



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee
From: Marie Fenwick
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
Date: April 24, 2021
File: 11-7141-01/2021-Vol 01
Re: Museum and Heritage Services Year in Review 2020

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled, "Museum and Heritage Services Year in Review 2020," dated April 24, 2021, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services, be circulated to Community Partners and Funders for their information.

CM Fenwick

Marie Fenwick
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
(604-276-4288)

Att. 6

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
City Clerk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Sevens</i>
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: <i>MF</i>	APPROVED BY CAO <i>[Signature]</i>

Staff Report

Origin

On June 11, 2007, Council approved the following vision for Museum and Heritage Services: Richmond is a city that proudly celebrates its past, present and future. The City's museum and heritage services policies will interpret the unique and dynamic story of where Richmond came from, where it is now, and how it will develop into the future.

This Museum and Heritage Services Year in Review 2020 highlights the achievements from the past year that helped to achieve this vision.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #6 Strategic and Well-Planned Growth:

6.4 Recognize Richmond's history and heritage through preservation, protection and interpretation.

Analysis

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

2020 was a year of challenges and opportunities. While there were many programs and activities planned at the start of the year, with the COVID-19 pandemic, staff were required to rethink and adapt plans.

On March 17, 2020, facilities across the City were temporarily closed due to COVID-19. The table below identifies the museum and heritage sites that closed and the date and extent of facility re-openings to date. Unfortunately, the Steveston Tram has not yet been reopened as regular sanitizing of the historic tramcar would cause irreparable damage and the facility itself is challenging to reopen under the current physical distancing guidelines.

While the facility was closed, the Richmond Archives adjusted and realigned services to a virtual delivery model. This allowed the Archives to remain open virtually with researchers able to access online services 24/7.

Site	Re-opening Date	2020 Visitation
Minoru Chapel	June 6, 2020	35 ceremonies
Britannia Shipyards	Park remained open all year Some buildings re-opened with limited hours on July 23, 2020	15,413
Richmond Archives	August 17, 2020	376
Steveston Museum	Post office re-opened for full hours on September 21, 2020 (Attachment 1)	12,865
Richmond Museum	October 7, 2020	9,585

Site	Re-opening Date	2020 Visitation
London Heritage Farm	Park remained open all year Farmhouse was not open in 2020	n/a
Steveston Tram	Remained closed	3,170 (January - March 17, 2020)

Programs and Events

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, many programs were successfully delivered in-person where safe or online.

The Richmond Museum delivered the Junior Curators and Young Archaeologist camps for youth during Spring Break and summer. Although spaces were limited for COVID-safety, the camps were well received by the public. Richmond Museum staff also continued to support teachers with in-class education kits and a newly developed teacher resource newsletter. While the *City at Work* exhibit was held over another year, two new neighbourhood walking-tour experiences were developed which allowed people to explore the Terra Nova and Brighthouse areas of Richmond in their own time. These downloadable guides won a 2020 Heritage Award from the Richmond Heritage Commission. (Attachment 2)

The Steveston Heritage Sites joined with Tourism Richmond to develop a new Steveston-wide scavenger hunt. The online activity invites participants to join Big Red, the Irish Setter dog, on his quest to uncover Richmond's history and mysteries by following clues to find the answers left by the Cannery Cat. The scavenger hunt takes place outdoors, starting at Britannia Shipyards and ending at the Gulf of Georgia Cannery.

To maintain connections with the community while in-person visits were limited, a variety of new online programming was created and delivered through each site's social media channels. Through trending themes like #DiversityIsOurStrength and online events, artefacts and images told the unique and diverse story of the City.

Due to the pandemic restrictions limiting gatherings, events were re-envisioned in a variety of ways.

- London Heritage Farm Plant Sale – Being outside, the annual Plant Sale was able to continue with new safety protocols in place. Although smaller scale, the London Heritage Farm Society successfully delivered the event and raised funds to support their work at the site.
- Doors Open Richmond – This event brought together 37 sites for a new online behind-the-scenes experience of Richmond places and organizations. The successful event was held June 6 to 13 and offered 135 virtual experiences for participants to enjoy from home. For the first time, this event was supported by a grant of \$17,500 from the Department of Canadian Heritage. (Attachment 3)
- Richmond Maritime Festival – With support from the Richmond Arts Coalition and Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society, the event was transformed into a

series of online performances delivered over 11 days. Original content premiered daily, featuring pre-recorded performances, hands-on activities and storytelling that celebrated the City's maritime heritage with the Britannia Shipyard National Historic Site as the backdrop.

- Winter in the Village – With the addition of a new holiday light tour, Steveston Village was transformed into a sparkling winter wonderland for the month of December. In addition, family-friendly activities were offered by a range of Steveston organizations, including Tourism Richmond's Holiday Window Display Contest, Steveston Post Office's Letters to Santa, and the Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site's Festival of Trees. (Attachment 4)
- Songs in the Snow – Part of the Winter in the Village celebration, the fourth annual Songs in the Snow was delivered online via a video conference platform. The event featured a line-up of musicians and entertainers performing holiday favourites over three nights. Locals could also pre-order and pick up free craft kits and snack packages ahead of the show to enjoy at home.

Program	In-Person Visitation	Online Engagement
Youth Camps	31 children	
School Programs (January 1 – March 17, 2020)	42 classes	
Doors Open		22,000
Richmond Maritime Festival		46,000
Songs in the Snow		1,057

Heritage Conservation

One of the highlights of the year was the return of the *MV Burnaby* boat. Eriksen Brothers Shipyards in North Vancouver built the historic tugboat in 1925. The *MV Burnaby* was restored in partnership with the Britannia Shipyard National Historic Site Society. (Attachment 5) Staff are working to develop supporting interpretation and programming at Britannia Shipyards.

Staff continued work to preserve the important history of Richmond through the oral history program and artefact collections. In 2020, the Richmond Museum collected extensive oral histories from two long-time members of the Richmond community. Additionally, collections staff took in over 187 objects donated by community members and organizations.

Lastly, the closure of facilities and reduced visitor numbers caused by the pandemic provided an opportunity to undertake a number of much needed facility repairs and upgrades at the heritage sites.

Planning for the Future

While program delivery was restricted, planning for future programs and interpretation continued. Projects included:

- Steveston Heritage Sites Interpretive Plan – Development of an overarching interpretive plan for the heritage sites in Steveston took place throughout 2020. As a first step, staff hosted a workshop with heritage group stakeholders in January that focused on defining intended audiences, interpretive themes, and desired interpretive methods for each site. Through subsequent discussions with these groups, staff further refined the proposed audiences, themes, and interpretive methods for each site. Council has been provided updates on this work via memos dated May 11, 2020 and December 3, 2020. This plan will be brought forward for Council’s consideration in 2021.
- Steveston Museum Visitor Experience Planning - Through the process of developing the Steveston Heritage Sites Interpretive Plan, the Steveston Museum was identified as site with opportunity for further interpretation of Steveston history and heritage. In particular, stakeholders favoured the idea of the Steveston Museum becoming an “interpretive hub” for the area, providing historical context for visitors to Steveston and serving as a driver for visitation to other local heritage sites. With this in mind, staff undertook a process with the Steveston Historical Society and Tourism Richmond to explore what other visitor experience opportunities might be possible for the site. Options for the Steveston Museum will be brought forward for Council’s consideration in 2021.
- London Heritage Farm Master Plan – Also stemming from the work on the Steveston Heritage Sites Interpretive Plan, staff worked with the London Heritage Farm Society to develop a new Master Plan for the park at London Heritage Farm. Planning began with a facilitated workshop with Society board members to explore areas of the site that were working well and aspects that could use improvement (Attachment 6). A draft Master Plan was created based on this input and guided by the interpretive themes identified in the interpretive planning work. This plan was endorsed by Council on February 8, 2021.
- Exhibit planning for the Steveston Tram – Now that the Tramcar restoration is complete, the small exhibits surrounded the Tram will be installed. The exhibits will provide opportunities for children to engage with the Tram in a meaningful way and for the public to learn about the Tram’s history in Richmond.
- Richmond History Video Series – Throughout 2020, the Richmond Museum team worked to produce a series of short videos that tell the many stories of Richmond, from sports to agriculture and from Steveston to Terra Nova. This series of ten videos of three to five minutes will be presented at museum and heritage sites, online, and used in school and public programs. This series will launch in 2021.

Cultivating Partners

In spite on the inability to meet in person from much of 2020, staff continued to work effectively with Museum and Heritage Stakeholders. Conversations with the City’s partner societies (London Heritage Farm Society, Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society, Steveston Historical Society, Richmond Museum Society, and the Scotch Pond Cooperative) were ongoing throughout the year.

In February, a roundtable was held with the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society, Steveston Historical Society, and London Heritage Farm Society to discuss the potential for changes to the governance and operating models. This preliminary discussion indicated interest in increased collaboration between groups. Although the pandemic has slowed these conversations, there remains interest in this subject.

In addition to the many planning-related discussions described above, societies and staff worked collaboratively to negotiate the challenges of the pandemic. In some cases, this meant societies took on additional staffing to support sites during City layoffs. In other cases, this meant societies and City working together to access new funding streams to support museum and heritage projects.

The year also brought changes to some society operating agreements. A new operating agreement with the London Heritage Farm Society was executed in November. This agreement replaced their original 25-year agreement from 1980. Additionally, the agreement with the Steveston Historical Society to operate the post office and Tourism Richmond's lease agreement for the Visitor Centre at the Steveston Museum were renewed for two years.

In addition to the on-going relationships with local heritage societies, two new agreements with heritage partners were established in 2020. The first was a three-year agreement, with the *Providence* sailing ship to be the flagship for the Britannia Shipyards. The 1903 sailing ship will be docked at Britannia Shipyards during the winter months and support events and programs at the site throughout the year.

In October, the Richmond Museum signed a memorandum of understanding with the University of British Columbia Initiative for Student Teaching and Research in Chinese Canadian Studies. The collaboration allows the Richmond Museum to extend its knowledge of and connection to Richmond's Chinese Canadian heritage by working with students in the UBC program to undertake specific research projects in the Richmond community.

Lastly, although the pandemic greatly reduced the capacity for working with volunteers, museum and heritage sites still benefited from the support of individuals from the community. The volunteer hours outlined in the table below, illustrates this commitment.

Site	Volunteer Hours
Britannia Shipyards	408
London Heritage Farm	908
Steveston Museum	n/a
Steveston Tram	95
Richmond Museum	16
TOTAL	1,427

Grant Funding

As a result of the pandemic, provincial and federal governments made new grant opportunities available. Richmond's museum and heritage sites benefitted from this with the following grants:

- The Richmond Museum Society received the annual BC Arts Council operating grant of \$32,000, which was an increase of \$4,000 over the previous year. Additionally, the Richmond Museum Society received \$37,000 in funding from the BC Arts Council Expanded Arts and Culture Resilience Supplement Award program to support Museum operations and programs during the pandemic.
- The City received a \$100,000 grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage COVID-19 Emergency Support Fund for Heritage Organizations program. The funding supported ongoing operational needs across Museum and Heritage Services including the development of educational programming for teachers, enhancing online platforms to better share public programming initiatives, and supporting artefact collections work.
- The Artefact Collections team benefitted from two fully funded students through the Department of Canadian Heritage Young Canada Works program. The Collections Assistant supported the on-going work to care for the City's collection. While the Collections Intern began the review of the London Heritage Farm Society's collection in preparation for transfer to the City.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

Richmond is a city that proudly celebrates its past, present and future. The Museum and Heritage Services Year in Review demonstrates the valuable contribution that these services provide to the community.



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Attachment 1: Photo – Steveston Museum Post Office Re-opening

Attachment 2: Photo – Richmond Museum Society Receives Award for Walking Tour Guides

Attachment 3: Photo – Doors Open Richmond Behind-the-Scenes

Attachment 4: Photo – Winter in the Village at Steveston Tram

Attachment 5: Photo – *Burnaby* Boat Restored

Attachment 6: Photo – London Heritage Farm Master Planning Workshop











