

October 30, 2014

Royal BC Museum marks Remembrance Day with series of events

VICTORIA, BC – Remembrance Day is a much respected and revered day of reflection at the Royal BC Museum, and for 2014 it's all the more so, with the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the First World War.

A series of special events and educational experiences, organized with the help of community partners, will help mark the occasion and explore how the First World War impacted British Columbia and its citizens.

Starting on Wednesday, Nov. 5, the Royal BC Museum will host a series of events to explore stories of the Great War through the emotive power of the written word and song. Most presentations will take place in Clifford Carl Hall and are free.

On November 5, *Live @ Lunch: The Great War of 1914-1918: British Columbia Vignettes* will feature Royal BC Museum Curator of History Lorne Hammond sharing stories on the contribution of British Columbians **to the First World War and the conflict's impact** on our province. Event begins at noon.

That same evening, come out to the Royal BC Museum from 7 to 8 pm as a team of librarians and a Royal BC Museum curator speed review as many First World War-related books and films as they can during *Booksmack at the Royal BC Museum*.

The *Community Speaker's Series: World War 1 – A Local Perspective* on Saturday, Nov. 8 will see a wide range of local experts speak to war, commemoration and remembrance from 1 to 3 pm.

Author Robert Taylor will kick off the series with *The Ones Who Have to Pay: The Soldiers – Poets of Victoria, BC in the Great War*, a look at poetry written by local soldiers and sent to Victoria newspapers and journals from the front lines, revealing some of the popular attitudes towards war, masculinity, the British Empire and the city a century ago.

Starting at 1:30 pm, military historian Paul Ferguson will take guests on a journey of commemoration with his talk, *In That Distant Land: Touring the Great War*. This discussion will assist those interested in visiting war sites of memory, from Tyne Cot to Vimy, Thiepval to Hill 60, Ypres and others.

A little known chapter of Victoria war history will be revealed by military historian and novelist Sidney Allison as he speaks on *The Bantams: Victoria's Unknown Soldiers* at 2 pm. Among the 10 military units recruited in Victoria was the now virtually unknown 143rd Overseas Battalion, better known as the **"Bantams" because the unit was made up of 700-odd men who were below the army's minimum requirements for height**. Learn more about the fate of **this unit through Allison's talk**.

To finish off the *Community Speaker's Series*, Victoria Genealogy Society Ambassador Joanne Barnard will present *William Rochfort: A Victoria Architect Goes to War*, following the path of Rochfort from renowned architect (he designed the Royal Theatre and the Royal Victoria Yacht Club clubhouse) to the theatre of war in Europe, and back home again.

Commemorations continue Sunday, Nov. 9 with *Lest We Forget: A Musical Tribute to The Great War*, featuring the Naden Band of the Royal Canadian Navy as they play a musical tribute to the era of the First World War. This free performance is **part of the Victoria Symphony's "Lest We Forget" concert series**.

On Remembrance Day itself, the Victoria Children's Choir will visit the Royal BC Museum to perform music on themes of war and peace, including songs from the times of both World Wars, patriotic Canadian tunes and more recent compositions expressing the common desire for peace.

This award-winning choir, founded by Artistic Director Madeleine Humer, comprises about 50 talented singers aged eight to 17, known for their performances of wide-ranging repertoire both around Victoria and on tour. The choir will perform from 12:30 to 12:45 pm and from 1:45 to 2 pm.

Also performing that day will be the Story Theatre Company, which has teamed up with the Royal BC Museum to present *The Call Goes Out*, a collection of music, songs and poetry from the First World War era mixed with letters from the young men who travelled overseas to the trenches.

Both script and music have a British Columbian flair, through letters from the BC Archives written by local soldiers. This 30-minute presentation, running at 1 and 2:15 pm, brings back the efforts and sacrifices made by British Columbians. *The Call Goes Out* is an expression of our respect for those who answered it.

For more information on these and other events please visit royalbcmuseum.bc.ca.

About the Royal BC Museum

The Royal BC Museum explores the province's human history and natural history, advances new knowledge and understanding of BC, and provides a dynamic forum for discussion and a place for reflection. The museum and archives celebrate culture and history, telling the stories of BC in ways that enlighten, stimulate and inspire. Looking to the future, by 2017 the Royal BC Museum will be a refreshed, modern museum, extending its reach far beyond Victoria as a world-class cultural venue and repository of digital treasures.

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