

What We Heard

Renaming of
Mary March
Provincial Museum

AT THE
ROOMS



Summary Report

Background

As part of the process of decolonization, The Rooms recognized the colonial history of the name of the Mary March Provincial Museum in Grand Falls-Windsor. As such, there was a commitment to rename the museum.

The Rooms sought the public's input to determine a new name that works towards reconciliation, healing and respectful commemoration of Indigenous Peoples' histories and is more accurate.

In 2020, The Rooms struck a committee to advise on the renaming the Mary March Provincial Museum in Grand Falls-Windsor. The committee is comprised of councillors from the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor, a representative from the town's heritage group, representatives from Indigenous Governments and Organizations, as well as a representative from The Rooms and its Regional Museum staff.

The Provincial Government's goal was to find a new name for the museum that reflects the content of the museum, the visitor experience it offers as a tourism attraction in this region, its history as a community museum, as well as a name that respects the efforts towards healing and commemoration of Indigenous Peoples histories in this province.

There were two names put forward to the Provincial Government by this committee – **Demasduit Regional Museum** or **Demasduit Regional Interpretation Centre**.

Methodology and Approach

The approach utilized to gather input into the renaming of the Mary March Provincial Museum was a landing page and online questionnaire posted to the engageNL web portal. An email address as well as a mailing address were provided for written submissions to be emailed or mailed directly to The Rooms.

The consultations on the renaming of the Mary March Provincial Museum was posted on engageNL December 6, 2021 and stakeholders and the public had until December 22, 2021 to complete the questionnaire; send an email; or, mail a form postmarked by December 22, 2021, to the address provided. In total, 161 submissions were received through engageNL and two emails were received*. There was also one submission received on The Rooms Facebook Page. There were no forms received via mail.

*Of the two email submissions received, only one email included a submission for the survey, the name submitted would fall in the "other" category.

Privacy

In accordance with the **Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015**, a privacy notice concerning the collection and protection of personal information was posted on the online engagement portal (engageNL).

Overview of Participants*

Respondents were asked to identify the region of the province where they lived.

Region	Number of Responses	Percentage
Avalon	57	35.40%
Eastern	10	6.21%
Central	73	45.34%
Western	14	8.70%
Labrador	7	4.35%
Total	161	100.00%

* This chart represents submissions captured through the engageNL online survey and does not include the email submissions or the submission received on The Rooms Facebook Page as regional information was not provided with those submissions.

Key Observations

Respondents were asked to choose one of the two names recommended by the **Renaming Advisory Committee – Demasduit Regional Museum** or **Demasduit Regional Interpretation Centre**. They could also select “Other” and provide a third name option. Those who selected “Other” were prompted to consider the following when proposing a name:

- name length and clarity;
- reflect the visitor experience;
- distinct from other attractions/museums/cultural institutions;
- compatible with the regional museum system operated by The Rooms (Provincial Seamen’s Museum, Labrador Interpretation Centre).

Recommended Name	Number of Responses	Percentage
Demasduit Regional Museum	68*	41.72
Demasduit Regional Interpretation Centre	71	43.56
Other	24**	14.72
Total	163***	100.00%

* There were 67 submissions for Demasduit Regional Museum from the survey on the engageNL portal and 1 submission received for Demasduit Regional Museum from The Rooms Facebook Page. **There were 23 “Other” submissions received through the

survey on the engageNL portal and one “Other” submission was received via email.***The final total includes all submissions received through the engageNL portal, the submission received on The Rooms Facebook Page and the submission received via email.

Additional Comments:

- Many respondents felt museum is an honoured and recognized word around the world and therefore should be included in the name.
- Some commented that changing the name is more political, it does not change history.
- There is a need to enhance education and knowledge of the history.
- There were comments to determine whether the facility’s primary purpose was for interpretation or museum. Once the primary purpose is determined the appropriate word (interpretation or museum) should be used in the renaming.
- Some felt that tourists or others would not associate Demasduit with Beothuk and may bypass the museum.
- There were several suggestions of how to enhance the facility to provide knowledge and understanding of the Beothuk people.

Summary Analysis

Respondents were provided with options for the renaming of **Mary March Provincial Museum**. While the majority (43.56%) chose **Demasduit Regional Interpretation Centre**, it should be noted that **Demasduit Regional Museum** was selected by 41.72% of respondents.

The majority of respondents (45.34%) identified Central as the region where they lived, which is reflective of the location of the current **Mary March Provincial Museum**.

There was agreement and disagreement with renaming of the museum – some participants stated “leave the name as it is” and felt it should not be named after a particular individual, while others would like to see Beothuk or Demasduit included in the name or have no issue with it being named after a particular individual.

In reviewing the data collected, consideration will be given to the comments received through the engagement process when selecting the new name. Further considerations will include name length and clarity; that the name reflect the visitor experience; that it be distinct from other attractions/museums/cultural institutions; and that it is compatible with the regional museum system operated by The Rooms (Provincial Seamen’s Museum, Labrador Interpretation Centre).