



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MUSEUMS MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR BRITISH COLUMBIANS
Celebrate BC Museums Week May 18-24, 2019

VICTORIA, BC – From May 18-24, it's time to celebrate the role museums, art galleries, historic sites, cultural centres and other memory institutions play in making life better for British Columbians. BC Museums Week starts on International Museum Day and takes place right after International Museum Week, tapping into a worldwide event that unites the global cultural sector on social networks by using the same hashtag.

"Museums are at the heart of their communities," says Erica Mattson, Executive Director of the BC Museums Association. "Museums preserve local history and culture, provide learning opportunities for all age groups, help create economic opportunities and provide spaces for the community to gather together."

There are a variety of activities planned throughout the province during BC Museums Week including free admission at the **Nanaimo Museum and Bastion** on International Museum Day on May 18th, a new exhibit at the **Creston Museum** showcasing the impact of logging and sawmills in the Creston Valley and the seasonal opening of the **Huble Homestead** in Prince George where visitors can welcome new animals to the farm and learn about pioneer families' spring activities. Find out what's happening for BC Museums Week in your community by visiting <http://bit.ly/BCMuseumsWeek2019Events> or follow **#BCMuseums** on social media.

The BC government recently made strategic investments in the cultural sector to help build strong, connected communities throughout the province. As part of Budget 2019, the government invested an additional \$15 million over the next three years to BC Arts Council, which will have a direct impact on BC museums. One-time grants through the *BC/Canada 150* program helped museums upgrade local facilities and develop new exhibits, and *Family Day grants* allowed BC museums to host free special events for families to enjoy with their neighbours on the holiday weekend in February.

"Our museums, art galleries, historic sites, cultural centres and other institutions do an incredible job in presenting stories of British Columbia," says Lisa Beare, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture. "I am thrilled that this year's BC Museums Week will showcase Indigenous languages and culture in honour of the International Year of Indigenous Languages. This is an excellent chance for people to immerse themselves in the power of language and learn more about this important part of B.C.'s heritage."

The United Nations has declared 2019 the "International Year of Indigenous Languages." During BC Museums Week, several museums, cultural centres and heritage groups will be showcasing Indigenous languages and culture. The **Museum of Vancouver** is offering \$2 admission all day on May 18th and two special tours of the *Haida Now* exhibit, which is a visual feast of innovation and tradition. At the **Royal BC Museum** in Victoria, visitors can explore the interactive *Living Languages* exhibit to hear a greeting in one of the 34 First Nations languages and learn more about how First Nations communities are working to make sure their languages survive.



About BC Museums

- Total revenues for B.C.'s museums sector are estimated at over \$225 million annually.
- Over 4,400 people are employed by B.C.'s museums sector.
- Over 19,000 volunteers contribute over 1 million hours of work each year in museums and heritage institutions.
- 11 million annual visitors to B.C. heritage institutions
- 33.7 million visits to museums' digital collections

Source: Government of Canada Survey of Heritage Institutions: 2017

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About the BC Museums Association:

Founded in 1957, the British Columbia Museums Association (BCMA) creates a bright future for British Columbia's museum, gallery, and related heritage communities through networking, advocacy, innovation, and professional development. It delivers programs and services to the benefit of its members and the sector at large, acting as the cultural and heritage information hub for British Columbia while providing a unified voice for the institutions, trustees, professional staff and volunteers.

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