

Museum: Historical Importance

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ABSTRACT

This article shows the historical importance of Museum. Museum is an institution that cares for (conserves) a collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance. Many public museums make these items available for public viewing through exhibits that may be permanent or temporary. The largest museums are located in major cities throughout the world, while thousands of local museums exist in smaller cities, towns and rural areas. Museums have varying aims, ranging from serving researchers and specialists to serving the general public. The goal of serving researchers is increasingly shifting to serving the general public. The aim of modern museums is to
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collect, preserve, interpret, and display items of artistic, cultural, or scientific significance for the education of the public. From a visitor or community perspective, the purpose can also depend on one's point of view. The museum as an institution tells the story of man the world over and how humanity has survived in its environment over the years. Museums play a crucial role in preserving local culture. With careful documentation and artifact preservation, a culture can be recorded and remembered regardless of its future. It can also be shared and understood by those from different cultural backgrounds. Here are a few of the reasons museums are so essential for cultural preservation

INTRODUCTION

Museums are buildings in which we see many things of artistic, cultural, historical, traditional and objects of scientific interest. It is a great source of knowledge. It not only gives us knowledge but also makes us familiar with our history, culture, civilization, religion, art, architecture of our country. In the museum, there are many things which are kept for the public.

A museum is an institution that cares for (conserves) a collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance. Many public museums make these items available for public viewing through exhibits that may be permanent or temporary. [1] The largest museums are located in major cities throughout the world, while thousands of local museums exist in smaller cities, towns and rural areas. Museums have varying aims, ranging from serving researchers and specialists to serving the general public. The goal of serving researchers is

increasingly shifting to serving the general public.

Museum holds relics, evidences and artifacts from the past that we may somehow harness the knowledge how human of particular civilization from that time lived [2]. Museum brings people to the objects on display intended to give us important information how civilization changes from one period of time to another, despite human have different way of living in every places they lived, different cultures, tradition and beliefs, including the vast kingdom of animal and plant species that lived in their own suitable places, these vital pieces of information must be told and display, museum has the great role that serves as the holder of authentic artifacts and its significant value that gives great knowledge, facts and entertainment as well [3].

There are many types of museums, including art museums, natural history museums, science museums, war

museums, and children's museums. Amongst the world's largest and most visited museums are the Louvre in Paris, the National Museum of China in Beijing, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., the British Museum and National Gallery in London, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and Vatican Museums in Vatican City. According to International Council of Museums, there are more than 55,000 museums in 202 countries. [4] [5] Through all these things we can come to know how people of ancient times lived, what they used and what things they made. Therefore, Museums are also called storehouse of history.

Aim of Museums

The aim of modern museums is to collect, preserve, interpret, and display items of artistic, cultural, or scientific significance for the education of the public. From a visitor or community perspective, the purpose can also depend on one's point of view. A trip to a local history museum or large city art museum can be an entertaining and enlightening way to spend the day [6] [7]. To city leaders, a healthy museum community can be seen as a gauge of the economic health of a city, and a way to increase the sophistication of its inhabitants. To a museum professional, a museum might be seen as a way to educate the public about the museum's mission, such as civil rights or environmentalism. Museums are, above all, storehouses of knowledge. In 1829, James Smithson's bequest, that would fund the Smithsonian Institution, stated he wanted to establish an institution "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge." [8]

Museums of natural history in the late 19th century exemplified the Victorian desire for consumption and for order. Gathering all examples of each classification of a field of knowledge for research and for display was the purpose. As American colleges grew in the 19th century, they developed their own natural history collections for the use of their students. By the last quarter of the 19th century, the scientific research in the universities was shifting toward biological research on a cellular level, and cutting

edge research moved from museums to university laboratories. [9] While many large museums, such as the Smithsonian Institution, are still respected as research centers, research is no longer a main purpose of most museums. While there is an ongoing debate about the purposes of interpretation of a museum's collection, there has been a consistent mission to protect and preserve artifacts for future generations. Much care, expertise, and expense is invested in preservation efforts to retard decomposition in aging documents, artifacts, artworks, and buildings. All museums display objects that are important to a culture. As historian Steven Conn writes, "To see the thing itself, with one's own eyes and in a public place, surrounded by other people having some version of the same experience can be enchanting." [10]

Museum purposes vary from institution to institution. Some favor education over conservation, or vice versa. For example, in the 1970s, the Canada Science and Technology Museum favored education over preservation of their objects. They displayed objects as well as their functions. One exhibit featured a historic printing press that a staff member used for visitors to create museum memorabilia. [11] Some seek to reach a wide audience, such as a national or state museum, while some museums have specific audiences, like the LDS Church History Museum or local history organizations. Generally speaking, museums collect objects of significance that comply with their mission statement for conservation and display. Although most museums do not allow physical contact with the associated artifacts, there are some that are interactive and encourage a more hands-on approach. In 2009, Hampton Court Palace, palace of Henry VIII, opened the council room to the general public to create an interactive environment for visitors. Rather than allowing visitors to handle 500-year-old objects, the museum created replicas, as well as replica costumes. The daily activities, historic clothing, and even temperature changes immerse the visitor in a slice of what Tudor life may have been [12].

Types of Museums

Museums can be divided into following categories:

- Fine arts: They contain all types of paintings, drawings, sculpture, architecture etc.
- Historical Museums: These museums illustrate historical events or period, personalities etc. They have weapons, statues, artifacts made of stones and other material.
- Science and Technology: It contains all the things which are representative of the evolution of history, science, and technology such as fossils of dinosaurs.
- Museum-house: It is located in the birthplace of a famous person such as Sabarmati ashram, Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar's home, Tipu Sultan palace etc.
- Archaeological Museum: It contains all the objects related to history.
- General Museum: They contain more than one subject and therefore these museums are called multidisciplinary museums.

The Modern day Museum

The museum as an institution tells the story of man the world over and how humanity has survived in its environment over the years [13] [14]. It houses things created by nature and by man and in our modern society it houses the cultural soul of the nation. (It holds the cultural wealth of the nation in trust for all generations and by its function and unique position, it has become the cultural conscience of the nation).

As a result of their historical beginnings in many "developing" nations, museums are seen as places where unwanted objects or materials are deposited; in addition, they are regarded as places where objects associated with idolatry and fetish religions are kept. This negative interpretation of what museums mean has continued to inhibit their development in most countries, (especially in third world countries).

In our modern society, it has become necessary and indeed urgent for museums to redefine their missions, their goals, their functions and their strategies to reflect the expectations of a Guyana Workshop, Public Lecture, May 17, 1999 Museums, Peace, Democracy and Governance in the 21st Century - Post Conference Workshop 2 changing world. Today, museums must become agents of change and development: they must mirror events in society and become instruments of progress by calling attention to actions and events that will encourage development in the society [15] [16]. They must become institutions that can foster peace, they must be seen as promoting the ideals of democracy and transparency in governance in their communities, and they must become part of the bigger communities that they serve and reach out to every group in the society [17]. For museums to retain their relevance and become positive partners in the development of our societies, they should use their unique resources and potentials to become more responsive to the dynamics of modern society and urban change.

As institutions possessing critical resources in society, they can encourage, promote and foster the best of the cultural and democratic ideals of the nations. Without being political, they can give voice to the citizenry in matters pertaining to how they are governed by creating avenues for free discussions and dialogue; they can create a confluence where the events of today can be exhibited and discussed for the collective good of all. Through their programmes and activities, the museums can sensitize target groups like teachers, adults, the youth, and women's organizations through popular forum discussions on the goals of the nation for the promotion and better understanding of its heritage and its agenda for national growth, development and general emancipation [18].

Importance of museum

Museums play a crucial role in preserving local culture. With careful documentation and artifact preservation, a culture can be

recorded and remembered regardless of its future. It can also be shared and understood by those from different cultural backgrounds. Here are a few of the reasons museums are so essential for cultural preservation.

They Document Daily Life: Recording everyday life within a culture is one of the most important pieces of preserving it. With the rate at which cultures are disappearing, careful preservation of daily life is the only hope a heritage group has for recovering its culture. Daily life encompasses rituals, religion, foods, art, and any other facets that make a culture unique. Regardless of what type of museum it is, odds are it has some cultural artifacts, art, music, or technology displayed.

They Educate Others on Local Culture: In order for a culture to be respected and survive globalization, those of the dominant culture must be educated about minority cultures and their way of life. The best way to do this is through a respectful display of local culture in a museum. With an educated populace who respects minority cultures, culture loss suddenly finds itself decreasing. Furthermore, museums are a wonderful place to take children for both fun and education. They offer hands-on learning with knowledgeable employees and visual aids to hold any child's attention and will likely give you other ideas on how to incorporate hands-on learning into your child's education once you leave. The earlier a child is educated on the importance of accepting and embracing diversity, the more likely they are to become kind, tolerant adults.

They Display Alternative Perspectives on History: Many mainstream history courses and books are biased, focusing on the perspective of the dominant culture and ignoring the thousands of minority

cultures with fascinating history to be told. Museums display histories, timelines, and perspectives you may have never heard before, potentially altering the mindsets of people who have simply never been educated outside the mainstream culture. This differing perspective is something any well-informed person should have. When viewpoints are only taken from one's own culture, they find themselves severely limited.

They Connect Those of Different Backgrounds: Two types of people will visit museums in search of information on other cultures: People with that heritage, and people interested in learning about that heritage who come from a different background. Museums focused on heritage and culture bring people together, creating a network of support for different minorities and groups. It is support networks like these that prevent cultures from disappearing and languages from dying.

Museums and their patrons are critical components in the effort to prevent culture and language loss. These losses occur when the minority culture feels inferior or unimportant and strives to make its children like those of the dominant culture. By using a museum to cultivate respect and interest in these minority cultures, we are already working to prevent cultural losses.

Catherine Workman grew up in a small town where she yearned to stretch her wings. Now that she's left the nest, she spends every available weekend exploring different cities across the country and someday, across the world. She started WellnessVoyager.com with her friends to share her travels and experiences and hopes to inspire others to embrace the hidden gems of the world [19] [20].

CONCLUSION

Museums are not unfamiliar with computer technology in exhibitions, as we have seen; there is a history of multimedia interactive presentations in gallery spaces that dates back approximately two decades. The possibility of creating and sharing "national catalogues" utilizing database

standards and technology was recognized early on as well - in the mid-60s. Nearly five years ago, museums were quick to apply the knowledge and experience gained from these early forays in multimedia technology to a presence on the World Wide Web. Similar to the early experiments with interactive multimedia

in gallery spaces, which were driven to a large extent by software and hardware manufacturers and consisted of a good deal of "button-pushing," the early art museum Web sites were often referred to as "electronic brochures." Similar also, however, was the goal of developing content and structuring interactive presentations that would allow the visitor

to construct meaning from the information presented and enrich his/her understanding and appreciation of art and art objects. In order to accomplish this goal, art historians have been examining how to apply their interpretative and pedagogic expertise in translating information for the specific characteristics of the Web medium.

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