Hello there,

In case you don't already know me, I'm Shawn Adamsson and I sit on the board the ACO London, the Urban League of London and am a member of the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH). Thanks to many of you a chunk of my life is now dedicated to helping preserve London's heritage.

At LACH last week a couple of cool projects were on the agenda that are designed to engage average Londoners in our local history but neither project really gave an opportunity for people to dig deeper into the stories of our city - that's fine, we're all working on shoestring budgets and constraints are to be expected. One of the members of the LACH asked if there would be a website for people to go deeper on one of the projects but we don't really have a space like that today. We don't have a great place where we can share all of our stories in a high quality format and with any level of consistency. That's not surprising because it's a lot of work for any one organization to manage that kind of resource, especially with many being run by volunteers.

Here's the ask: would it be possible for some or (ideally) all of our groups to come together to support a central storytelling website that we could all use to further the education of Londoners with regards to our history? (You're going to have to trust me but this email is going to a lot of people.)

Putting together such a website is pretty trivial nowadays and the costs are minor, even putting the stories on the website isn't terribly tough or time consuming.

The work comes in assembling these stories (not just facts ... narrative, engaging storytelling) normally but between all of our groups we have a LOT of stories available. The ACO has content from decades of Geranium tours for starters, the City of London has heritage reports, we can request permission to reprint excerpts from history books, etc. The idea would be to provide a place where we can start to tell the stories of people, places, events and more ... these stories don't need to be fleshed out completely because it's the web and we can continue to add more content as time goes on. The site would be a home for a series of living documents.

By sharing the responsibility there's less concern that one group could take down an important resource should the group become defunct. All the organizations who get involved would have the ability to login and author content on the site. I (and others) can help with transferring stories to the site or formatting stories so they are readable and attractive on screens, tablets and phones.

A few of the other benefits:

- This is a great opportunity to raise the profiles of all our groups with bylines featuring short bios of the people who have contributed and the groups to which they belong.
- We can feature links to buy books about our heritage at local book shops and promote materials that can only be found in the London Room, Museum London and Western Archives.
- We can feature London citizens and businesses who are doing their part to preserve our history.

- We're all building our stories together and can locate resources that we can't necessarily find on our own (I witness this kind of thing monthly at LACH).
- If we want to build momentum together for a future London Archives this is a great place to start.
- We're using all of our social capital to make one resource as successful as we can and amplifying each other's voices far and wide.
- It allows us to keep our websites laser focused on the goals of our organization without having to squeeze in this kind of content.
- There are a bunch of other opportunities as well but this is a pretty good start.

We already did a little of this on the History Jam website (this content could be some of the first stuff to find a new home on this new cooperative site). You can find one of the blogs here: https://www.historyjam.ca/new-blog/2017/6/15/three-stories-eight-sides.

Costs would be pretty minor. Depending on the number of organizations to come on board, I'm guessing that if each organization could invest $100-$200 per year in the project we'd be in really good shape.

I would love to hear your feedback on the idea and whether you think it's viable. I truly think this is a "many hands make light work" kind of project and one that can significantly raise the profile of all our organizations.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Shawn