

The voice of the BC Museums Association

# Roundup

Issue 266 // Fall 2016

## Rethinking our Footprint

Climate Change and Social Responsibility

## Roll On Columbia Project

Defiance and Cultural Voice

## Looking Inward

Considering Repatriation

## Breaking with Neutrality

An Interview with Robert Janes



BC MUSEUMS  
ASSOCIATION



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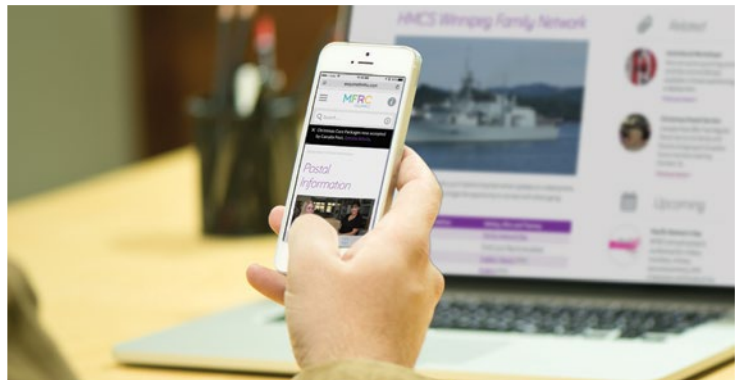
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The voice of the BC Museums Association

# Roundup

Issue 266 // Fall 2016

**Cover photo:** Using sustainably sourced cedar from nature walk as part of inFlux programming, Surrey Art Gallery.  
Photo Credit: Glen Chua

## Rethinking our Footprint

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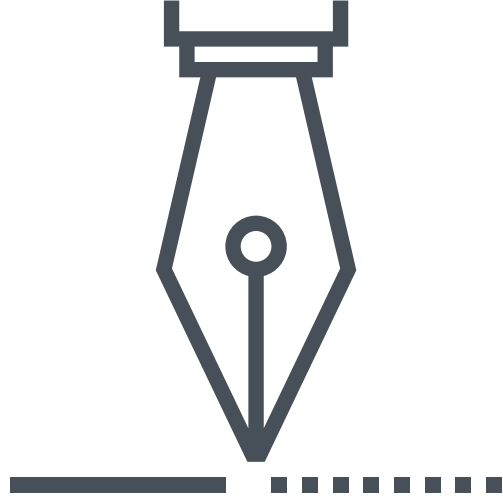
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# NOTES FROM THE EDITOR



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## Jane Lemke

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Museums and cultural spaces have an obligation to tell all types of stories and narratives. Unless our institution's mandate is specifically environmentally-focused, we are rarely able to devote substantial time or resources to the stories and narratives of climate change and social responsibility. But that shouldn't be true. BC has such wonderful natural history and heritage but issues of funding and popularity often dictate the vision and mandates of our institutions.

This issue of Roundup sheds light on some projects throughout BC that are consciously devoting themselves to environmental and socially responsible projects. As independent and free-thinking institutions, we should always aim to be truthful, not neutral. Let's always strive to have an opinion about our environmental and social responsibilities to our world.

Jane Lemke,  
Managing Editor, Roundup  
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**This issue of Roundup sheds light on some projects throughout BC that are consciously devoting themselves to environmental and socially responsible projects.**

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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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## David Alexander

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The big news first – after a thorough recruitment process the BC Museums Association Council is very excited to announce we have found a new Executive Director in Erica Mattson. Erica brings a wealth of experience from the cultural sector including grant writing, government relations, communications, event planning and project management. She has held roles with the City of Vancouver, Calgary Art Development, Victoria Symphony, the City of Calgary and, most recently, the Province of BC and has a Master's of Arts degree in communication from Royal Roads University. While not from a museum, the Council was impressed with the transferable skills Erica brings to the role and her passion for the cultural sector. Erica will be stepping into the Executive Director role September 15, just in time for conference. A big thank you to Heather Jeliaskov who helped out the organization enormously as interim Executive Director, she kept everything running smoothly.

You will all get a chance to meet Erica at the October conference - which is coming up soon. If you haven't already, please do take a peek at the schedule, the Conference Committee has developed an excellent program with three keynote presentations and workshops that support and inform the work that we do every day. I am particularly looking forward to the session on repatriation called Museums & Canada's First Nations: A Moral & Legal Obligation - The Colonial Legacy. It's a conversation well worth having and we are honoured that BC Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief Shane Gottfriedson will be part of the panel.

The Council had an opportunity to tour the hotels and venues earlier this year including the new Audain Art Museum, the Whistler Museum and the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre and we're looking forward to welcoming you. The conference sold out last year, so make sure you register soon.

Thanks to all those museums who responded to our call for participants for the Federal Government's National Study of Small Museums. We had an immense response, which is indicative of the challenges small museums face. The following museums will be representing British Columbia in the study: Haida Gwaii Museum, Vancouver Maritime Museum, Nikkei National Museum, Kimberley Heritage Museum, Parksville Museum and Cumberland Museum and Archives.

See you all at conference in October!

*David Alexander*  
*President, BCMA*  
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# WORDS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## Erica Mattson

I am thrilled to join the BC Museums Association as the organization's new Executive Director, and I can't wait to meet you all. As I write this, I am mere days into my new role, so I'll admit (just for now) that my head is spinning with information overload and a very full "to do" list. That being said, I couldn't be more excited to be here. It's a bit cliché to say, but I am truly leaping out of the bed in the morning, eager to dig into the many exciting projects and initiatives that I am already immersed in.

It is certainly one of the busiest times of year for the organization with the annual BCMA conference in Whistler just around the corner. The conference theme - Begin. Build. Re-invent: all in a day's work - seems especially relevant as I consider what I hope to accomplish in my new role with the BCMA. For me, the conference will be an amazing opportunity to dive into the wonderful world of museums through

workshops, keynote presentations and discussions. Even more importantly, it will be a chance to connect face-to-face with our members, stakeholders and BCMA Council and Committee members - I am counting down the days!

Although I have only been in this role for a short time, I can see already that there is tremendous enthusiasm for collaboration both within the museums, heritage and cultural sector, as well as from other sectors like tourism, library, archives and education. This comes as no surprise. Museums, galleries and heritage organizations are an amazing resource for our communities, and they are increasingly recognized for the vital role they play in preserving and promoting history and culture, creating social and economic impacts and building strong and healthy communities.

I've witnessed the transformative power of the cultural sector again and again through my work with

other organizations, and, of course, through my own experiences as a museum and gallery visitor, audience member and heritage enthusiast. Connecting people with culture and helping the cultural sector grow has been a passion of mine throughout my career and it will be an honour and a pleasure to work with the BCMA and with each of you to do just that.

Don't hesitate to introduce yourself at conference, and please pick up the phone or email me any time. I am eager to learn as much as I can about your organizations and institutions, to work together and to hear your ideas about how the BCMA can best support and strengthen and support the museums sector in B.C.

*Erica Mattson  
Executive Director  
BC Museums Association*

# Success *by* Association

## Owl Cards

Whether an institution or governing organization, a mid-career professional, volunteer, or student on the brink of a career, membership in your professional association comes with lots of benefits including professional and career development, networking, and OWL Card privileges.

Issued to all Individual and Institutional members, the OWL Card provides free admission to museums, galleries and heritage sites across B.C.

Membership in the BCMA is open to organizations and individuals, with benefits designed specifically for each membership category. Visit our [website](#) for an outline of benefits by category.

Visit some of the outstanding museums, galleries and historic sites in BC! Present your OWL card, with picture ID, to the following institutions for complimentary admission during regular operating hours.

If you are a student or volunteer member and would like to change your membership category to access OWL card benefits, email [members@museumsassn.bc.ca](mailto:members@museumsassn.bc.ca).

## Whoo accepts OWL Card?

- Art Gallery of Greater Victoria
- BC Farm Museum
- Beaty Biodiversity Museum
- Britannia Mine Museum
- Craigdarroch Castle
- Creston & District Museum and Archives
- Cumberland Museum and Archives
- Doukhobor Discovery Centre
- Fort St. John - North Peace Museum
- Fraser River Discovery Centre
- Golden & District Historical Society
- Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site
- Haida Gwaii Museum
- Hli Goolth Wilp-Adokhl Nisga'a - Nisga'a Museum
- Kamloops Art Gallery
- Kilby Historic Site
- Kimberley District Heritage Society
- Maple Ridge Museum & Archives
- Museum of Vancouver
- Nanaimo Museum
- North Pacific Cannery National Historic Site
- Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre
- Osoyoos Museum
- Penticton Art Gallery
- Quesnel & District Museum and Archives
- Sidney Museum
- SS Sicamous Marine Heritage Society
- The Exploration Place
- Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art & History
- UBC Museum of Anthropology
- Vancouver Maritime Museum Society
- Vancouver Police Museum
- White Rock Museum & Archives
- Yale Historic Site

## Welcome to new members:

Ann Carlsen	Lucidea
Alexander Weaver	Mennonite Heritage
Canadian Museum of	Museum
Flight	Robert Simons
City of Maple Ridge	Sandra Martins
Heather Parsons, Heri-	Simone Marler
tageGroup Distribution	
Hope Kelly	

# 2016 CONFERENCE

## Begin. Build. Re-invent: all in a day's work!

### BCMA Conference, October 12-14 in Whistler

BC's only provincial conference for museum, gallery and heritage professionals, BCMA Conference 2016 takes place in the beautiful village of Whistler! Delegates will enjoy the cultural side of Whistler and a full programme of workshops and presentations.

#### Keynotes

**Dr. Anthony Shelton**, Director of the Museum of Anthropology at UBC, launches BCMA Conference 2016 with a breakfast keynote address that explores increased collaboration of large and small institutions, the sharing of resources and new ways of working together.

**Dr. Jack Lohman**, CEO of the Royal BC Museum, will speak on "Embracing the Family" during a Luncheon keynote presentation on October 13.

International museum consultant and advisor, **Elaine Heumann Gurian**, will be the closing keynote speaker at noon on October 14, with a presentation on "Intentional Civility". Ms. Gurian has served as the Deputy Director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, as Deputy Director for Public Program Planning for the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution and as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Museums at the Smithsonian, providing oversight for all 14 Smithsonian museums. She is the author of *Civilizing the Museum, and Institutional Trauma: Major Change in Museums and Its Effect on Staff*. Ms. Gurian's presentation is generously sponsored by the Royal BC Museum.

**Below:** Whistler Village.  
Photo Credit: Getty Images.





## Program

Plenary sessions and workshops cover a wide variety of topics such as Going Grey, Museums, Libraries and Archives cross-sector partnerships, Exhibitions 101, and BC Arts Council Grant Applications and also streams devoted to the Digital Museum and First Nations. Visit our [website](#) for the complete program.

## Featured Events:

> **Peaks of Success Awards Gala** – celebrate the nominees and winners of the BCMA Awards for Outstanding Achievement.

> **BCMA Annual General Meeting** – catch up with Council and learn how your Association has fared over the past year, and what is planned for the future.

## Returning:

> **Ask the Expert** - round-table discussions with experts on various topics such as Photography and De-accessioning

> **Owl's Bookstore** will be open throughout the conference. Delegates are asked to bring to Conference 5 non-fiction books (hardcover or soft) of interest to our museum and gallery community. Then visit Owl's Bookstore to purchase books for a nominal fee -- \$5 per hardcover and \$2 per softcover -- with all proceeds to BCMA. **Note:** *If your institution has extra books gathering dust in storage, this is a great opportunity to get them into appreciative hands!*

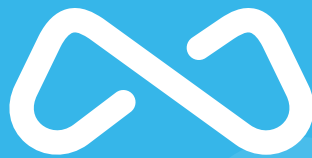
## New this year:

> **Speed Science** - a rapid-fire review of research underway across the province. Each researcher has five minutes to show 'n tell.

BCMA's Annual Conference provides a great opportunity to connect and reconnect with fellow members, but the event is also open to non-members. Please encourage friends and colleagues who are not yet members of the BCMA to consider joining us in Whistler.

For more information and to register visit our website: [www.museumsassn.bc.ca](http://www.museumsassn.bc.ca)

> **Host hotel:** Whistler Hilton Resort and Spa. Special room rate available!



**BC MUSEUMS  
ASSOCIATION**

October 14, 2016 - 7:30 a.m.

Mt Currie Ballroom - Whistler Hilton Resort

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

# What's **NEW?**

## Order of BC

Congratulations to Pauline Rafferty, who was one of sixteen exceptional civic leaders who were appointed to the Order of British Columbia, the Province's highest form of recognition by Lieutenant-Governor Judith Guichon, Chancellor of the Order in June 2016. Rafferty is the former CEO of the Royal BC Museum and a leading Canadian executive in the cultural sector.

## Caring Canadian Awards

Tumbler Ridge doctor Charles Helm was one of 150 Canadians awarded the Caring Canadian Award for their excellence and exceptional dedication to service. Helm's continuing efforts led to the establishment of the Tumbler Ridge Museum Foundation's Peace Region Paleontology Research Center and its associated Dinosaur Discovery Gallery, the first and only such vertebrate palaeontology facility in the province.

## Creative City Summit

The 2016 Creative City Summit, *The Future Lives Here: Bridging Cultures and Building Communities*, will be held at the Sheraton Vancouver Guildford Hotel in Surrey, BC from October 17th - 19th, 2016.

Join us for this year's Summit that will highlight the different stages of cultural development in communities across Canada. Learn from inspirational speakers and nurture new ideas while networking with your peers. [www.creativecity.ca](http://www.creativecity.ca)

## Name Changes

**Williams Lake Museum** is now the **Museum of Cariboo Chilcotin**.

**Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre** is now the **Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea**.

## Bill Barkley (1941-2016)

On July 12, 2016, Bill Barkley, who led the Royal BC Museum as its Chief Executive Officer from 1984 to 2001, passed away. Barkley left an important and enduring legacy at the museum and archives.

Born in New Westminster, Barkley attended UBC, graduating with a BSc in Honours Zoology in 1964. He received a secondary teaching certificate from the UVic in 1965 and then taught high school in Salmon Arm until 1968. In 1968, Barkley moved to Midland, Ontario to create and run the first Canadian Wildlife Service outdoor education centre.

He returned to BC in 1977 as Assistant Director of the BC Provincial Museum. He then held the post of CEO of the Royal BC Museum from 1984 to 2001. He oversaw the Royal BC Museum as it expanded into new fields of public programming; hosted and developed international travelling exhibitions; and made significant changes in its relationships with governments and the community at large. Barkley's leadership established a model for Royal BC Museum staff and their role province-wide.

Barkley also played a significant role supporting and developing the museum community throughout the province and the country.

# BCMA Awards for Outstanding Achievement

Congratulations to our seven worthy nominees! All of our nominees will be celebrated during the BCMA Annual Conference, with winners announced at the “Peaks of Success” Awards Gala on October 13, 2016.

## Chinese Canadian Artifacts Project

*16 museums across BC collaborated to make their Chinese Canadian holdings publicly accessible in an online database.*

## Beaty Biodiversity Museum

*100 Years, 100 Treasures – a celebration of the Museum’s collection, history, and community.*

## Sikh Heritage Museum National Historic Site

*Four years of innovative programming and exhibits recognizing and raising awareness of Sikh heritage and history in British Columbia and Canada at the Gur Sikh Temple*

## Dr. Andrea Walsh

*Residential and Indian Day School Art research Project. Compilation and sharing the personal stories behind student-produced art at Residential and Indian Day Schools.*

## Royal British Columbia Museum

*Righting Historical Wrongs - Chinese Canadian learning portal and outreach kits.*

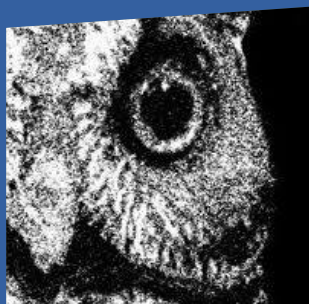
## George Harris, Two Rivers Gallery

*Consistent and long-standing effort to develop the careers of northern-BC artists and to bring internationally-renowned artists to northern BC.*

## Tim Willis, Independent Museums Consultant

*Dedicated effort, through a number of roles, to bring museums into their communities.*





# Whoo's News

The Exploration Place Museum + Science Centre is pleased to announce that **Lisa Connor** is now the Operations and Online Marketing Manager.



Connor is a University of Northern British Columbia graduate, with her Bachelor of Science in Natural Resource Management, Resource Recreation and Tourism Minor in Environmental Studies and is working towards a Certificate from BCIT in Social Media & Digital Marketing. Connor has been with the Museum for 12 years, winning an award from the Canadian Association of Science Centres for her work on our Childcare Program.

**Leah Best** is the new Head of Knowledge at the Royal BC Museum. Best has over 15 years professional experience working in museums and galleries and most recently as the Executive Director of Touchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History in Nelson for the past 10 years.



The Surrey Art Gallery is pleased to welcome **Alison Rajah** as the new Curator of Education and Engagement, following the retirement of Ingrid Kolt. Rajah brings a wide range of experience, including work with UBC's Faculty of Arts Humanities 101 Community Programme, engagement initiatives with Surrey's diverse youth and young adults, and curating interactive digital art exhibitions for the Gallery's Urban-Screen offsite venue.



**Mairin Kerr** is the new Communications Specialist at the Royal BC Museum. Kerr previously held the position of Marketing Communications & Events Coordinator at Beaty Biodiversity Museum. Kerr has a Masters of Museum Studies from the University of Toronto.



**Liz Crocker** has accepted the position of Learning Program Developer at the Royal BC Museum. Crocker has a BA in Archaeology and English from Simon Fraser University and a post-degree diploma in Cultural Resource Management from the University of Victoria. Crocker has worked on several digital learning projects for the Virtual Museum of Canada and the Royal BC Museum's Learning Portal.



Royal BC Museum has announced that **Emma Wright** is the new Archives Manager. Wright has an MSc in Archives Administration from the University of Wales and has worked as an archivist and records manager in the UK, Australia and Canada including the BBC, Transport for London and the British Columbia Teachers Federation. Most recently she was Manager, Records and Information Management at the First Nations Health Authority.



**Veronica Briet** recently joined the Royal BC Museum as Executive Administrative Assistant.

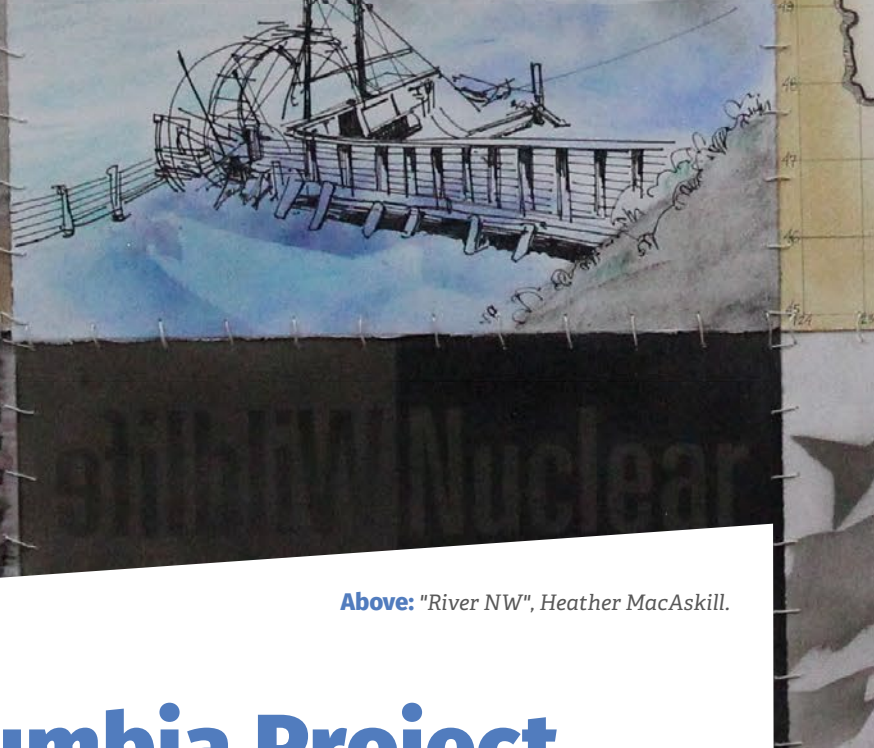


**Dr. Henry Choong** is the Royal BC Museum's new Invertebrates Curator. Choong was previously the Curator of Natural Sciences at the Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium and a Research Associate in Invertebrate Zoology and Invertebrate Palaeontology at the Royal Ontario Museum.



**Alyssa Tobin** has taken on the role of Curator for The Exploration Place Museum + Science Centre, replacing **Bob Campbell** as he retires. Tobin attended Simon Fraser University, securing a Bachelor of Arts with distinction; Archaeology, and a Certificate in Cultural Resource Management. She has been with the Museum for 3 years, has been working in the field for Archer Archaeology throughout and is looking forward to getting to know her colleagues around the Province.





**Above:** "River NW", Heather MacAskill.

# The Roll On Columbia Project

## Defiance and Cultural Voice

**Leah Best**

The *Roll On Columbia* project was first presented in Spokane, Washington, at the *Columbia River Basin 2014 Conference: Learning From Our Past to Shape Our Future*. Attended by 320 delegates from both sides of the Canada/US border, the conference offered a timely platform for First Nations, politicians, academics, business interests and students to discuss the future of the Columbia River within the context of a potential new treaty to be negotiated between Canada and the United States. With funding provided by the Columbia Basin Trust, Touchstones Nelson (Nelson and District Museum, Archives, Art Gallery and Historical Society) worked with two contract curators, six artists and one performance group to develop *Roll On Columbia* (ROC) in the six month lead-up to the conference. The histo-

ry exhibit of ROC continues to travel throughout the Canadian Columbia Basin with past stops in Nakusp, Cranbrook and Nelson, and future stops anticipated in Fernie and Revelstoke.

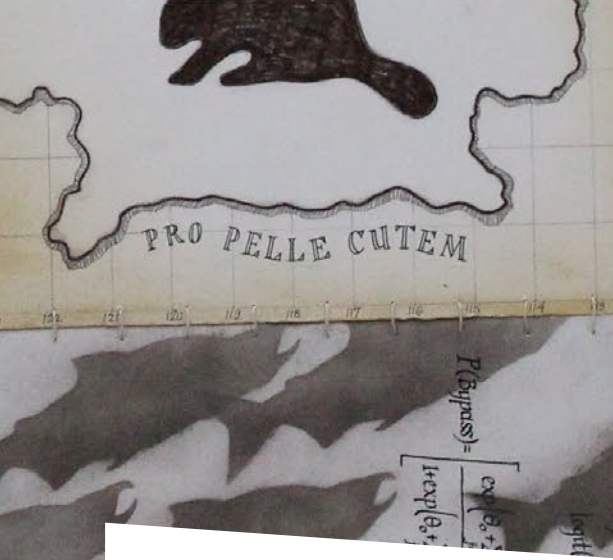
*Roll On Columbia*, at its first presentation in Spokane, explored the legacy of the current Columbia River Treaty through the lens of two exhibitions: a visual arts exhibit and a history exhibit made up of eight graphic panels that tell the story of the Columbia River Treaty (CRT), its development and ratification in 1964, and its legacy. The project goal was to inform present day understanding of the trans-boundary Columbia River watershed ecosystem through the lens of art and history. The holistic focus on the river basin as a watershed united by culture, rather than as an industrial resource divided by an international bound-

ary, provided unique opportunities to allow art and history to dialogue with science and politics.

**At its core, *Roll on Columbia* asked of its audience, "Do the public values that originally formed the Columbia River Treaty remain the same? And, how can art and history reflect changing views of the environment and its well being?"**

*Roll On Columbia* is named after the Woody Guthrie folk song of the same name, dating from the era of the Great Depression when mega projects such as dams were celebrated and embraced. In developing the





**Above:** "River NW", Heather MacAskill.

**Right:** Opening of Roll On Columbia at Touchstones Nelson, November 2015.



central thesis of the history exhibit, Eileen Delehanty Pearkes, ROC curator, describes her involvement as a remarkable opportunity, "to present a story that has nearly departed from living memory. With the upcoming potential re-negotiation of the 1964 Treaty, Touchstones Nelson played an essential role in giving voice to the local experience and preserving the lessons learned from the controversy over the Treaty for the next generation. I had been working on a book on the local experience of the Columbia River Treaty for several years. The challenge of condensing and presenting the story into a lively and digestible format for a museum exhibit taught me something about the sprawling manuscript's weaknesses. Once the exhibit was completed, I returned to the draft with a fresh eye and revised it to be more readable, which led to its acceptance and upcoming publication by Rocky Mountain Books in November, 2016."

The "local experience" Delehanty Pearkes refers to is a direct reference to the displacement of hundreds of families and the loss of sacred Indigenous sites and agricultural land in the Canadian Columbia River Basin (a roughly triangular-shaped region encompassing the East and West Kootenays) as a result of the building of four treaty dams – three in Canada: *Duncan* (1967), *Hugh Keenley Side* (1968), and *Mica* (1973), and one in Montana, *Libby* (1973). In addition to a total lack of public consultation, First Nations living in the Basin were denied a voice during the Treaty negotiations. This is a particularly poignant issue because the building of the dams on the Columbia River in Washington State during the 1930s destroyed the ocean salmon runs that were the beating heart of Indigenous culture along the Columbia River and its tributaries.

**"So often in today's world, corporate and institutional economies dwarf or silence the indigenous or settler landscapes that are affected by industrial resource extraction, including our water. Roll on Columbia explored honestly the impact of such resource-use on rural populations, a story often neglected. It's not possible to know the present and to explore future possibilities without understanding well the terrain of the past." Curator Eileen Delehanty Pearkes**

Panel sections of the travelling exhibit provide insight into the scope of the exhibit and its tone as well as pointing to the complexity of the subject matter:

- *Preparing the Ground*: key historic events that preceded the CRT;
- *A Hydro-Engineer's Dream Landscape*: the geography of the upper Columbia Basin and its role in the watershed's ecosystem;
- *Give and Take*: key events and outcomes in treaty negotiations;
- *Silence and Exclusion*: missing voices during CRT formation;
- *A Puzzling Legacy*: measuring gains and losses; and
- *Piecing the River Back Together*: the role of reconsideration and restoration in river management.

To give full voice to a cultural perspective on the CRT, the original presentation included the work of six visual artists and one performance group. Deborah Thompson, an independent curator, educator and artist living in Nelson, was attached to the project from the beginning. In her words, she felt that *"the inclusion of a visual art voice in the mix among what was a largely analytical and statistical dialogue on the current state and future of the Columbia River [at the conference] added a sensory aspect to the discussion. In my mind, it brought the river in (which was ironically just outside the doors of the conference centre yet otherwise invisible during the run of the conference). The guiding theme for me as a curator in selecting the artists and their work was thinking with our senses - lest we forget we are not speaking of the deceased rather honoring a massive and dynamic living ecosystem - that of the Columbia River watershed."*

The artists involved in the project included three from Washington State and three from Canada.

- Toma Villa (Portland): born in Oklahoma, but was raised in Portland and is a registered member of Yakama Nation.
- Betty Fahlman (Lardeau): a visual artist focusing primarily on painting. Her series *Imprisonment of Removal* stems from her grief at the loss of landscape from the disruptive actions of hydro projects

on the Columbia River.

- Jan Kabatoff (Slocan): a visual artist whose work spans several mediums, including encaustic painting, fibre work, and photography. Since 2005, she has focused primarily on the effects of climate change and its relationship to glaciers.
- Mary Babcock (Hawaii): an installation, fiber, and mixed media artist. She is deeply interested in the intersection of art, contemplation, and social activism.
- Heather MacAskill (Nelson): a "visual translator" with a background in visual art, graphic design, and surveying. She draws her inspiration from a variety of subject matter, often with her love and concern for the ecosystem at the centre.
- Vaughn Bell (Seattle): an installation and environmental artist whose work reflects her sense of stewardship and concern for the environment.

And finally, as part of the conference program, the Nelson singing trio, *Ananta*, composed of Alison Girvan, Noemi Kiss, and Kathleen Neudorf, sang a blend of world music for delegates.

In April 2015, at the Canadian Museums Association conference in Banff, Eileen, Deborah, and I, as project manager, accepted the award for Outstanding Achievement in Exhibitions for organizations with operating budgets under \$1M, for *Roll On Columbia*. The CMA called the project brave. I would agree – brave and defiant. We were a small team from a rural museum and art gallery with a severe lack of resources and a laughable amount of time to complete the project. But our capacity, with respect to the talented curatorial team, artists, and project designer was without dispute. We were convinced that it was the museum's *social responsibility* to give voice to those who were excluded then and who were in danger of being excluded again from treaty discussions.

In his book, *Museums without Borders*, [Robert Janes](#) describes this conviction as intellectual activism – the essential role that museums can play in making complex contemporary issues more understandable; in fostering critical thinking by audiences; and in embracing



marginalized voices. There is no doubt that activism (as described above) in museum work is challenging but there is also no doubt, at least in my mind, that it is also the most meaningful kind of work and the most needed in contemporary society.

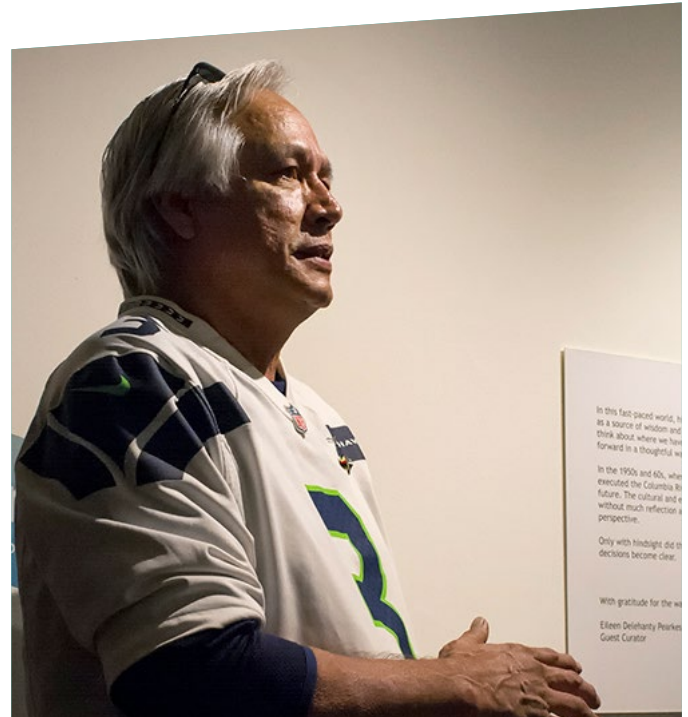
*Credits: Many thanks Eileen Delehanty Pearkes and Deborah Thompson for their inspired work; the participating artists; Nichola Lytle of Pink Dog Design for her outstanding graphic design; David Jensen and Associates for exhibit fabrication; and to the Columbia Basin Trust for providing 100% of the funding for Roll On Columbia.*

**Leah Best has over 15 years professional experience working in museums and galleries. She is currently Head of Knowledge at the Royal BC Museum having worked as Executive Director of Touchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History in Nelson, BC until August 2016.**

**Below:** Eileen Delehanty Pearkes (History Exhibit Curator) and Nichola Lytle (Exhibit Graphic Designer) in front of the opening panel for ROC at its presentation at Touchstones Nelson in November 15 on the occasion of the launch of their book, *Heart of the River*.

**Below right:** Guests sitting under Vaughn Bell's, *Thinking Caps*, Trans-boundary River Conference, October 2014.

**Below:** Virgil Seymour (Arrow Lakes Facilitator for the Colville Confederated Tribes) speaking at the opening of the Roll on Columbia exhibit at Touchstone Nelson in November 2015. Sadly, Virgil has since passed away.







# Maintaining a Conservation Ethic

## The Story of Haig-Brown House

**Erika Anderson**

In a quiet corner of Campbell River, where the gentle murmur of the river provides a constant soundtrack, an unassuming farmhouse on the bank of the river is preparing to wind down from its busy summer season and welcome a more subdued winter schedule.

The Haig-Brown House was built in 1923, and purchased in 1936 by Roderick and Ann Haig-Brown. Roderick Haig-Brown, who was recently designated a Person of National Historic Significance, was an author, a magistrate and a forward-thinking early pioneer of environmental conservation in Canada. His wife, Ann Elmore, was also an important member of the community as a librarian, intellectual, local activist and caregiver for women and children in crisis. They named their home Above Tide and used their 19

acre property to raise their four children, grow food, support livestock, and maintain a formal garden with an English-style lawn.

Roderick began showing an interest in conservation at an early age, but the environmental battles for which he is known took place after the war. In the early 1950s the British Columbia Power Commission proposed a dam that would flood Buttle Lake, located in Strathcona Park. Roderick presented arguments at hearings about the negative impacts of the dam, wrote articles about it for a Victoria newspaper, made radio appearances, and engaged many people in the fight, called the “Battle for Buttle”. He won a partial victory: a lower dam was built and less of the park was flooded. He also spoke out about the damaging impacts of DDT, condemned logging companies that were damaging streams, and fought against the Moran dam proposed for

the Fraser River. His strong, clear voice for preserving the natural environment had an influence that extended far beyond the boundaries of Campbell River.

“I have been, all my life, what is known as a conservationist. I am not at all sure that this has done myself or anyone else any good, but I am quite sure that no intelligent man, least of all a countryman, has any alternative. It seems clear beyond possibility of argument that any given generation of men can have only a lease, not ownership, of the earth; and one essential term of the lease is that the earth be handed on to the next generation with unimpaired potentialities. This is the conservationist’s concern.” - Roderick Haig-Brown, Measure of the Year (1950)

In 1975, the Haig-Browns sold Above Tide, including the majority of its contents, to the Province of BC as

**Above:** Haig-Brown House and formal lawn. HKY7621.  
Photo credit: Lee Simmons

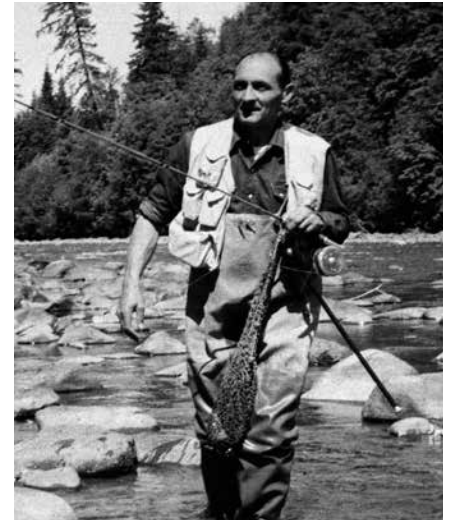


part of an initiative to preserve greenspace. Although the agreement did not include specifics about how the property would be used, the Haig-Browns did indicate they wanted the site to be used by deserving conservationists and writers and not to become a “hands off” heritage site.

In 1982, in recognition of the heritage importance of the site, 1.9 acres including the house and formal garden was transferred to the Heritage Branch. The remainder of the property stayed under the greenspace protection of the Province of BC. After the death of both Roderick in 1976 and Ann in 1990, one of the first steps undertaken by the Heritage Branch was public consultation that reconfirmed the desire to have the site utilized. Jenifer Iredale, who was at the time the Curator for the Coastal Okanagan Region of the Heritage Properties Branch, assisted by staff and volunteers of the Campbell River and District Museum, undertook an inventory of all

of the contents of the house and developed a strategy for managing the artifacts.

In 1994, the Heritage Branch called for proposals to operate the house. Kevin Brown was the successful proponent and was issued a Park Use Permit, a standard permit used by BC Parks and other Heritage Properties such as Barkerville and Fort Steele. Brown established a Bed & Breakfast and the Haig-Brown Education Centre. Over the coming years, he lived in the house and completed extensive restoration work while the Education Centre offered a catalogue of public programs including writing courses, fly-fishing lessons and seminars on a wide range of topics. This created a balance between maintaining the physical building as a historic site, and honoring the site’s social legacy. A summer kids camp, where kids have the chance to learn about salmon habitat, ecosystems and environmental stewardship, was established.



With the province’s announcement that it would devolve management of all of its heritage sites in 2002, the City of Campbell River gladly took over the site and continues to this day to provide operational funding support for its operations.

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**Building on the site management practices of the Heritage Branch, and the work of Kevin Brown, today the site involves several partners, including Greenways Land Trust, the City of Campbell River, the Haig-Brown Institute and the Museum at Campbell River.**

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The Museum at Campbell River has been faced with maintaining the house’s collection, balancing the wishes of the Haig-Brown family

**Top left:** Roderick Haig-Brown in his study at Above Tide, 1950s. Godfrey Baldwin photographer, MCR 3426.

**Top right:** Roderick Haig-Brown, 1970s. Photograph taken by long-time family friend Van Egan, MCR18056, Van Egan Fonds.



with meeting its goals for public engagement. There is the risk of the legacy of the house and property being forgotten, so the Museum's challenge has been to develop programming that will appeal to diverse audiences and that emphasizes the messages of the past that are so relevant today. Although radical at the time, Roderick's environmental views are contemporary, and many of his books are still in print. His philosophies have created a small, yet very dedicated, following. The Haig-Brown House is not a high profile historic site, however one of its strengths seems to be the quality of the experience it offers, deeply impacting those who take the time to understand it.

Sandra Parrish, the Executive Director of the Museum at Campbell River reflects on past and future initiatives. "I think that one of the biggest assets of the Haig-Brown site is the strong community support. There are still many residents who personally knew the Haig-Browns and are intimately connected with the site. Our challenge for the future is to make sure that we continue to develop connections so that the site remains relevant."

The Haig-Brown Kingfisher Creek Society was formed in 1980 with the goals of restoring Kingfisher Creek that runs through the property, providing environmental education and preservation of the Haig-Brown residence. At various points in the creek's history, it had

been logged, moved, and culverted. The Haig-Brown Kingfisher Creek Society evolved eventually into the Haig-Brown Institute with the goal of promoting watershed conservation and the links between ecology and economy through literature and conservation. Campbell River's Greenways Land Trust, who is currently the steward of the greenspace portion of the property, undertook in 2015 another major project to repair damaged portions of the stream.

One of the most successful programs at the house is the Writer-in-Residence program, which began in 2004. Each year, a deserving writer is invited to come live in the house from November to April. The program is supported with funds from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Haig-Brown Institute and the Museum at Campbell River. The writer's time is split between personal writing projects and public programming. Programming is developed specific to each author's interests and strengths, and often includes lectures, school visits, and one-on-one mentoring for emerging authors. Most of the writers that have been at the house have been focused on nature or environmental topics. For some writers, the res-

idency was their first introduction to Roderick Haig-Brown, however, all of the writers have left the residency feeling forever connected to the man, his family and their home.

A fall festival is held annually on World Rivers Day at the site. One highlight of the festival is the presentation of the City of Campbell River's Stewardship Awards.

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**"How fitting that we celebrate the spirit of this conservation ethic through the annual recognition of stewards who walk in these same footsteps to care for our common resources such as clean air, water, fish and wildlife, and the habitat on which we all depend", explains Terri Martin, the Environmental Specialist for the City of Campbell River.**

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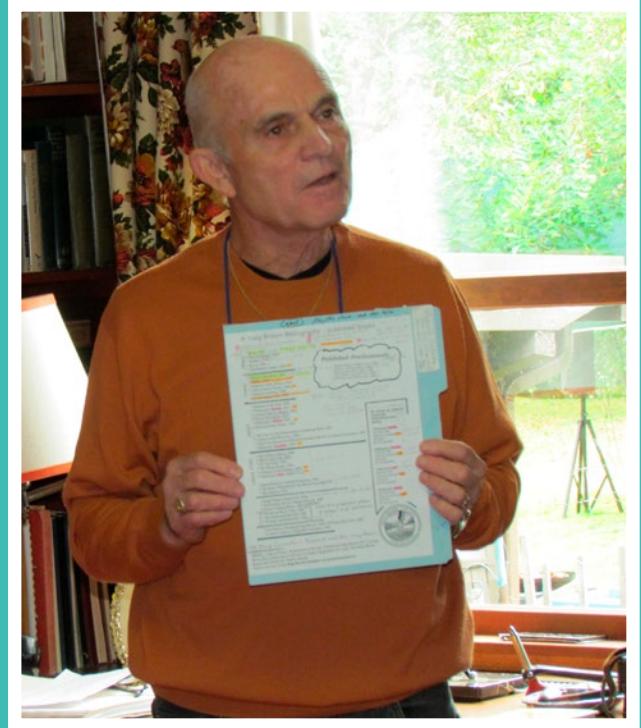


Each fall, the Museum at Campbell River, the Campbell River Arts Council and the Haig-Brown Institute host the Annual Haig-Brown Memorial Lecture. Many of the lectures have focused on the enduring environmental ethic of Roderick and Ann, addressing contemporary issues in environmental conservation. The 2015 lecture by Bev Sellars entitled “Aboriginals, Conservation, Fish and our Common Survival” was delivered to a packed house and sparked dialogue amongst the attendees that continued well beyond the event. Sellars also spoke at local schools in a partnership with School District 72. Other lectures have included Van Egan’s “For the Love of the River”, Harold Rhenisch’s “Land for the People”, and a joint lecture by all four Haig-Brown children entitled “What We Learned”.

Valerie Haig-Brown, one of Roderick and Ann’s daughters expressed her satisfaction with the management of the property, “The family are very pleased at the way the house and garden are cared for and with the way the place continues to evoke the spirit of our parents for us and for our children and grandchildren”.

Recently, Jenifer Iredale, retired Senior Curator with the Heritage Branch, applauded these successes. “The Museum at Campbell River has and is doing good work to not only preserve and present the house and collection but to continue and expand the impact of the Haig-Browns’ conservation ethic and community spirit. This was one of my dreams when we first established the historic house museum.”

**Erika Anderson is the Promotions and Membership Coordinator at the Museum at Campbell River. Her background in literature and in fisheries management has contributed to her keen interest in the lives and legacy of Roderick and Anne Haig-Brown. She has been a Director with the Haig-Brown Institute since 2008.**



**Top:** David Brown of the Haig-Brown Institute reading in the study during the Haig-Brown Festival.  
Photo credit: Sandra Parrish

**Above:** Booths on conservation topics, such as this table from Fisheries and Oceans Canada, provide information to visitors to the Haig-Brown Festival.  
Photo credit: Sandra Parrish

# LOOKING INWARD:

## Considering Repatriation Inside a New Reality

**J. Simkin & R. Naknakim**

*The Oxford English Dictionary defines “repatriate” as “to restore (an artifact or other object) to its country or place of origin,” and recognizes repatriation as a process of restoration, of making whole again. Many artifacts and works of art have special cultural value for a particular community or nation. When these works are removed from their original cultural setting they lose their context and the culture loses a part of its history (Malcolm Bell III, 2010).*

Every commission, report and inquiry can be produced to promote support for cultural repatriation of First Nations artifacts. However, until mindsets change in our institutions to more accurately reflect the tone and tenor of the national conversation, we are tied to an antiquated idea of moral and legal obligation. This, in spite of fundamental shifts in our law and courts, the tremendous work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the overwhelming support of Canadians to address the impact of 150 years of colonization.

There is a clear and concise path to the principles of the legal and moral obligation, which lies in the commonly held assumptions of early Canada: that First Nations assimilation and acculturation policies would achieve their desired purpose. Canada would, through systematic race-based barriers, eradicate the country of its “Indian problem” by simply ridding Canada of its “Indians”. In this assumption with a landscape void of the First Nations, cultural material would be all that remained of the First Peoples. Our knowledge of intangible cultural heritage and the spiritual essence and history of every object would stem from institutions charged with ensuring First Nations presence was woven into the tapestry of our national narrative.

We now find ourselves at an interesting crossroads. First Nations did not disappear. Voices have strengthened through successive First Nations generations and, as their histories and experiences are shared among Canadians, the support to address the injustices also grows. Even Canada’s highest court now recognizes that Aboriginal law is part of Canada’s law when dealing with Aboriginal rights. By contrast, the museum community has lagged behind, failing to recognize

**Left:** Naknakim Dant’si’kw Power Board.  
Photo credit: Leia Patterson





a distinctive change of circumstances in which First Nations control of First Nations heritage and identity are at the forefront.

The often stagnant presentation in mainstream institutions of Indigenous artifacts is frozen in time and reveals little about the common practices occurring through revitalization and rejuvenation efforts at the community level.

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**To accurately and authentically reflect history, interpretation must reveal the dynamic nature of First Nations who have adapted through the fur trade, settlement and colonial eras, and who continue to adapt to their changing realities.**

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Canada, as it embraces a path of reconciliation with its 634 First Nations, acknowledges this shift and in doing so influences the need for the moral and legal obligation ideology to be re-evaluated. Institutions holding First Nations material culture are doing so on behalf of Canadian citizens whose voices echoed within the Idle No More Movement and whose support for the Calls to Action articulated by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission have seen ubiquitous advances in education across the country.

## The Economics of Appropriation

Relinquishing control and repatriating Indigenous artifacts comes at a cost for institutions that have gained financially through elaborate exhibits and the selling of Indigenous imagery. Visit any museum gift shop and you will find glossy table books littered with First Nations images, rows of mugs and giftware, and shelves lined with miniature totem poles. And why? Because First Nations are big business. Yet few institutions acknowledge the connection between First Nations displays and admission numbers or ticket sales. Nor do financial gains derived from unsanctioned replication of images, flow to the original owners or their descendants.

In the case of Potlatch pieces, such replication proves problematic as permission to copy cultural material is strictly controlled. Songs, dances, masks and crests are reflective of family lineage and ownership. By reproducing products without first obtaining proper consent, museums demonstrate a disconnect to and disregard for the peoples, their traditions, and to the cultural heritage they currently steward.

The inflexibility of the colonial lens has allowed for only one primary method of institutional accession, which ignores the fluid movement of ownership. In the case of potlatch pieces, ownership can be transferred through the dowry system

or through the transitioning of hereditary rights. This information is often lacking in institutional records causing tremendous confusion in repatriation conversations where the original owner or carver is the only person documented in the collection record.

Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre, which houses the Sacred Potlatch Collection, provides a contemporary example of the hereditary transfer in the Chief Billy Assu collection. Upon his death, the rights and title to his chieftainship, including crests, masks, songs, dances and totem poles, passed to his son, the late Chief Harry Assu. Upon Harry's death the hereditary transfer passed to his son the late Chief Donald Assu, who upon his passing transferred his rights and title to his son Chief Brian Assu. Such transfers occurred publically so that all could bear witness: the Chilkat blanket which draped Chief Donald Assu's casket was removed prior to burial and placed on the shoulders of his eldest son Brian, indicating to all that the hereditary rights had been transferred.

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**Ownership is not stagnant regardless of the physical location of material culture.**

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If, and when, additional pieces attributed to Chief Billy Assu are located and accessioned into the Nuyum-



balees collection, their lineage is documented. Ensuring the living history of the piece is captured is essential so when succession of the hereditary rights transfers again, there is a clear and articulate record. This demonstrates the evolving nature of ownership and the need to embrace the intangible cultural heritage which accompanies each artifact.

## The Language Barrier

We may speak the same language, but our understanding of words, concepts and intent is sometimes far apart. Ownership in the museum community, for example, is connected to the possession of physical objects. The Indigenous viewpoint by contrast is connected to an inherent right to ownership regardless of the object's physical location. Canadian law, which includes aspects of ownership, illuminates this point and demonstrates there is more than just a philosophical difference.

## A Tipping Point

Since its founding, Canada's relationship with the Indigenous Peoples has been arduous. Acknowledging this, the Constitution provided under section 91 (24) that Indians and lands set aside for Indians, fall under federal jurisdiction. The "Indian Act" became the governing legislation used by successive governments to push a mandate of assimilation and acculturation. Policies such as mandatory attendance at residential school and anti-Potlatching provisions were included

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**It is time for a renewed, nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples, based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership.**

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as were restrictions on mobility, the use of native language, and the organizing and raising of funds for political purpose. While the legislation remains, its relevancy is evaporating in British Columbia as independent First Nations negotiate their modern treaties.

In June 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada delivered a unanimous decision which unequivocally provides the country's Indigenous Peoples the ultimate recognition. Known as *Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia*, 2014 SCC44, it is the first time aboriginal title (which provides a legal interest in its lands and resources) has been awarded within our country. In its decision, the Court provided that the Tsilhqot'in satisfied requirements in law for Aboriginal title and that Aboriginal law along with the common law of Canada must be taken into consideration.

This monumental shift in formal recognition ushered in a new era of emerging opportunities and dialogue that has long eluded First Nations communities and limited their ability to heal, progress and participate in the Canadian economy as equals.



**Left:** Assu House Posts.  
Photo credit: Leia Patterson



**Above:** Assu and Xokwxokw.  
Photo credit: Leia Patterson

Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, in clarifying his viewpoint and that of his administration, mandated Federal government ministries with the following: *"It is time for a renewed, nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples, based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership."*

Given the change occurring in the legal landscape and the emerging trends in government policies, expectations for transformation are high. And, as individual treaties are ratified, issues of heritage and culture will dictate the relationship of First Nations to museums who will be obligated by law to up-hold their spirit and intent. This shift in control marks a significant disruption in the relationship and museums have a fleeting moment inside this transitional period to build collaborative partnerships or be left standing on the periphery.

As BC's First Nations call on governments to modify the treaty process to enable greater efficiency in the

settlement of new agreements, the moment for museums to get things right is now. The time is imminent when the legal and moral obligation will fade and museums will be faced with a new reality which they will no longer control.

First Peoples have a tremendous desire to see cultural treasures returned home: it is healing, respectful and necessary inside the process of reconciliation. There is a resurgence of cultural pride emanating from First Nations youth who are anxious to reconnect with a cultural heritage that was elusive in previous generations.

## In Conclusion...

Our cultural institutions should be reflecting our nation's values and embracing the changing tone of our national conversation. We owe more to First Nations than simply offering patchwork promises whose purpose is to suggest that real strategy, consideration and consultation has occurred. There is simply no possibility of moving the conversa-

tion ahead until we embrace a new way of thinking and navigate a new way forward. We are strong enough to withstand the scrutiny of looking inwards at our history, and ought to be brave enough to embrace what lies ahead even if that means an end to the moral and legal obligation upon which our museums are founded.

**Jodi Simkin is the Executive Director of Nuyumablees Cultural Centre located in the Village of Cape Mudge on Quada Island. Home to the Sacred Potlatch Collection, the Centre was the first of its kind in Canada designed specially to house a repatriated collection.**

**Rod Naknakim is a lawyer and the Chief Negotiator for the Lacihi-Kwil-Tach Treaty Society, as well as the President of Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre. Together they work to enhance the cross cultural and intercultural opportunities for the Kwakwaka'wakw peoples and the community at large.**



## Lunch With WL

Roundup Editor, Jane Lemke, recently sat down with Dr. Robert Janes to discuss his groundbreaking work encouraging museums around the world to reflect on how they handle environmental responsibility and climate change.

Janes is an independent scholar-practitioner and the Editor-in-Chief Emeritus of the journal *Museum Management and Curatorship*, a Visiting Research Fellow at the School of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester (UK), and a Fellow of the Canadian Museums Association. He is also the past Chair of the Board of Directors of the Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley - an NGO committed to the ecological integrity of the mountain region where he lives. He earned a Ph.D. in Archaeology from the University of Calgary and began his career as an archaeologist in Canada's remote Northwest Territories.

### ***In what ways are museums not living up to their potential?***

Museums have amazing potential as places that are grounded in their communities and are expressions of

locality; are bridges between science and the humanities; bear witness by assembling evidence and knowledge, in addition to being one of the freest and most creative work environments in the world. Museums are closely connected and representative of their communities and they have substantial potential to address climate change from a local perspective.

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**Museums are also deeply trusted, knowledge-based, social institutions. They are spaces for civil society where substantive issues can be aired, discussed and acted upon.**

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It is not that museums should be expected to fix climate change or any other issue. Rather, they can provide the knowledge, experience and civility that build the understanding and public dialogue which are essential to progressive civic action.

Right now, museums are missing out because they are preoccupied with issues of funding and donors. Many museums are also failing to question their own relevance. Museums must ask why they are doing what they do. This will naturally lead to a concern for the community's interests and aspirations. In short, what is the museum's role and place in the local community and in the global community?

### ***Why should museum workers part company with the time-honoured protection of institutional neutrality? What can be achieved?***

First, we cannot continue to protect our institutional neutrality because climate change is upon us. Each of us has a personal responsibility to confront the reality of climate change and protect the planet upon which we depend.

Second, we know as museum workers that education is a core mission of museums, but we must ask what sort of education is appropriate and necessary now? What we need are museums to help identify and challenge the myths and misperceptions that threaten us all.

And third, we're all part of a family and if we care about the next generation and the children born to the next generation, we have to shift our thinking. We have to create a new story of "our time" that does not turn a blind eye to issues of climate change.



### ***Why isn't providing the public with information enough anymore?***

Just providing information was never enough. Information that consists solely of facts is not sufficient. Information is now the curse of the digital age and we are drowning in it. Much of it means nothing, devoid as it is of context and values. What society needs is knowledge, wisdom and advocacy.

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**It is time for museums to move beyond their internal preoccupations and create visions and missions that address the big problems and the big questions, such as *why* does your museum exist, *what* changes are you trying to effect, *what* solutions will you generate, and *what* are your non-negotiable values? Can we put an end to our oversimplification?**

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Furthermore, museums have conservation policies, collections policies, membership policies, etc, but they should also have advocacy policies. Wouldn't it be nice if museums had an advocacy policy that articulated the civic and moral issues that are of importance to the museum and the community? In doing so, museums will become more relevant to their communities. The Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History is one of a few institutions that has an advocacy policy and it is available online. I hope it inspires similar initiatives in other institutions.

### ***How can museum workers make a difference in the climate change debate?***

Museum workers can make a difference by assuming personal agency or the capacity of individual museum workers, not just their leaders and managers, to take action in the world. They can be personal advocates

with their substantial training and education and they shouldn't only rely on their institutions to lead them through an issue. Yet, museum workers often shy away from expressing their values – possibly for fear of losing their job or their professional colleagues. However, personal agency should be celebrated and nurtured as a vital organizational resource and a force for good.

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**Museum workers are insightful and motivated by concerns beyond the workplace and can be intellectual advocates for a variety of issues. By intellectual advocate, I mean someone who does not necessarily create new knowledge but makes existing knowledge more accessible, understandable and useful to others.**

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We all need to become more reality-based. Being reality-based means becoming more visionary, becoming more involved in the broader world and confronting the socio-environmental issues that museums are equipped to address, recognizing their individual strengths and limitations. Can museums finally subordinate themselves to concerns that are larger than their own?

We need to create a sense of urgency around the issue of climate change. We also need to be asking the larger question of: who's telling our narrative? Who's telling the story of life in the twenty-first century? Right now, our story is being constructed by multinational corporations and governments, who tell us that consumption equals happiness and that economic growth is essential for our future. This shouldn't be our narrative and these institutions should not be responsible for telling it. Museums should be creating a new story for humanity in conjunction with their communities, including creating a sense of urgency around the issue of climate change.



# LISTENING TO ARTISTS AND AUDIENCES

## Surrey Art Gallery's Education & Engagement Programs

**Alison Rajah**

Surrey Art Gallery has a 40-year history of listening and providing opportunities to listen to the diverse, multi-generational voices in Surrey and beyond. Serving to connect art, artists, and audiences, education and engagement programs at the Gallery enable material and ephemeral opportunities for critical, creative explorations of issues and ideas that affect our lives through contemporary art. By listening, the Gallery is able to respond to the needs of artists and audiences and provide relevant, meaningful, and experimental experiences, connecting people in collaborations and conversations.

### Reimagining Discarded Materials

Young people's voices inform the direction of the Gallery's youth programs. Through youth and young adult advisory committees and planning teams, the Gallery invites young people to share their ideas on engaging with the world they live in through contemporary art. The Gallery piloted *Youth Art Drop-In* to provide youth with an opportunity to learn and build relationships in a casual environment while contributing to making something creative and significant together. As an inclusive



**Above:** Using sustainability sourced materials in hands-on artmaking activity in the classroom with artist Roxanne Charles, as part of the School Program *Sharing Perspectives: Indigenous Contemporary Art Workshop*.  
Photo credit: Glen Chua

**Top:** Reusing and recycling clay for maquette building activity with artist Keith Rice-Jones during Family Sunday.  
Photo credit: Glen Chua





**Photo:** Using sustainably sourced cedar and previous City street banners in collaborative weaving project with artist Roxanne Charles, as part of inFlux programming.  
Photo credit: Glen Chua





and free program, youth are able to gather and make art with mentoring artists. This past year, the youth and our Youth Engagement Programmer, artist Edward Westerhuis, created collaborative, multiphase projects. One of their projects included using recycled cardboard from discarded boxes to design and construct a large-scale sculpture using a variety of different techniques.

Our Youth Engagement Programmer's research findings demonstrate that young people want their input to have a tangible outcome.<sup>[4]</sup> Given this, the Gallery aligns the work of our planning teams with direct implementation in specific initiatives and programs, like that of *inFlux*. As a social night of art action, *inFlux* mixes live performances and do-it-yourself and do-it-together hands-on art activities with mentoring artists, encouraging a deeper exploration of the complex, conceptual themes in the Gallery's current exhibitions.

Moving into its ninth iteration, this Fluxus-like art happening offers several examples of artist-led, process-based experiences and activities that use materials in environmentally responsible and sustainable ways. Recently, Surrey's Poet Laureate, Renée Sarojini Saklikar, developed a collective erasure poetry project where people could use decommissioned print materials to create spatial object text works.

Artists Debbie Westergaard Tuepah and Carlyn Yandle used synthetic waste materials like plastic and polyeste-

ter to create a group engagement project. The three-dimensional artwork, *The Network* (2015), invites people to use the coloured synthetic strands as an opportunity for visual representation of actual social interaction, resembling something between a free-form macramé sculpture and an electronic conduit system. Suggestive of the unpredictable nature of open dialogue and threads of conversation, the strands, entanglements, and knots become like dangling tangential phrases and sentence fragments. Using the fabrication method of simple knots to connect strands, the work encourages all to join the activity and, ultimately, the conversation – visually represented in the work and verbally enacted during the process of construction.

Mixed media artist Roxanne Charles, of Strait Salish and European descent and an active member of Semiahmoo Nation, brought people together for a collaborative project in the Gallery's *inFlux* this past spring. The Gallery is sited on the traditional and unceded territory of the Salish peoples (including the Katzie, Kwantlen, Musqueam, Semiahmoo, Stó:lō, and Tsawwassen Nations), and Charles invited people in the Gallery on a nature walk to talk about traditional trade routes and the histories and current conditions of the land and people. Upon returning to the Gallery, she encouraged people to join her to weave a performative gown from sustainably sourced cedar and previously used deinstalled City street banners. This project was situated in the Gallery's exhibition installation of *No Pigs in Paradise* (2015-2016),

**Top:** Reusing synthetic waste materials in group engagement project, *The Network*, with artist Debbie Westergaard Tuepah, as part of *inFlux* programming.  
Photo credit: Glen Chua





a work that was created as a response to missing and murdered women in Alaska, Canada, and India. It is comprised of symbolic gown forms and a dual video by Toronto-based artist Nep Sidhu and Alaska-based Tlingit/Unangax artist Nicholas Galanin, along with a repurposed sound piece by Ishmael Butler. Through the collaborative urban weaving with Charles, people were able to consider more deeply the implications and prevalence of violence against women.

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**Whether using recycled cardboard from discarded boxes, decommissioned print materials, synthetic waste materials, or street banners, the mentoring artists' use of materials is fundamental to the meaning of the project.**

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## Creative Explorations for All Ages

Inside and outside of the Gallery, artists work with families, students, teachers and newcomers. For the Gallery's *Family Sunday* program, artists often source recycled objects and work with materials so that what is made can be enjoyed and then recycled again. In our spring *Family Sunday*, sculptor Keith Rice-Jones worked shoulder-to-shoulder with families, using recycled clay to help them make maquettes inspired by his *Monumental Sculptures* (2016) installed in the

courtyard pool outside the Gallery. Exploring formal geometric and organic shapes and building techniques, families were able to experiment with building miniature configurations and characterizations. While some took home their creations, many were pleased to leave theirs for others to enjoy during the day, knowing the clay would be recycled for future activities.

For our school programs, where artists and art educators bring learning and artmaking opportunities into the classroom, Charles uses responsibly and sustainably sourced materials. In the Gallery's *Sharing Perspectives:*



**Right:** Using sustainably sourced materials in hands-on artmaking activity in the classroom with artist Roxanne Charles, as part of the School Program *Sharing Perspectives: Indigenous Contemporary Art Workshop*.

Photo credit: Amelia Epp

*Indigenous Contemporary Art Workshop*, she introduces teachers and students to Northwest Coast cultures and contemporary and traditional artmaking processes. Sharing the collections of the Gallery and Surrey Public Art (both held in trust for the people of Surrey), this workshop encourages teachers and young people to become familiar with the works by Indigenous artists in their local Gallery and neighbourhood. Through images, stories, “touchables,” and a hands-on art activity, which grows out of the Indigenous artist and art educator’s practice, the workshop offers cross-curricular educational experiences for young people in kindergarten to grade 12 and responds to the new BC curriculum’s focus on Aboriginal perspectives and knowledge.

During City and community festivals, artists and art educators offer family-friendly and multi-generational hands-on artmaking activities. For the City’s Earth Day event, *Party for the Planet*, the Gallery often has art-on-a-stick projects, using recycled and scrap materials, or un-prescribed recycled and recyclable clay explorations. Ceramicist and long-time Gallery ceramics teacher Murray Sanders uses recycled clay to demonstrate throwing forms on a wheel at community festivals in the City’s town centres, intriguing passersby with ceramics and the desire to develop ceramics skills through Gallery courses and workshops.

Aiming to be a welcoming space with accessible programs and opportunities to meet people, make art, and explore the world through art, the Gallery piloted and then implemented an ongoing *Newcomers Tour and Workshop* several years ago. Surrey is a City of exponential population growth, with 1000 plus people, many of whom are new Canadians, moving here each month. While there is an age range, 50% of newcomers are 24 or younger upon arrival (as of June this year, 799 Syrian refugees have settled in Surrey, representing 44% of all Government-Assisted Refugees who have arrived in British Columbia since November last year, and about 60% of those settling in Surrey are under 19).<sup>[2]</sup> With this knowledge, our free tour and workshop introduces youth to seniors to the Gallery as a place of learning. Participants

are welcomed with a learner-focused tour of the facility and current exhibitions, and then invited to explore ceramics practices, both traditional and contemporary, and the medium of ceramics through hand-building vessels and sculptures with recycled clay.

The Gallery’s education and engagement programs continuously seek effective and effervescent ways to be relevant to diverse local audiences within a contemporary art context and history. Listening to artists and audiences enables the Gallery to be a connecting conduit, even a catalytic space, for experiences that move, inform, inspire, propel, and transform.

[1] *Strengthening Youth and Communities through Art* (2016). This report was commissioned by the Surrey Art Gallery to enhance its connection with and develop programming for youth and young adults. The research and development of this report was made possible with funding received from the Youth Engagement Grant Program of the BC Arts Council awarded to the Surrey Art Gallery. <http://www.communityschoolspartnership.surrey.ca/culture-recreation/16266.aspx>

[2] These statistics are sourced by the City’s Planning and Development Division and Surrey Local Immigration Partnership, a consortium of government, business, non-profit, and community agencies, and public and private institutions, working together to strengthen Surrey’s integration of newcomers and build a more inclusive and welcoming city.

***Alison Rajah serves as the Curator of Education and Engagement at the Surrey Art Gallery, with a core staff team including Interpretive Programmer Amelia Epp, Visual Arts Programmer Lindsay***

***McArthur, and Volunteer Program Coordinator Chris Dawson-Murphy. She did her graduate studies in Critical and Curatorial Studies at UBC, and has taught as part of UBC’s Humanities 101 program since 2008***







# MIGRATION: CITIES

**Above:** Jane's Walk, 2015.  
Photo credit: Jessica Wood

## (Im)migration and Arrival Cities

**Catherine C. Cole**

The Commonwealth Association of Museums (CAM) is collaborating with ICOM CAMOC (Collections and Activities of Museums of Cities) and ICOM ICR (International Committee of Regional Museums) on *Migration: Cities*, a long-term project to explore how to foster dialogue between diverse people and encourage the participation and inclusion of migrant populations within ever transforming urban environments, in what Doug Saunders has referred to as Arrival Cities’.

Europe is facing unprecedented migration with millions of refugees arriving in the last few years, leaving museum workers struggling to find their place in the context of rapid change. Therefore, the Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO) released *Museums, Migration and Cultural Diversity – Recommendations for Museum Work*, guidelines that provide a constructive approach to working with different communities including migrants, refugees and minorities.

Strategies range from small, immediate, inexpensive measures to more extensive, long-term changes and will be helpful to people with little experience working in culturally diverse communities.

For Canadian museums, the situation is less acute than in Germany but we too are thinking about how to engage the 25,000 refugees who have recently arrived in this country – and those who will come in the months and years ahead. From the late 19th to the late 20th centuries, Canada accepted millions of immigrants from Europe, many of whom came as displaced people from war-torn areas, or for political or religious freedom. Canada is a country of Indigenous people, immigrants and migrants from other parts of the country.

Museums are recognized as safe places to learn about other cultures, forums for discussion about contemporary issues, and vehicles to promote integration. They provide a laboratory for immigrants to learn Canadian values. Beyond

‘Heritage Days’ types of events that present music, dance, costumes, and food – entertaining, family events – museums offer activities that allow more two-way communication with other cultures that deepen our understanding and build trust.

Working in collaboration with Don Bouzek of the popular theatre company [Ground Zero Productions](#), I initiated *Mill Woods Living Heritage* in 2012. Edmonton does not have a city museum but this would be a perfect project for one. Inspired by Saunders’ *Arrival City*, which stressed the need to think about transitional urban spaces, places where people retain connections to their place of origin as well as to the city, neighbourhoods where the transition from poverty occurs and the next middle class is forged, the next generation’s dreams, movements and governments are created. Whether Saunders would consider Mill Woods an ‘Arrival City’ or not, the questions he posed informed the questions we are addressing in research and oral histories.

Mill Woods has had several incarnations over the years: Initially the Papaschase Indian Reserve, then a farming settlement and, since 1969, an “urban village”. The province secretly acquired the 9 square miles of land through a land bank and the City developed a design concept with physical, social and economic objectives. Physically, urban sprawl continues to be a problem. Socially, younger members of ethnocultural communities appear to mix more than their elders and the community suffers from largely unwarranted fears of violence. While economically, the development was indeed a success – the City was said to have made \$185M on the development.

[Mill Woods Living Heritage](#) is an experiment in bringing heritage and arts organizations and community leagues together. We work with artists living in the community, artists of different cultural backgrounds working in a variety of mediums (poetry, dance, music and sculpture). Our website, which is not expensive or flashy but was built to keep people informed about the project, is updated as new activities are completed.

The website includes excerpts from some of the more than 50 oral history interviews that have been conducted. We work with ethnocultural organizations, such as Memoria Viva for the Latin American Community and Cari-West for the Caribbean community, and the Cultural Diversity Collaborative and Aboriginal Family Night, to build trust with community members, identify people to interview, and explore the community in different ways. Community-based work is extremely time-consuming but rewarding.

I use information from the oral histories and archival research to write a monthly column for a community newspaper called the *Mill Woods Mosaic* and as the basis of displays, walks and workshops, and it inspires the artists with whom we work. We created a temporary display shown at the local Canada Day celebrations – the largest in the city – and at various community facilities since. We have led walking tours where we talk about the three distinct histories of use, community development, and place names, and have invited community members to

share with us site visits including a gurdwara, a mosque, an Islamic Centre, a housing cooperative, and a neighbourhood park.

We facilitated a community mapping workshop in which we provided photographs, maps and other materials and asked participants to select images that were meaningful to them, discuss them with participants in small groups, create a collage showing what Mill Woods means to them collectively, and share their ideas with the larger group. We also created a pop-up exhibition that involved interpretive panels, some written by me based upon our research and some written by community members. Then we put them up all over the community last Thanksgiving, and created a map showing where they were.

We worked with an Indigenous artist who created a sculpture about the community and helped a group of kids at the Indigenous family night dinner contribute to the backdrop, with a South Asian khattak dancer on a piece about the meaning of light in Indian culture integrating a phrase from an oral history as the rhythm line, and with a Chilean rap poet on the experiences of Latin American immigrants. We're now working on a piece that will combine Aboriginal music and khattak dance to tell a story about cultures mixing, all means of engaging immigrants in thinking about place.

***Catherine C. Cole has been a heritage consultant for more than 20 years and previously held curatorial and interpretation positions. She is Secretary-General of CAM and Vice-Chair of CAMOC. If you're working on a project related to migration and would like to be included in Migration: Cities, contact [CatherineC.Cole@telus.net](mailto:CatherineC.Cole@telus.net); 780-424-2229.***





# Volunteers

## The Life Force of Museums

Cathy English

Most museums rely on volunteers to round out their staff and to offer services that wouldn't be possible with paid staff alone. Revelstoke Museum and Archives is among those museums that have treasured volunteers that enhance our programs and enable us to be more and do more.

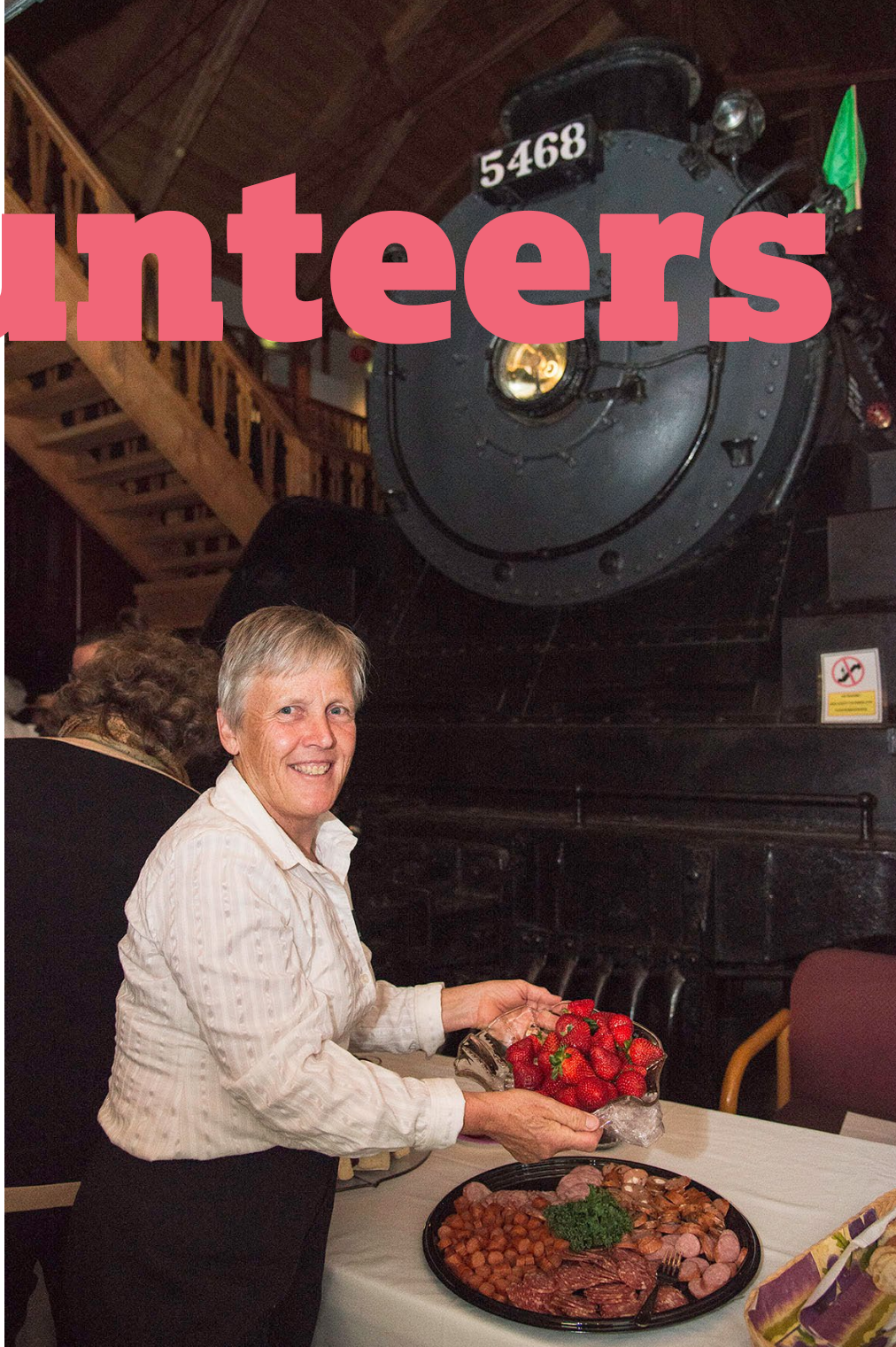
Our volunteers were a crucial part of our team when Revelstoke Museum & Archives hosted the British Columbia Historical Federation conference on May 26 to 28 of 2016. Volunteers were eager to help and they made the conference the overwhelming success that it was. Delegates could always find a friendly face with a bright blue volunteer tag whenever they needed something. Many delegates commented on how helpful the volunteers were.

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**“The energy of the volunteers illustrates the heritage potential in all our regions.”**

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**Above Right:** Jane McNab prepares food trays at a reception at Revelstoke Railway Museum during the B.C. Historical Federation conference.  
Photo credit: Kip Wiley



“The many volunteers helped make the conference a pleasant experience and I hope they have been told so.”

Volunteers at the conference helped the delegates find what they needed to make the conference run smoothly for them. The volunteers were there to serve at the social events, to shepherd people onto buses for tours, to help with directions, and to act as ambassadors for our city.



The volunteers brought a warmth and friendliness that enhanced the conference experience for the delegates.

We use a variety of methods to attract volunteers. One of the advantages of a small community is that we are all connected to broad circles of people, and often the easiest method of recruitment is to simply think of people within our circles who have the skills that we require, and ask them directly. This was the case when we decided that our reference library needed to be properly catalogued. We contacted Dianne, a retired school librarian and asked her if she was willing to take on the job. She agreed, and she is finding the job interesting and engaging. We gave her the training she required for our data system, and let her bring her expertise to the job and determine how to proceed.

I often joke that we run the museum by the serendipity method. I can't count the number of times when we began discussing a project, only to have people with exactly

the expertise we required walk in the door and offer to help. While we can't count on this as a way to run our volunteer programs, it is a wonderful experience when it happens.

Revelstoke Community Futures, an independent non-profit, maintains an active volunteer registry for those who wish to volunteer, and those who require volunteers, and each year, they hold a Volunteer Fair at the community centre. The Fair gives potential volunteers an opportunity to find work within the community. We have found several new volunteers at the Fairs, among them people who had come to Revelstoke just for the winter skiing season. At a Volunteer Fair a few years ago, we were looking for people to help with one specific task: moving our artifact collection into our new storage area. We found several volunteers willing to help with this job. They found it interesting and rewarding, and although it was a small commitment on their part, it was a tremendous help for us.



**Right:** Volunteers and delegates mingle at the opening reception of the B.C. Historical Federation conference at Revelstoke Museum & Archives.  
Photo credit: Kip Wiley



**Left:** Meghan Tabor helps to relocate artifacts to the new storage area.  
Photo credit: Cathy English





As part of the annual Volunteer Fair, Spirit of Revelstoke awards are given to those who have made a significant volunteer contribution in the community. We nominate some of our outstanding volunteers each year so that their contributions can be recognized by the entire community. At the 2015 Fair, one of our youngest volunteers was honoured. Courtney began coming to our summer children's programs at the age of five. She graduated to the older program at age eight, and by the time she was 10, she began volunteering with the younger children. Now, at the age of 14, she comes every week in July and August to help with the program, and we know that she will quickly jump in when need-

ed without having to be told what to do. I have my eye on her as a potential student employee within the next couple of years. She has proven her passion for and commitment to the museum.

One of the volunteer programs of Revelstoke Museum & Archives is our Heritage Garden. Built in 2004, the Heritage Garden turned a former delivery alley into a beautiful and tranquil downtown green space. The garden is maintained entirely by volunteers, led by one of the directors on our board. Susan does not profess to be a seasoned gardener herself, but she has surrounded herself with a team of volunteers who are. They meet on a regular basis to

discuss planting plans for the museum, and to determine tasks and plan work parties. A wide variety of people show up at the work parties, including one lifetime member of the museum society who is now in her eighties, and has been volunteering at the museum for more than 30 years.

A crucial component of our success with volunteers is our Board of Directors. They all volunteer outside of their board roles, and provide a model to other potential volunteers. There can be a danger when board members become volunteers, if they overstep their roles, but we have created a collaborative, respectful environment and board members are

**Top:** Holly Rosenberger, Sheryl Wolgram, and Una McInnes welcome delegates to the B.C. Historical Federation conference.  
Photo credit: Kip Wiley



careful not to overstep their authority when carrying out volunteer tasks. They defer to me as curator when my role is required. In real life, that means that they would always consult me if they wanted to move an artifact to set up for a special event, but they wouldn't ask me what colour of tablecloths to use.

Volunteers sometimes become paid staff. Our current office manager, Harumi Sakiyama, came to us as a volunteer to gain experience so that she could reenter the workplace. She performed her job as a collections assistant so well that when a grant-funded position became available, she was the obvious choice. She has now been with the museum for three years and is a key staff member. Other volunteers have also become part-time or contract employees.

The keys to our volunteer program are: finding the right people for the right jobs; training and then trusting the volunteers to do their jobs; and creating a respectful work environment for everyone. We can expect the museum to remain a vibrant, welcoming place where everyone can contribute and share their passion for the history of our community.

***Cathy English has been curator of Revelstoke Museum & Archives since 1983. Cathy enjoys sharing the history of Revelstoke through programming, including the "Brown Bag History" series, a bi-weekly lunch-hour talk that focuses on an aspect of local history. Her book "Brown Bag History – Revelstoke Origins", was published in 2015.***



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**Photo:** Field trip to Mount Revelstoke National Park during the B.C. Historical Federation conference. Volunteers served as tour guides, shepherds, and local ambassadors.

Photo credit: Kip Wiley



The BC Museums Association creates a bright future for British Columbia's museum, gallery and related communities through networking, advocacy, innovation, and professional development. Membership is available to museums, galleries, heritage sites, and individuals in the province affiliated with or interested in BC's museums, galleries and heritage sites. For more info visit: [museumsassn.bc.ca](http://museumsassn.bc.ca)

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**Right:** Reusing materials to create art-on-a-stick birds in Gallery booth, during Party for the Planet festival.

Photo Credit: Surrey Art Gallery

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