

Mission:

The Royal BC Museum brings British Columbia's stories together.

Our collections, research and presentations enable us to tell the stories of BC in ways that enlighten, stimulate and inspire. By exploring our human history and natural history, the Royal BC Museum advances new knowledge and understanding of BC, and provides a dynamic forum for discussion and a place for reflection.

Vision:

A transformed Royal BC Museum will become British Columbia's leading cultural centre. Our vision calls for major initiatives on-site, off-site and online. We will become a landmark physical site and virtual environment for debate, reflection and knowledge. We will bridge cultures, engage generations, and positively impact the lives of all people who share a connection to BC.

History of the Royal BC Museum Corporation:

- British Columbia's provincial museum was founded in 1886 when a group of prominent citizens petitioned the BC government to create a venue to preserve treasures of provincial significance. From the *Provincial Museum of Natural History and Anthropology* housed in the "Bird Cages" (the original Legislature Building) to the *Royal BC Museum Corporation* in its present form, the institution has undergone several name changes, a few Provincial Museum Acts and many relocations.
- Created in 2003, this crown corporation amalgamated the former Royal BC Museum and BC Archives organizations and added several heritage properties.
- The Royal BC Museum is overseen by a Board of Directors, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts and includes:

Royal BC Museum – Founded in 1886 with John Fannin, outdoorsman and taxidermist, as first curator;

BC Archives – Founded in 1894, to house government records (dating back to 1849), manuscripts, maps, photographs, paintings, audio recordings and film;

Netherlands Centennial Carillon – A gift from the Dutch community of BC in honour of Canada's centennial in 1967. The carillon's irreparable automated playing system was replaced in July 2007, with state-of-the-art technology from the Netherlands, thanks to a donation from the Bodine family.

Helmcken House – Built by Dr. John Sebastian Helmcken in 1852 and still located on its original site. Open seasonally June - Sept., noon to 4 p.m.

Mungo Martin House, Wawadit'la – constructed in 1952 under the supervision of Kwakwaka'wakw Chief Mungo Martin, as a copy of a big house built at Fort Rupert in the mid-1800s;

St. Ann's Schoolhouse – Built in 1844 and donated to the museum by the Sisters of St. Ann in 1974, when it was moved to its present location;

Thunderbird Park – A collection of Northwest Coast totem poles established in 1940, and replicated via the museum's Totem Restoration Program, 1950 - 1990, when the originals began to decay beyond repair. A new Kwakwaka'wakw pole was carved and raised in 2000; and

Glenshiel Seniors Residence – This three-storey heritage building from 1908 is a home for independent seniors (55+) is leased to BC Housing (until 2062) and is operated by the Glenshiel Housing Society (not-for-profit).

Royal BC Museum Facts:

- The Royal BC Museum property encompasses 2.71 hectares in downtown Victoria, on its beautiful Inner Harbour
- Approximately 7 million artifacts, specimens and archival records are held within its human history and natural history collections
- Full and part-time staff of 130
- 500+ volunteers give 40,000 hours of their time annually
- Almost 11,000 Royal BC Museum members
- Houses National Geographic IMAX Theatre, which operates in partnership with RBCM
- The Royal BC Museum Corporation is the only combined provincial museum and archives in Canada
- Annual budget of approximately \$18 million, of which \$12.1 million is provided as a grant from the BC government

Economic Impact:

- Major economic driver for Victoria and for the province as a whole, generating an average \$11 million for the local (southern Vancouver Island) economy every year. A further \$6.3 million is generated for the rest of BC. This total annual economic impact of \$17.3 million supports 563 full time (377 in southern Vancouver Island plus 186 in the rest of BC) jobs in British Columbia, consistently, every year.
- *Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition* (2007) generated more than \$30.2 million and 742 full-time jobs for Southern Vancouver Island; it generated more than \$12.5 million for rest of the province of BC.
- *Treasures from the British Museum* (2009) generated \$6.6 million and 155 full-time jobs for Southern Vancouver Island; and a further \$2.7 million and 64 full time jobs for the rest of BC

Attendance:

- Each year more than 350,000 people visit the Royal BC Museum, its exhibitions, archives, café, gift shop and park.
- More than 23,000 BC students, their chaperones and educators visit the RBCM – free of charge – every year.

Popular Past Exhibitions

- *Treasures of the Worlds Cultures from the British Museum, 2009 (3 months) – 200,000 visitors*
- *Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition 2007 (4 months) – 450,000 visitors*
- *Eternal Egypt: Masterworks of Ancient Art from the British Museum, 2004 (4 months) – 331,000 visitors*
- *Dragon Bones: When Dinosaurs Ruled China, 2003 (3 months) – 360,000 visitors*
- *Leonardo da Vinci: Scientist Inventor Artist, 1998-99 (5 months) – 416,000 visitors*

2011-2012 Temporary Exhibitions

- *Wildlife Photographer of the Year (December 2011-April 2012)*
- *Dinosaurs, Ancient Fossils, New Discoveries (May-September 2012)*
- *Queen Elizabeth II by Cecil Beaton: A Diamond Jubilee Celebration (June to September 2012)*
- *Curious - Royal BC Museum at Wing Sang (June to September 2012)*

The BC story travelled to the heart of Vancouver's Chinatown and the historic Wing Sang building. "Curious" included four unique exhibitions: *Intimate Glimpses, Artifact | Artfiction, Magic Lantern* and *Bottled Beauty*.

Media contact:

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