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# Our Hidden Hills

# Animation Template Project Kit

**Theatre Wakefield**

December 2008

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## Introduction

**Our Hidden Hills** is a creative community project designed to bring local history alive by animating the stories of community members and exploring opportunities for presenting and celebrating those stories.

In the fall of 2008, Theatre Wakefield developed and implemented an animation template to guide the creative process.

This kit is designed to aid coordinators of animation projects in their own communities. It complements and refers to the Local History Animation Activity Plan presentation that can be used at workshops.

There are four main activities in the animation template:

1. Collecting a list of Local History Stories
2. Assembling Materials and Documenting the Stories
3. Preparing for the Animation Workshop
4. Conducting the Animation Workshop

The steps needed to carry out these activities are outlined in this kit.

In addition, the steps leading up to the first activity are included in the “Getting Ready” section and summary steps are in the “Wrapping Up” section of this kit.

Theatre Wakefield gratefully acknowledges the support of Canadian Heritage through which this project was made possible.



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## Getting Ready

Before project activities begin, there are things to consider and preparations to be made. At the onset you will have to determine a budget for administration and operations which will include human resources, material supplies, locations, communications

### **What people are needed?**

The core team consists of three people:

1. Project Coordinator;
2. Lead Facilitator; and
3. Documentation Coordinator.

Job descriptions for each of these positions are provided in Appendix A.

It is recommended to enlist more people to help with various tasks such as community outreach, publicity, administrative duties

Key resource people needed to participate in workshops will include local community people who are the source of the history, and artists (drama, music, film, dance, art) who are experienced at turning historical tales into living art.

### **What other resources are needed?**

You will need spaces to meet to discuss the project, carry out interviews and hold workshops.

You will also need the means to record your workshops. Audio/visual equipment is the recommended format.

### **What are the steps to be taken?**

The two main steps leading up to the animation workshop are:

1. Information Gathering; and
2. Workshop Preparation

A sample Project Schedule is provided in Appendix A to aid you in the overall tasks to be carried out for the project.

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## Activity Plan

### Activity 1: Collect Stories

#### Talk to individuals

- In-person interviews
- Phone interviews

#### Hold sharing workshops

- Facilitated informal group session

#### Ask for stories and photos

- Email lists
- Website
- Posters, newspapers

#### Tips

Identify key people in your community who have historical knowledge.

Consult people involved with historical societies, museums, libraries, newspapers in your area.

Keep workshop size manageable – no larger than 20.

Give demonstrations (either live or pre-recorded) of ways history can be brought to life – songs, poems, readings, plays etc.

Publicize your project – get people talking about it!

### Activity 2: Document Histories

#### Record interviews & workshops

- Audio/video recordings
- Transcripts and notes

#### Archive and index stories & photos

- Scan originals
- Catalogue files for future reference

#### Post selections on website

- For easy public access

#### Tips

Get permission to record and publish material by signed waiver form.

Digitize material and save electronically. Categorizing makes retrieval easier and faster.

Website can be used to submit stories as well as share those already collected.

Website is a perpetual means of contributing and sharing.

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## Activity Plan cont'd

### Activity 3: Prepare Workshop

#### Select best stories

- Based on material collected, its relevance

#### Select workshop format

- Based on stories and resource people available

#### Set up workshop

- Book dates and venue
- Confirm workshop leaders
- Facilitators, artists, historians, storytellers, musicians, actors
- Arrange materials (a/v equipment, flipcharts etc.)

#### Prepare workshop package

- Stories and story ideas handouts
- Audio/visual clips of interviews, workshops
- Photos
- Other resource material

#### Publicize workshop

- Email, newspapers, website, other e.g. Facebook

#### Tips

Select a maximum of ten stories that are well-documented, relevant to the community and, of course, interesting.

Match the format of the workshop to the stories and resource people. Examples of format include scriptwriting, dance movement, songwriting. Workshop could be a combination of formats.

Workshop package should include all collected material for the selected stories.

Distribute the package to workshop leaders and participants prior to the workshop so that they can familiarize themselves with the ideas, concepts and even do their own additional research if they wish.

Make sure you get RSVPs from all invitees, i.e. leaders.

Ask people to register so you know how many people are attending.

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## Activity Plan cont'd

### Activity 4: Hold Animation Workshop

#### Welcome & Introduction

- Brief project overview, activities, objectives
- Self-introductions

#### Small group brainstorming

- Break into small groups with one leader each
- Select stories to focus on
- Choose formats for presentation, e.g. song, skit, radio play, dance, etc.

#### Mini presentations

- Small groups present ideas to all

#### Collective brainstorming

- Large group discussion
- Feedback on individual ideas and the big picture
- Facilitator compiles and blends stories, ideas and helps the group format them into one fluid presentation

#### Going “live”

- Group presents a run-through of full production

Note: A sample Workshop Agenda is provided in Appendix A.

#### Tips

Briefly outline the purpose and progress of the project, outcomes and agenda for the day.

Go around the room to let people introduce themselves.

Get contact information and signed waiver forms.

Groups of four participants with one leader are a good size.

Each group should assign its own notetaker. Flipcharts are very useful for this.

Provide participants with story documentation.

Make more detailed material available (audio/visual clips, photos, artefacts, etc) for participants to refer to during the workshop as they wish. Don't bombard with too much information.

Facilitator should circulate from group to group to assist as needed.

Take notes of mini presentations and collective brainstorming session on flipcharts so all can see.

Record the entire workshop on video if possible.

Discuss next steps with group with suggestions for building on their work

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## Wrapping Up

After the final workshop, there is follow-up to do.

Results of the project need to be shared with the participants. For instance, an edited version of workshop videos could be made available by putting it on a website or making personal copies for each participant.

Project documentation needs to be compiled, archived and made accessible to participants. Again, the website is an excellent format for doing this.

Personally follow up with the participants. Ask for their feedback on the process, results and ideas. Give guidance on ways they can further explore and build on the animation template within their communities.

Encourage people to continue adding and sharing stories and information to the history collection on an ongoing basis via email or website.

# Appendix A

Job Descriptions

Sample Project Schedule

Sample Workshop Agenda

Waiver Form

## Job Descriptions

### Project Coordinator

Duties:

- Manages overall project to fulfill project goals
- Works with target communities to determine key resource people
- Coordinates development, distribution and analysis of project material
- Coordinates logistics for workshops

Qualifications:

- experience with project management
- good knowledge of target communities
- good understanding of logistics
- good writing ability
- reasonably fluent in French

### Lead Facilitator

Duties:

- Responsible for design and delivery of workshops
- Works with project coordinator to analyze project material
- Designs and leads workshops

Qualifications:

- workshop design
- workshop facilitation
- good knowledge of community history
- reasonably fluent in French

### Documentation Coordinator

Duties:

- Responsible for documentation of the workshops
- Takes a transcript
- Records (film/sound) appropriate parts of the workshops

Qualifications:

- good knowledge of IT and multimedia
- reasonably fluent in French

## Sample Project Sequence

Activity	Timeframe	To do list	Status	Responsible	Notes
<b>Information Gathering</b>					
Publicize project		Write text for website, press releases etc Translate text Launch website Contact media Post posters			
Collect and archive stories		Develop list of eligible candidates for interviews, ie historians, authors, seniors Conduct interviews in person or by phone Receive stories by email Digitize and store material			
<b>Workshop Preparation</b>					
Schedule sessions		Confirm venues, dates, costs			
Publicize sessions		Write text for posters, website etc Translate text Contact media Follow up with key individuals Post posters			
Organize sessions		Develop agenda and workshop methodology Develop budget Develop media presentation Prepare participant info packages Purchase supplies (flipchart paper, markers etc) Confirm attendance Order food, refreshments Multimedia requirements			

## Sample Workshop Agenda

Item	Activities	Time	Responsible	Outcomes
Background and introductions	Introductions Purpose of project Outcomes/agenda Permission to film	10 min	Facilitator Documenter/recorder	Clear understanding of why we are here
What makes a good story?	Presentations Discussion on “what makes a good story” from which criteria is pulled	40 min	Facilitator Documenter/recorder	Generation of ideas/excitement Selection criteria on flipchart <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A story</li> <li>• Novelty</li> <li>• Interesting characters</li> <li>• Modern day relevance</li> </ul>
Brainstorming of “nuggets” (ideas)	Facilitated discussion	90 min	Facilitator Documenter/recorder	A list of nuggets
Fleshing out of concepts	Create links Match to criteria Prioritize if necessary	40 min	Facilitator Documenter/recorder	A final list of nuggets
Next steps	Group discussion – may need to be split into “nugget” groups	30 min	Facilitator Documenter/recorder	To do list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who will work on it</li> <li>• How will they proceed next</li> <li>• What supports do they require</li> </ul>

# Waiver Form

## WAIVER AGREEMENT

I, (PRINT NAME) \_\_\_\_\_, the undersigned consent to participate, without charge or payment, in the production being shot by \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Name of Organization)

I further agree to the use of my voice, likeness, personal stories, memories and artefacts in this project and that the above organization or their nominee have the right to film, videotape, photograph, record and otherwise use the material I provide in any video, TV, radio, recording, motion picture, broadcast or other reproductive print or electronic media, and to fully exploit the said performance and material in any way not mentioned before.

I hereby declare that I am not under the age of eighteen (18) years.\*

**SIGNED** by the undersigned at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Witness)

tel: \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

\*I (PRINT NAME) \_\_\_\_\_ hereby warrant that I am the legal guardian of the above-named person and that I give my permission for his/her participation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Witness)