

roundUp

BRITISH COLUMBIA MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION
No 261 | WINTER 2015





RoundUp

NO 261 | WINTER 2015

Creating a Sense of Place

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 03 Executive Director's Report | 18 Nobody Said Public Engagement is Easy |
| 04 President's Message | 22 A Good Connection |
| 05 Membership Matters | 25 Merging Worlds |
| 10 Whoo's News | 28 Museum as Forum |
| 12 Victorian Vancouver | 31 Lunch with Owl |
| 15 History Around Us | |

Cover photo New Westminster will be this year's BCMA conference venue. City of New Westminster Archives, # IHP4912 Wintertime Along the 'Golden Mile', 1948.

[Left] Visitors viewing the Cultural Expressions of the Lheidli T'enneh Image exhibition. Photo credit: The Exploration Place.

COUNCIL

Peter Ord, *President*
 David Alexander, *Vice President*
 Deborah Hudson, *Secretary*
 Jon Irwin, *Treasurer*
 Leah Best, *Past President*
 Hanna Cho, *Councillor*
 Lillian Hunt, *Councillor*
 Danielle Lemon, *Councillor*
 Tania Muir, *Councillor*
 Nataley Nagy, *Councillor*
 Dennis Oomen, *Councillor*
 Catherine Ouellet-Martin, *Councillor*
 Erika Stenson, *Councillor*

BCMA OFFICE

Theresa Mackay
Executive Director
tmackay@museumsassn.bc.ca
 Heather Jeliazkov
Manager, Marketing and Membership Services
[hjelijazkov@museumsassn.bc.ca](mailto:hjeliazkov@museumsassn.bc.ca)
 Jen Demler
Webmaster
info@museumsassn.bc.ca

ROUNDUP EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

David Alexander, *Head of New Archives & Digital Preservation, Royal BC Museum*
 Nancy Kirkpatrick, *Director, North Vancouver Museum & Archives*
 Lesley Moore, *General Manager, North Pacific Cannery National Historic Site*
 Kevin Neary, *Traditions Consulting Services Inc.*
 Peter Thompson, *Managing Director, Two Rivers Gallery*

Lisa Codd
Managing Editor, Museums Roundup
roundup@museumsassn.bc.ca

Nelson Agustín
Designer, Museums Roundup
www.nelz.ca



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Theresa Mackay



As I am writing this I've just come back from the December holidays to a clean office, thanks to the recent help of my youngest daughter. Every so often she visits me here, a teenager, with all of the typical teenager accoutrements in tow [iPod, headphones, Converse, backpack, skinny jeans, hoodie, hair up in a messy bun. I'm sure you can picture it.] Each time she comes in, she shakes her teenage head and with a dry-sort-of-teenage-attitude says, "You do what, exactly?" [Emphasis on EXACTLY.]

So this last time when she asked me, I skipped right to the "here are all the things we've done in the past year" speech. Describing with excitement and overly-large hand gestures everything we did in 2014, I tried to give her a sense of the direction we've gone in, the kind of community we are and all of what we've created this past year.

Like our conference in Penticton where we had buses that transported us to cultural and heritage locations, followed by a networking

reception on an historic vessel called the SS Sicamous. And our workshop in southeastern Creston where we had to battle the snowy weather just to bring the BCMA to a remote corner of our province. And our BCMA brand workshop where we used sticky notes and Council feedback to transform our brand into something that now has energy and excitement. And the daily calls we get from museums needing assistance with storage ideas, or galleries needing to find a supplier, or a member of the public wanting to donate their muumuus [true story]. And the cobbling together of our archives for publishing on the web so everyone can see our association's history. And our record-breaking AGM attendance.

And as I came up with more and more examples of all of the things we've done in 2014, I saw her doubting it, in her teenage-sort-of-way, that all of THAT excitement, all of THAT activity, could come from two desks, two computers and a printer. Well you, dear member, know it can. And it has. Exactly.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Peter Ord

How does a person define the 'essence' of a place? Is it possible to articulate the 'sense of being' that a location can convey? In this issue of *RoundUp* we explore what museums, galleries and heritage sites can accomplish to express a community's sense of place.

I have commonly come across the theory of 'Topophilia' to explore the concept of a sense of place. The term is a construct of the Greek word *topos* for 'place', and *philia* for 'love of'. It has been used to articulate how people feel about certain places, and how these places evoke feelings of emotion around spatial and cultural identity. The geographer Tuan Yi-Fu explored this topic in his 1974 book *Topophilia: a study of environmental perception, attitudes, and values*. It's significant because Yi-Fu does what museums have been doing for decades: Identifying what factors, be they physical, cultural or emotional, make a place so special.

In October at the BCMA's annual conference in Penticton, the issue of sense of place was exhaustively explored through the conference theme *The Third Space – Re-imagining our Cultural Landscape*. Based on everybody's

participation at the plenaries and sessions, it was clear that museums and galleries have a vital role to play in building a sense of identity based on the creative use of space.

Speaking of creativity, I would like to thank the dedicated work of outgoing *RoundUp* editor Lisa Codd, who has brilliantly crafted over sixteen *RoundUp* editions over the last four years. The BCMA has been fortunate to have worked with her and wish her fun with all the new spare time she has on her hands.

I would also like to warmly welcome four additional members to the BCMA council. Please say hello to Danielle Lemon from Danielle Lemon Law Group; Tania Muir from University of Victoria; Nataley Nagy from the Kelowna Art Gallery; and Catherine Ouellet-Martin from the Fraser River Discovery Centre.

And lastly, another round of applause and a big congratulations to all the nominees and winners of the BCMA's 2014 Awards of Outstanding Achievement, which were awarded at a wonderful banquet during the conference in Penticton. It was a night to remember!



View from Penticton Lakeside Resort, the conference host hotel.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Conference 2014:

The Third Space- Re-imagining our Cultural Landscape

Over 100 delegates attended BCMA Conference 2014 in beautiful Penticton last October, participating in Immersion Sessions, networking receptions, plenary sessions and even a wine tour! Thank you to all of our conference 2014 speakers, partners and sponsors:

KEYNOTES

Kelvin Browne, Executive Director/CEO, Gardiner Museum
Professor Jack Lohman, CEO, Royal BC Museum

PRESENTERS

David Alexander, Head of New Archives & Digital Preservation, Royal BC Museum
Chantal Amyot, Director, Canadian History Hall, Canadian Museum of History

Michael Callaghan, Professional Marketer
Beth Carter, Director-Curator, Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre
Cheryl Chapman, Co-Chair, New Pathways to Gold
Hanna Cho, Curator, Engagement & Dialogue, Museum of Vancouver
Liz Crocker, Writer/Educator, Principal of Salt Frog
Tzu-I Chung, Curator of History, Royal BC Museum
James Douglas, Historical Interpreter/Interpretation Consultant, Barkerville Historic Town
Mike Elliot, Canoe Artisan, Kettle River Canoes
John Grimes, Mission+ strategic solutions
Tracey Herbert, Executive Director of the First Peoples' Cultural Council
Thomas Hepburn, Vice President of Business Development, NGX Interactive



Tracy Bonneau, session co-host on behalf of En'owkin Centre.

Shane Lighter, Digital Imaging Technician, New Archives & Digital Preservation, Royal BC Museum
 Richard Linzey, Heritage Branch, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, Province of BC
 Cristi Main, Executive Director, Royal BC Museum Foundation
 Darrin Martens, Director, Nisga'a Museum
 Dr. Carol E. Mayer, Head of the Curatorial Department UBC Museum of Anthropology
 Tania Muir, Cultural Resource Management Program, University of Victoria
 Nancy Noble, CEO, Museum of Vancouver
 Ursula Pfahler, Heritage Resources Planner, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, Province of BC
 Esther Rzeplinski, Research Associate for the Landscapes of Injustice project
 Joseph Sanchez, independent artist and former Curator, Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, NM
 Dave Stewart, Digital Manager, Royal BC Museum
 Lauren Terbasket, En'owkin Centre
 Amy Thacker, CEO, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association

PARTNERS

En'owkin Centre
 The Grist Mill and Gardens
 Penticton Art Gallery
 Penticton Museum & Archives
 Shatford Centre
 SS Sicamous Paddle Wheeler & Heritage Park

SPONSORS

City of Penticton
 Penticton Museum & Archives
 Cultural Resource Management Program, University of Victoria

A special mention goes to Manda Maggs of the Penticton Museum & Archives for all of her driving, assistance with the awards and excellent on-the-ground coordination! We'd also like to thank Tim Willis for developing, coordinating, presenting and reporting out on the fantastic Immersion Sessions. As well, our thanks go to the 2014 Conference Committee: Peter Ord [Chair], Scott Marsden, Paul Crawford, Julie Fowler, Chris Mathieson, Jane Shaak, Jessie Dunlop, and Lauren Terbasket.

CONFERENCE 2015 UPDATE: JOIN US IN NEW WESTMINSTER!



New Westminster waterfront.

SAVE THE DATE! Conference 2015 will take place in New Westminster from October 25-27. We've made a number of improvements for this year including moving the conference earlier in the week and pulling together a tighter program for 2015. Sunday will start with an optional walking tour of historic New Westminster in the afternoon followed by an opening reception in the evening. We go into full swing on Monday

morning and finish up the day with our Awards Gala that evening. Tuesday will see even more engaging sessions and Tuesday late day/early evening we'll open up workshops to all, including those not attending the conference, so spread the word! Watch our website for all of the details, including information on the host hotel, the Inn at the Quay, the call for presenters, award nominations and more!



Recipients and members of the Awards Committee.



The audience at the annual BCMA awards banquet.

2014 BCMA Awards for Outstanding Achievement

The BCMA has recognized five of BC's museums, galleries and heritage sites for Outstanding Achievement. The awards were presented October 24, 2014, during the BCMA's annual conference in Penticton. Each honoree received an individually-crafted sculpture created by Okanagan-based artist, Michael Hermesh. Congratulations to all!

Martin accepted the award on behalf of the Fraser River Discovery Centre.

Award of Merit

Two Rivers Gallery in Prince George for the MakerLab 2RG. Director of Public Programs, Caroline Holmes, and MakerLab Coordinator, Kathleen Angelski, accepted the award on behalf of the Two Rivers Gallery.

Award of Merit

UBC Museum of Anthropology in Vancouver for the exhibit, *Paradise Lost? Contemporary Works from the Pacific*. Curatorial Director, Dr. Carol Mayer, accepted the award on behalf of the UBC Museum of Anthropology.

Award of Merit

Fraser River Discovery Centre in New Westminster for the exhibit, *My River My Home*. Executive Director, Catherine Ouellet-

Distinguished Service Award

The Museum Docent Team at the Langley Centennial Museum. Arts and Heritage Curator Kobi Christian accepted the award on behalf of the docents.

Corporate Service Award

Burnaby Village Museum and City of Burnaby Mayor & Council for their Free Admission initiative. The City of Burnaby's Assistant Director of Cultural Services, Denis Nokony, accepted the award on their behalf.



Denis Nokony, Assistant Director Cultural Services, City of Burnaby; and Deborah Tuytens, Director, Burnaby Village Museum.

Thanks Lisa and Nelson!

As many of you know, Lisa Codd, Museum Curator at the Burnaby Village Museum, has been the editor of *Roundup* for four years. With this final issue, Lisa moves on to bigger and even brighter things! Over the years Lisa has efficiently and creatively led the production of each issue alongside her design partner, Nelson Agustin. As a team they have maintained the professionalism of this excellent publication, working with many of you across the province. On behalf of the BCMA, Council and *Roundup* Editorial Committee, we wish Lisa and Nelson all the best and thank them for their dedication to *Roundup* and the BCMA!



Welcome Back Jen Demler!

Remember Jen Demler, our summer intern from Royal Roads University? Jen graduated in the fall of 2014 with a Master of Arts in Tourism Management and she has now re-joined us as our part-time webmaster. One of her first projects is to publish archived content on the history of the BCMA. See any updates or changes needed to our website? Jen would love to hear from you! You can contact her at info@museumsassn.bc.ca.



Important Listserv Updates

The email for posting to Listserv has recently changed. Posts should now be sent to: bcma@lists.vifa.ca. Please note that your membership must be valid in order to subscribe to the member Listserv.

Fax Number Discontinued

Our fax number has been discontinued so please delete it from your contact records. Membership renewals will now be accepted via mail, phone and soon via online payments. Please visit our website for the latest information.

New Logo Coming Soon

Along with its refreshed look and feel, as well as a more consistent approach to communications materials, the BCMA has developed a Brand Brief that is the guiding document for all that we do, injecting life and energy into our association. Up next? A new logo. Stay tuned for the launch! The BCMA would like to sincerely thank the Royal BC Museum, and especially Professor Jack Lohman, for supporting our branding efforts.

Special Project Volunteers Needed!

The BCMA is looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help with special projects, such as an oral history project on the Association and a research paper on the history of museums in BC. We are even looking for weekly administrative assistance, too. Looking to try something new? Interested in building your resume? Want to network with others in the sector? Send your note of interest to Executive Director, Theresa Mackay, at tmackay@museumsassn.bc.ca.

Welcome New BCMA Members

Brad Froggatt, Fort Steele Heritage Town
Beverly Gibson, Cowichan Valley Museum and Archives
Andrew Hinton
Nataley Nagy, Kelowna Art Gallery
Okanagan College Research Museum

Royal BC Museum Master Classes - Coming Soon

In 2015 we plan to launch the new Royal BC Museum Master Classes in partnership with the Royal BC Museum, University of Victoria and Royal Roads University. These Master Classes will give you exclusive front row access to the latest and greatest minds in museum thought leadership. Produced in a learn-at-lunch-style format with some sessions broadcast online, sector professionals will have a unique opportunity to hear innovative, provocative and relevant thinking for our sector, and our time. Join us! Watch our website for details.



Annual General Meeting

Over 100 members gathered for the BCMA Annual General Meeting in October 2014. During the course of the meeting a number of changes to the BCMA By-Laws were approved by Special Resolution. Specifically, the expansion of the Council, and the adjustment of BCMA Membership categories.

Museum volunteers are invited to join the Association in the new Student/Volunteer category. Individuals who earn income through contracts or service provision or other commercial activities for museums, galleries, heritage organizations or related cultural institutions are invited to join BCMA in the new Affiliate Member – Individual category.

Please welcome our new Councillors (clockwise from top left):



Danielle Lemon, Corporate Counsel & Manager, North American Legal Services, Danielle Lemon Law Group, Vancouver

Tania Muir, Program Director, Cultural Resource Management Program, University of Victoria

Nataley Nagy, Executive Director, Kelowna Art Gallery

Catherine Oullet-Martin, Executive Director, Fraser River Discovery Centre, New Westminster



WISH YOU WERE HERE

Conference 2014

[Above] BCMA Chair Peter Ord accepts gift from Peach City Radio performers at the Shatford Centre in Penticton.

[Below, left to right]: Kobi Christian, Curator, Langley Centennial Museum; Shannon Bettles, Archivist, Chilliwack Museum and Archives; BCMA Council member, Catherine Oullet-Martin, Executive Director, Fraser River Discovery Centre; and, BCMA Council member Lillian Hunt, U'mista Cultural Centre.



Reg Wilford recently completed an interim contract as Site & Visitor Experience Manager at Fort Langley National Historic Site, and is now the newly appointed Executive Director for the Coquitlam Heritage Society where he will be directing the operations of the Society and the Mackin House Museum. The focus of his efforts will be to generate support and commitment for a stand-alone museum for the City of Coquitlam – a city with a population of over 130,000 and currently without a municipal museum.

The Royal BC Museum is pleased to welcome six new professionals to its team. **Peter Ord** is the new Vice President of Archives, Collections & Knowledge. Peter joins the Royal BC Museum with the goal of aligning the museum's collections and knowledge departments with the vision of creating a world-class institution. Peter previously spent nine years as manager/director of the Penticton Museum & Archives. He was founder and principal of Archaeomark Consulting in Vancouver, a cultural resource management company working with First Nations, post-secondary and NGO clients throughout BC from 1997 to 2005. As readers of *Roundup* know well, Peter is presently President of the BC Museums Association and has been on the board since 2004.

Cara Bourassa is the new Budget and Reporting Officer at the RBCM. Cara previously worked at the Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia; prior to that, she worked as a financial analyst for Chipotle Mexican Grill in Columbus, Ohio. **Shaun Cerisano** is the RBCM's new Annual Campaigns Manager. Shaun comes from Kingston, Ontario, where he was the Area Manager of the Heart and Stroke Foundation office and Senior Development Officer of University Hospitals Kingston Foundation. He has been guest speaker at the Queen's University Conference of Philanthropy and keynote speaker for Project Red, a fashion show in

benefit of Heart Month. Shaun specializes in building relationships in the community, public speaking and creating innovative fundraising campaigns.

Alexis Lenk recently joined the RBCM staff as the new Technical Specialist. Alexis previously worked managing collection and archives data at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, and most recently comes from the newly reopened Harvard Art Museums where she was the Collections Information and Database Specialist. **Meagan Sugrue** is the new RBCM Web & E-Commerce Specialist. She is committed to delivering innovative, dynamic web content and building the digital reputations of cultural institutions. Meagan joins us from the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, where she oversaw marketing, communications and web.

Aidan Moher recently joined the RBCM as its new Web Specialist & Content Developer. Aidan is a web designer and the Hugo Award winning editor of *A Dribble of Ink*, a blog about science fiction and fantasy. He has past professional experience in the creative, tourism and education sectors.

Lesley Moore is the new General Manager at the North Pacific Cannery National Historic Site operated by the Port Edward Historical Society. The site celebrated its 125th Anniversary this year as the oldest, intact cannery in British Columbia.

The Chilliwack Museum and Archives welcomes its new Museum Director **Matthew Francis** this February. Matthew, who grew up in Chilliwack, has been working in Alberta as

senior Manager, Municipal Heritage Services with Alberta Culture. Matthew aims to activate the Museum's space and program, not only for conservation, but for public conviviality, connection, and fun.

Jane Lemke joined the team at the Chilliwack Museum and Archives as Curator in July 2014. Jane comes to Chilliwack after acting as Interim Curator at the Langley Centennial Museum and previously as Curator at the Mission Museum. Jane replaces long time Curator **Paul Ferguson**, who left the position in March 2014 after over 20 years of service with the Chilliwack Museum and Archives.

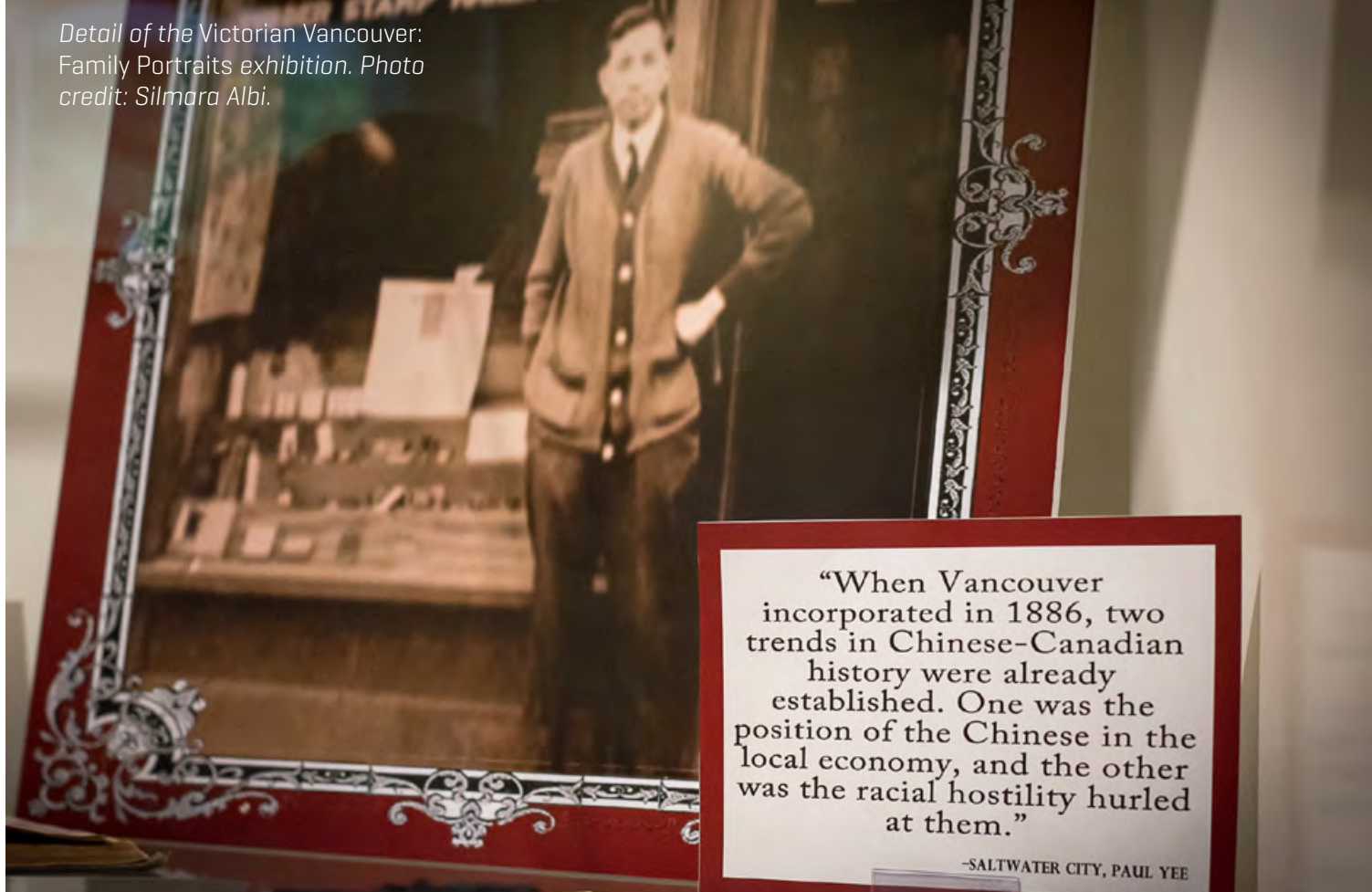


Darrin Martens is leaving the Nisga'a Museum, to take up the role of Chief Curator with the new Audain Art Museum in February 2015. The new art museum will open in the fall of 2015 in Whistler.

Lorenda Calvert has recently joined the staff of the Burnaby Village Museum as Assistant Programmer, replacing **Lynda Maeve Orr**, who recently retired after more than 25 years of service. **Terra Dickinson** has joined the staff as Museum Programs Coordinator, replacing **Sanya Pleshakov** who is on maternity leave. Congratulations to Sanya and husband, Murray, on the birth of their baby boy in December.



Detail of the Victorian Vancouver:
Family Portraits exhibition. Photo
credit: Silmara Albi.



VICTORIAN VANCOUVER: FAMILY PORTRAITS Sheila Giffen

In the fall of 2014, Roedde House Museum mounted an exhibition titled *Victorian Vancouver: Family Portraits* which told the stories of three families from distinct cultures who were foundational pioneers in Victorian-era Vancouver. Situated in the heart of Vancouver's iconic West End neighbourhood, Roedde House Museum is a restored Victorian home built in 1893 for the family of Gustav Roedde, a German immigrant who was a printer and bookbinder. The museum offers an immersive window into the city's past so visitors can explore the house and imagine life in the 1890s.

One of the challenges we face as a historic house museum is to situate the daily life of the Roedde family in the broader context of Vancouver's social history over 100 years ago. Beyond the four walls of the house – what was the community like at that time? Who were the Roedde's neighbours and contemporaries? What sorts of obstacles did they face as a German immigrant family? How does their story relate to other histories of migration to BC and to the challenge of building a sense of home and place?



Winnie Cheung, founder of the Pacific Canada Heritage Centre - Museum of Migration Society, at the exhibition launch on August 30. Photo credit: Silmara Albi.

We set out to develop *Victorian Vancouver: Family Portraits* to place the Roedde family history in context of BC's richly diverse heritage and to broaden our museum's "window to the past". One section featured the history of Gustav Roedde's printing and bookbinding business. The second featured contemporaries of the Roedde business, Ho Sun Hing Printers. Ho Sun Hing is one of the oldest and longest standing Chinese-English printers in Vancouver founded by Lam Lat Tong when racialized legislation against Chinese immigrants in BC posed significant challenges for new business owners. Our third section told the story of Kanaka Ranch where generations of Hawaiian immigrants lived on the shores of Coal Harbour. Each of these families created their own sites of culture, commerce and community in the city's early years.

Beyond providing portraits of Victorian-era Vancouver, we wanted to emphasize the historical legacy of these immigrant communities –these are not merely portraits frozen in time, but dynamic traces of our city's past. The mandate of the museum is to celebrate Vancouver's past for

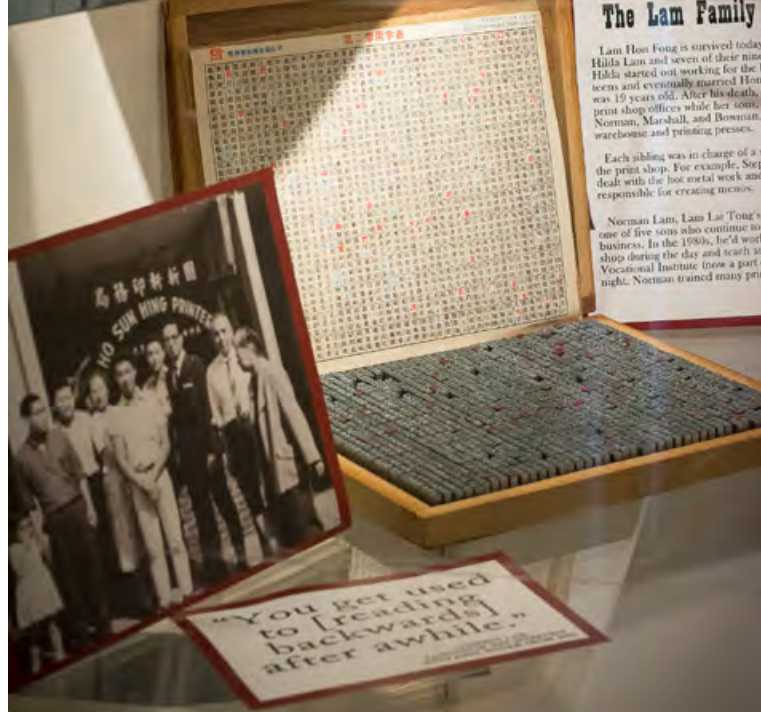
the future. Reaching out and engaging with the community is essential for fulfilling the mission to connect these stories to our present moment.

We collaborated with the founder of the Pacific Canada Heritage Centre - Museum of Migration (PCHC-MoM) Society, Winnie Cheung, to offer tours of the exhibit to non-English speakers and new immigrants. PCHC-MoM volunteers led groups around the house in Mandarin and Cantonese. A group of new immigrants from the People's Republic of China [largely Mandarin speakers] were surprised to learn of the long history of Chinese migration to Canada and knew little of the legacy of racialized legislation against the Chinese. We also hosted the Hong Kong Polytechnic University Alumni Association and the Chinese University of Hong Kong Alumni Association –while these groups were more familiar with the history of Chinese migration, several were taken aback by the history of Hawaiian migration to BC. Even amongst people who are firmly established in Vancouver's cultural community, we noticed a lack of knowledge about other histories of migration to this area –particularly the history of

Hawaiian migration to BC which has left fewer material traces on the city's landscape. It was a real testament to how these histories slip away from a common cultural memory when their physical traces do not last.

One visitor from these groups remarked that he was grateful for the opportunity to visit the house, adding that he would not have felt welcomed had we not reached out to communities of new immigrants in BC. His comment gestures to a challenge faced by heritage spaces like the Roedde House –this Victorian home presents a window into daily life 100 years ago, but for many people, this is not seen as a shared history. Developing exhibitions and programming that consciously seek to broaden that window to the past and reach out to communities of people who would not otherwise feel welcome, is a way for us to connect with people and become a more integral part of Vancouver's cultural landscape. More importantly, it gives us a sense of purpose that is rooted in the Roedde family legacy, but that extends far beyond the Roedde's themselves to engage in broader questions of migration, home, family and place.

Sheila Giffen is the Museum Manager of Roedde House Museum and the Executive Director of Canadian Women in the Literary Arts [CWILA].



[Top and above right] Detail of the Victorian Vancouver: Family Portraits exhibition. Photo credit: Silmara Albi.

[Above left] Visitors at the Victorian Vancouver: Family Portraits exhibition. Photo credit: Silmara Albi.



Provincial Fair, RBCM. Photo credit: Janet Macdonald, RBCM Head of Learning.

HISTORY AROUND US

Tom Morton, Provincial Director of Heritage Fairs in BC, shares examples of local history projects that helped participants foster an appreciation for their own communities.

WISH YOU WERE HERE

Conference 2014

Owl keeps watch over the BCMA awards envelopes at the awards ceremony and banquet.



Kristen with her project, My Heritage Home. Photo credit: Tom Morton.

Kristen Schulz of North Vancouver became curious about the objects that she found in the attic of her heritage home: a glass door sign with “John Bull Co. Broker” on it, a milk bottle from the Associated Dairy, and more. Soon she was researching in the City Directory and reading census records in the North Vancouver Museum and Archives to tell the stories of the previous homeowners. She eventually made an award winning video of her project, *The Heritage of My Home*, in which she told the story of her research and argued for the importance of preserving heritage buildings.

Many students do not see themselves in history. Heritage Fairs give them a chance to “do history” and make meaningful connections between their own lives and school history. They can explore their local and personal stories and present these to a wider audience at their school or local museum. Some are selected to present their research to the general public at the Provincial Fair that will be at the Royal BC Museum this summer.

Many students explore the history of their local communities, completing projects on local businesses such as the Kelowna Creamery. Others look at communities like Japantown or Webster’s Corner. Local figures are sometimes the focus of a project, including Vernon’s Michael Schratter who cycled around the world to raise awareness of mental illness and



Rose Prince, the Carrier Nak'azdli First Nation woman whose grave is a pilgrimage site. Many choose a topic clearly linked to their identity such as Andrew's project, *The Salmon People*, based on his interviews of his uncle and grandfather about their beliefs and Ryan's project, *Komagata Maru: the Journey of My Forefathers*.

Some bemoan the lack of national narratives in Heritage Fair projects [calling for less Grandpa, more John A.]. Others say that the focus on family and community history neglects critical thinking [what young person will challenge Grandpa's memory?] However, the skillful history teacher helps students link the local to larger themes in Canadian and world history. Although there are clear pitfalls in trying to understand complex events through personal stories, place-based research projects provide readily available "primary sources" for historical thinking about evidence. The BC Heritage Fairs [web site](#) has a variety of resources for teachers to help their students deepen their understanding of the historical method.



[Top] Ryan with his project, *Komagata Maru: the Journey of My Forefathers*. Photo credit: Michael Gurney. [Above] Heritage Fair project *The Forgotten Streets of Japantown*. Photo credit: Tom Morton. [Right] Andrew with his project, *Michael Schratter: One Pedal at a Time*. Photo credit: Michael Gurney.





Protest held on July 1, 1977 against development of the energy industry in Kitimat.

NOBODY SAID PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WOULD BE EASY.

Louise Avery shares her thoughts on why the community of Kitimat did not respond to an exhibit exploring a controversial topic.



WISH YOU WERE HERE

Conference 2014

Tracey Herbert [left], Executive Director, First People's Cultural Council, with Jennifer Iredale, Director, Heritage Branch.

The Kitimat Museum & Archives presented *Kitimat Questions: Energy* August 29 to October 18.

Over the past three years, Kitimat has become the focus for much of Canada's energy debate, first with the Northern Gateway pipeline and later with liquefied natural gas development.

Inspired by Robert Janes' book *Museums in a Troubled World* (2009), I saw an opportunity for our Museum to be mindful and relevant at this critical global time. Many Kitimat residents had been asking questions at open houses and other industry events and municipal gatherings. Uncertainty abounded. It felt like the right time to create an exhibition that provided a space for critical thinking about the energy debates.

Working in collaboration with co-curator Canadian photojournalist and author Robin Rowland, ten panels were assembled that explored energy production, type and use. The *Let's Talk Energy* program at the Canada Science & Technology Museum, Ottawa provided an energy kiosk with current Canadian energy content. A rare earth magnet activity, energy product samples including oil sand, and a thermal-imaging camera were included in the exhibition. Three films from US-based Rational Middle on Canada's energy were looped and available for viewing.





[Left] Leach Harrison Session. [Above] Rational Middle Energy Film Screening

Artists were invited to create artwork on energy, but not necessarily protest art. The choice was theirs and the doors were left open for anything. The artists knew that the goal of the exhibition would be to engage visitors to think on energy. Their artwork would hang between the display panels on energy innovation, activism, regulation, market, consultation, environment, economy and culture. Most created artwork with a message of concern and caution.

An important component of the exhibit was to gather questions about energy from local residents, which would be circulated to government, organizations, and industry to answer. The answers would be presented later as a publication or future exhibit. To gather resident's questions, a general call in the community for questions was made through social media, a focus group, a flyer, and personal contact at meetings and a municipal council meeting broadcast on local cable.

White boards were placed in the gallery during the exhibition to gather any additional questions, comments, and concerns. Programming was offered including a youth

writing competition, speakers, and film viewing. During the exhibition run and three programmed events, there was significant radio, newspaper, television, and on-line advertising.

Despite the timely topic and great effort put into organizing the exhibit and related programming, we saw a considerable decrease in Museum visitation during the exhibition. Why? I have a few thoughts:

The topic is tiring – “Not another energy event to attend!” Many residents said that Kitimat is exhausted by information sessions and public hearings.

The topic is obscure – Yes, even with Kinder Morgan and Enbridge Northern Gateway pipelines in the news daily, the greater public is only now grasping the relationship between fossil fuel use, environment, global health, and their part in the continuing demand for energy. How does Canada balance its need for a strong economy with fossil fuel export and a clean environment? You would think this subject would be perfect for opinion by many. Not so...



Terrace Artist Marek Waszkiewicz

Only four people wrote their questions, comments, and concerns on the whiteboards provided and despite a one-month extension and a great prize [iPad, iPod, digital camera], only 6 youth writers entered the essay contest. A very small amount of protest art was submitted by regional artists. One artist remarked that she did not know how to approach the topic.

The topic is serious – It is my belief that only a small portion of the population wants to think critically and seriously during limited leisure time. The Museum's third space, although thought-provoking, may not have been considered as welcoming to the broader population.

The title doesn't commit– Some thought presenting the facts and concern for the environment of the future through questioning was a missed opportunity for strong debate. Some called to book space for an anti-pipeline event and to ask for space in the exhibition. The Museum decided that in an effort to present all points of view, no one view could be endorsed. This turning away of events and groups could have affected visitation to subsequent museum-hosted events. In truth, if the Museum had taken a stand for or against fossil fuel in Kitimat, and thus presented something provocative, participation would have increased.

The funding is suspect – The Museum needed funders to have an exhibition and programming that explored the question of

energy production, type and use. To that end, endorsing anti-pipeline sentiment would not be the way to go. This funding pursuit with energy companies did not sit well with some, while some energy companies were reluctant to fund anything that might challenge their message tracks.

The topic is non-traditional and unusual for a museum– The Museum presented a current issue other than local history, culture, and landscape/still life painting traditions. The Museum is not the "go to" place for controversial enquiry.

Why were we so far off the mark? Would the topic have done better in an urban and/or academic setting? We had some additional barriers. Those who wouldn't normally visit a museum did hear about the exhibition but didn't make it in. "You did that energy thing!" Interest was there but feelings of guilt were expressed at not having attended. There was also a physical barrier as the Museum's main entrance had changed temporarily due to sidewalk construction. This change confused residents, many of whom thought the Museum was closed during construction. The BC teacher's job action fell at the worst time, affecting potential visitation by school groups.

Please have a look at our panels, the artwork and stories and share your thoughts on the topic of public engagement on controversial topics. [Click here to go to our page.](#)

Louise Avery is the Curator of the Kitimat Museum & Archives.



The Wall from the Museum of Copenhagen.
Photo Credit: [Museum of Copenhagen](#).

BESTPRACTICES

A GOOD CONNECTION Jason Clarke

Albert Einstein had a few things to say about technology and its potential impact on our ability to connect on a human level. He was once quoted as saying:

"I fear the day that technology will surpass our human interaction. The world will have a generation of idiots."

Fair enough, Al. You don't have to go very far today to see a table of four, deeply engrossed in conversation... with their text messages. Or, for that matter, said people obliviously walking into traffic after dinner because their photo of chicken parm is blowing up on Instagram [for the record, that was some of my best filtering work, but I digress].

So was Einstein on to something? Are we becoming so absorbed in technology that we don't notice the humans around us, or can we use technology to *enhance* these human connections before we all turn into cyborgs?



[Top] The Alumni Story Touch Table at UBC's Sauder School of Business. Photo Credit: NGX Interactive

[Above] The Testimonial Booth at the Centre for Civil and Human Rights. Photo Credit: [Second Story](#)

Good news: not all technology is created equal and there are thankfully many settings where technology can enrich human connections without leading people into traffic. Luckily for us, museums are one of those settings.

There are many examples of interactive technology in museums that connect people to each other and to a shared sense of place. Many of these interactive tech exhibits create a channel through which museum visitors can become part of the exhibit itself and share something about themselves that they otherwise wouldn't. Visitors can then learn about and connect with their fellow visitor, creating a unique - and uniquely human - interaction.

The [Testimonial Booth and Wall](#) at the Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta, Georgia, provides an imaginative example of an exhibit that facilitates human connections. Visitors are invited to become part of the exhibit by adding an image of themselves and completing the sentence: "I am _____". These contributions are then added to a growing collection of submissions on the gallery's Testimonial Wall where visitors can touch on profiles and get to know fellow museum-goers.

In addition to connecting people to each other, interactive tech exhibits can also connect people to a sense of place. The [Alumni Story Touch Table](#) at UBC's Sauder School of Business connects visitors to the school through multi-layered, interactive content. Alumni, students, and staff are taken through the storied history of their school through photos, stories, class composites, and cultural milestones, connecting them to their school and each other through a shared sense of nostalgia and pride. The expansive size of the screen - roughly 16.5 ft by 2 ft - encourages users to make human connections as they explore [let's call this the Rubbing Shoulders Effect]. Multiple visitors can comfortably use the screen at once, fostering open conversation as they navigate through the timeline from 1929 to 2014.



*The WALL from the Museum of Copenhagen.
Photo Credit: 2020cities.blogspot.com*

Similarly, the WALL from the Museum of Copenhagen also connects people to each other and to a shared sense of place. This 12 meter long and 2 meter high interactive screen is found in various locations throughout Copenhagen. Through a mixture of interactive content, the WALL allows visitors to explore the past, present and future of Copenhagen and learn more about their city and the people that inhabit it. The depth of content steadily grows as users add their own personal memories, pictures, films, music and texts. The Rubbing Shoulders Effect also plays a role here, as the massive multi-touch screen encourages multiple users to explore the scene and learn about the city [and each other] at the same time.

It's clear from today's applications of interactive technology in museums and other interpretive spaces that technology can offer an effective platform to establish unique and unexpected human connections. If we approach technology as a tool to enable and enrich these interactions in museums, rather than something that hinders them, we might be pleasantly surprised by the results. Together we can keep Einstein's "generation of idiots" at bay.

Jason Clarke is the Content Strategist at NGX Interactive, an interactive design firm specializing in creating digital storytelling experiences for museums, science centres, and other cultural and educational institutions.



*A lone Sequoia tree in Oak Bay is valued as a cultural landscape remnant.
Photo by Liz Crocker.*

BESTPRACTICES

MERGING WORLDS

Liz Crocker

Increasingly, I've noticed more conversation between the heritage and cultural worlds. This makes me wonder, could museums apply heritage conservation's values-based approach to collections and the development of exhibitions to increase community engagement? Could I have written a more cumbersome sentence? Both merit investigation.

At a recent heritage professionals meeting in Burnaby, the merging of heritage, culture and nature were quite evident. BCMA's own Theresa Mackay delivered a well-received presentation. Theresa talked about the areas of overlap between the arts, culture and heritage sectors. There is usually little museum representation at these meetings. People were inspired by her talk and BCMA's work.

Javier Campos of Heritage Vancouver Society talked about his group believing in a heritage that is living – a heritage that includes archaeology, aesthetics, intangibles and ecology.

Internationally, this sentiment was echoed at the recent International Council on Monuments and Sites [ICOMOS] conference in Italy. The conference theme was "heritage and landscape as human values". At the meeting in Burnaby, two heritage professionals who attended the conference in Florence, talked about how internationally, Canada is seen as a key player in the shift to an emphasis on cultural landscapes and formal acknowledgement of intangible heritage. Clearly, the meaning of heritage extends far beyond saving old buildings.

Back in BC, determining heritage values for historic places is a community-based process that extends beyond heritage experts such as historians and architects. It encourages input from the neighbours and citizens who live with or near the



Some of the members of the Oak Bay Heritage Foundation. [Left to right] Robert Taylor, Marg Palmer, Joan Heagle, Pat Wilson and Phebe Chartrand. Photo by Marg Palmer.

historic place. Historic places added to the British Columbia Register of Historic Places (BCRHP) have been *deemed* by their communities as having heritage value.

The definition of an historic place is broad. It includes: buildings, structures, groups of buildings or structures, historic districts, cultural landscapes and archaeology sites. Historic sites are assessed for a wide range of heritage values that include:

- Aesthetic value [eg. architectural excellence]
- Historic value [eg. has association with an important historical person]
- Scientific value [eg. an archaeology site]
- Cultural value [eg. a place of long term traditional cultural use]
- Spiritual value [eg. burials and other places associated with after-life]
- Social value [eg. has past and/or present meaning for a particular social group]

Recently, I assisted the Municipality of Oak Bay near Victoria to write statements of significance for four properties. Statements of significance are required documents describing the heritage values of an historic place. Oak Bay had already gone through the process of determining what heritage they valued during the creation of the *Oak Bay Heritage Plan*. That process involved town hall and focus group meetings, which were avidly attended by interested citizens, including local experts like the Oak Bay archivist.

The process forces participants, in this case residents, to articulate what heritage values are important to them about where they live. Opening the process to everyone, not just experts, allows a much wider and more inclusive range of values to be identified for an historic place. We all know, as museum or heritage professionals, we have our own biases and ideas about what has value and what doesn't. Including the wider community in determining heritage significance, doesn't negate the values professionals might identify, it places them on even footing with values articulated by someone with a different kind of knowledge about the place.



Interior features such as wooden staircases, were identified in the statement of significance for a house in Oak Bay. Photo by Liz Crocker

For Oak Bay the key heritage values defined in the Oak Bay Heritage Plan are:

- Heritage Streetscapes and Neighbourhoods
- Historic Buildings and Structures
- Cultural Landscape Features
- Natural Landscape Features
- Oak Bay's Unique History

In Oak Bay, the Heritage Commission and Heritage Foundation are two active volunteer groups that work in partnership with Oak Bay Municipality to support and encourage heritage conservation in their community. The groups are made up of engaged citizens who are motivated to protect what they love about the place they live in.

Along with colleagues Alastair Kerr and Denise Cook, I facilitated workshops with these heritage groups to identify the Oak Bay heritage values specifically represented by the houses in question. From workshop results we wrote the first drafts of statements of significance, then sent them back to the community for



This distinctive low lying stone wall was identified as adding to the character of the streetscape of the neighbourhood. Photo by Liz Crocker.

comments and rewrites. The finished product is a statement of significance that is fully theirs. The values were not decided by experts and handed down to the people. In this process, the people of Oak Bay, shaped and helped write their own statements of significance.

I think museums might consider something similar to the heritage conservation process, to inform the development of collections and exhibitions that are more inclusive and relevant to the people who visit them. There is already overlap between museums and the heritage world, increasing where and how they overlap may be beneficial to both. In smaller communities, the same folks who run the museum are often also involved in built heritage, archives, and other related issues. I think there are opportunities for museums to be more involved in the broader heritage around them. Blurred edges and worlds converging can be a good thing.

*Used to moving between different worlds, **Liz Crocker** is the Digital Content Writer for the Royal BC Museum's new Learning Portal and a member of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals.*



Detail of the Where are the Children exhibition. Photo credit: The Exploration Place

BEST PRACTICES MUSEUM ^{AS} FORUM

Tracy Calogheros shares examples of how museums can serve as safe places for difficult discussions and conversation.

As society evolves, so too, do our institutions. That may seem a funny notion for the colloquial understanding of “Museum” as an historical facility that is, arguably, invested in looking back but I take the position that the modern expression of “Museum” encompasses a far broader definition. At one end of the spectrum there is an artists’ run centre engaged in disseminating the ephemera of a risky performance piece while at the other, a national gallery with a mandate to collect and interpret on an international

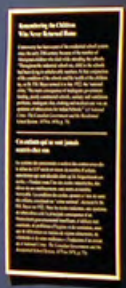
scale. The role of a community institution then, is to be a compelling entry point to cultural exploration; to create relationships based on trust, understanding and camaraderie that will shape an individual’s willingness to participate throughout their lives, all along this cultural spectrum.

Museums are gifted with the advantage of general credibility. As a mirror for our collective successes and failures, triumphs and mistakes, museums

Detail of the *Where are the Children* exhibition. Photo credit: The Exploration Place

Remembering the Children Who Never Returned Home

Ces enfants qui ne sont
jamais rentrés chez eux



have long provided a first person experience that is neither judgmental nor punitive; things simply “are,” with discernment remaining intensely individual. If museums are to remain vital, they must mature into multi-disciplinary forums; a safe place for difficult discussions and arduous inquiry.

The Exploration Place Museum + Science Centre leapt into this concept of forum with both feet in 2007 when we hosted *Where Are the Children*, a travelling exhibition looking at the legacy of residential schools in Canada. This powerful story transformed not only our visitors but also our staff and our relationship with long-time partners like the Lheidli T’enneh.

Not everyone was affected in the same manner; there were heavy helpings of anger, tears, disbelief and gratitude and everything in between. My interpretative team learned to help survivors, colleagues and visitors

alike, as they explored the challenging content.

Several First Nations organizations hosted healing circles at the Museum and many families came in multi-generational groups to share stories with youth that had never openly been discussed before. It was a rewarding, yet very difficult time in our galleries; one that brought such value to our community we decided as a team to take another look at related subject matter in the *September 1913* exhibit in 2008. Building on the partnership with the Lheidli T’enneh, we developed an exhibit examining the circumstances surrounding the expulsion of the Band from Fort George Park. This show elicited similar, disparate responses from our audiences, but encouraged our community to take a few more steps along the path to understanding and healing.

The third exhibit, in what has turned out to be a trilogy of sorts, was 2013’s *Cultural Expressions of the Lheidli*



Visitors viewing the Cultural Expressions of the Lheidli T'enneh exhibition. Photo credit: The Exploration Place

T'enneh. In this case, the Lheidli T'enneh contacted the Museum and asked us to work with them to develop a showcase for their history as they hosted the Provincial Elder's Gathering. This piece was focused on examining their past as a People, how far they've come as a Community and celebrating their future as a Nation. As Elders from across British Columbia explored this work they made it clear what an impact it had upon them to have this opportunity within a museum.

The old-fashioned panel format, placing opposing views in the same room and respectfully sharing opinions, is another way to have uncomfortable discussions. These panels happen at universities, in club houses, on-line and around dinner tables, but in each of these cases the audiences are dictated by some affiliation to the venue. At the Museum everyone feels welcome and finds a place to express themselves to others they might not otherwise have met. Information changes hands, ideas are tested, theories are challenged and in that environment growth

happens. We have hosted two such community forums at the Museum in the last year, one on the legalization of marijuana and the other on genetically modified foods. Both of these events attracted large, mostly new, audiences that resulted in lively, mostly respectful, debate.

These forums showcase the role of our Museum in our community as a hub of cultural reconnaissance. Northern British Columbia is growing and evolving, with that comes change and sometimes, conflict. The museum is that central point, a pivot if you will, where everyone can for a moment, take a deep breath, investigate a variety of points of view and think a little more deeply about their own. In my view, a noisy museum is a compelling museum; one that has integrated itself into the messy business of engaging its audience all along the cultural spectrum.

Tracy Calogheros is the CEO of The Exploration Place Museum + Science Centre in Prince George.

WISH YOU WERE HERE

Hill Day

Shivering on the windy steps of the Parliament Buildings for CMA Hill Day! BCMA Executive Director Theresa Mackay with Nancy Noble, CEO of Museum of Vancouver and President of Canadian Museums Association, and Angela Williams, COO of Royal BC Museum.



Owl and **Dr. Scott Cooper** enjoyed a cozy lunch next to one of the brick fireplaces at Il Terrazzo Ristorante in downtown Victoria. Dr. Cooper recently joined the staff of the Royal BC Museum as Vice President, Exhibitions Innovation.



I understand that your first career choice was engineering. How did you get from there to museum work?

My father was a builder who made a living restoring the legion of derelict cottages that once littered the mill towns of Yorkshire. My childhood was spent helping him – hauling bricks and mixing mortar. Aside from providing me with some useful trade skills it drummed in to (or brought out of) me a profound desire to preserve the past by unlocking its relevance to the present. That passion stayed with me through adulthood. It informed my graduate studies in engineering, building conservation and architectural history. It also drove my career from conserving historic churches in Scotland and Venice to the repurposing of nationally-important historic buildings – often for new uses as museums. Increasingly I began to specialize in museums – most recently creating the first museum of slavery in the Islamic world. I suppose it might be considered somewhat circuitous, but to my mind, youth and adulthood, studies and work, have all been connected by one deeply held belief – a belief in ‘the power of place’.

As we talk, it seems to me you are a person driven by curiosity: a desire to live an interesting life, and to help others connect to what interests and energizes them. Why do you think museums and heritage sites have become your platform to pursue and encourage curiosity?

Certainly I am a curious individual. From autobiographies to auto-mechanics I have an endless desire to learn how people live or why things work, largely because it helps me make sense of the world and my place within it. I would be a liar to say such thinking informs my every waking hour. It doesn't. My life, like many other people's, is principally comprised of writing emails, paying bills and school runs. Finding the time for intellectual epiphanies is a luxury. And that's why museums are so special to me. They not only care for, organize and store many of the things that are important to us, they also take the time to connect them together for us, and increasingly with us. When the world is changing at unprecedented rates and free time is increasingly scarce, it seems to me that the role of museums – as places that help society find the time to pause, puzzle, think of the world differently and talk about it openly and together – has never been more important.

What has surprised you so far about life in British Columbia?

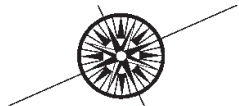
First and foremost, I have, of course, been surprised by the astonishing scale and beauty of British Columbia – I had a rough idea gleaned from my sons' affection for the Discovery Channel but nothing prepared me for the view from the window of the early-morning sea plane to Vancouver. Secondly, as a father of three children under six, BC is about as perfect a place to bring up a family as can be imagined – for a hundred different reasons. And finally, I have been truly taken aback by how steady and considerate drivers are – especially in Victoria. Perhaps it's a facet of the mellow Pacific North-West vibe people talk about here? Certainly it's very calming, unless of course, you're in a rush...

WISH YOU WERE HERE

Conference 2014

[Left to right]: Theresa Mackay, Executive Director, BCMA; Katherine Molloy, Executive Director, Heritage BC; Heather Jeliaskov, Marketing & Membership Manager, BCMA; and Ursula Pfahler, Heritage Resources Planner, Province of BC.





British Columbia Museums Association *Since 1957*

RoundUp is published by the BC Museums Association, a provincially incorporated society and a registered charitable organization. The BCMA holds the copyright on all material unless otherwise stated. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Association. ISSN 0045-3005.

RoundUp is distributed to all BCMA members and to subscribers. Ad rates available upon request.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia.



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ARTS COUNCIL

The BCMA is a professional association serving the museum and gallery community of British Columbia. 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. Visit museumsassn.bc.ca for more info.

Contact us!

BC Museums Association
675 Belleville St
Victoria, BC
V8W 9W2
P: 250-356-5700



members@museumsassn.bc.ca
<http://museumsassn.bc.ca>

Editorial Policy *RoundUp* is the quarterly publication of the BC Museums Association, providing a forum to highlight BC museums and galleries, and best practices relevant to museum and gallery professionals in the province. Quarterly themes are established by an editorial committee, who direct the managing editor to solicit related content. It is recommended that people contact the managing editor before submitting unsolicited content. Unsolicited content is reviewed by the editorial committee for suitability for the issue. Though the content published in *RoundUp* does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the BC Museums Association, the BCMA reserves the right to reject or require edits to content at any point in the publication process due to suitability or space restrictions.



Print, fill out, cut, then scan and email to us.

BCMA MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES AND ANNUAL FEES

VOTING MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

☐ **Institutional: \$80.00-\$550.00**
For public, not-for-profit museums and galleries in BC.

☐ **Individual: \$50.00**
☐ **Student/Volunteer: \$30.00**

NON-VOTING CATEGORIES

☐ **Affiliate: \$100.00**
For museums and galleries not yet open to the public, non-profit societies, privately owned collections, suppliers and interested businesses.

☐ **Affiliate Individual: \$100.00**
For individuals who earn income through contracts or service provision or other commercial activities for museums, galleries, heritage organizations or related cultural institutions.

SIGN UP NOW! (Please fill in appropriate information; membership valid for 12 months.)

Name _____ Contact _____

Address _____

City/Province _____ Postal Code _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

Website address _____

Method of Payment

☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Please send invoice Credit card: ☐ VISA ☐ Mastercard

Credit card number _____ Expiry date ____ / ____

Signature _____ Name on card _____

For information, call 250-356-5700 or visit our website: www.museumsassn.bc.ca