Who is the Foundation?

At its very core, the Royal BC Museum Foundation wishes to focus on promoting and supporting the aims, interests and activities of the Royal BC Museum.

The Royal British Columbia Museum Foundation began in early 1970 when the Museum’s then director, Dr. Clifford Carl, joined representatives from 10 local organizations whose aims were consistent with those of the Museum – to collectively create a new organization called the Friends of the Provincial Museum and later the Friends of the Royal BC Museum.

Often referred to in early documents as “The Means Finders” the Friends quickly grew into a structure of financial and community support of the Museum’s vision and development, raising over 3.2 million dollars in support of the Museum between 1972-1982. In these early years the Friends contributed to major efforts including the construction of the Old Town Gallery and funding the restoration of St. Ann’s Schoolhouse.

On November 17, 1970 the Friends opened the gift shop initially staffed entirely by dedicated volunteers. At the end of the first year of operation the Gift Shop generated a net profit of $20,000. Now the combined revenues of the gift shops average 1.8 million dollars annually.

In 2005 the Friends of the Royal BC Museum merged with the Royal BC Museum Foundation creating the Friends of the Royal BC Museum Foundation before undergoing a name change in April 2011 to become the Royal BC Museum Foundation. This name change streamlines the organization’s brand and is more in keeping with the work we do to support the Royal BC Museum.

To this day the Royal BC Museum Foundation continues to be a non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to support the Royal BC Museum financially and by reinforcing its links with the community. The Foundation’s retail operations provide a revenue stream to cover operating costs and provide annual funding to the Museum. The Foundation also manages all donated and invested funds and supports the Museum’s fundraising strategies.

Across the organization over 100 volunteers support the work of the Foundation in every aspect of operations from coat check to retail to office support. They continue to be as essential to the Foundation as they were at its inception.

The Royal BC Museum Foundation is a group of passionate individuals who inspire support for, and enrich the mission and vision of the Royal BC Museum

The Royal BC Museum Foundation is a non-profit organization whose sole purpose, since 1970, has been to support the Royal BC Museum
President’s Report

Gary Braley

Looking back over the last 45 years we have moved from a family of friends to a Foundation, a structure supporting and enriching the vision of the Royal British Columbia Museum. Originally known as the Friends of the Royal BC Museum, the now Royal BC Museum Foundation manages all donated and invested funds as well as the Royal Museum Shops, with average annual revenues of over $1.8 million dollars. This year our bylaws were amended to allow expanded membership letting us offer recognition to our generous donors and expanding our ability to secure new grants to support the Museum and its programs.

Traditionally, the arrival of Vikings in your town was not generally considered good for business. However, the stay of the Vikings: Lives Beyond the Legends proved that in history and still today that the arrival of Vikings can be a time of remarkable trade. This past year has been an interesting and successful time for us here at the Foundation.

The Museum reported excellent attendance for the Vikings Exhibit, drawing visitors from all over the country and the world to visit Victoria and our Museum. As a result, our Viking shop performed very well and we were able to provide the Museum with a grant of $138,000. This success combined with our investments and other efforts allowed us to contribute a total of $975,000 in grants to the Museum to support their programing, projects and exhibits this past year.

But it’s not just Vikings; our Royal Museum Shop also exceeded budget expectations and improved on sales from last year. We continue to focus on a distinctive British Columbia selection, highlighting the best our province has to offer. The Royal Museum Shop is proud to display the works of over 50 talented BC artisans and First Nations artists. This year we joined in the implementation of the Authentic Indigenous Label program to support indigenous artists and inform our customers of the benefit their purchase makes to the artists.

I would like to extend my thanks to our many volunteers who are essential in supporting the work of the Royal BC Museum Foundation. They are a vital part of our organization and help ensure our success. The Royal BC Museum Foundation is grateful for their dedication and support.

Lastly, I would like to extend a special thank you to Cristi Main, our Executive Director, and to Brian Yellin, our Manager of Finance. I would also like to thank our Directors and staff for their continued efforts and our donors for their generous contributions.

Warmest Regards,

Gary Braley
President, Royal British Columbia Museum Foundation

Did you know...? The Royal BC Museum Foundation is the charitable arm of the Museum and Archives and is a vital partner in helping the Royal BC Museum achieve its vision.
Treasurer’s Report
Matthew Rainsberry

It is my privilege to present the Treasurer’s Report on behalf of the Royal British Columbia Museum Foundation’s Board of Directors.

Hayes Stewart Little & Company, Chartered Accountants, has reviewed the Foundation’s financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2015.

In addition to operating the Royal Museum and Gallery Shops, the Foundation has $8,000,000 of funds under management. An Investment Policy Statement governs these investments and management of these funds is overseen by an Investment Committee. For the equity portion of our portfolio, TD Wealth, Private Investment Counsel, is our external investment manager. During the past year investment returns on our equity portfolio totaled $300,000, a 15% return. Most of the funds we manage on behalf of the Museum have a short-term investment horizon and, as a result, 70% of our portfolio is invested in GICs which generate modest returns but are risk free and available when required.

With the Museum reporting excellent attendance for the Vikings Exhibit, both our Royal Museum Shop and our Vikings Gallery Shop exceeded expectations. We used some of the proceeds to provide the Museum with a $138,000 grant to support the Museum’s capital redevelopment efforts and a $75,000 grant to support the Gold Rush Exhibit.

During the year we provided the Museum with $975,000 in grants to support their programs, projects and exhibits.

The Foundation’s primary purpose is to provide financial assistance to the Royal BC Museum. We are pleased to report that over the past ten years, retail operations have contributed $3.2 million dollars in financial assistance.

In summary, the Foundation achieved solid financial results during the year and our financial position at March 31, 2015 remains strong.

We would not be where we are today without the support of our many volunteers who contribute so much of their time. I would like to express my thanks to these volunteers and to my fellow directors and Investment Committee members. Without you we could not have achieved so much.

In closing, I would like to extend a special thank you to our Executive Director, Cristi Main, and our Manager of Finance, Brian Yellin and his staff and volunteers.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Rainsberry
Treasurer, Royal British Columbia Museum Foundation
Chief Executive Officer’s Report

Professor Jack Lohman CBE

In September 2013, with the strong support of the Royal BC Museum Foundation, we completed our master plan, a comprehensive plan for a series of small and achievable steps to transform the Royal BC Museum from a worthy museum into a sustainable and vibrant museum brand. In that same month, we made our first request for financial support to the Provincial Government when I had the opportunity to present the master plan scheme to colleagues in the ministry. In that presentation, we asked for financial support for new spaces for our Emily Carr and Pacific object holdings, for a study center for research on Emily Carr and the renewal of our shop, catering and public spaces. The planned first phase of work addresses our greatest risk, the safety of the world’s largest collection of Emily Carr’s art works and writings by strengthening our seismic defense of this collection.

Since that moment, we have had a remarkable expression of support from many Canadians, and a demonstration of our membership’s understanding and loyalty, for which we are grateful.

Showcasing BC’s collection, we loaned 25 of our Emily Carr works to an exhibition in London, the first in the UK dedicated to BC’s iconic artist. In another first, our Tradition in Felicities exhibition went to China. BC’s rich cultural heritage was front and centre in June 2014 when we hosted the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.

This year we drew a record 790,000 visitors overall, the numbers boosted by our outstanding exhibition Vikings: Lives Beyond the Legends. Confirming and promoting our appeal, Tripadvisor, an independent travel reviewer, voted us Canada’s top museum in 2014.

Gold Rush! Eldorado in British Columbia opened to much acclaim on May 13, 2015. This is the first ever showing of Colombian national treasures in North America and the first time artifacts from across British Columbia have been assembled to tell the story of the gold rush. It is scheduled to visit China in late fall 2015; and then to the Canadian Museum of History from April 2016 to January 2017.
We ended our fiscal year with a small surplus and a cautiously optimistic outlook, aware that revenues are always subject to changing external factors. Our fundraising strategy is seeing results - $1.087 million raised in grants, private donations and corporate sponsorships in fiscal year 2014/15; and a further $750,000 in in-kind support, which helps offset our operational expenditures. We also had the benefit of over 46,000 volunteer hours given this year – a significant contribution and demonstration of support from the community.

Partners are essential to our success, and we continued building partnerships at all levels of our organization. We collaborated with the First Peoples’ Cultural Council to present Our Living Languages, celebrating the rich diversity of First Nations languages in BC – which was also awarded international recognition by the American Museums Association.

As we strive to maintain our aging facilities, we continue working to secure funding from all levels of government, private sector partners and philanthropists to develop a comprehensive business case to support implementation of the masterplan for the Royal BC Museum.

For its ongoing support, we are grateful to Royal BC Museum Foundation and I am grateful to all our Foundation Board members for their help and support. I am pleased we enjoy a strong bond between the Museum and the Foundation, and I am pleased that this collaboration is resulting in positive results for both our organizations.

Did you know…? In October 2014, The Royal BC Museum was the recipient of the prestigious Keck Award, an international award for conservation! It was awarded to the Museum for the conservation of the Chinese Freemason’s Lantern in 2013.

Professor Jack Lohman CBE  
Chief Executive Officer  
Royal British Columbia Museum
Royal Museum Shops

For the past 45 years the Royal BC Museum Foundation has provided an excellent extension to the visitor experience through the offerings and service in the Royal Museum Shops. This past year has been an incredible success with both stores exceeding expectations.

Since its inception, the Royal Museum Shop has been an integral part of the Foundation with its annual revenue, currently averaging 1.8 million dollars, going towards covering operating costs and providing support to the projects and exhibits of the Royal BC Museum.

A major enterprise involving the merchandising of 3,800 square feet and hundreds of products is nonetheless operated by our small energetic crew of staff and, of course, our amazing volunteers.

The Royal Museum Shop is proud to display and sell the products of over 50 BC and First Nations artists whose works exemplifies the Northwest Coastal art and the spirit of British Columbia. We continue to support and mentor British Columbian artists and in doing so, bring the best of BC to our visitors. The Shop also includes a large catalogue of books pertaining to Vancouver Island and British Columbia with many titles written and self-published by talented local authors. The Royal Museum Shop also carries the widest selection of Royal BC Museum publications.

Committed to supporting and engaging with First Nations artists, this year the Royal Museum Shop joined in the implementation of the Authentic Indigenous label program so customers purchasing First Nations art work and designs in our shop can be certain they too are supporting the artists themselves.

The Museum Shop continues to expand its offering of custom items, drawing on the great resources of the Museum and Archives for images and ideas. We have an extensive selection of Emily Carr reproductions, unique and exclusive to us. New this year: a reusable shopping bag featuring many of the Museum’s widely – and not so widely – known treasures, and for those rainy west coast days, an umbrella featuring an archival image of Victoria harbor. All custom product proudly carries the Royal BC Museum brand where possible.

Did you know…? Royal BC Museum members and IMAX annual pass holders receive 10% off all purchases in the Royal Museum Shops?
In addition to the continued success of our main shop, this past year’s Gallery shop, The Viking Shield, performed spectacularly. The gallery shop reported record sales with attendants coming from all over the world to see the exhibit and shop. In addition to travelers, the museum hosted Viking recreationists who stirred interest, offered expertise and made more than a few purchases. Interest in battle was strong with over 40 sword sales but major sales in books reinforced the exhibit’s message of ‘Lives Beyond the Legends’ or, perhaps like the Vikings, everyone just wanted something to occupy them on the long voyage home.

This year more than ever the shops will represent the culture and history of British Columbia with the Museum’s current exhibit: Gold Rush: The Eldorado in BC. Our Shop has been fully redesigned and stocked with tons of quality products emphasizing the allure of gold and this pivotal time in the development of our province. Many exclusive items have been developed for this gallery shop, using archival images of the Gold Rush eras from the Museum and Archives collections.

Lastly, our shops have taken an exciting step forward over the last year with the implementation and launch of an online e-commerce shop. While current selection of products are limited, as development continues visitors from all over the world will be able to order art, gifts and mementos from their visit to the Museum without having to find just that extra few feet of space in their luggage. Browse our new on-line shopping site at https://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/shop/

*Did you know…? For the 2014 – 2015 fiscal, the Royal Museum Shops sold over 95,000 individual items and processed over 46,000 transactions!*
Volunteers
The Foundation of the Royal BC Museum Foundation

It cannot be said enough how important the dedication and hard work of volunteers is to the Foundation. When the group that grew into the Foundation was founded it was organized entirely by volunteers and even today is mostly comprised of volunteers with the support of over 100 volunteers and a skeleton crew of approximately 15 staff members. More than the hundreds of hours of their valuable time, the volunteers of the Foundation go far beyond that by providing their experience, warmth and enthusiasm to everyone, visitor and co-worker alike. The volunteers are always quick to offer more, whether it means spending a Saturday in the stockroom to prepare for the grand opening of a gallery shop or extending their hours to cover an absence.

The volunteers are mostly composed of retirees, former educators and teachers and others from all walks of life with a few fresh faces smiling in the crowd and all of them enjoy the sense of community and engagement of the Museum. Friendly to a fault, the Museum comment cards regularly report an improved experience courtesy of one of our fine volunteers.

Most volunteers with the Museum and the Foundation provide their time and work for many years and if you ask any given volunteer at the gift shop or coat check how long they have been with the Museum, there is a great chance of receiving an answer of a decade or more.

Kathy, who has volunteered for the Royal BC Museum Foundation for nineteen years, states:

“I volunteer at the museum because I am a BC native and it represents BC history. I volunteer in the shop because I get the opportunity to meet international visitors. They bring their culture and history, and I can give them a sense of our culture and history through the products we sell.”

Quite simply, the Foundation could not do the work it does, nor be as successful, without the continued and vital support of this amazing group of people.

We thank them for their support!

Did you know…? Approximately 100 Foundation volunteers donate over 18,000 hours across our organization every year!
Our Donors

Donations received April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015

The Royal BC Museum Foundation gratefully acknowledges the following donors. These generous donations, received between April 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015, have significantly and positively impacted the important work of the Royal BC Museum.

$400,000 and up
Province of British Columbia

$20,000 to $49,999
Humberto and Gretchen Bauta
W. Anthony and Darlene Southwell
Anonymous

$10,000 to $19,999
John S. Walton
Susan and Lyall Knott

$2,500 to $9,999
John and Joan Walton Innovators Fund
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Gary and Susan Braley
Andrew Mahon Foundation
Elizabeth Kennedy
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Pauline Rafferty and Bob Plecas
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Patrick and Anne Anderson
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Art Gallery of Ontario
The Honourable Darla Hunter and Chuck Wilson
Derek Ellis
J. N. Braithwaite
Jim and Isobel Merston

$700 to $999
Alan Tompson in memory of Anne Tompson

Did you know…? Sales from the Royal Museum Shops cover operating costs, therefore 100% of your donation goes directly to supporting the Royal BC Museum!
Did you know...? The Royal BC Museum only receives 60% of their funding through the Provincial Government. That means 40% of all funding must come through different avenues, such as donations.

$500 to $699
Anonymous
Shelley Reid
Susan McMillan
Jean Field and Roy Richford
Betty Thacker
Angela Wesley
Carol Cullimore
Charles and Marjorie Moser
Daphne Baldwin
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Paula Carey and Nick Wemyss
Tiit Kõdar in memory of Jean Elizabeth Kõdar
Trudy Usher
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$400 to $499
Sandy Pratt
Jean and Wayne Howe
Doreen Mitchell

$200 to $399
Wild Play
Michael O’keefe
Barbara Rae and George Suart
Dennis McCann and Diane Darch
Maryla and Donovan Waters
Patrick D. Crofton
Theresa McMillan
Barbara C. Fields
Barbara Potash

$100 to $199
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Anne Smithson
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Ruth Mossop
Arnold Ranneris
Bill and Wendy Brown
Hans Kummer
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Susanna Solecki
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David and Brigid Crump
David and Susan Geddes
David Clark and Eileen Carmichael
David Evans and Margaret Hearn
Donald and Margaret Mills
Dr. Isobel L. Dawson
Elinor Naylor

Did you know...? Revenue from admissions only covers 17% of the cost of operating the Royal BC Museum
Harriett Hyde
Henry and Marian Summerfield
Jack and Barbara Kirby
Jane Carrothers
Jean Mihell
Jessie Laronde
Joan Murray
June Mussenden
June Sohuus
Kathleen Anderson
Leona Taylor
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Shannon Cherkowski
Vancity Community Foundation
Doug Shore
Jean H. Winter

The Royal BC Museum Foundation has done its best to ensure that donors are recognized accurately and appropriately. If you notice an error or omission, please contact us at 250-356-6151 or friends@royalbcmuseum.bc.ca
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www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/foundation