

Best Practice

Dysart History Book Committee

CONTACT

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THE PRACTICE

The Dysart History Book Committee developed a Municipal History Book. The committee felt there was a need to preserve the stories of the people of the Village of Dysart and surrounding rural municipalities in writing. There are a number of communities involved with this project, including the RM of Lipton, RM of Cupar, RM of Kellross, RM of North Qu'Appelle, and the Villages of Dysart and Lipton. The stories in the book capture and preserve the history of the community.

THE PROCESS

A poster was put up asking for volunteers for the history book committee. After a few months, phone calls were made to individuals that the project leader thought would be interested. A committee of eight was created. The group met and decided to undertake the task of compiling and publishing a history book for the Village of Dysart and its surrounding municipalities. A work space was needed and the Village of Dysart has provided office space free of charge for the past two years. Meetings were held at least once a month.

The committee began consulting with other groups in surrounding communities who had done similar projects. They met with, and chose a publisher/printer, decided on a format, the number of pages and set a price.

After planning was complete, the committee started on advertising, applying for grants and fundraising. Several of the local businesses provided financial support and two members of the committee co-signed a line of credit to get the project started. The committee applied for several grants and received one \$500 grant. The group set up advertising booths at various trade shows, sent out brochures and appeared on the CTV Community Events program twice. They also pre-sold copies of the book.

The group began the collection of stories from residents, former residents, community groups and the surrounding municipalities. The stories were then formatted and put through four levels of editing. In the development stage, a set number of photos were chosen. The book was then finalized and sent to the publisher/printer. The book launch was scheduled for July 2010, and the presold books were picked up and more were sold.

THE RESULTS

The result was a book of stories about the history of the Village of Dysart and the surrounding municipalities. The book will be made available to the public in the Dysart Library, both municipal offices and in the Dysart Museum. The book captures 340 stories of families who lived and worked in the area of Dysart. Books continue to sell-in person and via the internet. This project also managed to cover its total costs.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Be sure to follow up on all entries sent to the publisher. Consistent communication makes this process smoother.
- Be sure to have a clear leader, one who is willing to dedicate the time to the communication process
- Have a number of people who are knowledgeable with computers if you are accepting electronic stories (via email).
- Make sure that receipts are issued for each book deposit. This makes tracking the presold orders more manageable.
- If possible, make sure you receive a 'working' copy of the manuscript prior to printing. Any errors can be easily caught.
- Take only hard copies of pictures, for organizational purposes. It is difficult to organize both hard and digital copies.