

February 11, 2015

Royal BC Museum launches the Learning Portal, online tool for learners across the province

VICTORIA, BC – Gaining access to the Royal BC Museum’s collections, research findings and fascinating stories behind its artifacts, specimens and archival records has become even easier, thanks to a new website, the first of its kind for a museum in Canada.

Today, the Royal BC Museum launched the Learning Portal (learning.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca), a window into its collections that kids and adult learners can crack open no matter where they live in the province.

The Learning Portal is a dynamic and intuitive website, designed to appeal to the different ways students of all ages choose to learn, featuring video content, audio recordings, fascinating images and compelling stories and articles. **It doesn’t matter** if a student is a visual learner, someone who wears headphones 24/7 or a lover of the written word – the Learning Portal offers plenty of ways to connect to **BC’s human** history and natural history.

“The Learning Portal is part of our commitment to the digital and physical renewal of our educational infrastructure at the museum,” said Royal BC Museum CEO Professor Jack Lohman. “Creating a major online study resource for informal learning will inspire curiosity about our important collections and stimulate creative thinking.”

The Learning Portal was designed with input from a diverse network of educators across BC, including teachers, librarians and staff from the Ministry of Education. Their input has helped the Royal BC Museum select and highlight some of the most interesting parts of its collections, with an emphasis on 21st century learning methods and approaches.

“The Learning Portal is a wonderful way for learners of all ages to engage with our province’s vast resources,” says Maureen Sawa, CEO of Greater Victoria Public Library. “BC public libraries support millions of lifelong learners and this is a fabulous way for learners to personalize the way they explore history.”

The Royal BC Museum designed the digital resource to be as warm and human as possible; the Learning Portal features photos and bios about contributing researchers, collection managers, conservators, curators and archivists from the Royal BC Museum staff. This gives users the opportunity to get to know the people behind the stories – and perhaps inspire a few young learners to someday work at a world-class museum.

The Learning Portal will continue to grow over its lifespan, continuously adding rich multimedia content and new interactive features. The next stage includes the ability for learners to **“pin” the most interesting articles, stories, videos and images to their own board**, similar to Pinterest.



As with all its digital projects, the Royal BC Museum bridges the stories of yesterday with **today's** technology, the better to reach learners of any age, no matter where they live. Another advantage to digital sites is the ability to feature objects, artifacts, specimens and archival records that are not on public display – just as the Royal BC Museum recently did with its 100 Objects of Interest website (royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/100/).

About the Royal BC Museum

The Royal BC Museum explores the province's human history and natural history, advances new knowledge and understanding of BC, and provides a dynamic forum for discussion and a place for reflection. The museum and archives celebrate culture and history, telling the stories of BC in ways that enlighten, stimulate and inspire. Looking to the future, by 2017 the Royal BC Museum will be a refreshed, modern museum, extending its reach far beyond Victoria as a world-class cultural venue and repository of digital treasures.

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