *not* in our plans, but rather “in our stars”: I'll get to that later!

First some good news.

Barry Landeen, one of our Museum's hard-working volunteers has spent countless hours over the past year collecting, organizing and registering the Denman Museum archives. It continues to be a mammoth and time consuming task, but Barry says he has found it interesting and rewarding, and he is enthusiastic about the proposed plan, approved by the Museum and Archives committee, to digitize all existing records as well as future ones.

This plan, proposed by our current Chair and DSMS Board member, Tony Gregson, will mean that through the use of a special scanner and electronic formatting, all our records, publications and Museum accessions will be preserved, and made available for reference and research purposes. The museum will also have the capability to store other cultural objects such as locally made videos and audio recordings in electronic format, and to provide photographic documentation of all our artifacts. Of course, to achieve this goal, the museum will have to purchase the necessary equipment: most importantly a flatbed scanner which can be used to scan both publications and objects.

Now that an archives policy has been established, the M & A will continue to accumulate more records from Denman's non-governmental organizations (both past and current ones) as well as from individuals. More specific information about this project will be coming in a later article.

The Museum and Archives committee has also approved a new plan designed to make better use of our available space. This will mean upgrading the existing office area with new storage shelving, a proper working space with a new desk, and the removal of the old sink to the museum bathroom.

All of this is good news. So what was my reference to “an unplanned action” hinted at in the first paragraph of this article? Well, if you can remember back to before these sun-drenched days of October, you may recall a somewhat soggy September that brought rain-drenching days to the island, and more specifically to our museum building where the roof leaked quite badly. The result was a very wet ceiling and large puddles on the floor. Luckily there were volunteers who arrived at the building soon after—one of whom made heroic efforts to mop up the mess, while another hastily procured industrial strength dehumidifiers from town. Others from the DSMS Board also added their help, and the museum seemed to more or less dry out. However, it was deemed prudent to call in a restoration company to assess the condition of the ceiling to see if it needed repairing. The Belfor Company who came to inspect it determined that the ceiling had in fact dried out now and that at this point it should not need repairing. So, thanks to the prompt action of some volunteers “All's well that ends well”.

On a further positive note, we received a generous donation from a member of the public to allow us to order more videos of our documentary “Looking Back”; they are now on sale again as a fund-raiser for the museum—at the bargain price of \$10! We sold all 100 copies of the first batch, but some people

mentioned that hadn't been able to get one. So here is another chance to collect a bit of Denman history for yourself, or maybe as a Christmas gift. They will be available at Abraxas Books as of today..