

# Museum unveils updated exhibit

IAN JACQUES  
Editor

Fans and friends of the long-running *Beachcombers* television series gathered to reflect and remember the beloved series last Saturday afternoon at the Sunshine Coast Museum and Archives in Gibsons.

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of *The Beachcombers*, the museum launched a new and improved exhibit.

The centrepiece is the recreation of the Molly's Reach countertop with a life-sized photo of the cast. Visitors are invited to "sit down and have a coffee" with their favourite characters and peruse archival photographs and scripts. There are also life-sized cut-outs of Nick and Relic for photo opportunities and the continuous screening of three classic *Beachcombers* episodes.

Funded by the Town of Gibsons, the new exhibit celebrates all things *Beachcombers*.

"Thank you to everyone who made this exhibit possible," said museum curator Kimiko Hawkes in welcoming everyone to the museum Saturday. "Nothing happens here without a lot of people. We rely on our board members, our staff, our volunteers and community members like you."

Several invited guests and *Beachcombers*' alumni were on hand for the event, and they shared their stories and fond memories of the show.

Harvie McCracken worked from 1972 to 1975 as a first assistant director.

"We all know what the *Beachcombers* means to Gibsons,

but in those first years nobody knew who we were," he recalled. "The Town knew we were here, people knew what we were doing, and they were very helpful, etc., but we were just flying by the seat of our pants. There was no changing rooms or a barge. We did everything on the *Persephone* or on land, so when John Smith built the barge for the second season, it was like we were in a world of luxury. The show could not have happened without the Smith family. They never said no to anything to my knowledge."

McCracken said the show became the backbone for the CBC and catapulted careers for many of the crew.

"It gave them a start, and so many have had wonderful careers because of this show. This little show in this little town put this town on the map, but it also was a training ground for actors for the crew. Some of my fondest memories in my career with the CBC are from working on this series," he said.

David Croal worked in the late '70s and early '80s as an assistant designer and in the special effects department and later as art director. He was also involved with both movies in 2002 and 2004.

"The really wonderful thing about *The Beachcombers* was we were not just a crew, but we were a family," Croal said. "Crews spend today on lunch what we had for our total budget. It was a different time back then. What came through in the production of the show was that it was a family show, and because of that, people here today remember it so fondly."



Jackson Davies, who played Const. John Constable for 16 years on *The Beachcombers*, cuts a ribbon to officially open the new updated *Beachcombers* exhibit at the Sunshine Coast Museum and Archives. See more photos and video on our website at [www.coastreporter.net](http://www.coastreporter.net).

Jackson Davies, who played Const. John Constable for 16 years, co-produced both movies in 2002 and 2004 and co-authored the B.C. best-selling book *Bruno and the Beach*, recalled many funny moments from the show and helped cut a ribbon to officially open the exhibit.

"I want to thank you all for the

work that has been done in supporting this," he said. "The neat part now of social media is getting that instant response. Fans in Canada and all around the world had this connection to the show, and they have shown that through social media, so it's been really neat for me to reflect on such a great time in my life. It was really

the best of times." *The Beachcombers* ran from Oct. 1 1972, to Dec. 12 1990, the longest running dramatic series ever made for English language Canadian television, with 387 episodes produced. To learn more about the exhibit and the museum see [www.sunshinecoastmuseum.ca](http://www.sunshinecoastmuseum.ca).

IAN JACQUES PHOTO