



SPOTLIGHT ON MUSEUM ED

Vanessa Richards of Hogan's Alley Society leads the group down Hogan's Alley in Vancouver.
Photo credit: Matt Hans Schroeder



TAKING PROGRAMMING TO THE STREETS

Heritage walking tours

Lindsay Foreman

Summer is always the busiest time of year for community heritage organizations. Our hours of operation are extended, we are planning and executing events (i.e., Canada Day, BC Day, Labour Day), and our public programming schedule is in full swing. The weather is also usually warm and sunny, beckoning both museum workers and visitors alike to spend time outside. While some of us have outdoor space(s) associated with our facilities, others do not, and must get creative. One excellent approach to engage both staff and visitors during the busy warm season is to take our programming to the streets by developing (and maintaining) and delivering heritage walking (or cycling, driving) tours.

These tours are a great opportunity to showcase both the natural and cultural heritage of our communities. They also serve as support and relationship boosters between different individuals and local organizations, providing a meaningful, long-term collaborative community project.

Either staffed, or self-guided, these tours are a great opportunity to showcase both the natural and cultural heritage of our communities. They also serve as support and relationship boosters between different individuals and local organizations, providing a meaningful, long-term collaborative community project. Whether spearheaded by one or more local memory organization or the municipality, many community members are involved in the development, delivery, and promotion of these tours. Heritage tours also allow our organizations to showcase their collections, especially archival items including photographs, blueprints, maps, and letters, which encourages both community members and visitors to come and see what other information we have on display or stored away.

The majority of the community heritage tours offered across the province consist of a hard copy, pdf, or digital map with numbered points of interest; some versions have their own smartphone app. Each point of interest is pictured, often using a 'then and now' approach, with a paragraph or two describing the place. In most cases, a plaque or sign is situated on or near the point of interest within the physical landscape, enabling anyone to learn about the community's heritage, as well as to serve as way finders for those participating in a tour. The self-guided tours are generally free; guided versions range from free to \$28 per person.



Vanessa Richards of Hogan's Alley Society shares the history of Benny Foods and its importance to the Hogan's Alley community in Vancouver.

Photo credit: Matt Hans Schroeder

TAKING PROGRAMMING TO THE STREETS



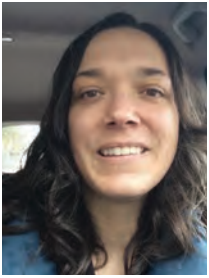
Michael Schwartz shares the history of the National Council of Jewish Women Neighbourhood House at 800 Jackson Ave in Vancouver.

Photo credit: Matt Hans Schroeder



Harvey shares with a tour group the Italian-Canadian history of bootlegging and bocce ball in Hogan's Alley in Vancouver.

Photo credit: Matt Hans Schroeder



LINDSAY FOREMAN

Themed heritage walking tours are also widely available. Several communities offer cemetery tours (i.e., Quesnel & District Museum & Archives, Revelstoke Museum & Archives, Nanaimo Museum), while the Vancouver Police Museum offers four different Sins of the City tours, and the Golden Miles of History tour shares the story of the Cariboo Gold Rush in Lillooet. Within the larger urban centres, such as Vancouver, Victoria, Nanaimo, and New Westminster, heritage neighbourhood tours are available. In fact, the Jewish Museum & Archives of BC offers walking tours of the Jewish communities of Oakridge, Strathcona, and Gastown in Vancouver.

Let's get out there and walk to support heritage! Experience and raise heritage awareness by participating in tours within your home communities and those you will be visiting over the coming months. Be sure to check out the Downtown Walking Tour offered by the public library in Prince George when you visit for the conference in September!

[Walking tours] also serve as support and relationship boosters between different individuals and local organizations, providing a meaningful, long-term collaborative community project.

Left: Visitor holding up a picture from the Talmud Torah Grade 4 class, circa 1965. Gita Kron, teacher.

Photo credit: Matt Hans Schroeder

Right: Elder Larry Grant used to be a student at Strathcona Elementary School in Vancouver.

Photo credit: Matt Hans Schroeder

