

# Don't throw history away

It was with considerable dismay that I recently became aware of the proposed budget cuts in Greater Sudbury that would result in the closure of the four city-operated museums and the termination of operating support to the **Capreol Railway Museum**.

By ending the municipalities' "involvement in the preservation and presentation of local history" the city is proposing to turn its back on the rich history that has shaped its development and growth over time to make it the vibrant community that it is today as one of the predominant cities of Northern Ontario.

While some of the benefits of museums may not be readily obvious, Ontario's heritage sector, museums and public art galleries contribute \$480 million to the province's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). There are 18 million annual visits to a museum or heritage site in Ontario with more than 100,000

school visits per year. There are 13,500 volunteers at work in Ontario's museums and more than 14,000 jobs are generated by the museum sector.

Countless hours have been donated to the city and its future by volunteers willing to give of their time and energy to share their understanding of our common past in an effort to help guide the future direction of the community.

Most people would not consider throwing away their birth certificates, marriage licenses, high school yearbooks, photographs, mementos and family heirlooms - their heritage. Perhaps Greater Sudbury should reconsider the proposal to close museums lest it should suddenly find itself wishing it had not thrown this important part of itself away.

**Ed Driedger**  
Director

North Bay Area Museum  
[www.heritagenorthernbay.com](http://www.heritagenorthernbay.com)

Feb 25 Northern Life