



Kelowna  
Museums  
Alive With Our History

# ANNUAL REPORT

## KELOWNA MUSEUMS SOCIETY

# 2021

Okanagan Heritage Museum | Okanagan Military Museum  
Okanagan Wine & Orchard Museum | Central Okanagan Sports Hall of Fame

## MISSION

The Kelowna Museums Society provides the public with educational exhibitions and programs that foster personal participation, stimulate curiosity, and engage the senses with the cultures, histories, and possibilities of the Okanagan region.

## VISION

To inspire a community to be alive with its history – connecting people and place.

## VALUES

Inclusive • Authentic • Responsive • Inspiring

## OVERVIEW

The Kelowna Museums Society (KMS) operates the Okanagan Heritage Museum, Okanagan Military Museum, Okanagan Wine and Orchard Museum, Laurel Packinghouse, and Central Okanagan Sports Hall of Fame. In addition, the KMS operates the Kelowna Public Archives, Vince Bezeau Military Library and Archives, Ursula Surtees Regional Conservation Lab, and Laurel Packinghouse event rentals.

*The Kelowna Museums Society operates on the unceded traditional territory of the syilx/Okanagan people.*





## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We are now in the third year of the COVID 19 pandemic, and I am the new president of the Kelowna Museums Board of Directors. I have served as a KMS board member for 15 years through war, fire, flood, disease and now war again. As a college professor at Okanagan College, I see the effects of the pandemic on our young people. Yet through it all the Kelowna Museums staff and volunteers have persisted and adapted to keep the museums accessible, sometimes only online. History can teach us many lessons, one of them is that our predecessors also survived trials in their day and so shall we.

In 2021, we suffered loss as a nation when in August, Kabul fell to the Taliban and Canada's Mission in Afghanistan faded from history. This defeat was not due to lack of effort from the Canadian soldiers who served there from 2001-2014. Our Okanagan Military Museum will tell their story even better after its main galleries get their planned upgrade.

We also felt sorrow as a nation with the discovery of unmarked graves at the Kamloops Residential School. We opened our Okanagan Heritage Museum on the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation and our First Nations heritage staff welcomed visitors while our board met that day to reach out to Westbank First Nation.

The Kelowna Museums has also lost the wonderful Ursula Surtees, our first curator in 1969. Her good work lives on in our museums and the Regional Conservation Laboratory. She is a model for us all.

My best wishes to you,

**Howard Hisdal, CD, MA**

PRESIDENT OF THE KELOWNA MUSEUMS SOCIETY



## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 2021, the long “Covid Winter” melted into a summer of record heat and wildfires, which cooled into a fall of destructive flooding and social upheaval. At the same time, new variants wreaked havoc on families and exhausted health workers. Across the world, a second pandemic of workplace burnout was widely reported in the media. The need to keep each other safe by maintaining distance also made us lonely. The strain was visible on faces everywhere.

Perhaps it was small acts of kindness that kept us going.

At Kelowna Museums, individuals stepped up to lend a hand and offer a friendly word. We learned the importance of asking each other, “How are you?” and listening carefully before getting down to business. The friendly exchanges between visitors and staff felt like lifelines to connection.

Our commitment to inclusivity, reconciliation and authenticity provided a shared purpose and inspired each of us to give our best. Despite the strain, staff continued to respond to the emerging needs of the community in innovative and creative ways. You will read about some of these highlights in this booklet.

Most importantly, we made small but meaningful steps on our journey of reconciliation. The heartbreaking news that 215 unmarked graves had been located at Kamloops Indian Residential School, followed by the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, moved us deeper into this work. Limlāmt to the many partners who are walking this path with us.

We are grateful to City of Kelowna, as well as our provincial and federal partners, for their funding support. And thank you - the staff, Board of Directors, members, donors, volunteers, partners and participants who choose to be part of this work. Our museums may be buildings that hold collections, but people are the life force of museums.

Thank you / wa'y limlāmt,

**Linda Digby**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE KELOWNA MUSEUMS SOCIETY







## EXHIBITIONS

In 2021, the team opened the Okanagan Heritage Museum's first feature exhibit of the year in February. The gallery space was transformed to give visitors the unique experience of "playing" the exhibit. *ArtiFACT or ArtiFICTION*, which made use of artifacts and reproduced archival materials, challenged our guests to test their knowledge in the style of a trivia game.

As summer wound down, exhibits switched over to showcase the culmination of a multi-year collaborative UBCO research project: *Waterways – Past, Present and Future*. The exhibit used multi-channel videos and interactive 3D worlds to allow viewers to explore the impact of development and climate change on local waterways as well as the importance of Traditional Ecological Knowledge in ensuring that all living things have clean water, now and in the future.

In the common room, we shared a display with some of the first additions to our COVID-19 collection, and we were also pleased to provide exhibit space for Cool Arts to display their newest work called *Weaving Together*.

While the Laurel Packinghouse remained closed to the public, great progress was made on the overhaul of the Okanagan Wine and Orchard Museum galleries, and a UBCO student project in the Laurel Square's Exploratorium brought the space to life with a virtual apple box tour.

As the year came to a close, Curatorial Manager Amanda Snyder welcomed her daughter into the world, and Daniel Becker stepped in to fill her managerial role.

*An elementary school class exploring the interactive 3D worlds in Waterways  
Daniel and Amanda working on the OWOM galleries  
Jas installing ArtiFACT or ArtiFICTION*

## COLLECTIONS & CONSERVATION

2021 was another busy year for collections and conservation. Over 3,000 objects were catalogued, 323 objects donated and 12 public projects undertaken.

Our summer students worked hard at cataloguing recent donations, as well as the Dr. Clarke medical collection that was never fully inventoried, and also helped to prepare objects for display in the newly imagined Okanagan Wine and Orchard Museum. Our conservation intern continued on a 2020 initiative, cataloguing all of our lithics (stone tools) with the goal of being able to notify bands of the First Nations objects in our holdings.

We received a grant from Canadian Heritage to co-host a series of four online workshops and webinars for museum professionals. Topics such as custom box and mount making, an introduction to archival practice, and museum evaluation strategies.

As a member of the BC Heritage Emergency Response Network, our conservator was asked to join a team of conservators to help recover objects from museums destroyed in the Lytton fire.

Another big change in 2021 saw our curatorial manager temporarily step back from her duties to take maternity leave. Congratulations, Amanda and Anderson!

***"Thank you again for everything on Tuesday. Your help was incredibly valuable – we learned a ton and are in a much better position to tackle this going forward."***

***-Marisa, Greater Vernon Museum and Archives***

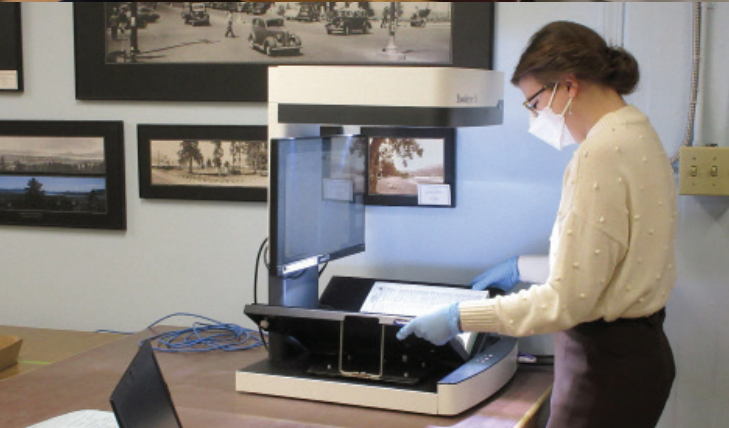
*Alana and Nikki looking at First Nations artifacts*

*Nikki cleaning the basket stapler for display at the OWOM*

*Karley applying numbers to medical instruments*







## ARCHIVES

The Kelowna Public Archives and the Vince Bezeau Military Library and Archives hold our community memory in the form of documents, sound recordings, and moving images. They are organized, preserved and made available to researchers of all levels and interests.

The archives invested in a variety of digitization equipment in 2021. We now have the ability to scan books, batches of slides and negatives, play reel-to-reels, convert 3.5" floppy discs, and digitize VHS tapes, cassettes, and records.

In 2021, researchers were primarily supported through online appointments. With a computer camera and screen sharing, the archivist was able to share images, audio and video with researchers both locally and from far away, all from the comfort and safety of their homes.

Our archives intern worked to organize and accession a large donation from the Central Okanagan Naturalists Club (C.O.N.C). Since 1962, C.O.N.C. has played key roles in establishing provincial parks, wildlife reserves and conservation education. The donation spans 60 years, with a highlight being an extensive newsletter collection containing drawings, minutes, trip reports and bird counts.

At the VBMLA, work continued on a 2020 project to re-envision and re-organize the archives storage area. We were kindly offered a donation of four, metal, enamel, map cabinets from AllTerra Land Surveying. These are an invaluable addition to our storage and allow for the continual safe storage of our archival material.

*Bri and Sarah Jane processing archival materials  
Josie after making her way through the entire CONC donation  
Megan working with the new book scanner*



## OKANAGAN MILITARY MUSEUM

In 2021, the Okanagan Military Museum opened its doors to visitors three days a week. In-person field trips returned as well, and new content for those groups was developed. Each month, military-focused blog posts were created for the newly released OMM website, and social media posts contributed for KMS platforms.

We were pleased to host a crew from the Canadian Fallen Heroes Foundation and to support the production of their fundraising video *Keep the Memory Alive*. Once again, the OMM participated in the community's Field of Crosses installation and led nearly 200 students through our gallery spaces in November. Our annual Remembrance Day open house returned and we welcomed 185 people.

In collaboration with the BC Dragoons Whizzbang Association, a WWI trophy machine gun was acquired, and a travelling display case and interpretive panels were created.

In 2021, the Military Museum was excited to host the new, and very successful, *Mannequin Madness* – a customized escape room style experience that saw small groups race against the clock to save the world!

***“A relatively small museum but very informative.  
Lots of things to see in it. You will need around a hour  
of time to fully digest the informations in the museum.***

***Really a hidden gem in Kelowna.”***

***- The Rekt production, Google reviews***

*Sarah demonstrating the recently donated map cabinets in the VBLMA  
A family races to solve clues in Mannequin Madness  
The mobile display case and interpretive panel for the MG08/15*



## BENNETT SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

SHARON LEVEQUE



ROLLI CACCHIONI



## ATHLETE CATEGORY

DOROTHY (SCHWAIGER)  
JANTZEN



SCOTT FRANDSEN



## BUILDER CATEGORY

EDWARD ALLAN HORNING



## TEAM CATEGORY

1993 KELOWNA SPARTANS



## CENTRAL OKANAGAN SPORTS HALL OF FAME ...to honour and inspire...

After a one year hiatus, the Central Okanagan Sports Hall of Fame committees were pleased get back to task, once again selecting an accomplished and inspirational group of people to welcome into the Hall of Fame. Pat Kennedy, COSHoF manager, produced a virtual induction ceremony to introduce the world to our newest class of inductees.

In 2021, the Central Okanagan Sports Hall of Fame was proud to announce and welcome the following inductees:

**Sharon Leveque and Rolli Cacchioni** • a pair of extraordinary volunteers whose influence is embedded in the Central Okanagan sports scene and who will forever be remembered

**Dorothy (Schwaiger) Jantzen** • one of the premier volleyball players to emerge from the Central Okanagan

**Scott Fransen** • an Olympic medal winning rower

**Edward Allan Horning** • a builder who founded both winter and summer sports in the region

**1993 Kelowna Spartans** • a National Championship winning Junior 'A' hockey team



## EDUCATION & PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

The Education and Public Programming department continually adapted throughout the year as health protocols continued to change. Both in-person and virtual program offerings gave classes options on how to participate in educational experiences. The long-standing partnership with SD23 Indigenous Education continued with an updated program *Storytelling and Sh̓k̓lip*, which had students learning through the eyes of coyote and singing along to coyote's song.

Public offerings included *Through the Grapevine* (a downtown walking tour), *Field of Crosses*, *Build a Mason Bee Home*, and *Women of the Okanagan* in celebration of International Women's Day. The ever popular *Tombstone Tours* continued, as did *ná?kʷulamən* (what we do), taking a close look at various aspects of syilx cultural practices. New programs included *Escape from Mannequin Madness* (an exit room experience), *Waterways*, *Date Night Thursdays*, and *syilx Spotlight*.

Fun new partnerships saw contestants rushing through the Laurel Square gathering apples and packing boxes in an Amazing Race style TV show, and KGH donors enjoying an appreciation event with a talk on early Kelowna and enjoying local goodies.

***My wife and I would like to commend your wonderful staff at the Okanagan Heritage Museum for the outstanding job they did on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. We were very impressed and learned a lot. Currently, we live in Bradenton, Florida and our experience prompted me to write a letter to the editor in the Tampa Bay Times which was published on Sunday, October 10, 2021.***

***- Sincerely and special thanks, Carol & Neil Armstrong***

*Kyla and some furry friends*

*Volunteer Bob Hayes leading a cemetery tour*

*Maria and a group of Los Tours del Museo participants*







## LAUREL PACKINGHOUSE

The Laurel Packinghouse remained closed to the public throughout 2021; however, late in the year, various rental events were hosted, including a corporate awards banquet, a dance recital, corporate filming for website promotions, a corporate holiday party, and a wedding. Repeat renters used the Laurel as film production location. More than 140 scheduled events were canceled, many of which were rescheduled. Loyal clients and service providers were in frequent contact regarding a return to the Laurel.

Due to KMS policy supporting rental refunds and in spite of restrictions which curtailed planning, the public responded positively to what the Laurel offers. Renters were well supported through the sometimes arduous process of adjusting plans repeatedly, sometimes over the course of three years, finally to the point of cancellation. The Laurel was again recognized by the public as Best of Kelowna's "Best Wedding Venue".

A shift in management of Laurel Square rentals was decided; the City of Kelowna relinquished control of rentals in conjunction with Laurel rental events to Shelley, the Laurel Enterprise Coordinator.

Redesign of the Okanagan Wine & Orchard Museum continued throughout the year. Plans were developed to contract the galleries as rental venues.

***"Beautiful heritage event space! Their amazing team helped us create an unforgettable night everyone enjoyed. We really appreciate how patient they were with all the Covid restriction changes and tweaks we had to do in the lead up to the event. You're in great hands with Shelley and her staff!"***

***- Maria Wunschke, Google reviews***

*The Exploratorium in the Laurel Square is a hit!*

*Jack and Nikki move the giant sherry cask into position*

*Nikki and Jas roll a Kangaroo through the Packinghouse to the harvest display*

## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

Beautiful heritage event space! Their amazing team helped us create an unforgettable night everyone enjoyed. We really appreciate how patient they were with all the Covid restriction changes and tweaks we had to do in the lead up to the event. You're in great hands with Shelley and staff!

**Maria Wuschke, Laurel Packinghouse renter**

Awesome experience! I could spend DAYS in this museum and not get bored. Staff is awesome and friendly. I loved learning about the indigenous culture. It was great learning about the animals that live in this area :)

**Chris B., OHM visitor**

What a great experience. Took a group of young girls and they were excellent with them. They had tonnes of things they could touch and try on as well as many other pieces to look at.

**Laura Bensler, OMM visitor**

Amazing place! The host of many downtown events! Plus it has a really cool courtyard in the back for an afternoon tea, or go discover local plants that flourish in their back garden. Do yourself a favour and stop by, you won't be disappointed :)

**Andrew Deans, Laurel Square visitor**

As always, it was a wonderful, informative and engaging presentation!! Thank you for allowing us to do it virtually during this difficult time of restrictions. We are grateful!!

**SD23 Teacher**

Great museum. Friendly staff and lots of cool old paraphernalia and photos. Really enjoyed the little exhibit about homelessness featuring stories by people experiencing homelessness.

**Hillary Miller, OHM visitor**

I love the Kelowna Public Archives because the staff are every bit as interested in my research subject - ranching, fruit farming, railways, logging - as I am. They move heaven and earth to help me find stuff, and are keen to learn about the sources I've found elsewhere. They're on my side, and I'm on theirs.

**Don McNair, author and KPA researcher**

## KELOWNA MUSEUMS BY THE NUMBERS

8,053

walk-in museum visitors  
[OHM • 5,832 and OMM • 2,221]

6,107

student experiences  
[167 virtual and 134 live field trips]

2,317

program participants  
[21 online and 131 in-person programs]

257

volunteer hours  
[by 3 dedicated KPA volunteers]

65,524

views of new KMS website  
[launched March 26, 2021]

6,123

page likes and follows  
[KMS Facebook and Instagram accounts]

66

people making KMS great!  
[board, volunteers and staff members]

In 2021, the KMS continued to connect people and place, bringing our history to life. We shared the stories of our community, and our visitors shared with us.





## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021**

Howard Hisdal, President  
Tom Fellhauer, Past President  
Stuart Grant, Vice President  
Colin Flannigan, Vice President/Treasurer  
Hussein Keshani, Secretary  
Miah Olmsted  
Bill Wang  
Simon Schofield  
Ying Zhu  
Christine McWillis, ex-officio

## **VOLUNTEERS 2021**

Jane Bowering	Cathie Pavlik
Lorne Buna	Kirk Penton
Gordy Charles	Randy Prost
Matt Cherille	Heather Semeniuk
Rachael Fleming	Sharon Shepherd
Jacqui Frehlick	Bill Stephens
Shannon Grant	Isla Tasker
Bob Hayes	Ryan Watters
Warren Hendersen	John Weber
Wayne Moore	Lorne White
Joachim Nierfeld	Ken Wilson

***Thank you to our board, volunteers, and all of our other supporters who so generously gave us their time and have helped us connect generations!***



## **STAFF 2021**

### **MANAGEMENT TEAM**

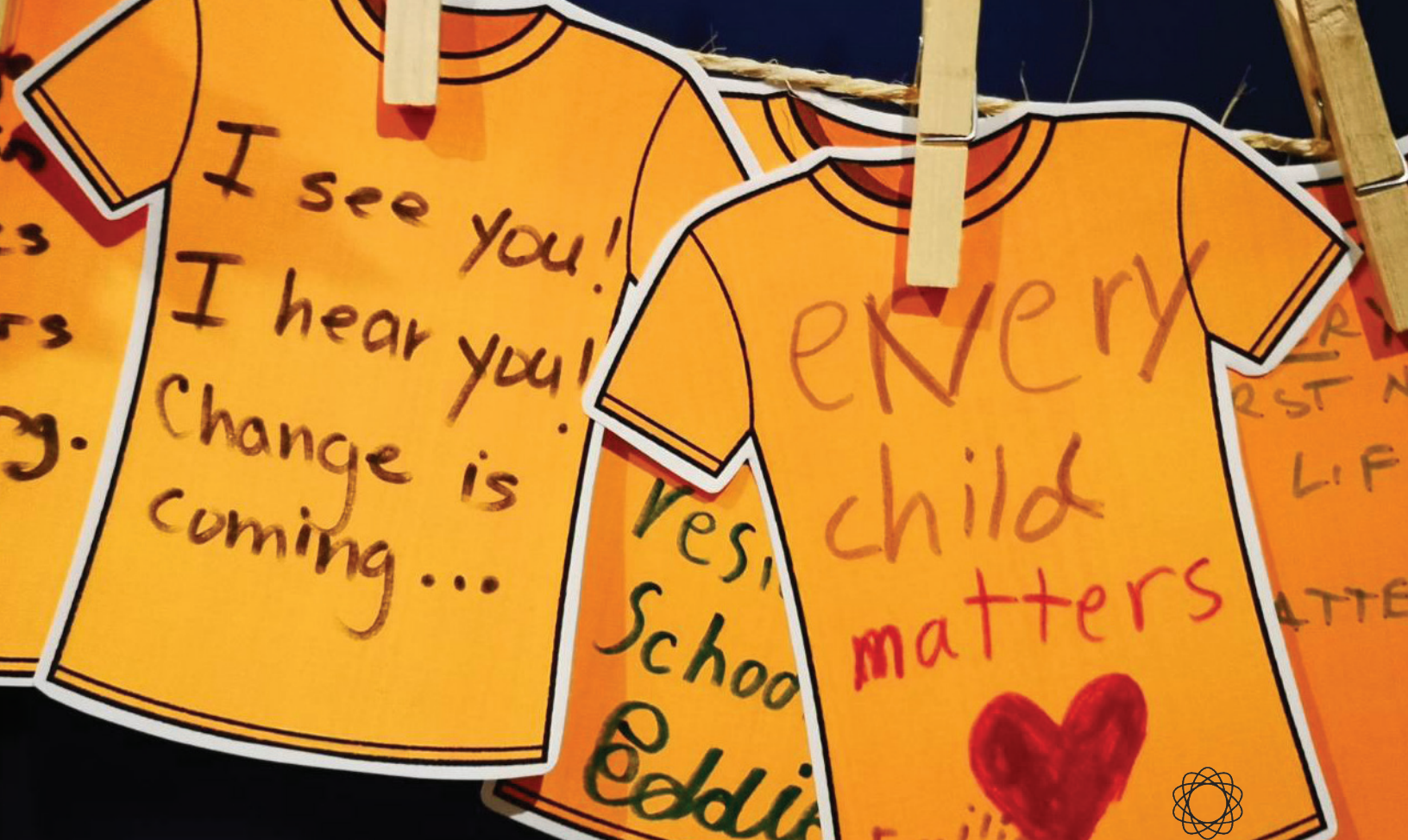
**Linda Digby**, Executive Director  
**Daniel Becker**, Interim Curatorial Manager  
**Christopher Butt**, Finance & Operations Manager  
**Amanda Snyder**, Curatorial Manager

### **CORE STAFF**

**Mallery Barnett**, Web & Social Media Coordinator  
**Keith Boehmer**, Military Historian  
**Nikki Bose**, Curator of Collections  
**Maria Garcia**, Museum Services Coordinator  
**Jen Garner**, Head of Programming  
**Tara Hurley**, Archivist  
**Jasmine Marshall**, Exhibitions Coordinator  
**Victoria Severinski**, Bookkeeper  
**Kyla Smith**, Education & Programming Assistant  
**Allison Wardle**, Education & Programming Assistant  
**Shelley Weber**, Laurel Enterprise Coordinator  
**Ryan Wong**, Museum Assistant

### **STUDENTS, INTERNS & CASUAL STAFF**

**Tiffany Rowland-Acton**, Event Assistant  
**Anastasia Bell**, Conservation Intern  
**Teresa Boehmer**, Visitor Assistant  
**Sarina Bouvier**, Event Assistant  
**Megan Butchart**, Archives Assistant  
**Sarah Cipes**, Student Archives Tech., Archives Assistant  
**Scarlett Everitt**, Student Collections Technician  
**Bri Fedoruk**, Student Archives Technician  
**Alana Firedancer**, Indigenous Programming Intern  
**Jamie Jackson**, Event Assistant  
**Sarah Jane Gibbs**, Archives Intern  
**Sofia Grael**, Education & Programming Assistant  
**Violet Greebe**, Student Education & Programming  
**Josie Kotowski**, Archives Intern, Archives Assistant  
**Edmund Nilson**, Student Archives Technician  
**Charity Pender**, Conservation Intern  
**Noha Shehata**, Student Education & Programming  
**Karley U'ren**, Student Collections Technician



Kelowna Museums Society is a Biosphere Committed Entity

BIOSPHERE  
committed entity



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
ARTS COUNCIL  
An agency of the Province of British Columbia



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*empowering generations to give.*

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