

Feds nix export permit for polar explorer Roald Amundsen's ship

Jane George, Postmedia News, Thursday, December 15, 2011

A plan to tow the half-submerged wreck of a ship off the shore of Nunavut's Cambridge Bay back to Norway has hit a wall.

The federal government has turned down a request for an export permit for the *Maud*, once sailed by Norway's Roald Amundsen, the first European adventurer to travel the Northwest Passage in 1906 and the first person to reach the South Pole, a feat he achieved in December 1911.

Amundsen sailed the *Maud* on an unsuccessful attempt to sail through the Northeast Passage, then drifted in the ice toward the North Pole.

But bringing the *Maud* back to Norway is all about the enduring hoopla that surrounds the country's homegrown hero, Amundsen.

And that's why a group of Norwegian investors wanted to raise the *Maud* with balloons, drag the hulk over to a barge and then tow it from Nunavut back to Norway — a 7,000-kilometre journey.

There, the *Maud* would be exhibited at a futuristic museum in Asker, a suburb of Oslo — where anything to do with Amundsen remains a huge draw.

The reason for the refusal of the permit: a full archeological study must first be conducted on the wreck — a condition that came as unexpected news to the manager of the project "*Maud* Returns Home."

"The reason for the refusal is explained as lack of information concerning the extraction of the Baymaud. The Export Examiner states that the ship should not be recovered without adherence to accepted archaeological standards," Jan Wanggaard said Thursday — a day after Norway celebrated the 100th anniversary of Amundsen's arrival at the South Pole.

But the project's proponents plan to appeal the decision to the Canada's cultural property export review board, Wanggaard said.

The refusal came as a surprise because the *Maud*, now owned by a Norwegian group, wasn't listed as an archeological site.

"This fact was part of our basis for our application, and we are therefore surprised that the Expert Examiner, despite this, considers the ship to be on this list and makes his conclusions, regarding the need for archaeological studies, based on this. At the time of our application being handed in, we were informed that *Maud* was not registered on this list," Wanggaard said.

Not that he's against an archeological study, but he said his 2011 survey of the *Maud* shows that would be "of marginal value."

As well, Canadian officials never requested more information, he said.

“We think it is in both nations’, Canada and Norway, interest that we are given the opportunity to respond to any demands made from Canadian side, to finally receive an Export Permit,” Wanggaard stated. “In this way we can continue with full power our concrete plans for a salvage operation to be realized next summer, including whatever is needed to fullfil any given standards and plans for further documentation.”

Wanggaard also spoke to a local Norwegian newspaper about his frustration over the refusal of an export permit.

“*Maud* was not registered as a heritage site in Canada, and it is not today either. Canadian authorities should have informed us that they would regard it as such before we submitted the application,” he said on Budstikka.no.

But Wanggaard still sounded optimistic, saying the goal of raising the *Maud* next summer hasn’t changed.

Although Wanggaard gained converts for that project when he visited Cambridge Bay this past August, many in Cambridge Bay will be happy to learn that the *Maud* may stay where it is.

A group of Cambridge Bay residents has lobbied to keep the sunken hulk of the *Maud* — better known to them as the *Baymaud*, the name given to it by the Hudson’s Bay Co. — in the waters outside their community.

They formed a committee called “Keep the *Baymaud* in Canada” and circulated a petition that says the *Baymaud*, which sank near Cambridge Bay in 1930, is “an archaeological site that needs to be protected as she is where she is.”

The petition noted that the *Baymaud* also served as a supply vessel and a floating warehouse, then later as a wireless radio station, broadcasting from the Arctic to what is now the CBC.

“While we don’t deny the importance of the *Maud* to Norway, one also cannot deny the fact that she is a Canadian archaeological site that has been here since 1930 and should not be removed,” the petition reads.

Le RAAV contre Richard Martineau

Le Devoir, le vendredi 16 décembre 2011

Le Regroupement des artistes en arts visuels du Québec (RAAV) a livré hier une charge contre le journaliste Richard Martineau, en raison d'une chronique tournant en dérision les 75 000 \$ dépensés par Montréal pour l'œuvre d'art public *Mélangez le tout*, qui doit être bientôt inaugurée dans le quartier Sainte-Marie.

Dans sa chronique controversée, le chroniqueur écrit: «Pourquoi cé faire qu'on dépense de l'argent public dans des affaires que le monde comprennent pas.» Le chroniqueur ajoute au surplus que le batteur géant créé par les artistes Cooke-Sasseville fait insulte aux gens du quartier, eux qui n'ont jamais eu les moyens de se payer un tel appareil. Il établit un lien douteux entre le coût de cette oeuvre et la récente hausse de taxes de 3,3 % annoncée aux Montréalais. Le RAAV estime que Richard Martineau fait preuve de mépris et de condescendance en ridiculisant une oeuvre porteuse de sens. «C'est en des termes d'un populisme au ras des pâquerettes que M. Martineau ironise sur le thème bien connu dans l'extrême droite», dénonce le Regroupement.

Georgina gallery can't make payroll

Facility needs advance

Heidi Riedner, YorkRegion, Thursday, December 15, 2011

The Georgina Arts Centre & Gallery will receive a cash advance from the town to cover its December payroll.

“This is the first time we have survived this far into December without having to ask the town for assistance but, due to the increased growth of the GAC, as well as the demand of our services in 2011, we find we must request a \$15,000 advance from our 2012 funding at this time,” wrote Heather Fullerton, the centre’s executive director, in a Dec. 6 letter to the town’s director of administrative services and treasurer.

Ward 3 Councillor Dave Szollosy moved to grant the request during council deliberations Dec. 12 based on the town’s budget process and previous practice, stating the request “is something council has done in the past”.

Council approved a similar \$8,500 advance in 2010 against the centre’s future 2011 budget allocation, which turned out to be \$90,000 after Ms Fullerton requested an additional \$15,000 on top of the \$75,000 granted.

More hours are “desperately needed” and the gallery can’t operate any longer with the budget it has now, Ms Fullerton said at the time, adding staffing is the biggest cost and there just isn’t enough funding to go around.

This year, however, is the first year in 11 years that the gallery made it through almost an entire year without having to ask for additional funds and the request was made to ensure every operational cost was covered heading in to the new year, notes Ms Fullerton.

“It just rocks my socks that we didn’t make it to that last payroll,” she said, adding the \$15,000 is not for one pay period, but to provide security heading in to January to bridge the gap until various approved government grants and corporate donations come in.

“We run a tight ship and we’re very proud of the fact that every cheque has been written, every bill has been paid and every artist has been paid,” she said.

She added that core staff of the gallery, which includes its full-time executive director, permanent part-time curator, bookkeeper and maintenance person, represents an annual outlay of \$65,000 in salary and wages, with no staff member receiving benefits as part of their wage.

The position of executive director is the gallery’s one full-time staff member earning just over \$36,000.

The gallery was able to bring Suzanne Smoke on as a full-time marketing director as part of a two-year joint marketing grant with the Sutton Fair and former Red Barn through the Ontario Trillium Foundation, but Ms Smoke’s salary is paid for by the foundation until March 2012.

Depending on programming and the number of participants, honorariums, fees for class teachers and general staffing, can add an additional \$30,000 to the gallery’s payroll commitments.

“We are very open about our books and being accountable. Most of our funding goes to operational costs, with capital grants being awarded for specific projects,” she said, adding more than \$100,000 in capital funds have gone in to the building for upgrades and renovations.

While the request was granted, Mayor Rob Grossi was uncomfortable with the issue of groups borrowing against a presumed and undetermined funding grant.

“First of all, there’s an assumption there is a place for them on a 2012 budget,” he said, adding council won’t be full in to budget deliberations until late January or early February.

Deputy Mayor Danny Wheeler also referred to the supposition of a future grant and agreed with Ward 5 councillor Brad Smockum, who wondered how the gallery proposed to cover its payroll issue until the budget comes out, most likely in March.

“The (gallery) could need as much as \$45,000 until the budget is passed,” said Mr. Wheeler.

But Ms Fullerton said the gallery currently has “all kinds of fingers in the fire” in terms of provincial and corporate funding and does not expect to go “back to the trough” in the near future.

In addition, a whole new area of federal grants is available to the gallery because of its recent museum status, providing access to additional funding through the Canadian Museums Association.

Appreciative of the town’s continued support, Ms Fullerton said the gallery is a line in the town’s annual budget representing an expected expense.

“We know they take us into consideration and we have developed a very positive relationship,” she said, adding the bang for the town’s buck is pretty amazing in terms of the programs, promotion of tourism and community partnerships the town receives for what is comparable to a senior management salary in the corporate world.

The gallery, however, wasn’t the only community group looking for and receiving an advance from future funding from the town.

Bill Rouse, the chair of the Georgina Military Museum, requested monthly installments of \$1,500 up to council’s passing of the budget to cover the museum’s rent.

Mr. Rouse said the museum will be petitioning for similar funding of \$18,000 in the 2012 budget and was forming his request for an advance against that money with the understanding the museum would have to pay back up to \$4,500 to the town if 2012 funding was not received.

Time capsule from 1909 opened at Sask. legislative building

Pamela Cowan, Regina Leader-Post, Thursday, December 15, 2011

The copper time capsule placed in Saskatchewan's legislative building in 1909 has lost its lustre, but its contents put a gleam in the eyes of the province's premier and lieutenant-governor on Thursday.

Premier Brad Wall and Lt.-Gov. Gordon Barnhart became time travellers Thursday morning as they chatted about what life might have been like in 1909, when thousands of citizens gathered at Regina's legislative building to watch the Queen's representative, Gov. Gen. Earl Grey, ceremoniously lay the cornerstone — with a time capsule in it.

After removing the time capsule's soldered lid, Wall and Barnhart put on green gloves and carefully lifted out several items including a pristine 1909 Henderson directory, a Canadian almanac and a thin copy of the official telephone directory for the Province of Saskatchewan.

Both men were excited to touch the objects in the time capsule, which was placed in the cornerstone of the Legislative Building during construction in 1909.

"It's remarkable," Wall said. "The last people that touched these were wanting to send all of us a message about how the province started and, in here, I'm sure there will be much about the vision that those early leaders had for Saskatchewan, including the premier."

Wall observed today's telephone book is considerably bigger than the 1909 directory.

"One has to wonder, in 100 years from now, will there be a telephone directory at all or will it all be electronic?" mused Barnhart.

Although the time capsule wasn't emptied Thursday morning, a list of the items that were to be placed in it includes the Oct. 4, 1909 *Morning Leader*. The headline on the newspaper's front page read: "Governor General Arrives in the City; Everything Ready for Today's Big Ceremony."

The following day, the *Morning Leader*'s headline was: "Corner stone well and truly laid."

"With the accompaniment of waving flags and stirring music, Earl Grey formally places historic stone of provincial parliament buildings in position in presence of great assemblage — inspiring and imperialistic speeches by His Excellency and Leading Statesmen — A Scene of Impressiveness and Beauty."

Thousands turned up for the laying of the cornerstone. On Thursday, only a group of schoolchildren, a few onlookers and reporters were at the Legislative Building to witness the opening of the time capsule. However, Wall noted that many thousand Saskatchewan residents would see the opening via the media and technology.

When the legislative building was built, the province had only 250,000 residents, Barnhart said.

"Look at the size of the building compared to what would have been needed for 250,000 — that shows you the foresight of Walter Scott and his government and of the pioneers," he said.

The time capsule was opened Thursday so items can be displayed at the beginning of 2012, which will mark the centennial of the official opening of the legislative building.

Barnhart was doubly intrigued by the time capsule — as a historian and as lieutenant-governor.

“When you study history, and I’ve studied certainly this era because Walter Scott was the person I wrote the biography about, and he was premier and also minister of public works during most of the construction of the legislative building, so it just makes me have that feeling that we’re back at that time,” Barnhart said.

He expected the premier and the cabinet of the day were among those who decided what articles would go in the time capsule.

“There were a lot of people who had the foresight to say, ‘Let’s make sure we preserve this’ and where best to preserve it than in a cornerstone,” Barnhart said. “Cornerstones in any building are really the beginning of a building. If a cornerstone isn’t solid, then the rest of the building isn’t solid.”

According to a list of articles put in the box, the contents should include a Union Jack, a Bible, postage stamps and currency.

Alyssa Becker-Burns, the conservator with the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, said each item will be photographed and a written description, including the object’s condition, will be done.

While handling the contents, she and the premier and lieutenant-governor wore powder-free, nitrile gloves to prevent oil from their hands from soiling the documents.

“The gloves are very smooth so they are less likely to catch on frayed edges,” Becker-Burns said. “Some people still do use the white cotton gloves — it depends on what you’re doing.”

First Sikh museum opens Saturday with Lt.-Gov. Point

Christina Toth, Abbotsford Times, Thursday, December 15, 2011

Lieutenant-Governor Steven Point will be in Abbotsford Dec. 17 to officially open the Sikh Heritage Museum, the first of its kind in Canada, at the historic Gur Sikh Gurdwara on South Fraser Way.

“There are no other museums (on Sikh history) in the country. There are exhibits but not a museum in itself that caters to Sikh heritage,” said Navneet Sidhu, a project coordinator with the University of the Fraser Valley.

The museum will feature photos and artifacts donated by local Indo-Canadian families, including a few who had uncles and grandfathers settle here almost a century ago. The project has been two years in development and is supported by federal government funds, through Canadian Heritage.

The temple, or gurdwara, was declared a national historic site by former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and former Heritage Minister Sheila Copps in the summer of 2002.

Built in 1911 by immigrant Sikhs who laboured at the nearby sawmill at what is now called Mill Lake, the unique wooden temple was the site of a three-day centennial party this summer.

“It’s a big deal to local Sikhs because something like this hasn’t happened before. Future generations will cherish the museum,” said Sidhu.

The year of centennial celebration began in January with a proclamation by Abbotsford Mayor George Peary that recognized the historic and cultural significance of the site and the contribution of Indian Sikh pioneers and immigrants in the development of the city.

Partnering groups have held a commemorative function each month through the year. For example, The Reach Museum and Gallery currently has a display on Sikh history. Saturday’s opening of the Sikh Heritage Museum will close the year of centenary celebrations, with a ceremony, speeches and tea from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the gurdwara.

The event will include comments from local dignitaries and it is open to the public.

The Gur Sikh Gurdwara is at 33094 South Fraser Way, Abbotsford. You can see more at www.canadiansikhheritage.ca.