

Lew Moir, 12.7.23

Fri, Dec 08, 2023 3:59PM • 24:29

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

veterans, broomfield, museum, rotary, city, contract, big, docents, organization, years, area, vic, raise, veteran, art, dave, called, stream, question, history

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have to do this later. Oh, no, there we go.

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I'd love to hear a little bit more Lou, about your experience with how you kind of got involved with the veterans museum. And maybe what I want to start with like,

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you must start at the beginning.

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Yeah, let's do that. Let's start at the beginning.

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Okay, at the beginning

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the founders had an idea.

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Vic bolt cart was president of the rotary at the time, I was a secretary.

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And so in a discussion with Vic, a motion was made to give a, like a \$5,000 grant, to start the process of recording veteran interviews.

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So that's the beginning of the interview portion. And, and these guys went out and organized as a veterans organization, a 501, C 19.

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What and

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the,

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after they got it started, then they went to the city. And they established a relationship with the city again, basically, John Atkinson and Vic was, were both big players in it, but all of the guys participated.

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And they went and

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worked a contract with the City.

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And, and the contract was written in such a fashion that you could view it as a ninety-nine year contract, as again, something that ran out annually. But in that contract, that's basically they got the one room up here. And they got curator support 15 hours a week, that's in that.

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So that was kind of the beginning. Then they had individuals like Jim Sparks from the woodworking shop over the Senior Center. And they made the initial cabinets that we had, and those are the cabinets now, what do you see what the slamming went off sloped. And they were that was also our storage area, so the storage stuff underneath it. And

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so then, when I came to, I guess it was about 2009. And at that time, I still didn't belong to the museum. But I was still in the rotary as the secretary as the treasurer, and we were basically giving annual grants to the museum to continue to do the recording of veterans, which were

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done by the Stein mates. They had \$300 per interview. And the way that Eric recorded them, unfortunately, they're all bits and pieces, which then he would have to assemble. And so that's later on. We ended the we weren't getting the big grants, but we also ended the interviews with the veterans, I think primarily because the cost of them.

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And at that time, now we're more modern history.

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So when they gave us the total room, first floor, they reviewed the contract and decided that they didn't need to alter the contract. We could just continue because the contract didn't say just one room.

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Okay.

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And then later on, as we progress through, then Dave Lewis and I petition the city for the whole building. And then we had a special meeting with the City Council.

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And at that time, we also had John Pettit Colas who was commander of the American Legion, who were looking for space. And he said all they were looking for an office or office so we joined forces and paracoccus. Then guy got his office and we agreed that the Legion could use the presentation room and the rest of it. And again, the legal guys from the city reviewed the contract and said, okay, it worked out. We don't want to change it. The big thing is they did not want to they did not want to alter the contract as it is just like the zoning laws are building laws. If you if you start to make a change, then you got to bring it up to all the current standards, right, which that contract is at the standards of the day it was written, it's not written in the standards.

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So that's why it's never been opened.

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Got a lot, you have to do a lot of work to get it.

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Well, you would probably have a very, extremely difficult time getting a contract of what we have right now. To get the equivalent right. So that's basically where we are. I don't I don't know if I've got if you got a question about something I can.

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I do? Yeah. So you mentioned Vic Bocard. And you know, a lot of those. Those guys were veterans themselves. World War Two veterans.

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Yeah, of the founders. Only Bill Humphrey was not a veteran.

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But like Atkinson

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not all of them were veterans. Now, a couple of them are lawyers, which Humphrey was, which Atkinson was. Vic was in advertising, which basically so was Paul. And then what's his name escapes me, but he was a high school principal or superintendent.

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But yeah, they were all they're all veterans. I don't know if any of them actually seen any significant action during World War Two, other than then Paul, but they might have, I just simply don't know.

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Did it feel like Broomfield at the time? I guess my question is, why Broomfield? Why does Broomfield have a veteran's museum as opposed to other cities in the area?

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Well, okay, so Broomfield used to be Broomfield heights, little, little wide spot on the turnpike because of the exit ramp off the turnpike here. And then they decided they needed some low cost housing, or they they needed housing for all the veterans that are coming back. And, and I don't, you know, that was before my time, but some of the tales of a couple of the people from the area here at once.

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Well, Swan started at Bell Swan think he was a banker, whatever. So they, they designed the what it's called the first filing. And you can see the remnants of the first filing yet today.

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The house has been modified some but basically speaking, runs from Main Street 120th. And I think maybe Sixth Avenue was six doesn't go through third, Third Avenue. And, of course, in this area here was different stuff at the time shopping center. big sign that was still there when I when we arrived and said Broomfield and Safeway was over there. And that was the that was kind of the center.

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But veterans moved into all of those houses. So these veterans were the original Jaycees. These veterans were the original city console Rotarians. And then while they became Rotarians when they out HBM JC and then they formed the Rotary Club. So it was that same group of guys just kind of marched around. And then, at the time that like I said, Now I was in Rotary, and that's when they decided to they needed to do something to preserve the show stories of veterans experiences of veterans. Well, then they had veterans had stuff.

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So they needed replaced for the archives of the stuff, which is what they did, and that's kind of how it started.

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Jay Bell, okay.

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And that's kind of how it grew and it was, and again, it was primarily supported by Rotary. And then of ovation, that's what I saw when I came in, into the act because the rotary at the time was not making enough money to continue to support this job and also it did not have a Charitable Foundation itself.

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So we started of basically myself, they, they, they had a fundraiser, which they raised \$2,500 a year, which didn't make a lot of money. They came and asked me.

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I think actually, I think it was, might have been Gary Francis who actually asked, they want me to do a fundraiser, take over the fundraising. And I said, Well, I would. But I wanted my neighbor John Santoro to be a party to it. I don't know if you know, John Santoro. But John is the doctor. And he's a very outgoing, marketing kind of guy. Yeah. And that's why I want to because I'm not into that.

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And then we sat down with, with the two of us and Gary, and we talked about, okay, how much money should we raise? And Gary suggested, maybe we should raise 10,000? And then, John suggests, so maybe we should go for 50,000? What kind of an event so we started out with what was Odyssey? Odyssey 2000, actually, as a matter of fact, and it was a formal Black tie affair.

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We did it out at the Omni, we had a live auction site, an auction art show, using the artists groups from town art was judged as to what art will go out. I think we grossed just under 90,000.

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Wow. That's amazing.

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And and so now the rotary had money. And that that was the main source of income for a number of years.

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Until I and we, by the way, we pattern it off of, I think boots and spurs is what a rotary over in Boulder did that raised money. Okay. I think it was called Boots and Spurs.

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At any rate, so we met with how did you do all that? And anyhow, bottom line is, it was very successful for the first five years. And then it began to wind down and eventually became nothing but a barbecue and, and about year four or five, also, we were joined with the other rotary, we asked the other John, because we needed more people.

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And people were, I guess, kind of tired of black tie events. I don't know. So then wrote rotary ran into bingo. And that's how they raise money. It's now that they do Yeah. Well, they raised money through bingo up until the time of COVID. COVID killed bingo. Yeah. Yeah. And so now they're back doing bingo. But the new breed in the club, and I'm no longer a member.

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The new breed in the club is are not as interested. We had two sessions every Sunday. And some of the guys were working every Sunday. And and to work two sessions, my wife Amy, and I, you know, we were two stations, but But typically, we had it once a month, because here's selling stuff. So they they

are raising money again, not as much as we used to raise. But um, that's pretty much this story. Maybe you got another specific question.

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Yeah, this is kind of looking forward. What would be or maybe like, two part question, which is, what do you think are some of the biggest successes for the veterans Museum in the last five, six years? And then looking forward to the future? Where do you see the museum in another five, six years?

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Well, I think in that sense, successes, obviously, the thing that really opened the door was the coffee and conversations. And that's the publicity on the coffee and conversations got out. That was very helpful.

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You know, I think typical of that is, you know, it's basically that the five grand that the Granger folks send this out of their foundation at the Chicago community foundation that we received every year now for about five years.

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I mean, that was probably one of the peak ones. But coffee conversation was a big thing. When we got to start at where we could stream it, we actually were picking up quite a number of people on a streamer. Yeah. That is a big problem of today. Because the guys, you know, we were always working, we were always jerryrigging things, because you're working on not a very big budget, and you're working without the expertise.

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So we are still not, we're still not streaming live. Now I know people in our community who would watch the C and C's if they could, but they can't, because we don't stream. I think, and I believe getting that back online is, is the biggest area of growth right now. For ourselves.

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And the other is, is the couple of things that are doing in the marketing side. But marketing is not our business. And we need to get our name out there. But I think we should be in a position to say, Okay, we did this, and this brought this into us. Well, I think in a lot of the marketing things that we do, if we were streaming, people could watch the C and C's and other things on the lawn on their telly.

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And that would draw the interest and they might come much like whatever that newspaper is that the guy that came in put a couple ads in the newspaper. Yeah. We got people from far afield received that newspaper, those ads are good. Yeah. That type of marketing was helpful.

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You know, spending several \$100 to go to the 40s event over in Boulder. I doubt if that's brought more than one or two people into the museum. We carry dutifully carry the signs and all that good stuff out to

the street. At least we kind of got people not to carry the flags that necessarily way out there. But point being in all my years here, I've only seen one group who said they came in because they saw the signs out there. So one of the things that we don't do, right, we don't evaluate what's good. what's working, what's not working.

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I just saw today the magazine, the quarterly magazine from the Broomfield Council of arts. Right? We don't have an article in it, we belong to that organization, we have nothing in it. It's been like pulling teeth to get people just to put an article and that would go to basically everybody.

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Yeah, that are that are involved in it, they would all be there. And there are other organizations that do. The Civic course uses us as because they sing at the events, so we're part of their justification for their 501 C three. The Rocky Mountain brass uses us. So that's part of the justification to which, you know, rather other individuals do? I don't know. But so that's an area that we, we need to assess a little bit better.

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Unless some magic happens, and we get a better bigger building or more space. I think our gross growth would simply be from outreach

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now clearly want to clearly one of the areas that we should flag as success and we don't really flag it. And that is the support that that effectively we give to all of the organizations throughout the Denver metropolitan area who deal with special needs.

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You know, as you you're probably aware, normally on a Thursday we'll have at least one or two groups, sometimes more especially. And we've had a couple of few of them now show up on Tuesday because that's even more convenient for them. And we have opened, we offered to open the museum for if they want to, and we've done that a few times. So I think so that's that's an area that a we don't advertise.

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But I think it's important. Yeah, it's a big service. And it's an important one. And the guys who work all very well at working with the with the individuals, regardless, whatever their their ability, their ability happens to support.

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So, but without a bigger building, I don't see much internal growth. But I see a great deal growth, outreach through through the C and C's being streamed through the things going to the schools. Dave, Lou Romans got the kind of the speaker's bureau getting out. And speaking of taking credit for that, and counting the people. These are the education aspects.

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Pre COVID We had the homeschool?

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Oh, yeah.

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I have not seen them back. Yet strange. But they have an organization and I don't know that we spend any time contacting and it's much bigger than I thought it was. It's a huge, and there's and there's a lot of them. So that's another area that I think we could provide.

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The fact that the the school curriculum doesn't nowadays don't provide history like, like, some of us old timers got, I don't know where along the line, all of this stuff changed. But I think it's unfortunate, but we can provide that history of that time.

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And because some volunteers have connections to the military and just are so knowledgeable, when you're able to walk through with through the exhibits, talk with them, you just learned so much. Yeah, that's really important.

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And and as new guys come on, another improvement we should have internally, which we haven't done, which Dave Jamil before he unfortunately passed away was going to get started was we ought to have a basic script for the tours. And we ought to train the docents. Now I said that we should call docents those that this other guy on duty for the what the DoD should be referred to as the Dosen.

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Mike Fellows is anti that because he said he associates docents with being a little gray haired ladies.

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I don't know how many museums he's been to, but I've been through museums all over the world. And I have not seen too many elderly gray haired ladies. I see a lot of individuals.

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All types.

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Yeah, all types. But, but most of them are younger. The only way when you encounter the elderly is when you're in a museum that deals with older history.

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But so that's that's a little nuance, but it's something I think we should somehow advertise. So I'm not sure that we advertise or our PR fits what we're really trying to do. Nor do we assess, we should be

evaluating. That's one of the things for grants that you evaluate. And I'm not I don't think we're we adequately do that. So next question.

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I think that's good for now. Thank you very much for spending some time and talking with Yeah, yeah. All right. Yeah, appreciate you.