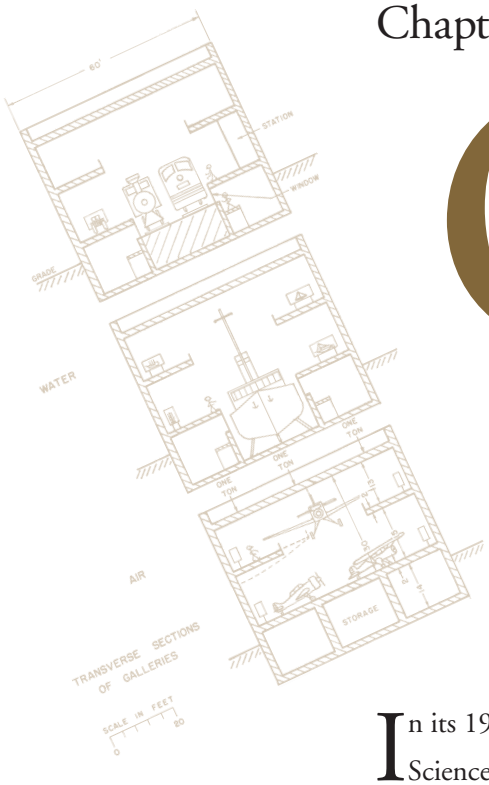
CSTM ORIGINS

Canada Science and Technology Museum

CANADA SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM

Canada



Chapter 1:

Origins

In its 1951 report, the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences—the Massey Commission—noted that Canada had "no museum to illustrate the substantial contributions of our country to scientific and technological progress." Those contributions, the commissioners argued, were significant and had made Canada "one of the world's important industrial nations." A national science museum "would serve not only to record Canadian achievements in science and technology but as a valuable guide and as a reference for future developments."[1] The commission therefore recommended:

> That a Canadian Museum of Science be established and be directed initially by the National Research Council and subsequently by a board of trustees, if found appropriate; that this museum illustrate in general the contributions of Canada to scientific research, to applied science and medicine, to invention and to technical development, particularly in physics, chemistry, engineering, and in other appropriate fields.[2]

This was one of 146 recommendations made by the commissioners. Of these, 17 related directly to what the commissioners called "National Museums." They identified short-term solutions to deal with acute problems, and also offered longer-term proposals to meet the needs of a growing and maturing nation. Of the former, the most important recommendation was that the Victoria Memorial Building, which at the time housed the two branches of the National Museum—Natural

1 Canada, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences 1949–1951, *Report* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1951) p. 91.

2 Canada, *Report*, p. 324.

History and Human History—as well as the Geological Survey and the National Gallery, be converted exclusively to museum use. This, of course, meant committing the necessary resources to re-house the other two institutions. The commissioners also advised the government to provide "adequate funds . . . for general educational services" for the National Museum.

The recommendation to create a national science museum was part of the second tier of recommendations. These also included the creation of a new national historical museum that would combine the historical (artifactual) collections held by the Public Archives of Canada with the human history collections of the existing National Museum, as well as other collections of "historical material" in the custody of the federal government and "pictures and portraits" in the National Gallery's collections "as belong more properly to an historical museum than to an art gallery." This new museum, like the science museum, would require "an adequate and appropriate building." The commissioners also recommended that the government establish a national botanical garden as well as a zoological garden, and that it "consider" setting up a national aquarium or national aquaria.[3]

A national science museum "would serve not only to record Canadian achievements in science and technology but as a valuable guide and as a reference for future developments."

With all these ambitious and potentially costly proposals on the table, it is perhaps not surprising that nothing was done about the proposed science museum—or the other museum recommendations—for almost a decade. Then, beginning in 1958, the government began to formulate plans for the new museums and their buildings. That year, the Department of Public Works informed the National Museum that the Victoria Memorial Building "had failed structurally," and new accommodation would have to be found or built. This coincided with the National Capital Commission's plans to re-make downtown Ottawa and create "a suitably monumental" capital city. With these two goals in mind, the federal government commissioned a series of studies, proposals and plans for central Ottawa. In 1962, the National Capital Commission (NCC) hired the architectural firm of John B. Parkin Associates to prepare a redevelopment plan for Confederation Square and the surrounding area. The new National Museum building became a pivotal component of this plan.

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3 Canada, *Report*, pp. 322-26.

It was to be located between the MacKenzie King Bridge and Laurier Avenue, and was to combine the natural and human history branches in one large building that would house both exhibitions and research and storage facilities. By 1965, the plan also included an NCC proposal to make the new science museum part of the complex, by building it across Laurier Avenue on the present site of Ottawa's city hall. This would form the basis of a museum "campus" that would help make Ottawa a much more attractive city, encouraging museum visitation and increasing tourism.

Even before the NCC commissioned its Parkin plan, another Parkin—J. H. Parkin—wrote a proposal for a new museum of science and technology. J. H. Parkin was the former Director of the Mechanical Engineering Division of the National Research Council of Canada, and an active member of the Associate Committee on a National Aviation Museum, which had been created in 1954 to advise the government on the creation of an institution that would preserve and interpret Canada's aviation history. It is not clear who commissioned the J. H. Parkin proposal, or how long Parkin was given to produce it. The report is dated August 1960.

J. H. Parkin with C. J. Mackenzie, Past President of the National Research Council of Canada, ca 1960. (Courtesy of the National Research Council of Canada Archives)

Parkin's proposal was brief—just 16 pages of text; 25 pages in total—and thus was more a conceptual document than a detailed plan for the new institution. Nevertheless, it was important for a number of reasons. It represented the first concrete evidence that the government was seriously considering the Massey Commission's advice regarding the creation of a national science and technology museum. Also, though painted with broad brushstrokes, the Parkin proposal touched upon most of the critical issues relating to the creation of a new museum—from function and scope, to administration, type of location and facilities required, and even a suggested design.

The Parkin document set down the principles that ultimately shaped the new museum. He saw the museum as having a dual function: to create a "visual record" of Canadian achievements in science and technology, and to provide an educational resource on the history of science and technology for popular and scholarly visitors alike. The exhibitions would provide teachers with a different and more engaging way of addressing and expanding upon the science curriculum.

At a more scholarly level, the museum would become a repository of knowledge and expertise that would attract researchers from various fields to study the evolution of technology and its use in Canada. In its research and education role, the museum would be "more effective than the reference library in that the three-dimensional material object provides a more comprehensive understanding than is possible through words alone."

Parkin went on to argue that, in order to fulfill its research and educational functions, the museum should be comprehensive in scope and should aspire eventually to "be international in character" and to cover "all branches of science and technology." Its immediate goals, though, had to be less ambitious; he suggested "a museum of modest size devoted to the branches of science in which significant contributions have been made by Canadians, and to those technological and industrial fields which assisted in the creation of Canada, have contributed to her development and have brought her wealth and importance."

Parkin proposed 12 initial subject areas, each to have its own gallery: science; exploration and survey; air transport; water transport; land transport; communications; forest industries; agriculture; mining, metallurgy, oil and gas production; hydraulic engineering; power development; and manufacturing and construction industries. Within these areas, the museum "should preserve for the nation original and historic apparatus" and should establish advisory boards of specialists in each field to consult with curators. He suggested an essentially historical "treatment" of the subjects, tracing the evolution of a given technology from first discovery or application to the present day.[4]

In keeping with the emerging international trend in museum interpretation and design,[5] and echoing the concerns expressed by the Massey Commission about the need for greater emphasis on the educational role of museums, Parkin also insisted that the new museum "must be alive, and active, continually expanding and constantly up to date." This was the only way he believed that it could fulfill its educational function and counteract the common misconception that museums were "dusty, monotonous collections . . . crowded in dark, dismal buildings." As for administration, he believed that what the museum needed, above all else, was flexibility and independence. Basing his arguments on examples of successful international museums, he recommended a board of trustees made up of government representatives, distinguished scientists, engineers and other representatives from academia and industry. Finally, he stated strongly the

4 J. H. Parkin, "A Proposal for a Canadian Museum of Science and Technology," Ottawa, 1960, pp. 1-5.

5 This was an era of great change and soul-searching in the international museum community. See Kenneth Hudson, *Museums of Influence*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) for a discussion of the various museological experiments undertaken in the 1960s and 1970s.

need for high-calibre, professional staff to insure the "vitality and success" of the new museum, and noted in passing the advent of graduate courses in museology and museum administration at certain universities in the United States.[6]

Parkin was not convinced that the new museum should be located at the Laurier Street site proposed by the NCC. On the contrary, he suggested that the cost of a central location would place limitations on the size of the museum building and the amount of surrounding land—essential both for outdoor activities and parking. The disadvantages of a suburban location, on the other hand, could easily be mitigated by good access to the city's transportation networks, ample parking, restaurant facilities within the museum, space for expansion, and by the steady growth of the city, which in time would make the site less remote. He also noted the need for a rail line to facilitate the acquisition and disposition of rolling stock, and suggested that water access would also be an advantage in the display of marine transportation artifacts.

J. H. Parkin's proposal did not produce immediate results and, by 1964, there was some concern among supporters of the science museum project that it had lost momentum. The site suggested by government was not yet vacant, and this meant that there would be no new building for the museum until the mid-1970s. Moreover, in June of that year, the Secretary of State of Canada, the Honourable Maurice Lamontagne, when questioned about his government's plans for the new museum, stated only that the appointment of a director was "under consideration as a matter calling for early action." He suggested that such an appointment should be made well in advance of the opening of a facility, since the new director would have to focus on building a collection in order to make exhibitions and programs possible.[7] The government's commitment to the project was not exactly unwavering.

Against this backdrop, supporters of the science museum decided to take action to try to stiffen the government's resolve to go ahead with the project. In July 1964, a group of interested individuals met to discuss concerns and possible strategies. Dr R. G. Glover and Dr A. W. F. Banfield represented the Human and Natural History branches of the National Museum respectively.

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6 Parkin, pp. 6-9. In this, Parkin was echoing the concerns of the Massey Commission and the Miers-Markham Commission of 1932, both of which stressed the critical importance of professionally-trained curators to the success of any museum, and both of which noted that Canadian curators were undervalued, underpaid and demoralized by the sorry state of museums and the lack of government and public support for their institutions and their work. See Massey Commission *Report* pp. 92-100 for comments on this subject and detailed quotations from the Miers-Markham report.

7 Hansard, June 17, 1964, p. 4391. Copy in Dunn papers, Library and Archives Canada [LAC] MG 31, J6, vol.1.

Mr M. S. Kuhring represented the National Research Council; Mr R. H. Tanner and Mr Arthur Dunn, the Institute of Electrical Engineers. There were also representatives from Technical Services and Administration at the National Museum. After discussing a number of operational and thematic issues relating to the museum, the participants agreed on a proposed course of action:

> That if possible during the months of July, August and early September the group draft a policy statement for the Museum of Science and Technology together with suggested qualifications for a Director. Further, they should endeavour to lay down a rational and objective date for the opening of the building and suggest a plan of action and budget to cover the expenses of such operation, excluding the costs of building. In September it is proposed that a brief be presented to The Honourable Mr. Lamontagne, Secretary of State, supported by prominent individuals in the industrial technological field in order to apply some pressure to obtain such an institution at the earliest date in Canada.[8]

In order to facilitate these goals, Mr Dunn, with the advice and assistance of Mr Kuhring and Mr G. G. E. Steele, Under Secretary of State of Canada, created a committee. Called the National Science Museum Support Committee, its mandate was to "support" the government officials responsible for setting up the new museum. It was tasked with collecting "ideas and suggestions for exhibitions from interested persons and organizations all across Canada," making recommendations on "the philosophy and themes of museum exhibits," locating "suitable exhibit material" and identifying "potential donors of funds or material."[9]

Mr G. G. E. Steele, Undersecretary of State and the Honourable Paul Hellyer, Minister of Defence at the opening of a display of the national aviation collection at Rockliffe Air Station, 21 May 1965. Mr. Steele played a critical role not only in keeping the science museum project alive through the early 1960s, but also in obtaining sufficient funding to get it established and finding a building to house it. (CSTM J 10937-6)

The group held its first meeting 30 April 1965, with 11 people in attendance: two representing the Secretary of State of Canada and the National Museum respectively, and the remainder representing various areas of science, technology and engineering in government,

8 Dunn Papers, Record of Meeting, Museum of Science and Technology, pp. 2-3.

9 Dunn Papers, draft terms of reference, The National Science Museum Support Committee. Included as attachment with Dunn to J. S. Glassford, February 8, 1965.

academia and private industry. Mr Hindley, representing the Secretary of State, updated the group on the government's plans for the National Museum. He touched upon both the building project and the proposed legislation with its "radical approach" of "making the complex responsible to a Board of Trustees appointed by the Prime Minister having the power of a Crown Corporation, but responsible administratively to the Department of the Secretary of State through the Secretary of that Board." Each branch of the museum was to become a separate national museum with a separate Advisory Committee to help support its specific areas of interest and concern.[10]

The primary preoccupation of the support committee, however, was the development of a brief for the Minister, outlining what the museum should be. Their discussions covered a wide range of topics, from philosophy to educational programs to location. The "urgency of obtaining ideas for the museum," was noted and the members reminded that, while they were encouraged to look at "all aspects of the Museum," the department wanted their written brief no later than August or September of 1965.[11]

Working strictly on a volunteer basis, the committee met regularly through the summer and fall of 1965. They solicited input from museum professionals around the world, and from leaders of science and industry in Canada, to help them formulate their brief and extend their network of advisors and contributors. The document was submitted to Under Secretary of State of Canada G. G. E. Steele on 5 November 1965. The committee also distributed it to a number of Canadian scientists, engineers and educators for their comments and criticisms.

It stressed the need for urgent action, citing the growing importance of science and technology in Canadian society and the risk of losing irreplaceable parts of our heritage through delay.

The support committee's brief was only slightly longer than J. H. Parkin's original proposal, and clearly owed a great deal to that earlier document. It stressed the need for urgent action, citing the growing importance of science and technology in Canadian society and the risk of losing irreplaceable parts of our heritage through delay. The committee supported

10 Dunn Papers, Inaugural Meeting of the National Science Museum Support Committee, 30 April 1965, p. 1.

11 Dunn Papers, Inaugural Meeting, p. 2.

Parkin's view of the importance of the historical approach, while at the same time noting the need for dynamic display techniques that demonstrated, among other things, basic scientific principles. It also reiterated the educational value of the museum, as well as the importance of core functions such as collecting, conserving and researching. The committee did not go into detail on subject areas as Parkin had, but rather chose to emphasize what they called the "systems" approach. The new museum, they argued, had to look at the physical sciences and all branches of technology as part of a broad, panoramic continuum embracing past, present and future advances and inter-related developments from field to field.[12]

Like Parkin, the committee members stressed the need for the new museum to have a high level of administrative autonomy, such as that given to Crown Corporations. Secure, non-lapsing funding was also critical, particularly in the early developmental years.[13] They reiterated the importance of hiring suitable staff, noting the difficulty of finding experts in scientific and technological fields who also had curatorial knowledge or experience.[14] They discussed at some length the location and size of the museum, proposing that the government reconsider its plan to build the museum downtown and instead consider one of several suburban sites. Here it could easily have the 500,000-plus square feet [152,400-plus square metres] of space that they believed would be required to do justice to the field of science and technology, and to meet the many public demands that would be placed upon this institution in time.[15]

The committee also had something to say about the type of director the museum needed, since this would have an obvious impact on the direction and philosophy of the institution. They suggested that, at least initially,

> the museum be established under a director who could be considered more of a collector than a student of technology. Such a person would have a wide general knowledge of the history of technology and would be expected to travel widely to obtain the materials required to give the institution the initial impetus.[16]

This director, whose tenure would be "relatively short" would be followed by a director "who would systematize the collection and direct the museum into its more final form." Chosen by a

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12 Dunn Papers, Brief the the Secretary of State Department Re: Museum of Science and Technology submitted by Museum Support Committee, November 5, 1965, p. 9.

13 Dunn Papers, Brief, pp. 17-8.

14 Dunn Papers, Brief, pp. 9-13.

15 Dunn Papers, Brief, pp. 13-7.

16 Dunn Papers, Brief, pp. 10-11.

board of trustees, the new director "would be supported by a Technical Advisory Council of interested persons in the fields of science and technology." They would offer advice and assistance wherever appropriate, including on the acquisitions.[17] At the end of its brief, the committee attached a list of 42 professional, industrial and historical associations and societies that it felt might be interested and could "assist in the formation of a national science museum."[18]

The committee received many thoughtful and positive replies, the most important of which came for Mr G. G. E. Steele. In his letter of 7 December 1965, acknowledging receipt of the brief, he stated that he was "in full agreement" with the committee's "expression of the urgent need to establish the new museum," and announced that the department "was actively seeking approval for financial provision to be made in the fiscal year 1966–67 to enable a start to be made, including the early appointment of a Director."[19] Steele apparently wrote a more detailed response to the brief. In this letter, he seems to have expressed concerns about the possibility of a comprehensive national museum competing with, or facing competition from, other unidentified institutions across the country. He also raised questions about the committee's proposals relating to location and financing.[20]

Vintage car parade, 23 April 1965. Note the sign on the side of the car: "Future National Museum of Science and Technology." (CSTM J 18683-7)

Despite these concerns, Steele followed through on his promise to find funding to get the museum established in the coming fiscal year. Early in May, the Department drafted a statement of qualifications for the position of Director. It eventually advertised the job, with a much briefer and less specific set of qualifications, at a salary of up to CDN$20,000. The Under Secretary of State of Canada also asked the support committee to submit the names of any individuals they thought might be appropriate for the position. The secretary of the committee, Arthur Dunn, offered the names of two British candidates,

17 Dunn Papers, Brief, pp. 10-11.

18 Dunn Papers, Brief, p. 1.

19 Steele to Punchard, 7 December 1965, Dunn Papers MG 31 J6, vol. 1, file 3.

20 Steele's second response was not in the files, but a copy of Punchard's response to it is. See Punchard to Steele, 17 January 1966.

Miss Margaret Weston (recommended by Colonel A. A. Kennedy, Commissioner of Ontario Hydro) and Mr Frank Greenaway, both of the Science Museum in London. He noted in closing that, "I regret that I am aware of no Canadian with the adequacy of experience and knowledge necessary for an institution such as is projected; indeed there is a great dearth of such personnel everywhere."[21]

Around the same time, Steele gave his approval to the formation of a second committee related to the new museum project. The Associate Committee on National Museums of Science and Engineering was modelled after the Associate Committee on a National Aviation Museum. Its objectives were to provide advice to groups interested in establishing museums in the field and, more specifically, to offer practical assistance in the formative stages of the proposed science museum. Like the support committee, this group was made up of men from the fields of government, industry and education and included the chair, J. C. R. Punchard, and secretary, A. D. Dunn, of the support committee. Its priorities were also similar. It was to help the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada to fulfill three important requirements with respect to the proposed science museum: the appointment of a suitable Director, the acquisition of a substantial collection, and the identification of a storage place for that collection.[22]

By the fall of 1966, the Department of the Secretary of State had decided on a director for the new museum. David McCurdy Baird was a geologist by training and had been chairman of the Department of Geology at the University of Ottawa for eight years at the time of his appointment as director of the Science and Technology Branch of the National Museum of Canada. Over the years, he had developed a special interest in making science more accessible to the public, writing, among other things, guidebooks for the national parks, and a brochure on the geology and scenery of Newfoundland, as well as 47 scripts for CBC Television's early educational program *Live and Learn*. He also gave public lectures and was very involved in the Youth Science Federation: an organization aimed at interesting secondary school students in the science fair movement across Canada. He was elected president of this organization in 1968.[23]

Yet, while the government was moving along with its plans for the new Science and Technology branch, it appeared to be having some doubts about the larger development strategy for the

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21 Dunn to Steele, 21 July 1966.

22 Minutes of the First Meeting of the Associate Committee on National Museums of Science and Engineering, 20 June 1966. Dunn Papers, file 6.

23 "Commentary," *Chemistry in Canada*, January, 1968, p. 9; Sandra Gwyn, "Ottawa's peculiar hand-me-down treasurehouse," *Saturday Night*, vol. 95, no. 3, April, 1980, p. 35; National Museums of Canada "Newsletter," no. 2, Fall 1968, p. 8.

National Museum. Back in 1964, when the government transferred it from the Department of Resources and Development to the recently created Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, the plan was still to have the Natural History and Human History branches in their new building by 1 January 1967. In July 1965, however, the government announced that the project would not begin for at least one year. Citing Ottawa's over-stretched construction sector as the primary reason, the Secretary of State took advantage of the delay to examine the federal government's involvement in cultural activities and to develop a comprehensive plan for the National Museum.[24]

In 1965, Lamontagne appointed Mr Gordon Sheppard as Special Consultant of the Arts. He was given a broad mandate which included examining "the need and basis for a cultural policy for the Federal Government," and making "recommendations towards a cultural policy." To fulfill these objectives, Sheppard had to look, not only at the present cultural needs, policies and planning methods of the government, but also at the possible future needs and strategies for meeting them. Out of about 900 pages of typescript, Sheppard devoted just over 30 to the National Museum. In those pages, he went over some of the same territory covered by previous studies, including the Massey and Glassco Commissions, commenting and elaborating upon their recommendations and assessing what, if any, progress had been made towards fulfilling these.[25]

Among other things, Sheppard stated that a new building for the National Museum was "imperative" if the museum was to meet the ambitious goals assigned it by Massey. Yet, while he noted that the recent decision to postpone construction had "caused already sagging Museum morale to wilt," he recommended that the government "review the relevance" of the current design. He maintained that many people, including the branch directors of the National Museum, thought that the 1961 plan was already obsolete and needed to be updated to reflect ongoing changes in the character of museums in Canada and around the world. Sheppard recommended that this re-consideration and re-design process be undertaken immediately, in order to limit further damage to staff morale and any additional expenditure on what now seemed an obsolete building plan.[26]

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24 Dunn Papers, J. D. Leaning to A. D. Dunn, 21 April 1965, and Archie F. Key, *Beyond Four Walls The Origins and Development of Canadian Museums* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1973) pp. 222-24.

25 Gordon Sheppard, "A Special Report on the Cultural Policy and Activities of the Government of Canada, 1965–66," Volume II, pp. 290-317.

26 Sheppard, pp. 305-6.

Sheppard also had something to say about the new science museum project. He suggested that, in light of the Ontario government's decision to build a "splendidly first-class" science museum in Toronto, it would be unwise for the federal government to invest in a competing institution. Noting that "some museum directors" thought that this would make the national museum "superfluous, a waste of men and money," he argued that developing this new museum now would also have the effect of "dissipating limited energies and resources" so badly needed by the two existing branches of the National Museum. He recommended that the federal government defer this project and use the intervening time to assess the actual content and performance of the Ontario museum, and use this to help "clarify their thinking" about what the national museum ought to be. This strategy would also allow the government to focus on getting human and natural history into "top shape," before directing their attention to the science museum.[27] Late in the summer of 1966, the Ontario government decided that their new institution would be a science centre that focussed on the present and principles rather than objects.[28]

While Sheppard was still working on his report, the Secretary of State of Canada commissioned a second, more specific study of the National Museum. This study, written by Frederick Gutheim, a consultant on urban affairs based in Washington, D.C., analyzed the government's 1961 plans for the new building, within the context of the rapidly changing political, social, cultural, urban and museological environment of the day. Gutheim, like Sheppard, found the proposal "entirely inadequate" to the new reality, which included two increasingly separate museums—natural and human history—and which, based on the recommendations of successive inquiries, demanded that much greater attention be given to exhibitions, education and other public programs and spaces than had been in the past.[29]

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27 Sheppard, pp. 314-16. At the same time, in a section devoted to the National Gallery, Mr Sheppard recommended that the government create "a National Gallery of Canadian and Modern Art," as a new institution, separate from the existing National Gallery. He also recommended that they "consider founding a National Portrait Gallery." Sheppard, p. 259

28 Although its original managers and political masters intended it to be a museum similar to the Smithsonian, the government had a change of heart in mid-1966, and decided to follow the example of Frank Oppenheimer's Exploratorium instead. Many observers believed that this dramatic shift in direction, along with significant organizational restructuring, precipitated the resignation of the first director and several staff members late in the summer of 1966. Correspondence with Valerie Hatten, librarian of the Ontario Science Centre. Among her sources was the tenth-anniversary booklet entitled *First 10 Years*.

29 Frederick Gutheim, "The National Museum of Canada, Program Planning and Location," Report written for the Department of the Secretary of State, November 1966, pp. 2-5.

Gutheim produced a detailed report analyzing the challenges facing the National Museum and suggesting ways for it to meet these challenges. He examined the evolving urban environment of Ottawa, its growth and traffic patterns, and the role of tourism in the area. He also looked at architectural design as it related to museums and their changing roles in society, especially with respect to education and outreach. Finally, he speculated about what the future might hold for museums, stressing such important factors as growing attendance and increasing demands for professionally trained staff.[30]

Gutheim concluded that, while the proposed site for the new museum (in what is now Confederation Park) should be kept, the existing plan for the building had to be scrapped, and a new one developed. At the same time, he recommended that the government examine core museum functions such as collections and research "more critically, both in terms of their need for a central location, and their relationship to other museum functions." He felt that dividing display and research might be the best approach to reconcile the need for public accessibility and visibility with the need for large facilities to house expanding collections and specialized research.[31]

The Honourable Judy Lamarsh, Secretary of State and Dr David Baird at the opening of the National Museum of Science and Technology, November 1967. (CSTM J 19482-4)

Although Gutheim focussed mainly on the existing branches of the National Museum, he did touch on the science and technology branch. He interviewed the newly appointed Director, Dr Baird, and recorded his general views on the appropriate role and location of the proposed museum. He also repeatedly noted the central importance of transportation and resource development—including mining, energy creation and distribution, forestry, fisheries and agriculture—to the story of Canada and the development of our national character. Moreover, much of what Gutheim had to say about the need for thoughtful analysis of what the National Museum was and ought to become, and

30 See, for example, Gutheim pages 94-102.

31 Gutheim, pages 1, 12-3 and 110.

of what resources it would need to fulfill its increasingly complex social roles and responsibilities in the future was, of course, applicable to the new museum.[32]

Gutheim submitted his report in November 1966, around the same time that Sheppard completed the final volumes of his report. Shortly thereafter,[33] the new Secretary of State of Canada, the Honourable Judy LaMarsh, announced the cancellation of the new museum building project. Despite Sheppard's assertions that the Museum's branch directors understood that the plan was already inadequate, this action was not well received. One branch director and several senior staff at the National Museum resigned in frustration at the government's apparent lack of concern about the urgency of the problems facing the Museum. The government, for its part, tried to demonstrate its continuing commitment by introducing legislation—what would become the *National Museums Act*—in May 1967 to reorganize and reinvigorate the institution. Despite this, the new appointee to the vacant directorship resigned, followed the next year by Dr Banfield, director of the Natural History branch. Pointing out that the Canada Council's budget for one year equalled that of the National Museums (not including the National Gallery) over 50 years of operation, he questioned the government's commitment to the museums. He did not believe that the new regime would do much to address the long-standing and now acute lack of resources, professional staff and proper facilities at the museums. The new building, no matter how flawed, would at least have ameliorated some of these.[34]

The Morrison-Lamothe Building which became the home of the new museum. (CSTM J 19244)

This was the uncertain and unstable environment into which the National Museum of Science and Technology was born. Museums were definitely on the government's cultural agenda and, based on the Sheppard and Gutheim studies, they were expected to become increasingly important institutions with ambitious national mandates. But there were many other institutions and policies that were part of this cultural strategy, and it was not clear how all of these would or

32 Gutheim, pages 28-9 and 78.

33 It is not clear exactly when the decision to cancel the museum project was made or announced. The sources are all a bit vague and even unreliable on these details. See for example, Archie F. Key, *Beyond Four Walls The Origins and Development of Canadian Museums*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1973) pp. 222-24.

34 Key, pp. 222-24.

could be funded.[35] In this context, it is understandable that supporters of the science and technology museum and its new director were determined to get it up and running as soon as possible.

By the time Dr Baird was appointed, he knew that there would be no new museum buildings in the immediate future, and that the science museum would not be first on the list when buildings were finally planned. There was thus no point in waiting for that eventuality. Lurking in the background, too, were the chronic funding problems facing the National Museum, and the not unwarranted belief that a new museum would only exacerbate these difficulties by "dissipating limited energies and resources."[36] This may have added to the sense of urgency. After all, a director without a museum would be much more vulnerable to budget cuts than an established public institution. In this context, Dr Baird's decision to accept the less-than-ideal alternative of adapting a non-museum space for temporary use and moving ahead quickly with the project, was very astute. At the time, few could have guessed how permanent the museum's "temporary" lodgings would become.

35 According to Key, by 1967 the cost of the National Arts Centre had ballooned from the original $9 million to $46 million; p. 224.

36 Sheppard, p. 315.