



NovaMuse Stories Guide

A guide for creating Galleries through myNovaMuse on [NovaMuse.ca](https://novamuse.ca) – linking and sharing stories found in museum collections.

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Stories in Museum Collections

There is an increasing demand for museums to make resources available online. To meet these expectations, museum staff must schedule time to build relevant and impactful content, whether new or repurposed. Scheduling and creating a plan for this undertaking is the key to its success. Sustainability is a growing concern in a museum community with limited resources but with a strong plan in place, goals will become more achievable. It is important to delegate responsibilities and communicate a clear and coherent message.

It is important to look for connections in museum collections. Identify relevant information about local history that educates your online audience about people, place, and identity. Look for unique information that expresses a rich narrative. Find inspiration from your museum exhibitions and public programming. What stories have you already shared? Explore new stories! The sky is the limit. Develop your online presence by sharing these stories in the myNovaMuse galleries. ANSM invites you to use the myNovaMuse Galleries Brainstorming Activity ([see Appendix A](#)) and the myNovaMuse Galleries Stories Checklist ([see Appendix B](#)) to keep you on track. There are also a number of online tutorials available to help you build stories on NovaMuse.

[CollectiveAccess & Collections Management Webinar Series](#)

[Subject Matter Expert Partnership Video Series](#)

[myNOVAMUSE – How to Create Galleries Tutorial](#)

Stories Checklist

This checklist will help you identify records on NovaMuse that tell a cohesive story. If you would like to feature records from museums other than your own in your gallery, state the name of the museum(s) in the description to give credit. You may choose to do this when you find related records from other museums that strengthen the stories in your gallery. For instance, if you have a photograph of a couple on their wedding day in your collection and another museum has the bride's dress and veil, you may want to include these additional records. Think of these galleries as your online exhibits. Similar to how museums receive items on loan for temporary exhibits, museums can feature records from others on NovaMuse to strengthen online exhibits.

Why not mirror your temporary exhibit? A gallery like this would act as an extension of the work completed at the museum. Much of the groundwork has already been done so this is a quick way to build a museum's online presence and offer material for educators. This shift in delivery of educational materials is welcomed by many who can no longer bring their classes to the museum for a visit. Remember, NovaMuse is accessible in the classroom and has the potential to strengthen lesson plans with your help.

To search for records in your collection, start by choosing the name of your museum from the Contributor list in the "Filter By" options or enter the name of your museum in the Contributor field when tailoring your search in the Advanced Search menu. Searching for records in your own collection is the best place to start when building a gallery.

- Choose a theme or item of interest in your collection that is unique (a record with a strong narrative about local people, places, events, and/or cultural significance)
- Identify information in the record that provides links to other records (i.e. names, groups, events, timeframes, etc.)
- Use the browse feature or perform a keyword search for associated words (i.e. surnames of donors, people in photographs, names in letters, inscriptions on objects, etc.)
- Use the browse feature or perform a keyword search for associated dates, historic events, and holidays
- Continue to use "filter by" options located at the right-hand side of the results to narrow down searches
- Filter to only include records with media (images, audio or video)
- Use the advanced search option to refine searches. Contributing museums can enter the name of your institution under the "Contributor" field, and then, continue

to fill the other fields as you desire (ex. Name of military unit “Canadian Army Medical Corps”. or “C.A.M.C.”)

- Make note of the connections found
- Record accession numbers, object names, and important information that ties the records together
- Once you are satisfied with your selections, follow the steps outlined in this guide to build your gallery

Stories on myNovaMuse

For inspiration, here are a few examples of stories found on NovaMuse.

Canadian Army Medical Corps (CAMC)

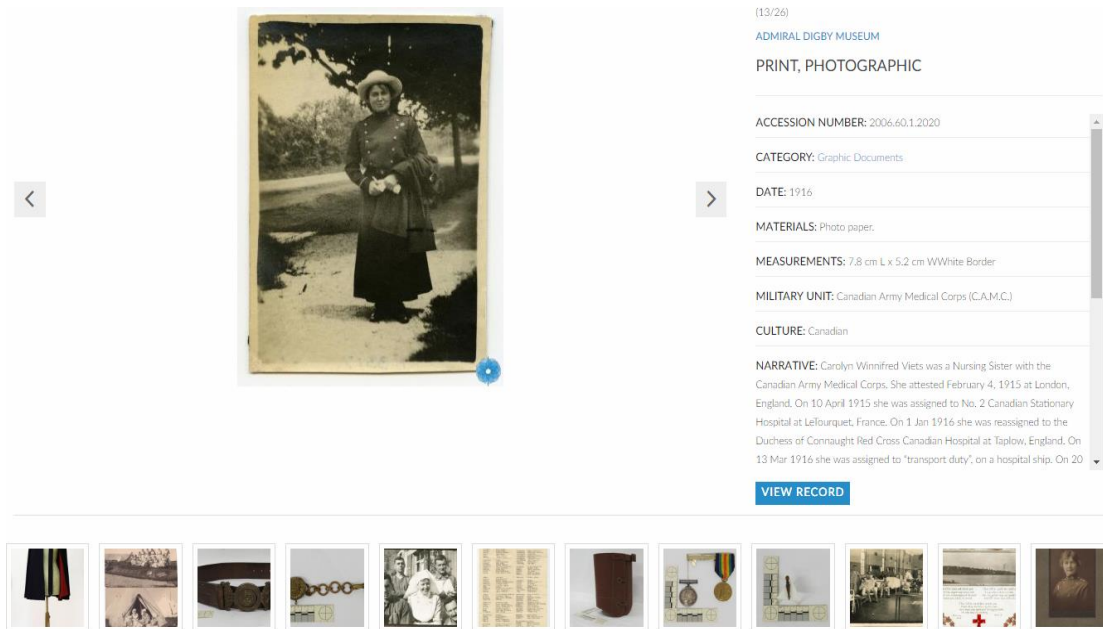


Fig. 1 myNovaMuse Gallery - Canadian Army Medical Corps (CAMC) Nursing Sisters

If you would like to see this gallery being built, watch the fifth webinar in the Collections Management Webinar Series titled [Identifying, Linking & Sharing Stories](#). This example is a grouping of records about the Canadian Army Medical Corps (CAMC) Nursing Sisters (Fig. 1). Information from the record will populate on the right-hand side of the page and the primary image will appear in the gallery. Viewers can navigate from one record to the next in this screen by clicking the arrows on either side of the primary image. Alternatively, users can choose a

record to view by clicking on one of the thumbnails near the bottom. Users can view more records in the gallery by clicking “14 more” (in this case) near the bottom left-hand corner of the screen. The remaining thumbnails for the records in the gallery will populate (Fig. 2)

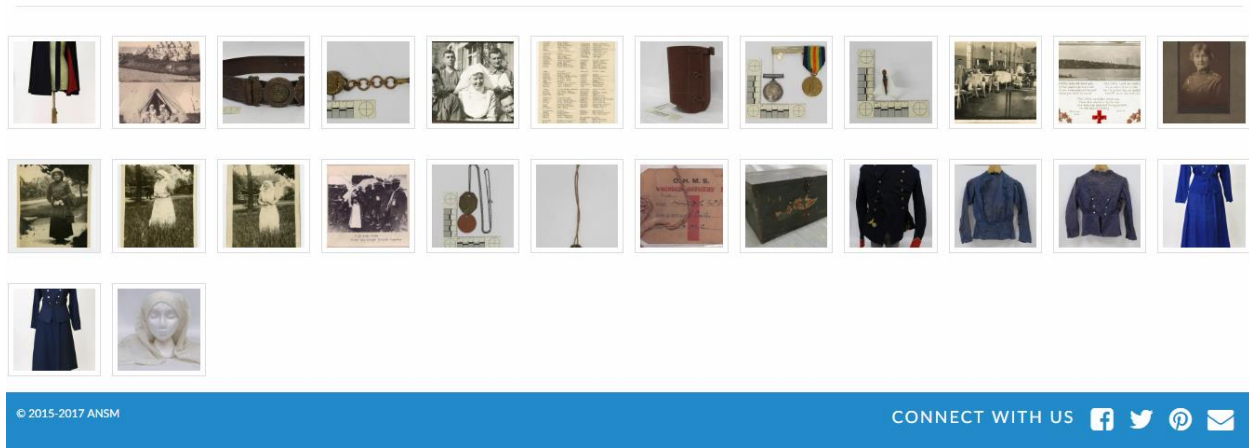


Fig. 2 myNovaMuse Gallery Thumbnails

A number of key word searches were conducted to narrow down a group of records that tie together a story. These included: “Canadian Army Medical Corps” / “CAMC” / “Nursing Sisters” “WWI” / “First World War” / “uniform” (Fig. 3)

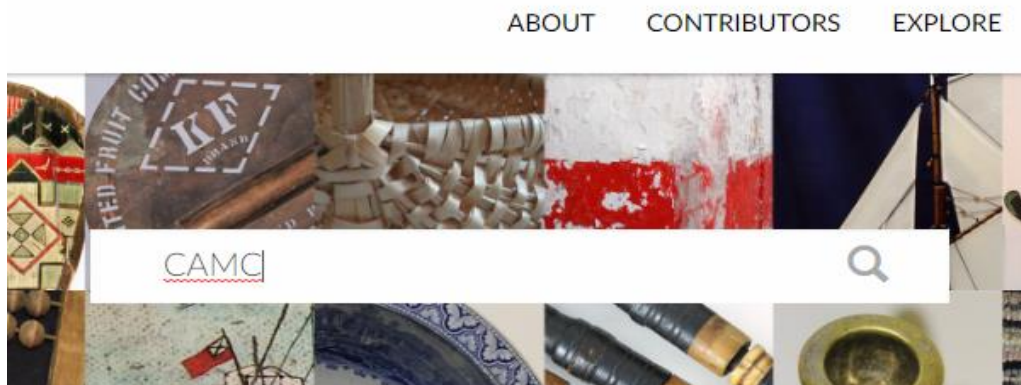


Fig. 3 Key Word Searches

To narrow down the selection, choose “Filter Results” and continue to use the “Filter By” options and the Refine keyword search option. Always choose “has image.” You will notice that a few of the records below (Fig. 4) found in the search results are in the gallery on NovaMuse.

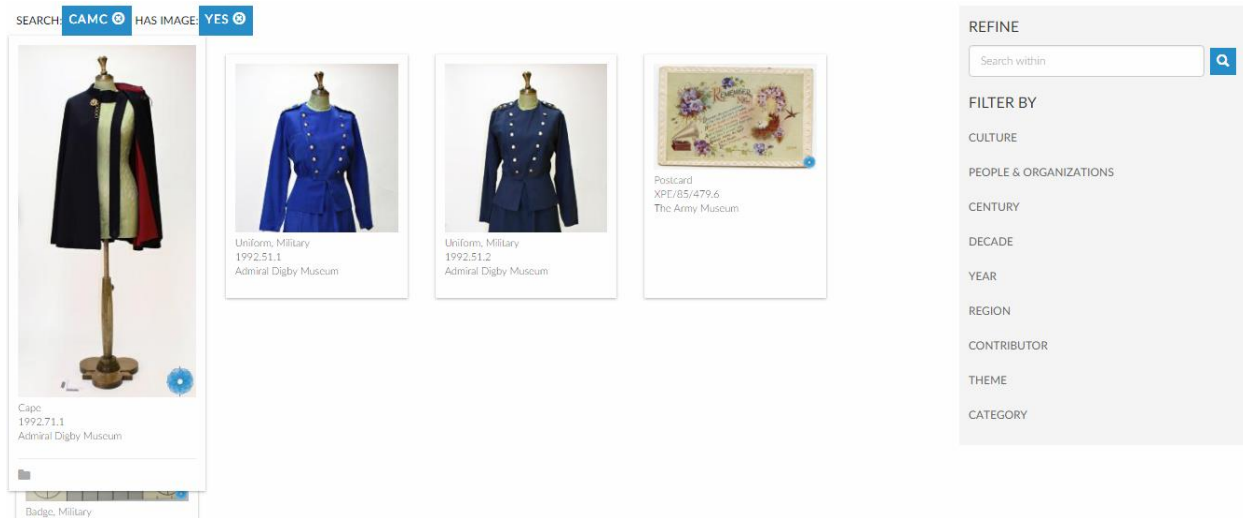


Fig. 4 Search Results

Continue to look for links in the records. For instance, the first record provides a detailed description of the CAMC nursing sisters.

“More than 3,000 nurses served in the Canadian Army Medical Corps (CAMC) in WWI, including 2,504 overseas. Nicknamed "bluebirds" because of their blue uniforms and white veils, Canada's Nursing Sisters saved lives by assisting with medical operations and by caring for convalescing soldiers. More than 4000 women served as military nurses during the Second World War after the CAMC became the RCAMC (Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps) playing a vital role in the care and comfort of wounded soldiers, sailors, and airmen.

In colder weather, the CAMC and RCAMC nursing uniform included a navy cape. Although the cape was the same color of the Ceremonial Dress, it was often worn with the Service Dress as well. The cape was supposed to be worn with the straps under the collar of the Service Dress and the neck chain attached.”

Source: <http://camc.wordpress.com/2012/03/12/ww1-canadian-nursing-sister-uniform-part-2-ceremonial-dress/>

The Advanced Search option (Fig. 5) found under the explore tab is another great place to narrow down search results.

OBJECTS ADVANCED SEARCH

Use one or more fields below to search for specific terms found in object records. Hover over the name of a field to find out more.

KEYWORD

OBJECT NAME

DATE RANGE

MATERIALS

HISTORY

CULTURE

MILITARY UNIT

VESSEL NAME

BRAND

MODEL

SUBJECT

CONTRIBUTOR



Fig. 5 Advanced Search

Identifying Connections

It is important to feature stories of the CAMC nursing sisters in this gallery as well. A keyword search for “nursing sister” provides a connection to Carolyn Winnifred Viets, a Nursing Sister with the Canadian Army Medical Corps (Fig. 6).

“Carolyn attested February 4, 1915 at London, England. On 10 April 1915 she was assigned to No. 2 Canadian Stationary Hospital at LeTourquet, France. On 1 Jan 1916 she was reassigned to the Duchess of Connaught Red Cross Canadian Hospital at Taplow, England. On 13 Mar 1916 she was assigned to “transport duty”, on a hospital ship. On 20 Jun 1916 she was back at the D of C Hospital. On 21 Jul 1916 she returned to France and was assigned to the No. 1 Canadian Stationary Hospital. On 9 Nov 1916 she was assigned to the No. 4 Canadian General Hospital at Salonica (Greece). She had diphtheria in Dec 1916. From 30 Mar 1917 to 12 May 1917 she worked at No. 28 Casualty Clearing Station. She returned to England, struck off the Salonica Force on 16 Aug 1917. On 9 Nov 1917 she was working at No. 16 Canadian Convalescent Hospital at Orpington. On 2 Dec 1917 she was assigned to the I.O.D.E. Hospital for Officers in London. On 26 Feb 1918 she was assigned to the Beech Hill Hospital at Sunningdale. On 11 Oct 1918 she was working in London. On 20 Oct 1918 she sailed on the *Hospital Ship Araguaya* as a transport nurse.



Fig. 6 Photograph of Carolyn Winnifred Viets

She officially returned to Canada on 14 Apr 1919 on the *HS Araguaya*, as a transport nurse, and worked at Camp Hill Hospital in Halifax. She was awarded the Royal Red Cross, 2nd class (London Gazette, 3 Jun 1916). She was discharged 20 May 1919 at Halifax; to live at Digby.”

Are there any clues in this record’s description and/or appearance of the item itself? What about her uniform? In the same results for this keyword search, two uniforms worn by Nursing Sister Francis Muriel Smith appeared (Fig. 7.1 & 7.2). “Francis was born September 28, 1892 in Peterborough, Ontario. She enlisted on May 5, 1915, age 23. She attained the rank of Captain during her career.” Do you see the similarities? This connection helps strengthen the narrative.

Each uniform features three brass ranks on the shoulder straps indicating the rank of Captain, along with the R.C.A.M.C. pin on each shoulder.

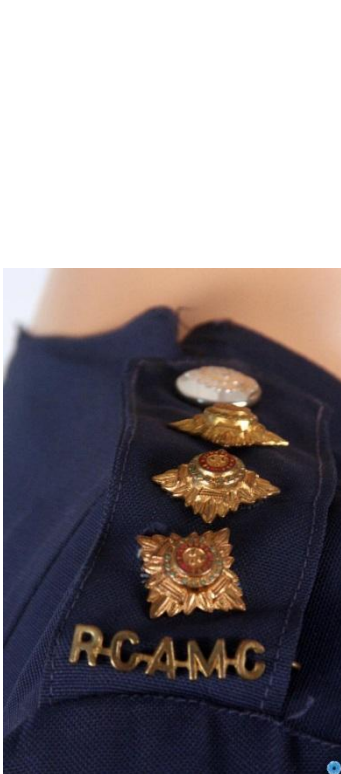
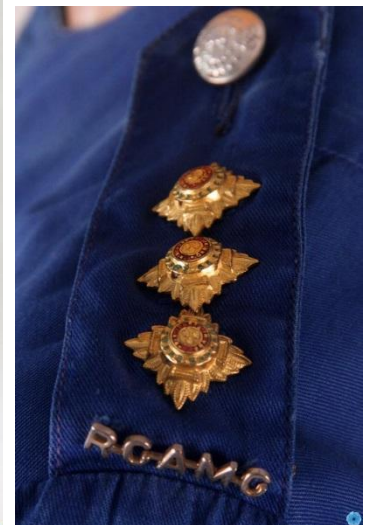


Fig. 7.1



Fig. 7.2



Upon further investigation, other parts of the CAMC uniform were uncovered, such as a belt (Fig. 8) and a clasp (Fig. 9). Each item strengthens the narrative.



Fig. 8

Think of a gallery as a quilt. Each patch is unique, yet shares characteristics with the rest of the piece. Stories are more impactful if all of the available pieces are present.

MATERIALS: Metal; Leather

MEASUREMENTS: 82 cm L x 4.8 cm W

MARKS/LABEL: Silver stamp on back of pin illegible

MILITARY UNIT: Nursing Sister; Canadian Army Medical Corps

CULTURE: Canadian

SUBJECT: First World War; Nursing Sister; Dalhousie Number 7 Stationary Hospital

NARRATIVE: Found in a lot which is seeming to have belonged to Dalhousie Number 7 Nursing Sister Elizabeth Ann Cooke.

DESCRIPTION: Brown leather belt with circular metal buckle

HISTORY OF USE: Worn with a Nursing Sister uniform



Fig. 9

MILITARY UNIT: Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps

CULTURE: Canadian

NARRATIVE: Was in a lot of personal items belonging to Nursing Sister Miss Gwendolyn Hopkins.

DESCRIPTION: A pair of bronze lion heads used as a clasp for a Second World War era Nursing Sister's cape; One lion head has a hook on the side of its head, while the other lion's head has a ring upon which a large ringed chain is attached; Both lion heads have 3 small double prong fasteners on the reverse.

Nova Scotia Railway Gallery

In this example, there are a number of different records that tell the story of the railway in Nova Scotia. There is a mix of 2-dimensional items and 3-dimensional items in the gallery. The first item is a trainman's hat worn by employees who worked on the Sydney & Louisburg Railway. In this case, the following searches provided sufficient results:

- Keyword searches: railway (workers, employees, photograph, uniform, hat), train (ticket, engine, seats, photograph), trainman, CN, etc.
- Filter by: Media (has Media), region, dates, etc.
- Advanced Search: object name (hat, conductor's; print, photographic; pin, occupational; ticket, etc.) + Canadian Pacific Railway

A few examples of how to run these types of searches listed below:



6 OBJECT RESULTS



SEARCH: **TRAINMAN** HAS IMAGE: **YES**



1 lot
SL-06-21
Sydney & Louisburg Railway
Museum



Box, Money
1986.497
Port Hastings Museum and Archives



1 lot
1986.498
Port Hastings Museum and Archives



Uniform, Occupational
95.284.3.3
Orangedale Railway Museum

REFINE

Search within



FILTER BY

PEOPLE & ORGANIZATIONS

CENTURY

DECADE

YEAR

REGION

Fig. 10 Keyword search “Trainman,” choose “Has Media”

OBJECTS ADVANCED SEARCH

Use one or more fields below to search for specific terms found in object records. Hover over the name of a field to find out more.

KEYWORD

railway workers

OBJECT NAME

DATE RANGE

MATERIALS

HISTORY

CULTURE

MILITARY UNIT

VESSEL NAME

BRAND

MODEL

SUBJECT

CONTRIBUTOR

Colchester Historeum

RESET

SEARCH



Fig. 11 Advanced Search - keyword: “railway workers,” Contributor: Colchester Historeum



(4/23)

THE ARMY MUSEUM

TICKET, RAILWAY

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2015.0.16

CATEGORY: Exchange Media

DATE: March 14 1941

MATERIALS: Paper

MEASUREMENTS: 5.5 cm L x 6.5 cm W

MARKS/LABEL: Reverse is stamped "C.N. Rys - 2 / Mar 14 41 / Mulgrave N.S."

CULTURE: Canadian

DESCRIPTION: Pink paper ticket for Canadian Pacific Railway - Furlough for passage from Halifax to Mulgrave, Ticket number 107787

VIEW RECORD

Fig. 12 Object Name: “Ticket, Railway”

Step-by-step instructions for conducting an advanced search:

Step 1: From the NovaMuse homepage, choose Advanced Search from the Explore drop-down menu (Fig. 13).

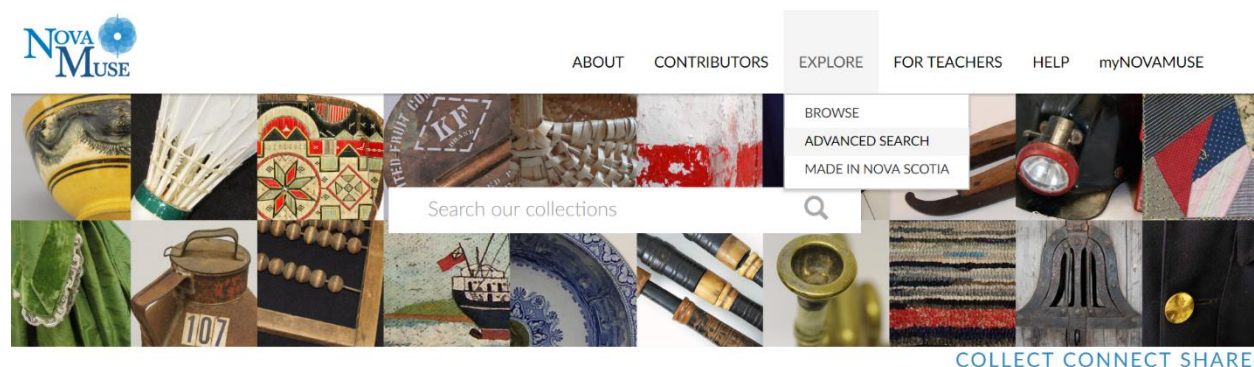


Fig. 13

Step 2: In the Advanced Search menu, fill in the appropriate fields. In this case, enter Keyword “railway” & Object Name: “Print, Photographic” (Fig. 14). Click search button.

Use one or more fields below to search for specific terms found in object records. Hover over the name of a field to find out more.

KEYWORD	
railway	
OBJECT NAME	
Print, Photographic	
DATE RANGE	MATERIALS
HISTORY	
CULTURE	MILITARY UNIT
VESSEL NAME	BRAND
MODEL	SUBJECT
CONTRIBUTOR	

Fig. 14 Example of Key Word Search for Railway Related Records

Step 3: From the results page, continue to narrow down results using the “Refine” and “Filter By” options. In this case, search by decade (1880s) (Fig. 15) to lead you to specific results, such as the photograph of the first locomotive for the Central N.S. Railway (Fig. 16).

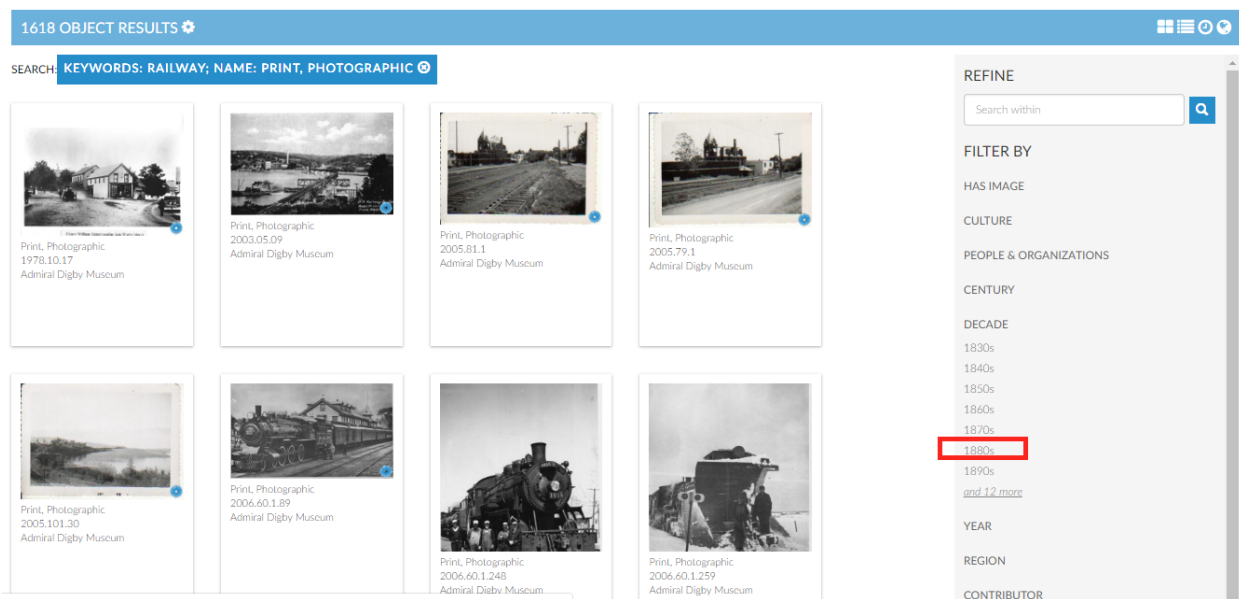


Fig. 15 Choose Decade (i.e. 1880s)

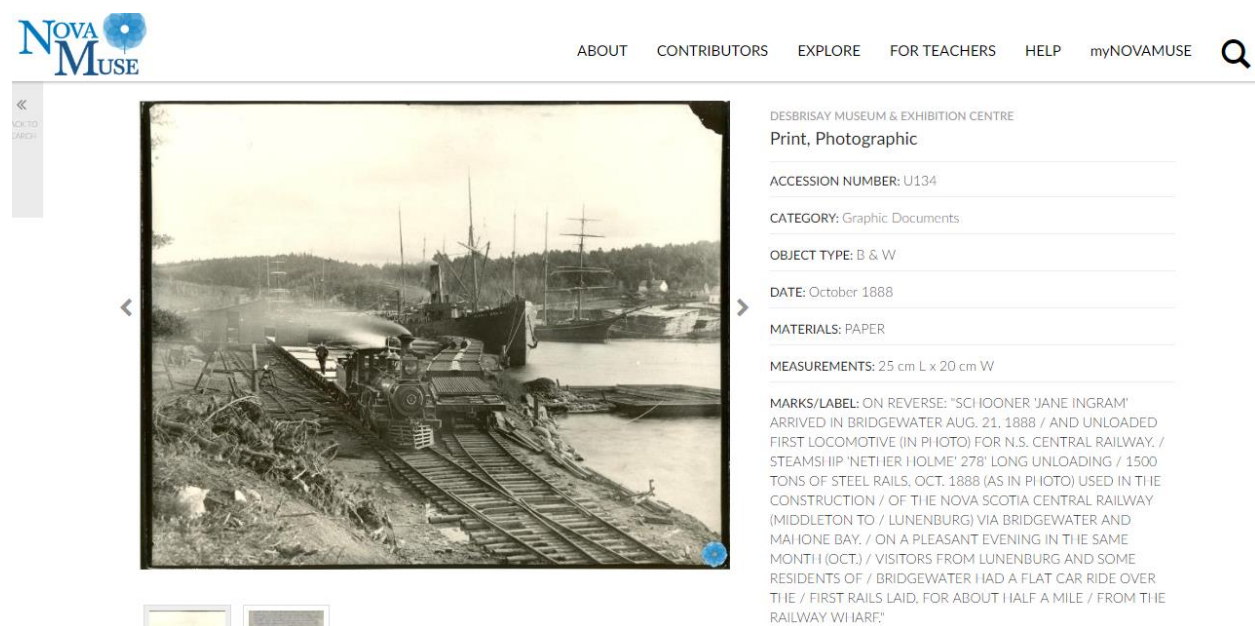


Fig. 16

The examples listed above include: a ticket for Canadian Pacific Railway - Furlough for passage from Halifax to Mulgrave, dated March 14, 1941; a photograph of railway workers in front of train engine 2358, among others. In the gallery itself, as seen on [NovaMuse](#) (Fig. 17), you will find even more items, including:

- an occupational pin for CN

- an acrylic painting of #45 steam engine approaching the Louisburg station by Floyd A. Allen
- Inverness Coal and Railway Company mortgage bond
- a snowplow manufactured by the Russell Snowplow Company (1949) used on the Sydney, Nova Scotia line
- a Canadian Pacific Railway Company sign
- and other related items: lanterns, train seating, and two railway bells

« BACK FEATURED GALLERIES: ALL ABOARD!

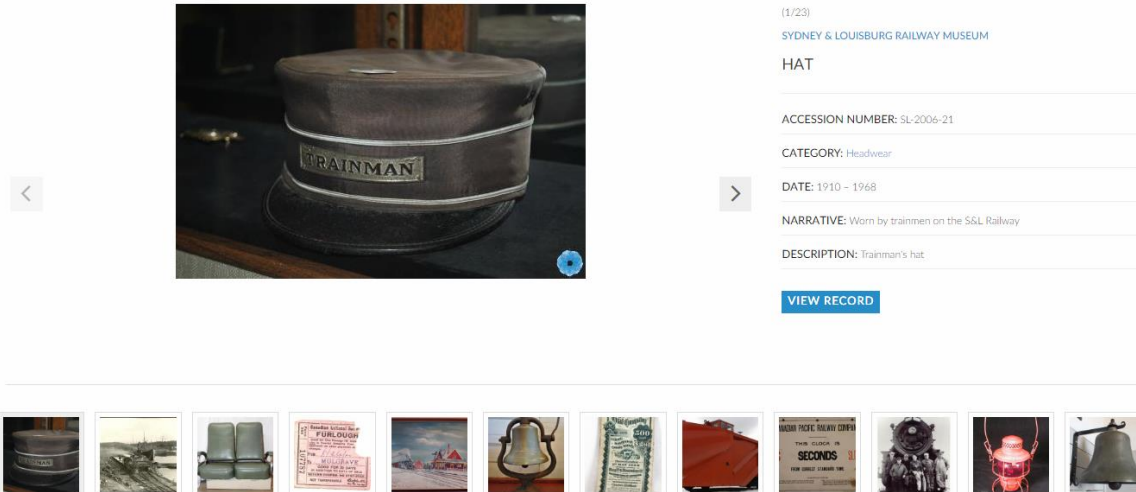


Fig. 17 All Aboard! Gallery

Family Ties

It is important to think about ways to make items in your collection stand out. Many museums have wedding dresses in their collections. Visitors identify and connect with these dresses when they know who wore them, when, and where. Museums often tell these stories through interpretive labels. Why not share it with your online audience as well?

Pictured here is Lavinia Dickson (Fig. 18.1) and her wedding dress (Fig. 18.2). She married James B. Davison in 1841. The dress is dated as being made in 1835. The third record is a portrait of her husband, James B. Davison (Fig. 18.3).



Figure 18.1



Figure 18.2



Figure 18.3

WALLACE AND AREA MUSEUM

Dress

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1990.114.130

CATEGORY: Wedding Objects

OBJECT TYPE: Wedding

DATE: 1835

MATERIALS: Wool

NARRATIVE: Worn by Lavinia Dickson when she married James B. Davison, 1841, dated as made in 1835.

DESCRIPTION: One brocaded cream coloured wool wedding gown, two pieces consist of skirt and bodice; bodice is off the shoulders style, skirt back closure, Bodice back closure is hook and eye, sleeves gathered at cuffs and elbows, skirt has a full lining, front pleated skirt.



Navigating MyNovaMuse

Explore connections across all collections found on NovaMuse. See what objects appear in the Featured Galleries created by museums and other users (Fig. 19). Make your own connections between objects by creating your own gallery. myNovaMuse allows you to save items, add comments, and share your Galleries with others.

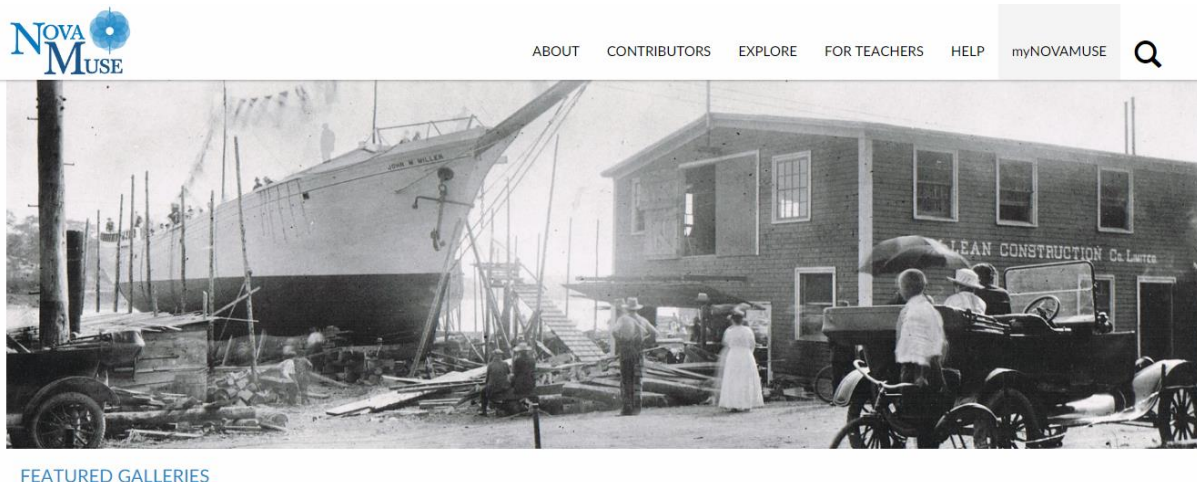


Fig. 19 myNovaMuse page

Creating a myNovaMuse Account

The first step to creating galleries is to create an account. Please contact ANSM to gain access to pre-set accounts if you are a contributing museum. For individual accounts, navigate to the myNovaMuse tab and click register (Fig. 20). You will then be asked to fill out the registration form (Fig. 21).

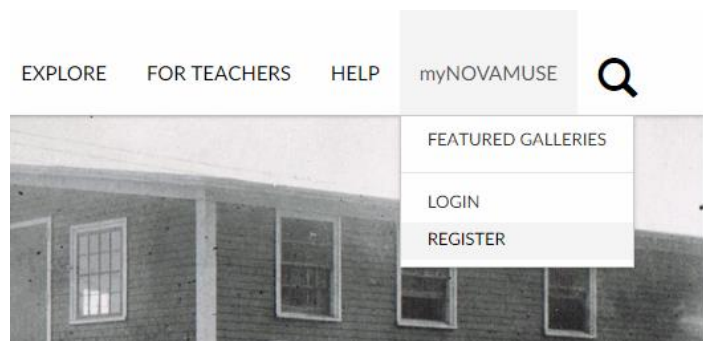


Fig. 20 MyNovaMuse tab

 The image displays the 'REGISTER' form on the myNovaMuse website. The form is titled 'REGISTER' in blue text. It contains several input fields for user information: FIRST NAME, LAST NAME, E-MAIL, USERNAME, ORGANIZATION, CITY, STATE/PROVINCE (a dropdown menu), COUNTRY (a dropdown menu currently showing 'Canada'), and POSTAL CODE. There is a small circular icon with a plus sign in the top right corner of the form area.

Fig. 21 Registration Form

Creating a myNovaMuse Gallery

Creating a gallery can be accomplished by using the [myNovaMuse Interface](#). Records can then be added to the gallery by clicking the file folder icon next to the image in a record. To add a gallery you must first log into your NovaMuse account.

Navigating the myNovaMuse Interface

To access the myNovaMuse Interface, navigate to myNovaMuse in the dropdown menu under the myNovaMuse Tab (Fig. 22). Click “myNOVAMUSE”, you will then be directed to the myNovaMuse interface.

In the myNovaMuse interface, you will be prompted to create your first gallery (Fig. 23). Click the cog next to the “myNOVAMUSE” heading and choose “New myNovaMuse.”

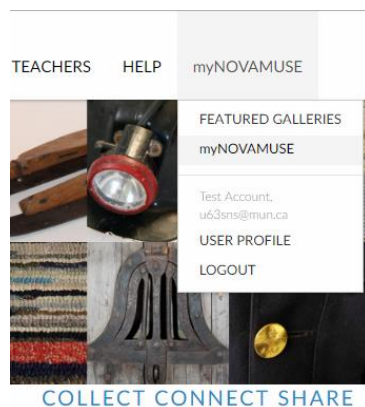


Fig. 22 myNovaMuse Tab

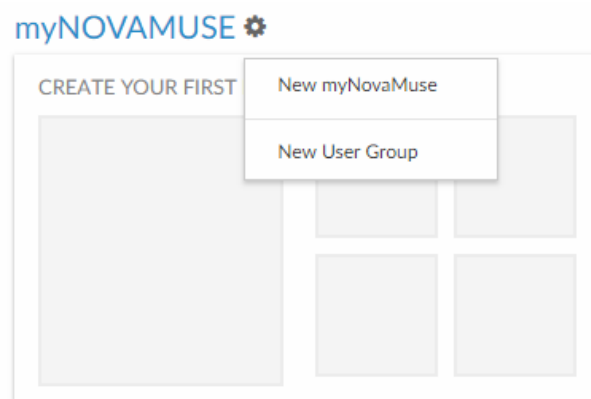


Fig. 23 Create Your First Gallery

Provide a Name and Description for your gallery. Then, next to Access, choose “private” or “public” from the dropdown menu (Fig. 24). If you wish to share your gallery with other users, choose public.

A screenshot of the 'myNOVAMUSE INFORMATION' form. It has three sections: 'NAME' with a text input field containing 'Chairs'; 'DESCRIPTION' with a text area containing 'A test for the stories guide.'; and 'ACCESS' with a dropdown menu. The dropdown menu is open, showing 'Private' and 'Public' options, with 'Private' selected.

Fig. 24 myNovaMuse Information

Adding Records to a Gallery

Adding records to a myNovaMuse gallery can be accomplished one of two ways.

Option 1: First, create a gallery from the myNovaMuse Interface (Fig. 23), perform searches to retrieve the desired records, and then add the records to the gallery.

Use the various search options to conduct searches on your topic of choice (Fig. 25).

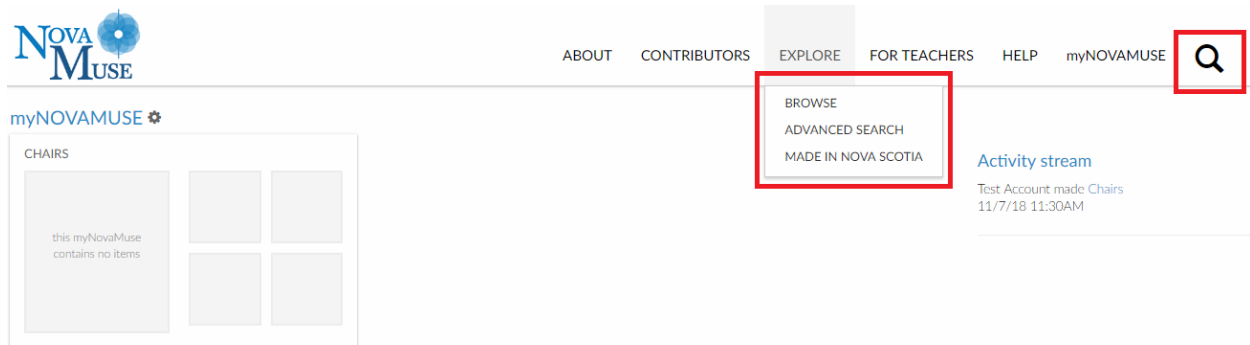


Fig. 25 Search Options

Add the record to the gallery by clicking the file folder located in the top left-hand corner of the primary image found under the individual record (Fig. 26).

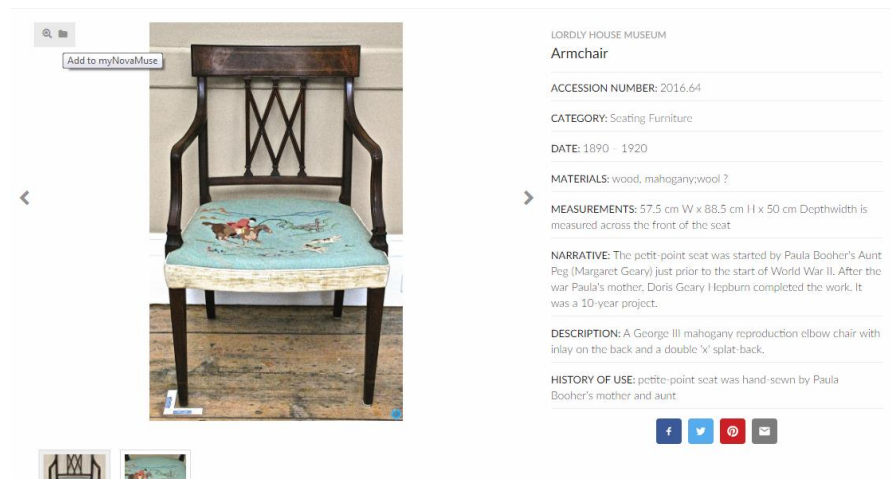


Fig. 26 Adding Record to myNovaMuse Gallery

Choose the corresponding gallery from the drop-down menu (Fig. 27).

Option 2: Or, create a gallery while conducting searches. Assign a Name and Description and choose Access level (Private or Public) from the drop-down menu.

Fig. 27 Add Item to myNovaMuse Window

Another approach, is to add a record from the search results. Click the file folder icon next to the record of your choice to add to myNovaMuse (Fig. 28). Continue to filter your results using the “Filter by” options and Refine keyword search to the right-hand side if you wish. You can add multiple items from the search results.

Fig. 28 Adding Records to myNovaMuse from Search Results

It is good practice to follow **Option 1** when you are planning ahead. This allows you to map out points of interest and be strategic when developing

online content. This method is recommended for museums and researchers.

Option 2 works best for general users who are using NovaMuse for leisure.

Editing Records in a Gallery

Once you have finished adding records to your gallery, you can return to the myNovaMuse Interface and edit the description and contents, including the order in which the records appear. Click the clipboard icon below the gallery to edit the name and description. Click the thumbnails to review the contents. To review comments, click the textbox icon. To delete a gallery, click the trash can icon (Fig. 29).

Remember to choose records with media. The media should be of a high resolution so that the image(s) is clear. Review ANSM's [Artefact Photography Tips](#) for further instruction.

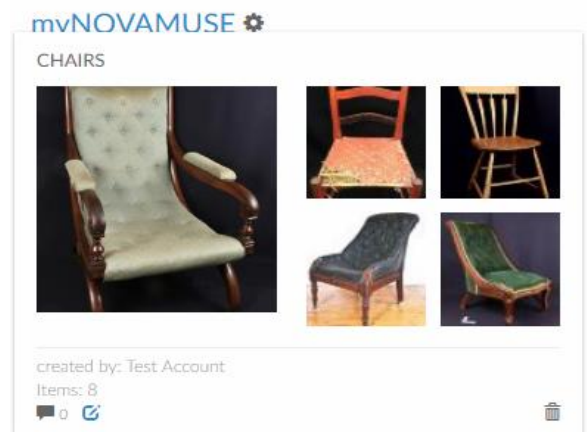


Fig. 29 Edit Name & Description

To edit an individual record in a gallery, use the different options in the task bar beneath each image (Fig. 30). To view item details, click the file icon. To enlarge the image, click the magnifying glass icon. To review comments, click the text box icon. To remove a record, click the trash can icon.

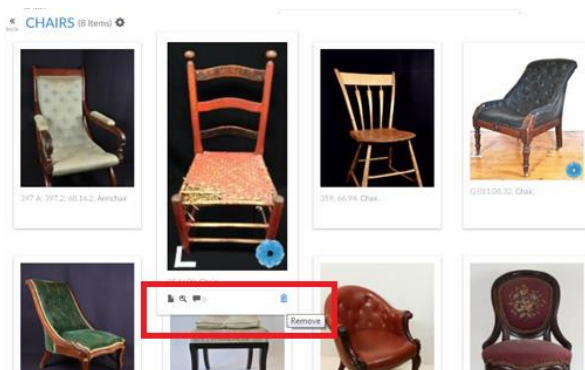


Fig. 30 myNovaMuse gallery task bar

Adjusting Settings for a Gallery

Use the cog icon to adjust the setting for a gallery (Fig. 31). Change the set order by identifier and title. Choose either “ascending” or “descending” to change the sort order. You can also change the order in which the records appear by dragging and dropping them in the gallery. Editing the name and description of the gallery is also available.

Share your gallery using the “Share myNovaMuse” option (Fig. 32). Slideshow presentations are available through this feature as well. Share your findings with museum visitors, staff, and/or researchers (Fig. 33).

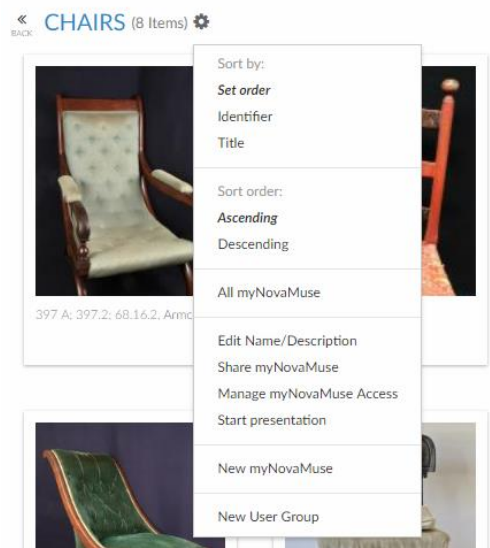


Fig. 31 myNovaMuse Gallery Settings

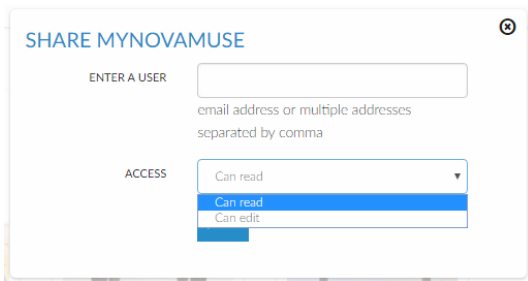


Fig. 32 Share myNovaMuse

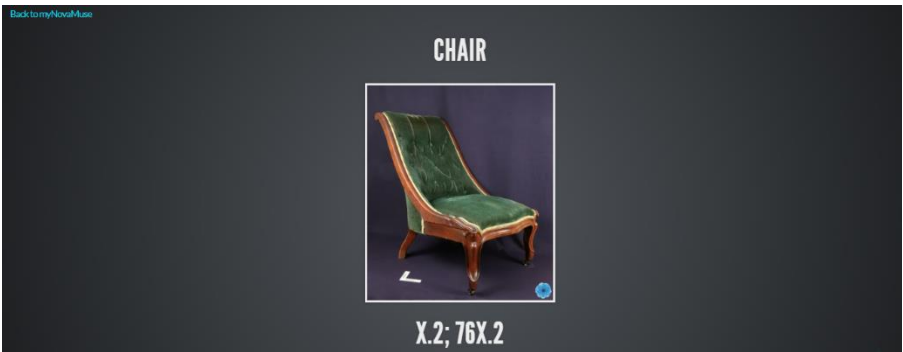


Fig. 33 myNovaMuse Gallery Presentation

Appendix A

myNovaMuse Galleries Brainstorming Activity



It's time to call a team meeting! Lead a constructive brainstorming session about what stories you have in your collection records. This is an interactive exercise, map out your ideas on a whiteboard, chalkboard, easel, etc. Leave your notes up in your staff room after the session so that your teammates can continue to add new ideas and expand on their initial thoughts. With your team, answer the following questions.

Let's begin!

- **What stories do you have in your collection?** (ideas include: local history, military insignia, manufacturing, fishing and lumbering, family connections, community events, household items, etc.)
- **How can you tie these items together and tell a story?** (example: wedding dress, photograph of bride, portrait of husband, etc.)
- **Are these records available on NovaMuse?**
- **Do these records feature high quality images?**

Planning ahead!

- **Who is responsible for building your galleries?**
- **Who is responsible for reviewing the galleries before you share?**
- **When will the new galleries be added to NovaMuse?**

Date(s):

- Where can you promote your new galleries? (Identify social media accounts)
- When should you schedule social media posts to share the news? (identify highest traffic, identify pre-scheduling options)

Dates:

- Where else can you share the news? (i.e. newsletters, etc.)

- When should you schedule another brainstorming session to follow-up?
- Are you actively promoting NovaMuse? If not, how can you do this going forward?
- When can you meet to discuss how the galleries performed?

Date(s):

Follow-up!

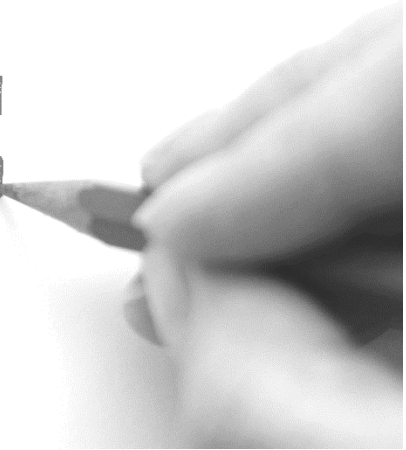
- What kind of feedback did you receive?
- How can you improve the content that you showcased?
- What adjustments can you make going forward?
- When can you meet again to brainstorm new ideas for galleries?

Date(s):

Appendix B

myNovaMuse Galleries Stories Checklist

CREATE



When developing content, ask yourself if your new gallery accomplishes the following:

(Check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Connects to community | ☐ Starts a conversation |
| ☐ Highlights local history | ☐ Reflects your vision |
| ☐ Celebrates diversity | ☐ Other _____ |
| ☐ Educates your audience | |

How was this accomplished?

What can you do to further develop each story? What information is missing? Which records can help fill in the gaps?