



SPRING 2023



A colourful view of the Museum in Gibsons. Original photo by Tayu Hayward

Our Vibrant Museum Future

After 3 long years, many museums and cultural organizations are asking themselves: *Where do we go from here?* The pandemic has been hard on the heritage field, specifically for museums that rely on admission as a large portion of their revenue. We have seen unfortunate closures of well-respected organizations such as the Robert Bateman Centre in Victoria, while museum workers in other locations struggle to navigate

Continued — next page

In This Issue

- New Strategic Plan
- Meet the President
- AGM 2023 Info
- Museum Reviews!
- Malibu Club in Canada
- How to Donate
- SCMA Membership
- Podcast Features

& more!





Museum consultant Tim Willis led museum board and staff through the strategic planning process

Continued from front page

.... a challenging landscape of intermittent closures and unreliable visitation. If anything, the pandemic has revealed how deficits in heritage funding have real world consequences to beloved museums in our communities.

Throughout the pandemic, we have been extremely well-supported by our amazing Sunshine Coast community, including our primary funders at the Sunshine Coast Regional District. This means that we have weathered the storm relatively unscathed, something we are very grateful for. It also means that we have had the privilege of conducting higher-level organizational planning which will help guide the Museum & Archives for years to come.

Enter well-known museum consultant **Tim Willis**. Over 2 days in February, Tim led us through a strategic planning workshop that was both informative and inspirational. We worked hard to distill the results of a successful community survey into actionable items for our continued growth as an organization. With this plan providing a roadmap, we invite you to come along for the ride as we strive to become one of the best regional museums in Canada.

On pages 4 and 5, you will see an overview of the key points in our new Strategic Plan.

Matthew Lovegrove, Curator/Manager

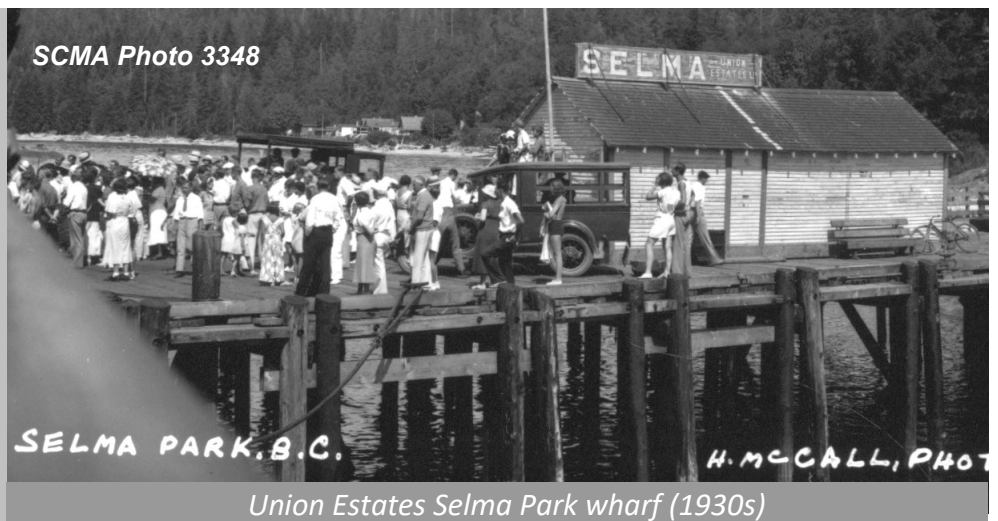




ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

Join us for our AGM on **Wednesday, April 19, 2023** from the comfort of your own home! This year's virtual meeting will take place on Zoom from **7:00pm - 9:00pm**. Learn about all of the exciting news at the Museum, vote for a new Board of Directors and hear about our plans for the upcoming year. We will be sending out meeting information via email, or call the Museum to receive details on how to access the meeting.

Hope to see you there!



President's Corner with Larry Penonzek

This has been our first full year of operation since the pandemic began. Thanks to our staff & volunteers for managing the transition from Covid protocol to the present-day routine, allowing our visitor numbers to rebound or exceed previous totals. Our agreement with the **District of Sechelt** has been finalized regarding the operation of the **Sechelt Community Archives** and I am pleased to report that the arrangement is proceeding very well.

The **HVAC system** has been installed. It is providing a comfortable environment in the museum along with protecting our artifacts and reducing energy consumption. Thanks to Tim Willis, we have completed our 5 year strategic plan with only a few minor edits left to do. Our membership drive has also been very successful with a substantial increase, and we are striving to keep the numbers growing. Check out this newsletter or our website for promotions and come and join us.

We continue to support our heritage partners on the Sunshine Coast and appreciate their input and help with our organization. I would like to thank our staff, volunteers and Board for their excellent work. Also to the membership, donors and local government for their generous support. All of these are vital in allowing us to provide a professional museum service for our community.

The AGM is April 19th, via zoom, so see this newsletter for details and please attend.



Thanks to our 2022 Donors

Gold Level:

Canadian Heritage
Barrie & Frankie
Stewart
Diane & Larry
Penonzek

Trudene Norman & Bill
Longman
Sunshine Coast Credit
Union

Silver Level:

Caprice Bed &
Breakfast
Crazy Red's Breads
Lisa & Ralph Hilton
Douglas & Sheila
Rogers
Gwen Willox & Wanda
Selzer

Bronze Level:

Clint Budd & Donna
McMahon
Kathy & Trent Farrell
Fay Fielder
Joann Hetherington
Laura Houle & Mark
Hiltz
Elaine Jackson
Terry & Sandy McBride
Jon McRae
Dona-Lyn Reel
Judy Rother
Thelma Tait

*...and many thanks to all
others who donated!*



Our Museum Future: Strategic Plan 2023—2028



*We are excited to share
our new Strategic Plan, a
document which will
guide the next 5 years at
the SCMA. Listed below
are some of the key
points in the plan.*

OUR FOUNDATION: A foundation to build on

Mission: The Sunshine Coast Museum & Archives Society is committed to preserving, promoting, and presenting the vibrant and diverse history of the Sunshine Coast.

Vision: We intend to be the best destination to discover the story of the Sunshine Coast, striving to be the best community museum in Canada.

OUR VALUES: Six important values to guide our work

Honesty and diversity

We believe in honest and accurate representation of our diverse history.

Stewardship

We value best professional practice in the care of our collections.

Storytelling

We tell stories well to connect with our audience.

Responsiveness

We are responsive to the needs of our visitors and community.

Cooperation

We value cooperation and partnership with regional heritage colleagues and other partners.





Sechelt, late 1920s. Herbert Whitaker's wharf on the Trail Bay waterfront

Respect

We respect and value collaboration with the Skwxwú7mesh and shíshálh Nations, including our practices of co-curation, repatriation and event programming.

PRIORITIES: Our focus for the future

We have identified 5 Strategic Priorities for the organization over the next 5 years.

1. Developing our capacity and resources
2. Enriching the visitor experience
3. Improving our infrastructure
4. Raising our profile
5. Building relations with Indigenous communities

In our full length plan, each strategic priority has between 5 and 7 key actions, covering a wide range of activities we will undertake in the coming years. If you would like a digital copy of our Strategic Plan, please contact the Museum; printed copies will also be available at the Museum.



Museum Reviews!

One of the items highlighted in our planning process was the importance of online reviews to encourage visitation. If you have had a great SCMA experience, we would love to hear from you! Help us increase the Museum's profile by leaving a review on **Trip Advisor** or **Google Business**. We will also include a Trip Advisor card in this newsletter too — thank you!



Photo courtesy of Fred Inglis. Looking towards the corner of Marine Drive and School Road in Gibsons. John Wood's Hardware & Appliances is well-known as the present-day location of iconic Molly's Reach from the Beachcombers television show. Circa 1954-55





The Malibu Club in Canada



swíwelát (Princess Louisa Inlet) is an important location in shíshálh Nation territory. The majestic fjord has a high-level of spiritual significance, and was the location of a village site called ásxwíkwu. Today, when you visit beautiful swíwelát, you will find a gorgeous lodge that houses the **Young Life Malibu Club**, a summer camp for teenagers. Back in the 1940's however, those buildings were part of a very different enterprise. In 1938, American businessman and aviation executive Thomas Hamilton was introduced to the inlet by his friend Bill Boeing. Hamilton and his wife Ethel were apparently so enchanted by the location that they decided they had to own a piece of it. The vision was to create a “mecca for millionaires”, a luxury resort in a beautiful, remote location. Hamilton wanted to attract Hollywood movie stars, directors, industrialists, and socialites.

After purchasing the land (and naming one of the islands after himself), Hamilton began construction on his ambitious project, which he called the **Malibu Club in Canada**. This was a very arduous process, as Hamilton designed all the buildings himself but would not draw them out, and had things rebuilt multiple times until they matched his vision completely. Despite the inlet's location, he mostly decorated the inside of his resort with art inspired by the Indigenous of the American Southwest in order to make his Californian guests feel more “at home”. He also commissioned several totem poles created by local Indigenous carvers. In a bizarre example of appropriating Indigenous culture, Hamilton called the opening party for his new resort the “Malibu Potlatch”. Actual potlatches were illegal at this time, and would continue to be banned for another decade after the club was opened in 1941.

Continued — next page



Hamilton created a luxurious escape for the very wealthy, and attracted some high-profile guests. Celebrities such as **John Wayne, Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, and Barbara Stanwyck** all visited the remote Malibu resort. Activities offered by Hamilton included sailing, boating, fishing, water skiing, hiking, and hunting. The rooms were luxurious, and the food was prepared by French chefs, with a customized menu depending on the guest's tastes. Entertainers were flown up to the resort specifically to perform for the guests there.

The book "Through the Rapids, the History of the Princess Louisa Inlet" by Charles W. Hitz proposes three possible reasons why Hamilton might have deserted his beloved resort. The first reason listed is financial issues. Apparently, the club had been losing money, and it took considerable resources to keep it operational. The second theory is that despite Hamilton's dedication to being the "visionary" behind Malibu, most of the actual management and organization had come from his wife, Ethel. By 1950, when the resort closed, they were divorced and she was no longer there to oversee operations. The third, and most dramatic explanation is related to a polio death and quarantine that occurred at the resort.

In 1948, 17-year-old Sydney Diane Harris, an employee of the Malibu, became extremely sick and lost consciousness. The nurse at the resort attempted to have her flown to the hospital, but it had become too stormy to safely fly. It was decided to wait until the next day to have her airlifted to Vancouver but, tragically, she died on the flight before making it to the hospital. The next night, the visiting sister of a captain who had tried to help Harris also became sick. She was admitted to the hospital and would remain there for three years, having also contracted polio. After the second case was confirmed, Health Authorities instituted a two-week quarantine at Malibu. Once the quarantine ended, the lodge returned to its usual operations. However, in 1950, Hamilton's grandson contracted the disease. Perhaps under the impression that polio would once again spread at the resort, Hamilton collected the staff and abandoned Malibu. The resort was left entirely intact, with food still on the stove in the kitchen and yachts still moored at the dock...

To read the full version of this article, including what happened to the Malibu Resort, visit the SCMA blog: sunshinecoastmuseum.ca/blog

Lucy Wolchock-Brown, Museum Assistant



How to Donate Artifacts & Archives

Spring is here and it is time for spring cleaning! As you unearth and rediscover the different treasures in your house, you might think of making a donation to the Museum. Our collection here at the Sunshine Coast Museum & Archives consists primarily of donations from community members. We started collecting in 1965 as the Elphinstone Pioneer Museum.

So how can you donate to the Museum?



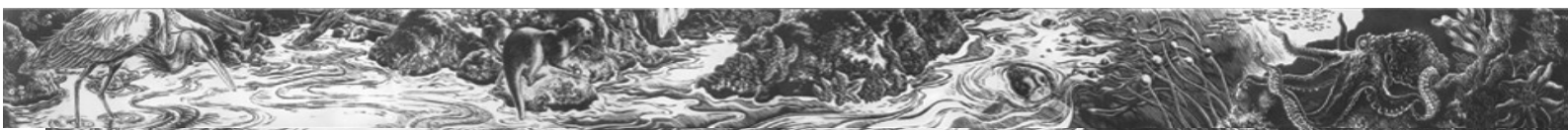
First, does your artifact fit our collections mandate? We are the heritage museum for the lower Sunshine Coast. As such, we only accept donations that are from or have significant connection to the region.

You can send us an email, call us, or come on in to talk about your potential donation. If your treasure fits our mandate and is not something that we already have in our collection, we will have you fill out a Donation Form. We may ask you to provide a photograph of the item to be assessed by the Acquisition Committee. It is best to include as much information as you can about the donation.

After we have received all of the details about your potential donation, we pass the Donation Form and all relevant information over to the Acquisition Committee who will make a decision at their next meeting. The Committee includes our Curator Matthew, as well as 2 Board members and a collections volunteer. They all have different perspectives and areas of expertise that help the Committee choose which items to accept. They meet quarterly, so it can take a little time before you hear back about your donation. This may get in the way of your spring cleaning a bit, but helps keep our organization organized!

A friendly reminder: please do not leave anything outside the Museum. If you have any questions, let us know! We can always refer you to another institution for your donation.

Allie Bartlett, Curatorial Assistant



Museum Membership Matters



Museum Membership

Your membership in the Sunshine Coast Museum & Archives Society matters.

Along with new member benefits, we have also changed the dates of the membership year, which will now run from **January 1 - December 31**. Fees will remain \$20 for individuals and \$25 for family membership.

A membership form is included with this newsletter. If you aren't sure if you are up-to-date, please phone us at **604-886-8232** and we will let you know!

Membership plays an important role in supporting our work to preserve and present the history of the Sunshine Coast. Funds raised from membership are used to purchase preservation supplies, design exhibits, and host events down at the Museum. Continuing to building our membership is listed as a key priority in our new Strategic Plan under the *Raising our Profile* priority. Membership now comes with some great benefits:

- **Museum Gift Shop Discount** — Save 10% on all gift shop purchases including T-shirts, gift cards, books (excluding consignment items)
- **Heritage Card Set** — Members receive 3 archival greeting cards (\$15 retail price). New set of cards released every year!
- **Exclusive Members Only Events** — Exclusive access to members-only exhibit openings and events
- **Complimentary Admission**— Visit as much as you'd like!
- **Museum Services**— Vote at the AGM, conduct a research request





History comes alive at the
Sunshine Coast Museum & Archives!

Union Steamship travel route (circa 1930s) depicting multiple stops along the lower Sunshine Coast, including Seaside Park (Port Mellon), New Brighton (Gambier Island), Gower Point, Halfmoon Bay, and Thormanby Island.

On your Playlist: SCMA Podcast Features

Are you an avid podcast listener? Over the past year, we have had something of a podcast renaissance at the Museum, and were featured in a number of interesting museum podcasts.

- ⇒ **BC Museum Portraits Project** - Curatorial Assistant Allie Bartlett and Curator Matthew Lovegrove sit down with Spencer Stuart to discuss all things museums! (34 min)
- ⇒ **Repatriation Call to Action with the SCMA** – BC Museum Association's Leia Patterson interviews Matthew Lovegrove about the repatriation of First Nations artifacts (15 min)

We would love it if you gave us a listen! Scan this QR code to visit our website podcast portal, or click on the *Learning* tab to access the *Podcast Features* page on our website.

Scan to listen to Museum Podcasts



Connect with Us!

The Sunshine Coast Museum & Archives is the regional Museum for the Sunshine Coast. Our collection includes photographs, archives, and artifacts.

604-886-8232

scm_a@dccnet.com

sunshinecoastmuseum.ca