

Monday to Friday, 10 am to 4 p.m.
Saturday, 12 noon to 4 p.m.
Closed Sundays and Holidays

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Fall 2020

Museum Services During the Pandemic—Rolling with the Punches

In 2020, the pandemic reduced the Museum’s annual visitors by 4,000 due to the pandemic shutdown and Museum closure, March 18—June 1. Staff are now working hard to encourage visitors back. It will definitely take time as, given physical distancing, the Museum space just can’t take the same number of visitors at the same time. Right now with the Christmas Gift Store—on now until December 24—limits in the building are three visitors upstairs and three down. As well, tourism is very low as it should be at this time.

Closure was extremely disruptive but the Museum survived given funding from all levels of government and staff working remotely. Still, during the closure the Museum cancelled the Cultural Arts & Crafts Spring Break programs, Museum Explorer’s programs and four temporary exhibitions. With the loss of visitors, the Museum lost revenue in the gift shop, commission sales, and donations at the door. Once open, the Museum ran the summer programs with half the students hired, half the programs and half the participants in each program. The requirements of physical distancing in the Museum’s Upstairs Gallery, a small space, limited the number of participants. Given all

the cancellations and reductions due to Covid-19, sales and program fee revenue streams saw a 42% decrease.

Temporary Exhibitions Return

Visual Connections—a beautiful collection of visual arts from artists in the Northwest region—ran August 7 to September 12. *Essential Oils: Art by Sherry Nielsen* brought the Northwest region into the gallery with Sherry’s powerful, stunning landscapes and wildlife of the region, oil on canvas, September 18—October 31, 2020. The *Christmas Gift Store* opened November 18, 2020 and features 22 local and regional artisans.

Museum Lift Set to Open

After the Museum’s new lift receives an inspection, it will open for visitors who have difficulty negotiating stairs. The Museum will notify the media when visitors can begin using the lift.

Haisla Heritage Collection Display Redesign

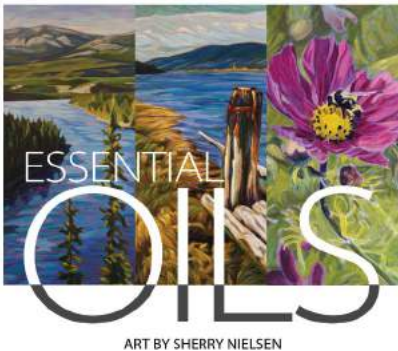
The nine information panels for the Haisla Heritage Collection display area are now installed and Lyle Wilson’s recent donation of art pieces from his career are now featured. The iPad station hosting Haisla images, maps, and documents will appear after the pandemic has run its course. Artifact labelling is now in production.

Strategic Planning

Heritage planning consultant Donald Luxton & Associates <http://www.donaldluxton.com/> has completed a new strategic plan for the Museum’s future physical space needs and potential partnerships. Meetings will be arranged with the District of Kitimat Council and Haisla Nation Council in the New Year.

Museum Website Hosts More Images

What to do during the pandemic? Best to keep busy building the Museum’s online offerings at www.kitimatmuseum.ca! Denise Pedro, Research & Marketing, has been hard at work adding images to the



Museum's website. These images are from two past exhibitions—Settling In: Highlighting 50 Years of Kitimat's History (2003), and the District of Kitimat's 60th anniversary exhibition hosted in City Centre Mall (2013) and now on display at Riverlodge. There are now 532 images on the Museum's website.

More is coming including: 1) Kitimat Skates (images digitized and featured when the Museum hosted Lace Up!, a travelling exhibition from the Canadian Museum of History, Ottawa, and 2) Living Landscapes, Memories of the Project, a compiled image collection to accompany written content and oral histories of the years of construction.

Finally, the Museum would like to feature a selection of images arranged per decade, and create a searchable collections database for online and onsite visitors.

KITIMAT MUSEUM & ARCHIVES COLLECTIONS



Remembering Craig Simpson



(John) Craig Simpson—Northwest artist and Museum Board member 1989-1997—passed away in his sleep on August 18, 2020. I met Craig when I was hired by the

Museum Board HR Committee in May 1996. He was one of three on the Committee tasked with interviewing me as well as showing me around the Museum and Kitimat. I remember Craig's tour of Terrace on my way back to Vancouver, which included a visit to the old Terrace cemetery and a stop at the Back Eddy Pub. Years before, I had met Craig and fellow Board member Richard Krickan in Penticton at the BC Museums Association Conference. Always having a well thought out opinion, Craig definitely had some choice words for the organizers at the policy session I attended.



Craig at 80 (top) and attending the 1997 Member Appreciation Day, Radley Park.

Craig and Sheila Simpson welcomed Mike and I and we quickly became close friends. I could always talk "museums" with Craig, and he became a valued mentor for me when I was first floundering around in my new job. He helped me focus on what was right—the best approach, and his thinking was always well considered. He loved to tease, discuss, paint, and read, and could be quite feisty on certain topics.

He loved history and art, and maintained a large library. When the Museum Board was attempting to find a motor for Fire One, Kitimat's first fire truck, Craig told me he had been involved in the restoration of Fire One in the 1980s, having worked extensively on the paint job. He also participated in the Museum's first art show in 1969. Over many years, he was a contributor to various community art shows, painting his beautiful portraits, and landscapes of mountains, ocean, and boats. His father had put in the water system at Butedale, and Craig remembered living there for a number of years. He loved that cannery community and the BC coast which often became the subject of his paintings.

I am honoured that Craig Simpson was my good friend for 24 years. I can imagine him now, portrait painting in heaven and enjoying a glass of cheap red wine! Farewell my good friend.

Louise Avery
Executive Director

Recent Acquisitions

By Angela Eastman, Programming & Collections

The Museum has received a number of donations since moving back to full-time hours. In August, the family of the late Malcolm Baxter donated a box of memorabilia that included several patches, Kitimat souvenir items, and newspapers. I was saddened by Malcolm's passing in May 2020. I first met him in the late 1970s on the slo-pitch fields where he played on a team appropriately named the 'Beer Cubs'. Malcolm went on to have a long career as a reporter for the Northern Sentinel Press in Kitimat and the Terrace Standard, returning to the Northern Sentinel as editor from 1995 until he retired in 2012. He was well versed in Kitimat history, having arrived in Kitimat as a child with his family. His father, Basil, worked for Alcan and sat on the first Kitimat municipal council. Baxter Avenue is named for Basil Baxter.



Kitimat Curling Club patch, from the former Curling Club at Riverlodge. Baxter Collection 2020.12.1

- From Cyndi McIntosh we received two aluminum Chamber Convention menu plates created by sponsor Aluminum Company of Canada.
- Eileen Hutson donated an embroidered CASAW sample logo.
- Colleen Velho donated a framed photograph of the Kemano Townsite.
- Barb Campbell brought in a very pretty little girl's party dress worn by her sister in 1961.
- From Magda Machula we received a Safe Driving I.D. Card issued to former Fire Chief Aubrey Creed.
- Aileen Thomas donated two photographs of Eurocan.

Robert Brimblecombe, Cambridge, UK sent three boxes of reports, correspondence, and archival items belonging to the estate of Arthur Smythe Henderson. Mr. Henderson worked for the Aluminum Company of Canada in the late 1950s.

Robert Brimblecombe wrote: "Arthur Smythe Henderson was born in 1926 – he always insisted on including his middle name in any correspondence. He died in December 2019, aged 93. I met him for the first time about eight years ago. We lived close to each other, and he cut a distinctive figure, always wearing a Tyrolean hat and carrying a white stick. He wasn't blind, but the stick belonged to his mother, and he found people were more helpful when he carried it.

He attended school at Stamford in Lincolnshire and towards the end of the Second World War, he spent some time in both the Royal Air Force (or it may have been the Fleet Air Arm) and the Royal Navy. He once told me that he attended his interview for the RAF while still wearing his school uniform. A member of the interview panel pointed out to him that what he was volunteering for as a pilot on aircraft carriers was a particularly dangerous choice to which Arthur replied, "I rather thought it might be sir, on account of the war." He was a member of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve for many years, and was instrumental in arranging for the battleship HMS Belfast to be moored in the Thames in central London as a floating museum, rather than being decommissioned and sold as scrap.

Between 1946 and 1955, Arthur studied architecture and town planning at the Architectural Association in London; at Stuttgart University under his hero, Max Erich Feuchtinger; at Yale School of Architecture and latterly at McGill University in Canada. It was from here, I imagine, that he was recruited to work on the Kitimat Project. After Kitimat and Canada, Arthur worked for a Canadian consultancy company in Tanzania, on the development of Dodoma, the country's new capital city.

A picture emerges of a man very much of his time – a man who was totally infected with the spirit of optimism of the post-war years and, perhaps even more importantly, a man who never doubted the importance of internationalism and collaboration. It is interesting to note, for example, the strong thread of interest in urban regeneration following the Second World War – and all of this is pieced together by rifling through piles and piles of documents that have mostly been untouched in well over fifty years. Arthur was not a particularly original thinker, I believe, but he was very good at bringing original thoughts together in combinations that are, at times, surprising.

He was not an easy man to get on with, however. I became friends with him in his later years, but had many disputes with him, especially when he was rude and snobbish – which I think probably hampered his success throughout his professional life. His legacy is very much a footnote. He was the man, for example, who specified the maximum steepness for safe curves on motorway and roundabout slip roads – that is to say, he wrote the rules for the UK Department of Transport which made sure speeding buses did not tip over."



Arthur Smythe Henderson ca. 1948. Photograph courtesy of Robert Brimblecombe

Cataloguing the Collection

Staff members Magda Machula and David Gable are assisting the Museum by entering database records for photographs of Kitimat construction and cultural events and activities. This staffing boost is provided by federal Covid-19 Relief and municipal funding. Photograph collections include:

- * 2018.2—Jean Lunny Collection, three boxes of slides taken by her father, John McLachlan who arrived in Kitimat in 1953. He worked for Alcan's Property Department for almost 40 years as land surveyor, cartographer, and draftsman.



Dominion Day Parade, 1964, Nechako Centre, Kitimat. Order of the Royal Purple Ladies' Auxiliary, Miss Kitimat. Jean Lunny Collection No 2018.2

- * 2002.7—Art Coghlin Collection, two boxes slides—27 of caisson construction and Kitimat Bridge, 25 of smelter area construction, circa 1953.
- * 2014.16—Lisa McBean Collection, two boxes of slides of the traditional pole raising on the Point, Sam Robinson, master carver, Jasee pole, two beaver, whole man, and halibut, 1973.
- * 2003.5—Max Patzelt Collection, totem poles in the Hazelton region, a two-day trip documenting them via audiotape and photography, circa 1965-66.

The more entered in the Museum's database, the more will be available in the near future for image searches on the Museum's planned online collections database.

Anderson Ranch Artifact Update

In 2020, the Kitimat Heritage Group through the Kitimat Museum & Archives received funding to hire a contractor to treat the Anderson Ranch implements—a sickle bar mower, a hay wain, and a plow—with Fluid Film, a rust resistant coating. These implements, once used at the Anderson Ranch, were salvaged from the estuary. In October 2020, Rio Tinto airlifted a number of these found relics from the site of an abandoned shed. All wood and leather had disintegrated over time with only metal remaining, and many of the pieces to make the machinery complete were missing.

To date, all work has been donated. In lieu of payment, two donations have been made to local charities in Zanron and

Bandstra's names. Zanron Mechanical Services donated treatment to remove the active rust, and Bandstra and Dal Monte's Wood-Craft Ltd. donated transport and pallets, respectively.



Kitimat Heritage Group members Grant Fouranet and Walter Thorne present a Certificate of Service Excellence to Paul Grincer, Zanron Mechanical Services.

City Centre

Mall donated indoor storage space until the spring. A resident will be donating an original wheel from the mower, found at the shed site many years ago, and salvaged.

The Kitimat Heritage Group would like to spend the remaining funds on a sculpture named "Kouwthpega" after the original name of the Anderson Ranch. An artist is now interested in creating the sculpture by welding the pieces together. The Kitimat Chamber of Commerce Board has agreed to locate the sculpture beside the stump puller, also from the Anderson Ranch and located at Heritage Park. Work will begin again in the spring 2021.

Artisan Christmas Gift Store

SHOP LOCAL

for everyone on your list at the Kitimat Museum & Archives

NOVEMBER 18TH to DECEMBER 24TH, 2020

OPEN

Monday to Friday: 10 am to 4 pm
Saturdays: 12 pm to 4 pm

EXTENDED HOURS:
December 14th to 23rd
Monday to Saturday: 10 am to 5 pm
December 24th
10 am to 2 pm

SHOPPING DURING COVID-19

Along with physical distancing and directional traffic, masks are required to be worn in the building for everyone's safety and protection

A limit of 3 visitors to the Store at one time

CONTACT

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www.kitimatmuseum.ca

WE ACCEPT

VISA Mastercard American Express