

October 18, 2019

## Royal BC Museum publishes a new book about one BC town's contributions to the Great War

VICTORIA, BC— More than one hundred years after the end of the First World War, the stories of 12 small-town BC men who soldiered in the conflict have been captured in the pages of the **Royal BC Museum's latest book**, *Once Well Beloved*, available today.

Starting with the stories of a carpenter, a coal miner and a drifter, all of whom volunteered for the war, Michael Sasges, a retired journalist and the former director of the Nicola Valley Museum, paints a detailed picture of the soldiers—and through them, the men, women and children of **BC's** Nicola Valley.

*"Once Well Beloved* is a well reported historical document about the great impact of World War I on a small Canadian community," **writes** Jeff Fleischer in *Foreword Reviews*.

The work of BC history and biography is a vivid snapshot of the town of Merritt, where a granite cenotaph erected in memory of 44 men who died soldiering in the First World War still stands today.

Through the stories of 12 of these 44 soldiers, readers also learn about the dramatic social and historical changes that occurred in the Nicola Valley, which had been suddenly and dramatically settled just a decade before by the will of railway executives and the arrival of British colliers.

The 144-page book, illustrated with black and white photographs from libraries, archives, museums and private collections, retails for \$17.95. It is available through local bookshops, the Royal Museum Shop and online at [rbc.ca/books](http://rbc.ca/books).

*Once Well Beloved* is also available in braille, thanks to the National Network for Equitable Library Service's Braille Publication Project. To download the electronic braille file, visit <https://nnels.ca/items/once-well-beloved-remembering-british-columbia-great-war-sacrifice>.

**The Royal BC Museum's publishing department and Sasges** are celebrating the launch of the book with two events: on October 29 from 6 to 7:30 pm at the Kamloops Library (<http://rhodes.tnrl.ca/record=g1000516&searchscope=0&SORT2=R>) and on November 7 from 7:00 to 8:30 pm at the Royal BC Museum (<https://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/visit/events/calendar/event/109009/book-launch-once-well-beloved>).

The Royal BC Museum will feature a number of performances and presentations on Remembrance Day to honour the service and sacrifice of **Canada's** veterans and to remember the fallen. As we approach November 11,



more details will be added to the events page at  
<https://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/visit/calendar/2019-11>.

### **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—onsite, offsite and online—taking pride in our collective histories.

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