



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee **Date:** March 21, 2022

From: Marie Fenwick, Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services **File:** 11-7141-01/2022-Vol 01

Re: **Museum and Heritage Services Year in Review 2021**

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled, "Museum and Heritage Services Year in Review 2021," dated March 21, 2022, 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. 7

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
City Clerk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Severna</i>
Facility Services & Project Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
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 2021 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

2021 continued to require creativity and perseverance while adapting to the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Learning from the experiences of 2020, staff were able to safely keep sites open to public, offer excellent program opportunities, and preserve Richmond's heritage. The table below identifies the 2021 hours of operation and visitation levels for the City's museum and heritage sites.

Site	Hours of Operation	2021 Visitation
Britannia Shipyards	Site open all year with limited hours	37,249
London Farm	Park remained open all year, Farmhouse open summer and special events	864 visitors to the house
Minoru Chapel	Year round	65 ceremonies
Richmond Museum	Year round regular hours	44,758
Steveston Museum and Post Office	Post office open year round, Japanese Fishermen's Benevolent Society building re-opened July 3, 2021	21,140
Steveston Tram	Re-opened September 9, 2021	4,686

Three facilities were re-opened during 2021. The Japanese Fishermen's Benevolent Society building was re-opened to public in July. During the summer, staff were available to facilitate guest experiences with public access continuing to be available through the Northern Bank building in the following months. The London Farm house was also re-opened for the summer season with staff facilitating public experiences and the Society operating the gift shop. In September the Steveston Tram re-opened, welcoming back families and children to refreshed displays illustrating the fascinating stories of the people who rode the Tram.

It is expected that this level of service at the heritage sites will be maintained or increased, providing COVID-19 health restrictions allow.

Programs

2021 saw the continuation of a number of popular programs and the introduction of new programs for all ages. Youth programming continued to focus on outdoor experiences. The Richmond Museum offered its popular Young Archaeologists summer camp at London Farm for over 100 children throughout the summer, adding more weeks to accommodate demand from the community. Britannia Shipyards developed a popular new children's activity guide giving children and families a way to safely engage with the site. (Attachment 1)

During 2021, two exciting new public tours were developed. A particular highlight for Britannia Shipyards was the introduction of a boat tour on the Fraser River. Departing from Shipyards docks, the Gikumi heritage working boat took passengers on a relaxing three hour tour up the river providing information about the history of Richmond and Delta along the way. Tours were offered in August and September, with 131 people participating.

Complementing the two tours created in 2020, the Richmond Museum's new self-guided walking tour of Sea Island offers participants a glimpse of the fascinating past of Burkeville and the Vancouver airport. (Attachment 2)

It was back to in-person programming for the month-long Culture Days celebrations. Visitors to London Farm discovered tastes, sounds and smells of Richmond's agrarian history during three multisensory tours of the gardens and grounds. Throughout the month, visitors enjoyed site tours at Britannia Shipyards and uncovered Tram Car 1220's history in a scavenger hunt challenge at the Steveston Tram.

In December, the heritage sites helped activate Steveston as part of Winter in the Village. Beautiful light displays brought the heritage sites to life, while holiday programming created opportunities for locals and visitors to enjoy Steveston. New for 2021 was the "Winter on the Waterfront" tour of Britannia Shipyards which combined local history and traditional music for an atmospheric journey into the past. At London Farm, a holiday tea offered by the London Heritage Farm Society and holiday baking workshop brought spirit to the house. Community members also once again enjoyed the Steveston Historical Society's "Songs in the Snow" offered online.

Education kits remained popular while field trips were not available during 2021. In addition to the nine kits available through the Richmond Museum, two new kits were created to tell the stories of Steveston to primary students. "Sockeye Special Stories" explores the Interurban Tram stories through creative play. "Steveston Stories: How One Person Can Make a Difference" offers students an opportunity to explore the history of the citizens in Steveston who contributed to their community. In addition to offering kits, the Richmond Museum coordinated a virtual Regional Heritage Fair for a number of local schools, helping students showcase their excellent projects and to compete in the provincial fair.

Events

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, a number of events were successfully delivered in-person and online. London Heritage Farm Society's Plant Sale and Winter in the Village were offered in person, with strong attendance for each event.

The 14th edition of Doors Open Richmond featured 35 partner sites and organizations that contributed more than 225 experiences through social media platforms using #DoorsOpenRichmond. The successful event was held June 5 to 12 with over 160,000 views and 25,000 interactions with the digital content created. (Attachment 3) In 2021, efforts were made to increase the representation of groups that showcase Richmond's diversity and help promote civic understanding. These efforts and the online delivery model allowed the following new organizations to participate:

- Anar Persian Cuisine;
- Fairchild Radio and Television;
- Connections Community Services, Indigenous Led Outreach and Support Program;
- City of Richmond Road Naming; and
- Steveston Harbour Authority.

With support from the Richmond Arts Coalition and Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society, the 18th annual Richmond Maritime Festival was re-imagined for 2021. The event program included maritime-themed décor and installations throughout the site; roving performances; "pop-up" style heritage storytellers; five food trucks; and 10 wooden and working boats along the dock. (Attachment 4) Participation highlights include:

- In-person attendance is estimated at 9,000 visitors over two days;
- Pre-registered timeslots to enter the Seine Net Loft, docks and Britannia Shipyards building were fully subscribed within a few days;
- More than 60 artists, performers and heritage storytellers contributed to the online and on site programming; and
- Approximately 70 volunteers contributed over 360 hours to deliver the event.

Exhibits

A number of new exhibits and displays were opened in 2021.

The Richmond Museum launched the newest feature exhibit *Reinventing Richmond*, which explores how the city's identity has changed over time. Interactive elements include meeting Lulu Sweet, playing a Richmond-based game of chutes and ladders, brainstorming new city slogans, and designing new neighbourhood flags.

Britannia Shipyards re-opened the Richmond Boat Builders building with a new exhibit illustrating boatbuilding techniques and telling the story of Japanese boatbuilding in Steveston.

Branscombe House was updated with a display about the family and their home that greets visitors as they arrive.

Heritage Conservation

Heritage conservation work continued throughout the year with two significant projects completed at London Farm. First, the house got a face-lift with the restoration of the building envelop including a new roof, structural upgrades, siding repairs and painting. Secondly, staff worked with the London Heritage Farm Society to complete a review of their collection, determining which items will be brought into the City's collection. This work will help inform future displays at the site and ensure that important artefacts are well cared for. (Attachment 5)

The City's artefact collections had a busy 2021, with 43 donors who donating 994 artefacts. Highlights included 664 objects from the London Heritage Farm Society, memorial objects given in memory of children lost through the residential school system, a large collection from a local Ukrainian Family, and RCMP uniforms.

Planning for the Future

Planning for future programs and interpretation continued, building on the work begun in 2020. Projects included:

- Steveston Heritage Sites Interpretive Plan – A draft Framework was brought to Council for preliminary endorsement.
- Steveston Museum Visitor Experience Planning – A new plan for operations at the Steveston Museum and Post Office was developed in collaboration with the Steveston Historical Society and approved by Council in November 2021.
- London Heritage Farm Master Plan – In February 2021, Council endorsed the new Master Plan for London Farm developed in 2020, and capital planning took place during the remaining months. Funding for Phase 1 of this work was approved by Council as part of the 2022 budget process.
- Destination Development - A new Destination Development Plan for the Steveston heritage sites was produced identifying actions to establish the heritage sites as important contributors to Steveston's tourism industry. To support some of the actions a Temporary Full Time Destination Development Coordinator was hired with funding from the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT).

Grant Funding

In addition to ongoing grant programs, as a result of the pandemic, provincial and federal governments offered new grant programs. Richmond's museum and heritage sites benefitted from these opportunities with the following grants:

- The Richmond Museum Society received the annual BC Arts Council operating grant of \$30,000. Additionally, the Richmond Museum Society received \$50,000 in funding from the BC Arts Council Pivot grant program to support the creation of a new interactive website for the Richmond Museum.
- The Richmond Museum Society received \$25,000 from the Department of Canadian Heritage to support the delivery of the Doors Open Richmond event.
- The City received a \$100,000 grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage Museums Assistance program Re-Opening Fund. The funding is supporting ongoing operational needs across Museum and Heritage Services including the implementation of interpretive projects at London Farm, Steveston Tram, and the Steveston Museum.

- The city received a \$77,000 grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage Canada Cultural Space fund to support the refit of the Steveston Museum to enable the delivery of new cultural programming in this space.
- Museum and heritage sites also benefitted from the contributions of six summer students supported by the Canada Summer Jobs program and Department of Canadian Heritage Young Canada Works program through the Richmond Museum Society, Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society and London Heritage Farm Society.

Community Stakeholder Initiatives and Volunteer Engagement

2021 was marked by the tragic announcement of a number of unmarked graves of school children at former residential school sites across the county. To honour the children found at the Kamloops Residential School, the Richmond community created a memorial in the Cultural Centre Plaza. Staff supported this effort by working with community members and Musqueam elders to ensure the items left in memory of the lost children were properly cared for, including saving some for future display.

Although the pandemic continued to restrict the ability to work with volunteers, museum and heritage sites still benefitted greatly from the support of individuals from the community. The volunteer hours outlined in the table below, illustrates this commitment.

Site	Volunteer Hours
Britannia Shipyards	1,797
London Farm	2,118
Steveston Museum and Post Office	84
Steveston Tram	27
Richmond Museum	174
TOTAL	4,200

City of Richmond Archives – City Clerk’s Office

The City of Richmond Archives is the official repository for City records. The Archives also acquires records through donation from individuals, families, organizations and companies. The Archives’ holdings include approximately one kilometre of textual records, 170,000 photographs, 20,000 maps and plans and over 500 sound and moving image recordings. In 2021, the Archives acquired 44 new donations of records.

With over 400 research requests in 2021, the people who use the Archives continue to have a wide variety of research interests and needs. This included City staff, local businesses, community groups, environmental and property researchers, public artists, writers, filmmakers, university and high school students, and family historians. The results of this research can be seen in staff reports to Council, presentations, exhibits, displays, magazines, newspapers, and TV programs. (Attachment 6)

The Archives' web pages and online database on the City of Richmond website also continue to be important 24/7 sources of information. In 2021, 700 photographs from the City's Production Centre was added to the online database.

The Friends of the Richmond Archives continue to support and promote the work of the City of Richmond Archives. Whether it is through their social media channels or presentations, the Friends are a dedicated group of volunteers who make a difference in our community and assist the Archives in meeting our mandate of making records accessible to all.

Gulf of Georgia Cannery

Located in Steveston, the Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site is operated by the Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society on behalf of Parks Canada. The Society's mission is to honour the importance of Canada's West Coast fishing history by sharing stories of the fishing industry and fishing communities through exhibitions, collections, and programs, and events.

To support this mission in 2021, a number of initiatives were undertaken. A new feature exhibit, *Waves of Innovation: Stories from the West Coast* was created to showcase how many of the important innovations in the fishing industry impacted the people involved in both negative and positive ways. A new partnership with UBC's Initiative for Student Teaching and Research in Chinese Canadian Studies was forged and resulted in a new community-based story telling project called Fish Tales. The spooky, sustainability-themed installation The Haunted Sea returned to the Cannery once again for the month of October. (Attachment 7)

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: Britannia Shipyards Activity Guide Cover
- Attachment 2: Sea Island Walking Tour
- Attachment 3: Doors Open Richmond Social Media Post
- Attachment 4: Photo – Richmond Maritime Festival
- Attachment 5: Photo – London Farm Society collection review
- Attachment 6: Photo – Researcher in the Archives Reference Room
- Attachment 7: Photo – Waves of Innovation exhibit


Britannia Shipyards Activity Guide Cover




Sea Island Walking Tour



Doors Open Richmond Social Media Post

 **Richmond Museum** ...
June 10, 2021 · 🌐

■ **#DoorsOpenRichmond:** Local business owner Tila Akhavan takes foodies on a tour of **Anar Persian Cuisine**, a family-run restaurant serving traditional Iranian dishes. Learn how each well-balanced meal offers a combination of protein and fresh vegetables, and a variety of flavourful spices that lend to colourful plates. Try out Tila's favourites next time you visit, which include the Loghmeh Kabob, a skewer of beef and lamb served with rice and roasted tomatoes.



YOUTUBE.COM

Doors Open Richmond 2021: Anar Persian Cuisine
Tila Akhavan, owner of Anar Persian Cuisine, share how popular Per...



  117 5 Comments 7 Shares

Photo – Richmond Maritime Festival



Photo – London Farm Society collection review



Researcher in the Archives Reference Room



Photo – Waves of Innovation exhibit

