

**293 City Centre  
Kitimat, B.C. V8C 1T6  
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**Monday to Friday, 10 am to 4 p.m.  
Saturday, 12 noon to 4 p.m.  
Closed Sundays and Holidays**

## Winter 2020-2021

### Update on Museum Services During the Pandemic

Saturday, March 20 marks the first day of Spring, so this winter 2020-2021 Museum update is timely! The visitor number over the winter has been both expected and unexpected. The Christmas Gift Store attendance was higher given that people were looking for gifts without needing to travel to Terrace. Attendance and sales definitely met and often exceeded previous years. Following the holidays, Museum staff were not necessarily expecting the quiet of January and February 2021. Both months are traditionally quiet but given the pandemic and essential/non-essential directives, they were half the usual number.

Emergency funding has been received from Canadian Heritage and BC Arts Council to assist the Museum in recovery from closure, loss of revenue, and continued lack of in-person service use by the visiting public.

#### Pivoting for Virtual Audiences

To maintain and increase visitors, increased virtual content will be delivered in a couple of ways—film on the Museum's YouTube Channel and a searchable database on the Museum's website.

Recently, the Museum filmed artist Stan Bevan explaining his Wood Cuts, the first show of 2021. If you missed this exhibition in the Upstairs

Gallery, you can view the film on the Museum's YouTube Channel. Additionally, the Museum will soon present the art of Freda Diesing School of Northwest Art & Design, first and second year students, in a virtual show on the KMA website, or see it in person until March 27.

Federal and provincial funding will help the Museum purchase film equipment in order to film Museum Explorer program instruction and summer program activities. The Museum will also launch On This Spot—a



history app where a historical photograph is matched up with a present-day photograph on that spot. These match-ups are viewed online. Museum staff are now working on a Discovery Interface to establish a searchable archival and artifact database online.

#### Museum Website Hosts More Images

Many images are now featured in the following online exhibitions at [www.kitimatmuseum.ca](http://www.kitimatmuseum.ca):

- Alcan Project History
- Settling In: Highlighting 50 Years of Kitimat's History.
- Kitimat's 60 Years, a retrospective of Kitimat residents, events, and places over sixty years.
- Kitimat Skates—images of Kitimat's skating history including Snow Valley Skating Club, Kitimat hockey—youth and adult, and facilities.

The Royal BC Museum has updated its website Living Landscapes at <https://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/bcs-living-landscapes>—For its Living Landscapes submission, the Kitimat Museum & Archives interviewed over 30 individuals who worked on the Kitimat Project. *Memories of the Project* is a compiled image collection that accompanies written content and oral histories of the years of construction on the Living Landscapes site.

#### Exhibition Maintenance

The permanent exhibitions *City of Tomorrow* and *Settling the Valley* will receive label revisions and photographic updates. A re-write and production of the three panels for the Delta King exhibition is now in production.

#### Temporary exhibitions planned for 2021 include:

- Stan Bevan, 'Northern Wood Cuts', January 8—February 27
- Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art, first and second year students, March 5—27 (on now)
- Margaret Trenn, 'Monochrome Musings', April 3 to June 5

- The Art of Angie McIntosh, June 11 to July 24
- Community Art Call for Entry, July 30 to September 11
- Living Languages, a Travelling Exhibition from the Royal BC Museum, September 17 to November 20
- Christmas Gift Store, November 26 - December 24

### **Gisela Mendel Geology and Fossil Collection Area**

The Museum will honour its first curator Gisela Mendel by dedicating the drawer unit of geology and fossil specimens and area after her. The display area will feature panels of geological and paleontological information for visitor orientation to the region. Daughter Frederika (Rika) Lyne made a financial donation in her mother's name to the production of the panels after her visit to the Museum during the 50th anniversary celebration.

Questions to be answered include: How was the area formed? What is the evidence of plate tectonics (i.e. presence of southern oceanic life, the ammonite)? Are there different ages of geological formations here? What signs are left from the last Ice Age? Gisela's intense scrutiny was on the fossils of the region, and most of the collections in the drawer unit are from her collecting activity. The information contained in the Museum's publication, "Geology of the Northwest Mainland," by Allen Gottesfeld (1985), will be the primary source for the panel information.

### **Museum Lift Officially Opens**

The Museum's new lift received an inspection during December and was officially opened by Annie Hall and Mayor Germuth. Annie mentioned that it had been many years since she had visited the Upstairs Gallery. The new lift offers critical access for those visitors who have difficulty climbing stairs. The lift is also great for mothers with babies in strollers/carriages to visit upstairs with little ones.



### **Haisla Heritage Collection Display Redesign**

Artifact labelling is now in production and additional archaeological specimens have been installed in the traditional case. Discoveries were made during LNG site construction. The Museum is listed as an official BC regional archaeological repository.

## **Join the Museum Board**

The Museum Board of Directors seeks to fill one position on the Board. If you would like to be an active part of Museum planning and policy, join our seven-member Board team.

You will:

- Be an active voting member of the Museum by annually purchasing a membership.
- Attend one regular meeting every second month (the fourth Wednesday). These meetings are generally one hour in length in the evenings.
- Attend additional meetings called by the Board Chair.
- Attend Museum events such as receptions and speaking engagements.
- Attend the Annual General Meeting, this year, May 26, 2021 7:30 p.m. on Zoom. At the meeting, we will officially welcome you to begin your 2-year term.

Contact the Museum Director at 250-632-8951.

## **Artifact Identification**

Do you know the story behind this alarm? Our guess is that it was once used during the Kitimat construction years at Smeltersite. The Museum has had this alarm on a shelf above the reference library for approximately 30 years. The artifact is unnumbered, so staff cannot locate the original information—its story and donor.



If you have information to provide, please contact us at the Museum at 250-632-8950.

## Recent Acquisitions

By Angela Eastman, Programming & Collections

The Kitimat Museum & Archives has received a number of donations these past few months.

Sophie Skitcko brought in a Junior B Hockey Program, and two Snow Valley Figure Skating Yearbooks from the early 1980s.

Judith Saunders from Vancouver sent along a box of slides taken by Ted Bateman (Edwin Charles Bateman.) Ted was a Surveyor's Assistant on Smelter construction in the early 1950s.

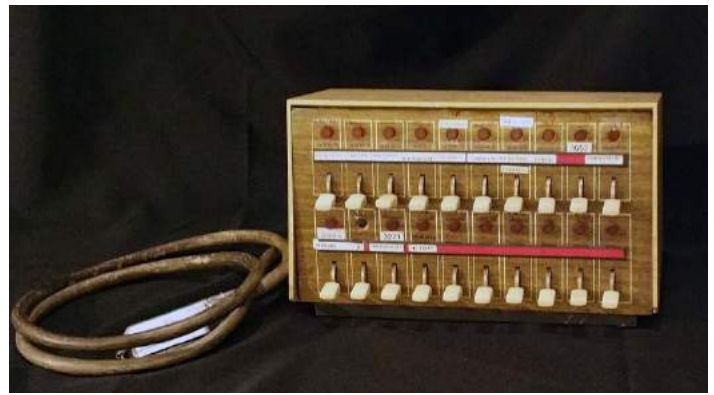
Barb Campbell donated a collection of airline memorabilia.

An Aluminum Company of Canada Ltd. 50th anniversary brochure and several photos were sent by Kira Westby at the Bulkley Valley Museum. The photos are of Smithers resident Eckard Mendel, son of former curator Gisela Mendel, holding a large Puget Sound box crab. Eckard caught the specimen while diving in the Douglas Channel near Kitimat. Eckard and the crab were featured in the Interior News (September 22, 1993, front page).

Walter Thorne donated a collection of 37 photographs from the estate of Klaus Mueller. These images include photos of Prince Philip's visit in 1954 and smelter construction. Klaus was a long-time Kitimat resident, most recently from Smithers.

Shirley Brueker brought in a number of items from the estate of Ingrun Hagemann. Ingrun was a resident of Kitimat for many years, arriving with her family in the early 1950s. She attended Smeltersite School and MESS. She went on to become a teacher, primarily at Nechako Elementary School. The collection includes a paddle, two framed paintings, Kitimat High School and MESS yearbooks, photographs, and published material.

Aluminum book ends were donated by Mike Avery. These book ends were commonly gifted to retirees or employees leaving Kitimat Works in the late 1970s through the 1980s. They are cut from an aluminum ingot. Also often gifted were lamps or



Alcan Switchboard ca. 1960s. Donor: Cor Rood. KMA No. 2020.27.1

candlesticks made from aluminum that spilled from the pots— usually from a leak. There are a couple of things I would like to acquire for the Museum before I retire—one is an example of an aluminum spill that has been repurposed in some way. The other is a standing ashtray that would have graced a Kitimat home in the 1950s. You've got a couple of years, Kitimat. Let's get on that!

We've had two donations of archeological material from environmental organizations involved in the construction of the LNG project in our area. These include a spall tool, hammer stone and what might possibly be a spearhead.

We received a small model telephone switchboard used by the Aluminum Company of Canada in the 1960s from Cor Rood. There are a couple of recognizable names on the different inputs #Anne Berrisford.

Master carver and artist Lyle Wilson has added to his significant continuing donation. The items include JUHQWIN FELWA WA-WES— a fabric paint on canvas banner; EAGLE - a traditional dancing frontlet headdress assemblage (yellow cedar, red cedar bark, abalone shell, leather, whale baleen, ermine & cotton string) and MIYA - alder carving on red cedar frame. The headdress is now on display in the traditional case in the x̄a'isla exhibition area.

EAGLE - a traditional dancing frontlet headdress assemblage. Donor: Lyle Wilson. KMA No. 2021.9.2



Aluminum book ends. Donor: Mike Avery. KMA No. 2021.6





From the daughter and granddaughters of John Ballantyne Carswell; Mary G. Carswell Hartley, Katherine A. Rogers-Hartley and Christine E. Hartley Morton we received a framed panoramic photograph of Smeltersite in the mid 1950's that belonged to Mrs. Hartley's father.

Civil engineer John Ballantyne Carswell was involved in many big events and projects around Canada after WWII. He also was the head engineer for Union Station in Toronto and many military bases around Canada including Downsview. He also led the clean up after Hurricane Hazel hit Toronto and directed the building of levees along the Fraser and Red Rivers. During WWII, he lived in Arlington, Virginia in a house dubbed "The Canadian White House" and was the Canadian representative in Washington DC for the Department of Munitions. He was in charge of buying anything the US government had for sale that Canada needed in the War Effort. An excerpt from the Northern Sentinel Press Ltd. (April 14, 1954. Courtesy of the Kitimat Public Library) reads:

*When the beginning of the Kitimat Project was first planned,*

*the question arose as to whether or not any Western Canadian company was big enough to be considered for the job. The answer came in the joining of a group of companies under the chairmanship of John B. Carswell of Vancouver.*

*Dawson, Wade & Co. Ltd. Marwell Construction Co. Ltd., Campbell-Bennett Ltd., Bennett and White Construction Co., General Construction Co. Ltd., Emil Anderson Construction Co. Ltd., BC Bridge and Dredging Co. Ltd., Dawson & Hall Ltd. made up the team – Kitimat Constructors Limited.*

*This joint venture was charged with the job of building up the area, clearing townsite, and installing certain major facilities and buildings.*

It is of interest to note that when her father was traveling back and forth from their home on Grouse Mountain in Vancouver to Kitimat, Mary always wanted to go with him to see the beauty of it. Unfortunately, she was always told that it was too 'rough' a population for a young girl to visit.

Carswell Street is named for John Ballantyne Carswell.



Panoramic photograph of Smeltersite ca. 1954. Donor: Hartley Family. KMA No.2020.28

## Upstairs Gallery—Now Showing

**View the 2021 Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art Student Exhibition from March 5 to 27, 2021.**

**Pieces by talented first and second-year students will be on display, and will be available to purchase. Come see first-hand the skill of these hardworking emerging artists.**

At the Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art, located at Coast Mountain College, students of Indigenous descent have an opportunity to learn alongside world-renowned carvers and artists, to develop design fundamentals in First Nations Northwest Coast Art and traditional woodcarving.



**FREDA DIESING**  
SCHOOL OF NORTHWEST COAST ART

**2021**  
**STUDENT EXHIBITION**



*The Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art brings all nations together in the pursuit of higher education, and sets new standards for aspiring artists. It is the only School of its kind in Canada, focusing on traditional First Nations Pacific Northwest Coast art.*

SHOWING at the  
**Kitimat Museum & Archives**  
**March 5 to 27, 2021**



coast mountain college 