



**Kelowna  
Museums**  
Alive With Our History

# ANNUAL REPORT

KELOWNA MUSEUMS SOCIETY

# 2022

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 • 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

In 2022, we started to recover from Covid 19 and the great lockdown. It was my great pleasure to attend the first Christmas staff party in three years in December 2022. Other than the Russian invasion of Ukraine, it was a reasonably normal year, no heat domes, no massive forest fires burning towns, and no instant floods. Sadly, there were still more unmarked graves found on old Residential School sites, but overall, it was a year to be thankful for.

I am very grateful for our Kelowna Museums staff and volunteers who once again did the city proud. Among the many programs and initiatives implemented by our staff, their combined effort for Truth and Reconciliation Day stands out. Thank-you for your efforts. To honour the woman responsible for leading us in this, I, with the Board's approval, wrote up our Executive Director, Linda Digby, for the Honour in the Arts Award. She was one of three finalists and the City got to hear about how the museum has implemented the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report recommendations of 2015. This has taken seven years of effort, but now we are an example to other museums.

From recovery to normal, we must now go on to rebuild. We need more KMS Board members, we need more volunteers, and we will need more professional museum staff in this coming year. If you are reading this and you are not involved in the Kelowna Museums, please consider becoming involved.

My best wishes to you, way' limlæmt,

**Howard Hisdal, CD, MA**

PRESIDENT OF THE KELOWNA MUSEUMS SOCIETY



## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Like other organizations around the world, after two years of pandemic constraints we staggered into 2022, blinking in the light of a new year and asking ourselves if it was over. As 2022 lurched forward we faced many challenges, but these were met with commitment, talent and shared purpose. Over the course of the year, our stride became more certain and the resilience of this organization was demonstrated yet again.

The world is changing and so are we. It is an exciting time for KMS.

In 2022 KMS launched a major change initiative which focuses on Digital Strategy and Human Resources Practice. Through this two year project, KMS is researching and implementing strategic transformation in the way we research and mobilize history, and in the way we operate, connect and collect. Ultimately these systemic changes will enhance our capacity to improve the quality of lives in our changing community.

For almost one hundred years, Kelowna's museums have served as caretakers of community memory. Growing out of the Okanagan Historical and Natural History Society, KMS has evolved in tandem with the community we serve. In the months and years ahead, KMS will continue to work with, and for, diverse communities to share perspectives that enhance understandings of the Central Okanagan.

Limlāmt to our supporters which make this possible. Thank you to our major funding partner, the City of Kelowna, as well as the Government of British Columbia and Canadian Heritage. We remember with gratitude our legacy donors, as well as the individual and corporate supporters, donors, members and volunteers whose contributions are integral to our mission.

I would like to express an extra warm thank you to the dedicated and skilled staff and Board of Directors. Finally, a special shout out to our indefatigable Board President, Howad Hisdal, who has served KMS with duty and honour for sixteen years.

Thank you / wa'y limlāmt,



**Linda Digby**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE KELOWNA MUSEUMS SOCIETY

## EXHIBITIONS

The Okanagan Heritage Museum featured several diverse feature exhibitions throughout the year. First, we hosted *BC's Marvellous Mushrooms*, a travelling exhibit created by the Royal BC Museum. Visitors were keen to learn more about the mushrooms growing in the region, and came in to study up on what they could find close to home. Throughout the summer months, the colourful *Jenga Jenga* was on display. Guest curator Hanna Karin showcased recycled materials and art from Canada and Myanmar. *Chief Dan George: Actor and Activist* was installed in September, and opened to a full house on the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. Produced by the North Vancouver Museum and Archives, this exhibition drew a wonderful public response throughout its run, and many were moved to share their memories of the late Chief with us.

2022 also saw our own travelling exhibitions loaned out and on view around the province. *Bats: Out of the Darkness* was set up for three months in Victoria, at the Royal BC Museum's Pocket Gallery. It also travelled to Vernon's Alan Brooks Nature Centre, where they were thrilled to host a record number of fall school trips based on the exhibit's content! *Waterways - the Past, Present and Future* made its debut as a travelling exhibition, and was displayed in Salmon Arm as well as Osoyoos.

***"Quite enjoyed this small local museum. They've clearly put a great deal of effort into it, combining well-displayed artifacts, multimedia presentations, a real winter house and detailed explanations in a well-ordered flow. It's quite well done! The wildlife, fossil and geological elements were fascinating. The winter house was superb, and clever use of mirrors gave a sense of the size of such a house."***

**- Tom Gee, OHM visitor**

Chief Dan George *display panels*

Garbage bird and Daren Williams' Housing Project were features of *Jenga Jenga*  
A display case featuring mushroom foraging tools



## COLLECTIONS & CONSERVATION

In 2022, the collections department undertook much meaningful work. Interns, summer students, volunteers, and the Curator of Collections catalogued over 6,000 objects in the Past Perfect database! A new acquisition of histology objects from a local doctor added fascinating pieces to the medical collection, while the model train collection was organized with custom enclosures to protect them while in storage. Most noteworthy, database records were completed for the entire First Nations collection, and this accomplishment in turn allowed KMS to start sharing inventories with representatives from local Indigenous communities – an integral step in the repatriation process.

Sadly, 2022 also marked the passing of former Executive Director, Ursula Surtees, who was instrumental in establishing the Ursula Surtees Regional Conservation Lab. This past year, the lab was a hub of activity, with conservation staff performing treatments on public heirlooms and museum artifacts, including horse saddles, a Black Mountain irrigation map from the 1920s and the Bennett cartoon collection.

In December, after 8 years of service, Curator of Collections, Nikki Bose, moved on to a new career. The museum wishes her success in her future endeavors.

The important work done this past year demonstrates the dedication and hard work of staff and volunteers in preserving and sharing the area's rich history.

*Elizabeth installing a 'recent donation' display (Beebe donation)  
(L) Nikki leads a behind-the-scenes tour  
(R) Elizabeth and Megan do cleaning treatments in Laurel storage  
Ursula Surtees at the 1992 unveiling of the Triceratops skull cast*





## ARCHIVES

The Kelowna Public Archives and the Vince Bezeau Military Library and Archives hold our community memory in the form of documents, photographs, maps, sound recordings, and moving images. These unique materials have been organized, preserved and made available to students, genealogists, authors and researchers.

2022 saw researchers return in-person, however virtual appointments have remained popular, allowing researchers from across the country to access to our collections with the added bonus of spending in-depth, one-on-one time with our archivist.

Utilizing equipment the Archives acquired in 2021, we digitized over 14,000 textual records and 30 audio recordings in 2022. We prioritized the creation of digital preservation copies of fragile artifacts and obsolete media. We also focused on digitizing and applying Optical Character Recognition (OCR) to frequently used materials including reference books, early Kelowna brochures, and telephone directories to increase in-house search capacities.

With the assistance of our Archives Intern, we completed two projects that included de-framing, rehousing and inventorying 520+ photographs, documents and posters. 12 oversized boxes of archival materials were also rehousing into 42 neatly arranged and inventoried archival grade Hollinger boxes. Projects such as these aid in the creation of much needed storage space, make the materials more accessible, and help to safely preserve archival materials.

*Megan scans and digitizes documents*

*Sarah Jane and Megan*

*Sarah works with newspapers in the VBMLA*

## OKANAGAN MILITARY MUSEUM

In the spring, a new feature exhibit was installed in the front gallery. Building on a past OHM success, curatorial staff created an interactive exhibition-turned-trivia-game called *ArtiFACT or ArtiFICTION: OMM edition* for visitors to challenge themselves – or each other – with as they explored the space. Planning began this year as well for a future overhaul of the permanent galleries.

The *Mannequin Madness* escape room continued to be popular with families and small groups as they raced against the clock to save the world! Other public offerings included the four part *Guided Tour of Duty* series, in which our in-house expert Keith Boehmer offered fascinating hands-on gallery tours. During the Remembrance season, programming staff hosted nearly 300 students who visited the Field of Crosses in City Park and the museum. The annual Remembrance Day Open House saw 145 visitors come through the door to pay their respects.

The OMM's online presence continued to grow throughout the year with a regularly published blog on the OMMS website, as well as increased other social media content.

Out and about in the community, OMM staff attended the Okanagan Military Tattoo expo in Vernon and had a chance to display the 2CMR trophy gun in its travelling case that was built a year prior.

***“Excellent military museum highlighting both overall as well as specific stories to Kelowna and the Okanagan. Staff were friendly and helpful, and lots of amazing exhibits.”***  
***- Kyle Cameron, OMM visitor***

*OMM display at the Okanagan Military Tattoo expo*  
*Allison in character for Mannquin Madness, an escape room-style program*  
*Feature exhibition-that's-a-game Artifact or ArtifiCTION: OMM edition*







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

2022 saw the Central Okanagan Sports Hall of Fame make a much anticipated return to in-person events. The induction ceremony was abuzz with excitement and the committees were proud to officially recognize the newest class of inspiring inductees.

The Central Okanagan Sports Hall of Fame was proud to honour the following:

### **Jack May • Builder**

Jack committed a lifetime to basketball. A coach, referee, and administrator, he also was the founder of the Western Canada Basketball tournament.

### **Phil Ellis • Athlete**

Phil dominated the local running scene for years, won 14 medals as a member of the national team and holds the third fastest 10km time for a Canadian at Vancouver's Harry Jerome International meet.

### **Rob Friend • Athlete**

Rob represented Canada on the soccer field before he was 20 years old, and spent 11 years playing professionally in Europe. He is now organizing a Canadian Premiere League team for the lower mainland.

### **Kelowna Major Men's Fastball • Pioneer**

Credited by Softball BC as being a key part of the game's history in the province, KMMF began in 1940 and have hosted events from selection camps to provincial and even international tournaments.

*(Top left) Jack May, (top right) Phil Ellis,  
(centre) Rob Friend (middle), (bottom) Kelowna Major Men's Fastball*



## EDUCATION & PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

In response to demand from a screen-weary public, most of our guided experiences in 2022 were delivered in-person. We hosted nearly 7,500 participants in our spaces, both virtual and actual.

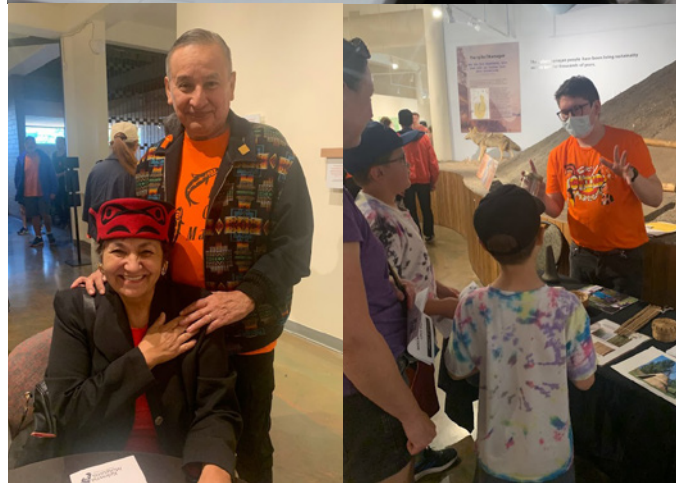
A major focus was the emerging role of KMS in co-curricular-making and Indigenous partnerships. An example is our continued work with UBCO on the research project *Co-Curricular-Making— Honoring Indigenous Connections to Land, Culture, and the Relational Self*. This project informed a partnership with the Kelowna Art Gallery to offer learning experiences inspired by the *Witness Blanket*, which reflected the tragedies of the Indian Residential School experience. In addition, we moved more deeply into partnership with Wild Rose Native Traditions to offer Elder-led education on syilx/Okanagan language, culture, knowledge and perspective.

The National Day of Truth and Reconciliation coincided with the public opening of the *Chief Dan George* exhibition. We were pleased to host over 800 visitors, and were honoured to welcome Grand Chief Stuart Phillip and Joan Phillip – granddaughter of Chief Dan George – who took the time to make a surprise appearance to chat with visitors and answer questions.

Other new and continued offerings included *Mannequin Madness* (an exit-room styled adventure at OMM), the *Guided Tour of Duty* series, *Los tours del Museo* and the *History of BC Wine in Nine Bottles*. Guided cemetery tours with the inimitable Bob Hayes continued to be popular, as well as downtown walking tours.

We were sad to say goodbye to Jen Garner, who spent many years growing KMS programming, however, we were pleased to welcome Solange Massicotte as our new Head of Programming as well as talented new Education Assistants.

*Participants of all ages are back in the activity room for in-person programs (L) Joan Phillip and Grand Chief Stuart Phillip (R) Marshall lets visitors get hands-on Sofia shows off a tooth-extractor during an outdoor walking tour*





## LAUREL PACKINGHOUSE

2022 was a year of transition. The Okanagan Wine and Orchard Museum re-opened following two years of COVID closure and gallery renewal. Programming staff prepared new wine and orchard programs, and hosted Indigenous-led public programs in the rental hall and Laurel Square throughout the year.

Public rentals resumed, but did not meet levels of previous years due to COVID uncertainty. Shelley Weber did an incredible job of maintaining positive relations as she guided renters through a challenging period. These efforts were recognized, as – despite the challenges of pandemic restrictions – the Laurel was again named Kelowna’s Best Wedding Venue.

In the early weeks of 2022 the Laurel hosted the return of the Bollywood Gala, Anti-Bullying Campaign Breakfast, Whiskey Global, Beer, Bands, Balding & BBQ, and winter weddings. Corporate events and multiple markets were booked, as well as awards ceremonies, fundraisers, conferences, and festivals. On multiple occasions we welcomed the local film industry into our spaces.

We’d like to say a huge thank you to Shelley Weber for all of her work she transitioned into retirement from her role as Coordinator. Renters, service providers, and staff are grateful for her years of exemplary service and her dedication during a bumpy year of change.

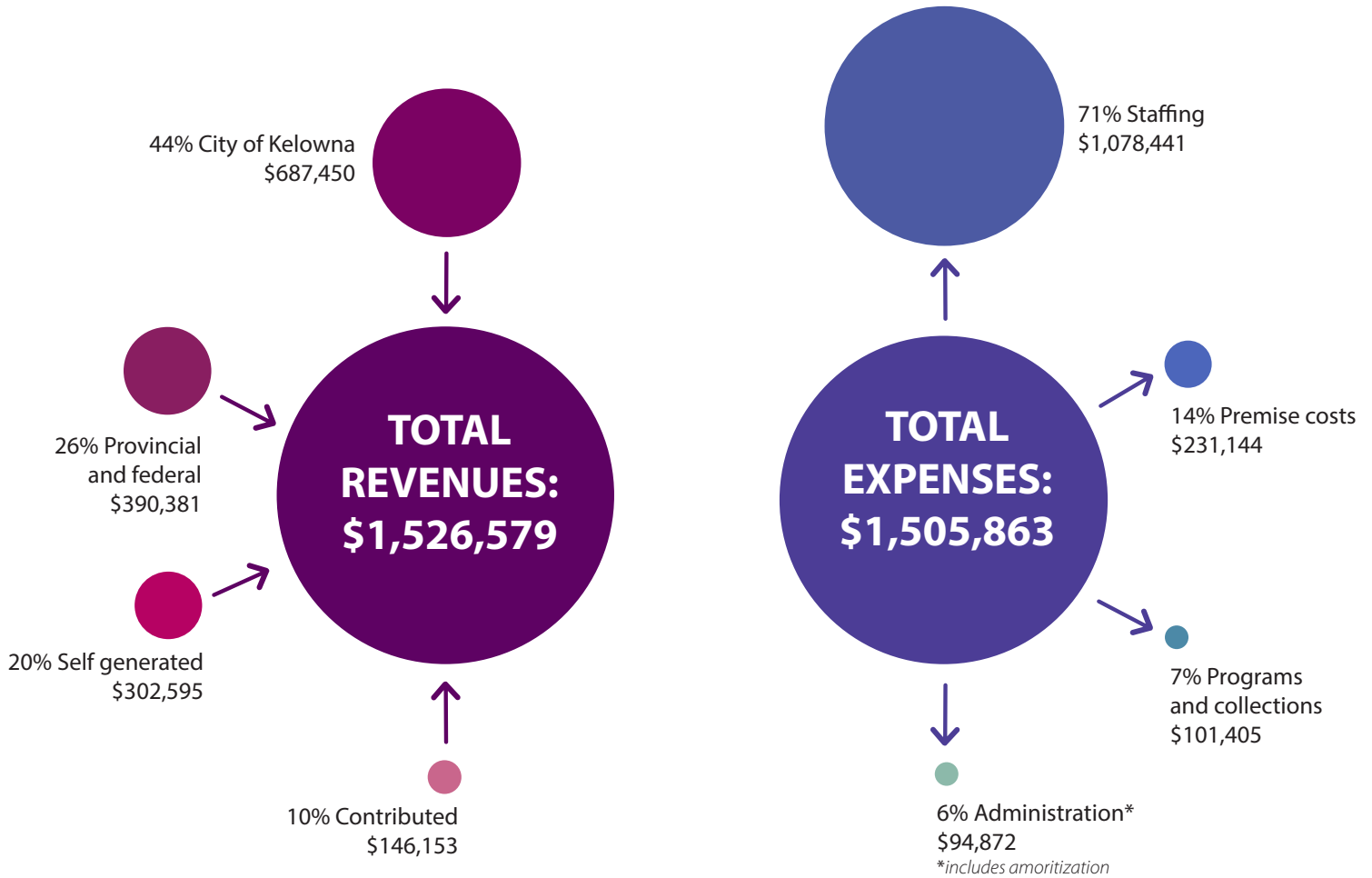
2022 ended with a flurry of festivities, performances, and markets. A substantial number of events for 2023 and 2024 were booked – a hopeful sign for the strengthening of all the Laurel has to offer.

*Erik leads a group from UBCO through the OWOM galleries*

*A film crew transforms the Laurel Square into a winter wonderland*

*The OWOM abuzz with activity as we host a class for our Pollinators program*

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



## THE YEAR IN OTHER NUMBERS

76

people worked  
together to  
make KMS great!

9 • Board members | 41 • Staff  
26 • Volunteers

13,797

walk-in museum  
visitors came  
through our doors

OHM • 10,123 | OMM • 3,224  
OWOM • 632

88,590  
views of  
the KMS  
website

255

classes  
experienced KMS  
field trips

243 live + 12 zoom

143

public programs  
were offered

143 live + 9 zoom  
with a total of  
1,566 participants

6,666

likes and follows  
on KMS' Facebook and  
Instagram pages

In 2022, 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 2022**

**Howard Hisdal**, President

**Colin Flannigan**, Vice President

**Stuart Grant**, Treasurer

**Miah Olmsted**, Secretary

**Tom Fellhauer**

**Trinda Wager**

**Bill Wang**

**Ying Zhu**

**Christine McWillis**, ex-officio

## **VOLUNTEERS 2022**

Jane Bowering

Dylan Buckmaster

Lorne Buna

Gordy Charles

Matt Cherille

Brian Cuthbert

Rachael Fleming

Jacqui Frehlick

Shannon Grant

Carol Hawkes

Bob Hayes

Warren Hendersen

James McDonald

Martin Moreno

Wayne Moore

Joachim Nierfeld

Cathie Pavlik

Kirk Penton

Randy Prost

Dan Prysunka

Heather Semeniuk

Bill Stephens

Isla Tasker

Ryan Watters

John Weber

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 2022

### MANAGEMENT TEAM

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

### CURATORIAL TEAM

**Tara Hurley**, Archivist  
**Sarah Cipes**, Archives Assistant  
**Allison Wardle**, Education & Programming Assistant;  
Archives Assistant  
**Megan Butchart**, Archives Intern  
**Sarah Jane Gibbs**, Archives Intern  
**Josie Kotowski**, Archives Intern  
**Hannah Woods**, Archives Practicum Student  
  
**Nikki Bose**, Curator of Collections  
**Charity Pender**, Conservation Intern  
**Meghan Fisher**, Conservation Intern  
**Elizabeth King**, Collections Intern  
**Karley U'ren**, Student Collections Technician  
**Evan Noble**, Student Collections Technician  
**Maddysen Weatherford**, Student Collections Technician  
**Keith Boehmer**, Military Historian  
**Jasmine Marshall**, Exhibitions Coordinator  
  
**EDUCATION & PROGRAMMING TEAM**  
**Jen Garner**, Head of Programming  
**Solange Massicotte**, Head of Programming  
**Alana Firedancer**, Indigenous Programming Assistant  
**Erik Beardmore**, Education & Programming Assistant  
**Marshall Bond**, Education & Programming Assistant  
**Sofia Grael**, Education & Programming Assistant



### VISITOR SERVICES & OPERATIONS TEAM

**Mallery Barnett**, Web & Social Media Coordinator  
**Teresa Boehmer**, Visitor Assistant  
**Maria Garcia**, Museum Services Coordinator  
**Victoria Severinski**, Bookkeeper  
**Ryan Wong**, Museum Assistant

### LAUREL PACKINGHOUSE RENTALS TEAM

**Jenna Kiesman**, Laurel Enterprise Coordinator  
**Shelley Weber**, Laurel Enterprise Coordinator  
**Sarina Bouvier**, Event Assistant  
**Lane Davignon**, Event Assistant  
**Reid Gratz**, Event Assistant  
**Chandra Manzo**, Event Assistant  
**Rose Maunder**, Event Assistant  
**Lindsey Slade**, Event Assistant  
**Mario Tavolieri**, Event Assistant  
**Amy Wright**, Event Assistant



Kelowna Museums Society is a Biosphere Committed Entity

**BIOSPHERE**  
committed entity

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

 **BRITISH COLUMBIA**  
Supported by the Province of British Columbia

 **Canada**

 **CENTRAL OKANAGAN  
FOUNDATION**  
*empowering generations to give.*

[KELOWNAMUSEUMS.CA](http://KELOWNAMUSEUMS.CA)

