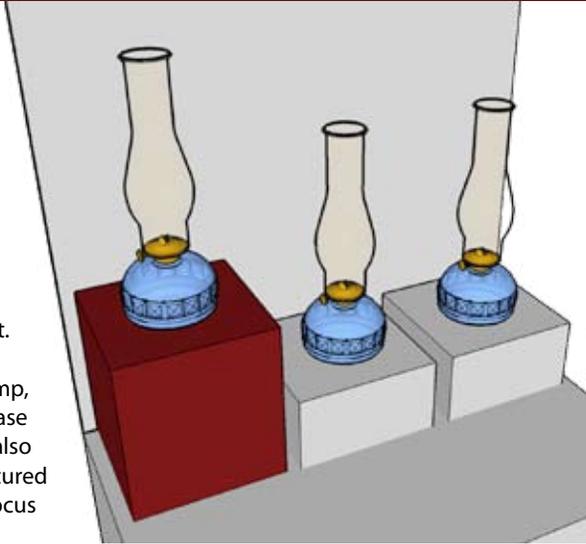


Using height and colour for emphasis

Another fun part about display boxes is that you can use a different height, a different colour, a different texture, or all three to draw attention to an object or to make one object of a group stand out.

The wall behind the left lamp, and even the floor of the case in front of the lamp could also have been coloured or textured differently to place more focus on that object.



Arminta Neal's classic book *Help! for the Small Museum* and her followup *Exhibits for the Small Museum* have lots of great tips for arranging exhibits. Both are still available from online bookstores.

NOTES is intended to be published four times a year. Its purpose is to share useful ideas, techniques and experiences among community museums, and it is available free of charge to community museums.

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If you would like a small number of additional copies for your Board, volunteers or staff, I will try to accommodate reasonable requests. If you do not want to receive *NOTES*, please let me know and I'll take you off the mailing list.



Community Museum NOTES

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The small display above, from the Grasslands Gallery at The Manitoba Museum is, after nearly 40 years, still one of my all-time favourites. It's not so much for the contents or the colours as for the beautifully uncomplicated, yet elegant way the objects are arranged. It's the display boxes that make it work, and this simple technique is within the resources of any community museum.

NOTES is a mini-publication aimed at community museums. It is not meant to be either a newsletter or a journal, but is simply a compilation of interesting and useful ideas that community museums can adapt to their own purposes to help them better serve their visitors.

Let me know if you find it useful and I'll keep doing it, or let me know if you'd like to see something in an upcoming issue, and I'll try to include it. I look forward to hearing from you.

David McInnes

Case furniture: giving depth to displays

Store window designers have known for a long time that placing items at varying heights in a display window is more likely to catch the attention of shoppers and make the display more pleasing to the eye.



Store window display,
Le Château, Winnipeg

Display boxes, called case furniture, props or pedestals, allow the window designer to use the full volume of the space, rather than just the back or floor of the case. Museums can use the same technique.

Display boxes can be painted, or covered with a variety of materials to give them some texture, such as paper, cloth, carpet, tiles or laminate.

Make sure that the materials and the finish you use are not going to hurt your objects.

When in doubt, ask a conservator

about safe materials and suppliers. The Association of Manitoba Museums' newsletter has a regular column called "Ask a Conservator".

When planning an exhibit, it helps to have a variety of boxes, ramps or columns on hand, so you can try out variations. You can make a set of practice boxes or ramps in cardboard.

Ask folks to save you the box their new TV came in.



The Transcona Historical Museum used a variety of case furniture for its Greatest Transconian exhibit.



Case furniture as supports for a display on grassland birds at The Manitoba Museum