
Royal British Columbia Museum

1995 Annual Report

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Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture

Province of British Columbia

ROYAL
BRITISH
COLUMBIA
MUSEUM

1995
Annual Report

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SUMMARY

This report on the activities of the Royal British Columbia Museum during 1995 is submitted to the Minister of Small Business, Tourism and Culture as required by the Museum Act.

Highlights from 1995

Building Upgrade

Work began in April on the Building Upgrade, which features new escalators, an elevator and new stair towers, and a new lobby which will house expanded services for the visitor, and will connect the Exhibits and Fannin Buildings.

Empires Beyond the Great Wall Exhibit

A major international exhibition brought to the Royal B.C. Museum between March 31 and September 10, 1995.

Living Landscapes

A research and public education project which focused on the Thompson-Okanagan region during 1995. Five special events were co-produced with regional museums.

Regional Community Programs

Production of Travelling Feature Showcases and a Travelling First Peoples exhibit.

Television Project

Production of two 13-part TV series, using collections and expertise of the Royal B.C. Museum as the origin for exploring the science, history, and nature of British Columbia.

Thunderbird Park - Big House Programs

Daily programming presented in the Carving Studio through the late spring and the summer months, focusing on a different theme each month.

INTRODUCTION

The Royal British Columbia Museum is administered under the Museum Act by the Minister of Small Business, Tourism and Culture.

The Museum continued to fulfill its mandate to collect, preserve, research and disseminate information about British Columbia and British Columbians. The Museum is guided by its Mission: "...to provide public programs and objective information about the cultural and natural environments of British Columbia, past and present, in a relevant, accessible, consultative and entrepreneurial style."

The 1995-96 fiscal year marks the third year of the Museum's Five-Year Plan (1993-1998). The strategic objectives of the five-year plan are on-going, as follows:

- to be relevant and responsive to the public and participate with communities all across British Columbia.
- to be more self-sufficient financially
- to deliver timely, relevant and innovative programs to British Columbians
- to improve and develop museum collections as sources of information about and for British Columbians.

MOVING AHEAD - "GROWING WITH YOU" - UPGRADE '95

In December, 1993 Cabinet gave approval to the planning direction of the Royal British Columbia Museum, as articulated in the Five-Year Plan, 1993-1998. That plan represented the results of numerous public consultations where the Museum was told the one thing British Columbia's residents want--change.

The Museum's current building was constructed in 1968. At that time, visitor projections were 100,000 per year. The Museum now hosts nearly one million visitors each year. With this attendance, the existing structures are operating at well over capacity. Upgrade '95 will bring new escalators, stair towers and an elevator to meet the needs of Museum visitors. The architectural design meets our upgrading requirements in an artistic and comprehensive way.

The linking of the Exhibits Building to the curatorial Fanning Building is the most obvious development. The Fanning Building holds the majority of the Museum's collections, not on display due purely to lack of space. With the linking of the two buildings will come increased access to the collections. Visitors will be welcome to tour through these areas, exploring further into the natural and human histories of British Columbia.

Bill Barkley,
February 1, 1996

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

During 1995, the Museum operated under three branches:

- Curatorial Services Branch
- Public Programs Branch
- Operations Branch

The report concludes with submissions from the co-operative societies and a list of community partnerships.

CURATORIAL SERVICES BRANCH

OVERVIEW

This Branch comprises curators, collections managers, conservators and librarians who are responsible for research, development, care and management of the Natural History, Human History, Conservation and Library sections. The strategic objectives of improving the information about B.C.'s human history and natural history and providing access for educational purposes were addressed. Projects were developed in consultation with numerous collaborating institutions and organizations. Financial self-sufficiency was supported by direct pledges totalling over \$ and staff time provided by other partnering agencies.

Natural History includes botany, invertebrate zoology, mammalogy, ornithology, vertebrate zoology and entomology. Human History includes archaeology, ethnology and modern history. Activities and/or section reports are listed under the Natural History and Human History headings.

Natural History Collections Management

Access

Acquisitions

Human History Collections Management--Anthropology

Repatriation

Access

Acquisitions

Transfers

Improved Storage

Human History Collections Management--Modern History

Acquisitions

Transfers

Natural and Human History Collections Management

Loans

Conservation Services

Library Services

Natural History Research

Research projects deal with the flora and fauna of B.C. and are based on new collections of specimens and the use of collections in general. This research makes the collections more accessible and meaningful to the people of B.C. research focuses on a variety of geographical areas within B.C. and stresses issues of social and biological importance, such as threatened and endangered habitats and species, and global warming. Joint projects with other agencies are a Museum priority actively supported by research projects. Research is closely connected to public programming products such as publications, exhibits, lectures, workshops, natural history tours and video.

Human History Research--Modern History

Emergency Services

Industrial Development

Education History

Human History Research--Anthropology

Potlatch Collection

Anthropology Photo Collection

Vancouver Island Marmot

Human and Natural History--Conferences and Training

Curatorial Services Branch staff were involved in improving the understanding of B.C. human and natural history through training and conferences, exhibits, publications and loans.

Conferences Attended

Conferences Hosted

Training

Human History and Natural History--Public Program Participation

Events

Exhibits

Publications

PUBLIC PROGRAMS BRANCH

OVERVIEW

Public Programs prepares and provides information about the history of British Columbia based on the work of the Curatorial Services Branch, and translates and transmits this information to audiences throughout the province. Sections include Exhibit Services/Design Services, Program Production Services, Volunteer Services, Publishing and Visual Services and Royal Museum Productions. This is done through exhibits, school programs, lectures, publications, television productions, travelling exhibits, speaker's tours and special events.

Exhibit Services/Design Services

Temporary Exhibits

Travelling Exhibits

Museum Program Productions

Special Events/Feature Showcases

Native Plant Garden Tours

Guided Tours

There are volunteers/docents trained to guide scheduled tours of VIPs and special interest groups through public galleries. Approximately docents are used on a rotational basis to conduct tours, either of individual galleries or a highlight tour. memorable visitors included....

During the last year, visitors took..... tours.

School Programs

School Programs reach about students each year, from kindergarten to grade seven inclusive. These curriculum-guided programs are hands-on, materials-based and docent-led. Programs are developed to utilize artifacts from all three galleries; programs were offered in 1995 to students.

TV Productions

Facility Rentals

Investigated markets within the community, as well as across the country, with meeting and destination planners, hotels, conference facilities and conference groups coming to Victoria.

There were bookings this season with an attendance of These bookings included:.....

.....(example:..Western Judicial Educator -- 500)

.....
.....

Workshops

Workshops continued in 1995, converting "special topic lectures" to workshops. This allowed the small groups attending these lectures a more hands-on, closer contact with the curators/experts. workshops were presented in the classroom drawing participants.

Environmental Expeditions

At the close of the season, the RBCM sponsored expeditions, taking participants to a variety of locations throughout British Columbia,

..... Expeditions included:.....

.....
.....

Box Office

Services provided included:.....

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The Box Office staff also handled ticket sales for MPP events, coat check service for those visiting the Museum and the distribution of audio tours to visitors. The staff were also helpful to tourists in suggesting other attractions they could visit in Victoria, accommodations, restaurants and travel routes.

Volunteer Services

The Museum is support by volunteers and research affiliates who contributed hours during the past year. Volunteers are involved in collections management, research, public programs, visitor services, the RBCM's recycling program and the Friends of the Royal British Columbia Museum. during 1995, new volunteers joined the Volunteer program.

Publishing and Visual Services

In 1993 the Publishing Section began co-publishing with B.C. book publishers. That direction continued in 1995, with books published co-operatively with

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Books published:

Other publications and products completed:

Discovery: Royal B.C. Museum News & Events--published jointly with the Friends of the RBCM eight times a year from September to May (8 pp). In 1995 a special summer issue was produced for visitors to the Museum in July and August.

OPERATIONS BRANCH

OVERVIEW

This Branch is responsible for all administration and central services at the Museum. Primary functions include Admissions, Facilities Management, Financial Services, Human Resource Management, Information Systems and Marketing Services.

Admissions

Attendance in 1995 was This is% above/below the average for the previous five years. Revenue of \$..... was up/down nearly% compared to the same period.

Facilities Services

Financial Services

Human Resource Management

Information Systems

Marketing Services

Attendance figures follow:

School Programs:
School Visits (self-guided):
Pre-booked Visits (self-guided):
VIP Guided Tours:
Feature Showcases:

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

FANNIN FOUNDATION

The Fannin Foundation is a non-profit public foundation with the purpose of soliciting, accepting and disbursing financial donations for the long-term growth and development of the Museum. The Foundation continued to work with the financial planning and legal communities to provide information on the opportunities for the public to support the Museum through the Foundation's Planned Giving Program.

In 1995, the Foundation came to a point where the Directors wish to re-focus. The Board has hired an expert in the field to provide assistance in the strategic planning process of planned giving and endowments. This process will lead to benchmarks for the Foundation's Planned Giving Program; these benchmarks will be implemented in the next calendar year.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BRITISH COLUMBIA MUSEUM

The Friends of the Royal British Columbia Museum (FORM) was established in 1968 to support the Museum's programs and activities. The FORM operates the Royal Museum Shop, which provides the majority of its earned revenue. In addition, special Museum projects are supported by the FORM.

A membership of _____ supports the Museum and receives information about Museum activities through the Discovery newsletter.

A Board of Directors manages the operations of the Society. The Board members are:

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The Museum functions as a partner with many individuals and agencies. This ensures that programs are relevant to a broad audience, costs are reduced and new ideas are developed through co-operative efforts. Some partners in 1995 were:

Provincial Government Agencies

Museums and Universities

Other Public Agencies and Organizations

Native Bands and Tribal councils

Companies and Individuals

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