

July 29, 2023

Get ready for a new take on an old town at the Royal BC Museum

VICTORIA, BC — Old Town, a much beloved section of the Royal BC Museum’s third floor is reopening today with a new approach designed to inform and inspire visitors to the exhibition.

“Today is an exciting day for the people of BC and the Royal BC Museum,” says the Honourable Lana Popham, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport. “Old Town is an iconic exhibit that has entertained families and visitors for generations. The return of Old Town means people will reexperience some of their favourite memories at RBCM while learning about the museum’s plan to share more of our province’s diverse history and stories.”

Part of the former *Becoming BC* permanent modern history gallery, *Old Town, New Approach* brings back notable favourites including the garage, kitchen, Chinatown, hotel, train station and more alongside a new series of contextual panels and displays that will continually change over time with community collaboration.

The story of sleeping car porters, many of whom made their home in Vancouver’s Black community, Hogan’s Alley, is now part of the Port Moody train station. These panels were created in partnership with the BC Black History Awareness society and curator Josh Robertson.

Also included are an acknowledgement of the land and the people who lived on it before industrial development began and a number of thought-provoking questions to inspire visitors to consider their own experiences and memories. The Majestic Theatre will screen a number of Living Cultures films, collaboratively developed with Indigenous cultural ambassadors.

“The team have worked with a number of community partners to introduce diverse and inclusive perspectives into Old Town and we’re really looking forward to continuing that work and to hearing from you,” says Leslie Brown, Royal BC Museum board chair. “This is just the beginning.”

Old Town, New Approach is reopening with a commitment to accurate, respectful and diverse storytelling, upholding the principals laid out in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act and the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

Originally designed in the 1970s to reflect an imagined town reminiscent of life in the 1880s to early 1900s, Old Town has long been a favourite feature of the museum for many. While the exhibition’s immersive scents, sounds and textures were highly regarded by many and captured many elements of settler life at the turn of the 20th century, it didn’t share stories of the province’s continually growing, rich diversity.

MEDIA RELEASE

An update was made in the 1990s to develop the now iconic Chinatown installation. This work, done in partnership with members of the Victoria Chinese Canadian community, provided the opportunity for the community to tell their stories and histories in their own voice. The inclusion of Chinatown was the last major update made to the exhibition, until now.

Old Town, New Approach is now open. Entry is included with general admission or a museum membership.

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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. Located in Victoria on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen (Songhees and Xwsepsum Nations), we are a hub of community connections in BC—on-site, off-site, and online—taking pride in our collective histories.

For tickets to IMAX® Victoria and the Royal BC Museum, including combo tickets for both attractions, visit: [Tickets](#)

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