

Kelowna Museums Society

2024 ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT

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

The Kelowna Museums Society operates within the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory/tmx^wulax^w of the syilx/s^wk^wn?aín people.

We are grateful for their stewardship of these lands since time immemorial and to the Elders and Knowledge Carriers who share their wisdom so that we may walk forward together in a good way.

The Kelowna Museums Society (KMS) is made up of:

Okanagan Heritage Museum

Okanagan Military Museum

Okanagan Wine and Orchard Museum

Laurel Packinghouse

Central Okanagan Sports Hall of Fame

Kelowna Public Archives

Vince Bezeau Military Library and Archives

Ursula Surtees Regional Conservation Lab

Message from the Executive Director & Board President

2024 began as a year of transition for Kelowna Museums Society, but it quickly transformed into a period of remarkable growth and achievement.

A significant highlight was the overhaul of the Okanagan Heritage Museum's front entrance, guided by a Rick Hansen Foundation accessibility study. This welcome improvement, coupled with a beautiful new garden featuring indigenous plants and decorative panels by local artist Moozhan Ahmadzadegan, has dramatically enhanced the visitor experience for everyone. Despite the inconvenience of prolonged construction, families flocked to the OHM to see Dinosaurs of BC, a temporary exhibition on loan from the Royal BC Museum. Dinosaurs of BC broke attendance records and reinforced the vital role our institution plays in intergenerational learning experiences.

In addition to this incredibly successful exhibition, our team delivered two more temporary exhibitions at the OHM, one at the Okanagan Military Museum, and a wide array of school and public programs designed to engage our visitors. We saw continued growth in event rentals at the Laurel Packinghouse, which contributed to a healthy increase in our self-generated revenue.

All good things,
Jillian Povarchook
KMS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The past year's successes are a collective effort. I'm extremely grateful to everyone at Kelowna Museums for their dedication. To our staff, thank you for your guidance, patience, and enthusiasm during my first year with this organization. My thanks also go to the KMS Board for their invaluable support during this year of learning.

We extend our sincere thanks to our crucial funders, especially the City of Kelowna for their major contribution and specific support of the OHM entry renewal project. We are also deeply grateful for the continued support of the Government of British Columbia and Canadian Heritage. I'm grateful to our sibling partners and friends, especially Sncewips Heritage Museum and Wildrose Native Traditions, for their generosity of spirit, knowledge, and wisdom.

Finally, we recognize the invaluable contributions of our legacy donors, individual and corporate sponsors, donors, and members. And to our incredible volunteers, who so generously give their time to help us connect people and place on these beautiful lands—thank you.

Colin Flannigan
PRESIDENT OF KMS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Exhibitions

The year began with a last opportunity for visitors to explore 'La Nostra Famiglia Italiana: Our Legacy in Kelowna.' Created in partnership with the Kelowna Canadian Italian Club, this exhibit was a great connection to our city's past, not just for the Italian community, but for all, to learn the stories of some of Kelowna's early residents and what it was like to start over in a new place.

As the seasons changed, so did the feature exhibition. 'Spring Fashion: From Collections to the Catwalk' allowed us to showcase a portion of our incredible 2500+ piece textile collection. In addition to the clothing and accessories on display, the exhibit was also a chance for us to share the role that museums play in collecting, preserving and exhibiting artifacts from our communities.



We had the busiest, most exciting summer in years, as locals and tourists, young and old, came through the (side) doors to see 'Buster' the ferrosauarus, and other pieces from the RBCM's travelling 'Dinosaurs of BC' exhibit.

As the school bells rang to usher the students of SD23 back to class, the exhibits team unveiled 'Old School: A Look Back at School Life in Kelowna.' Inspired by a donation from the Central Okanagan Retired Teachers' Association (CORTA), with additional support from SD23, Sylix Language House and Sensisyusten, the exhibit featured photos and artifacts from our own collection that took visitors on a trip back in time to reflect on the school experience of many former Kelowna pupils.



(Above) Megan and Elizabeth, along with Gord from the KCIC, photograph objects as they come off of display
(Left and right) 'Buster' - the star of Dinos of BC; a throwback to math class in Old School

Collections and Conservation

A focus in 2024 for collections staff was processing new donations and updating records in the database. Objects from Global Okanagan and BC Tree Fruits came in as large donations that had both collections and archival components. Over 50 donations were accepted into the collections, and nearly 2,000 new catalogue records were created. Numerous objects were rehoused within storage to make more efficient use of our space. Staff worked with other museums to transfer donations that no longer fit our mandate, and cataloguing a collection of Mexican pot sherds is underway, to prepare them for repatriation. Malik Prasad was our Collections Intern on a 10 month term, and contributed to ongoing collections tasks as well as providing the team with support preparing, installing, and striking exhibitions.



In the conservation lab, 12 public projects were completed. Noteworthy amongst them was a set of over 500 flood-damaged negatives that were cleaned and salvaged. Work was also done on pieces for both Penticton and Westbank Museums. Artifacts were cleaned and prepared for display in the 'Old School' exhibit.

In December, a workshop was put on for the Archives Association of BC. Tips on mould prevention and detection, as well as safe cleaning techniques, were shared with participants. Out and about in the community, tombstone cleaning workshops were revived, and held in May and September. Staff attended Arts on the Avenue in July and August, doing tear repair demonstrations and answering the public's questions about conservation.



(Above) Megan and Elizabeth spring clean the OHM's biodiversity gallery

(Left and right) Elizabeth places a dust cover on a recently donated model; Malik with an Urkel doll - December's 'artifact of the month'

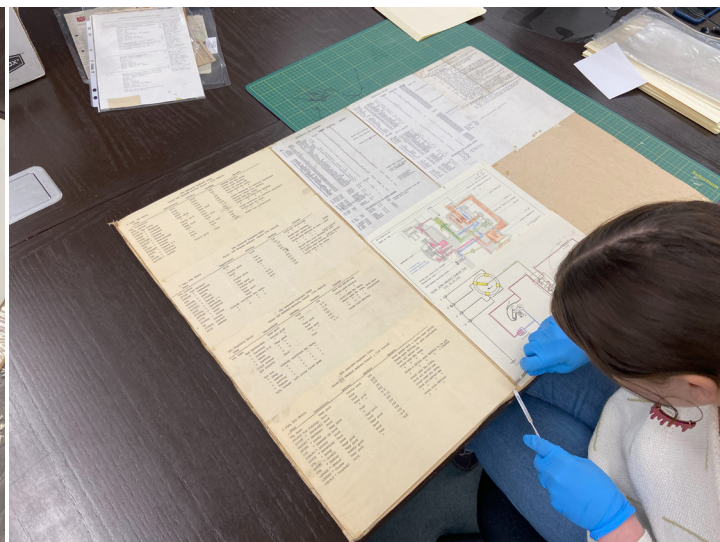
Archives

The Kelowna Public Archives accepted four major donations this year. From the Theatre Kelowna Society, posters, programs, news clippings and photos from its start in 1949 to its closure in 2020. Global Okanagan donated documents, photographs, film and promotional ephemera from 1957 to the early 2000s. With the historical closure of BC Tree Fruits Co-op and its subsidiaries, material from its multiple offices consisting of cartographic, documents, ledgers, photographs and promotional ephemera. The Kelowna Canadian Italian Club, as part of an ongoing project, has scanned over 3,500 items and donated 2,874 of them, plus digital copies of the scans and a copy of their searchable database of ephemera, documents and photos, to help with research into local Italian families, KCIC and member history.



YCW BCH Archives Intern, Elena Plotnifoff, was with us for 7 months. Some highlights of their accomplishments are: working on three large fonds amounting to the arrangement and description of 105 cm of textual and ephemera material, two large inventories of over 1,500 newspaper clippings, and digitizing numerous photographs, documents, and VHS tapes.

In the Vince Bezeau Military Library and Archives, a key project was a review of images used in the KMS' 2013 publication 'Always First, A Pictorial History of the BC Dragoons.' Along with the photos in the book, staff delved into 5,000 other related images in the VBMLA collection, confirming the locations of the photos and gaining a better understanding of the breadth of subject matter in the collection.



(Above) Tara with co-chairs of the Kelowna Canadian Italian Club Heritage Committee, Gord Hotchkis (L), and Don Rampone (R)
(Left and right) Archives staff remove tape and residue from archival materials

Okanagan Military Museum

To observe 80 years since the end of WWII, a new exhibit was created. 'In the Line of Duty' shares service stories of Lieutenant Dorothy MacBean, Sergeant Hikaru 'Chic' Mori, and Major-General Rodney Keller, with items of their clothing, weapons and currency on display.

Staff attended the last annual Okanagan Military Tattoo Expo, with a kiosk highlighting the Okanagan's participation in the Gothic Line battle in Italy and D-Day landings in Normandy, France, in 1944.

In May, there was a special screening of Jask Gin's 'Finding Fred Lee' - a film about a Chinese Canadian soldier who fought at Hill 70 in France during WWI. Afterwards, to commemorate its 80th anniversary, staff and members of the local



Chinese Canadian community visited the site of the WWII Commando Bay training camp, where Chinese Canadian soldiers trained to operate behind Imperial Japanese lines.

During the Remembrance season, the OMM supported the Field of Crosses with educational programming, logistics and leadership for another successful year. 399 Central Okanagan students and 43 Cadets participated in classes and ceremonies, with more on a waiting list.

I just wanted to say thank you for such an amazing field trip. ... The kids were saying how it was much more impactful than a regular Remembrance Day assembly at our school. Thank you very much for the experience.

- K. Low, Grade 9, 11, 12 teacher at Mount Boucherie Secondary



(Above) A visit to the training site at Commando Bay
(Left and right) Sergeant Hikaru 'Chic' Mori's belongings on display in the 'In the Line of Duty' exhibit; KMS staff and volunteers meeting to plan the annual Field of Crosses event.

Central Okanagan Sports Hall of Fame

In 2024, we welcomed another inspirational class of inductees. We also said goodbye and a heart felt thank you to Pat Kennedy, who has managed the COSHoF since its inception in 2008.

Jack Hoy • Builder

UBC basketball player, BC Sports Hall of Fame inductee, and player for Canada at the World University Games, Jack served as the director of the Western Canada Basketball Tournament for 25 years, growing it into one of the country's top highschool athletic events.

Dan Martell • Builder

Dan ran the Valley's first curling clinics, and received the Canadian Curling Association's Award of Merit. He coached the Julie Sutton team to Provincial, National, and World Junior titles, and has coached visually impaired curling

teams to win 7 national titles. Dan has also officiated events at every level.

Mike Crumb • Athlete

Mike played 8 seasons in the CFL, with the Lions and the Argonauts. He won the Grey Cup with both teams. Mike's football career began with the Okanagan Sun, where he was named an all star. Mike was also named a CIAU all star while playing with U of Saskatchewan.

Jason Crumb • Athlete

In six CFL seasons, Jason went to two Grey Cup finals with the Lions, winning one. With the Okanagan Sun, he was named the BC Football Conference's Outstanding Quarterback. In university, Jason played in an undefeated season with Dickson State, and was inducted with the team into Dickson State University's Sports Hall of Fame. He was also on two Vanier Cup Championship teams, earning inductions into the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame.

Joni Frei • Builder

Joni has coached softball for over 20 years. She took Team BC to gold at the North American Indigenous Games twice. In UBCO Heat women's third season, Joni coached them to be Canadian Collegiate champions. Joni led the Langford Lightning to two Canadian Championships. She also founded the East Africa-Canada Exhibition Series, which provides player, coach and umpire clinics.



2024 Central Okanagan Sports Hall of Fame inductees: (left to right) Jack Hoy, Dan Martell, Mike Crumb, Jason Crumb, Joni Frei

Education and Public Programming

Our education and programming team continues to have a large and positive impact the community. In 2024, 6,009 people participated in school/privately booked tours, and over 3,200 more joined us for public programs!

Back by popular demand, in addition to curriculum based educational programming, the team delivered programs for Family Day, Unplug and Play Literacy Week, TRC Day, and Remembrance Day in addition to our ongoing 'Nakulamen' and 'Nsiylxcen for Everyone' series. Out and about, folks joined us for 'Tombstone Tours', 'Downtown Walking' tours and even bus tours.



A wide array of new offerings were created and delivered in 2024. Special programs to compliment our feature exhibitions at the OHM were a hit with all ages. Portuguese tours were a new addition, providing community members with another option in addition to the English, French and Spanish tours already on offer. Our 'Queer Zine Fair' and 'Future of Black Histories' programs were amongst our top five best attended for the year. A new program for elementary classes - 'Birds, Bats and Butterflies' - had 11 bookings.

Programming Intern, Nick Paquin, finished his term with us in March, and we're thankful to him for his hard work and contributions.



(Above) The education and programming team at the opening celebration for Dinosaurs of BC in the OHM

(Left and right) Special screening of Finding Fred Lee at the OMM; Erik shares pieces from the teaching collection at the OHM's Dino Day

Laurel Packinghouse

Another busy year is under our belts at the Laurel Packinghouse! We were excited to be nominated for - and win - gold for Best Wedding Venue and Best Building in the annual Best of Kelowna contest. Thanks in no small part to our amazing team, 2024 was a record year for revenue at the Laurel Packinghouse.

There were 45 wedding rentals, plus an incredible variety of other events, both community and corporate. Annual fundraisers such as Pink T-shirt Anti Bully Campaign (BCGO), Balding, BBQ & Beer (KGH Foundation), United Way Kick Off Breakfast, Evening of Hope, Habitat for Humanity's Jingle Bell Build, and the Women's Shelter International Women's Day resulted in \$1000's of dollars going back into our community.



Several public, ticketed events including Whisky Global, the Cheese and Meat Festival, and several of the monthly Candlelight Concerts were sold out.

Other rentals included conferences, meetings, graduations, holiday parties, and public markets, clinics (including blood Donor drives) and workshops. For the first time, we offered bar service for select events, as and additional revenue generator that we hope to expand in 2025.

The Laurel is also a regular programming space for our own KMS events. A meeting point for Plant Use walking tours, an interpretive (and fun!) space in the Laurel Square for learners of all ages, and tours in the OWOM help to further showcase the building and surrounding area.



(Above) Annie, Katya and Maria share a laugh
(Left and right) Sofia in the OWOM; staff Christmas party in the main rental space

Board of Directors

Colin Flannigan, President
Howard Hisdal, Past President
Miah Olmsted, Secretary and VP
Trinda Wager, Treasurer and VP
Shaun Campbell
Kayt Ell
Bill Wang
Ying Zhu
Christine McWillis, ex-officio

Volunteers

Gary Athans	Shimpei Shiozawa
Jane Bowering	Laura Sosa
Lorne Buna	Bill Stephens
Gordy Charles	Isla Tasker
Matt Cherille	Aidan Tomalty
Thelma Chinondo	Nishat Tasnim
Cooper Clarkson	Charlotte Wang
Brian Cuthbert	Ryan Watters
Aura David	Lou Wilde
Larissa Dekker	Ken Wilson
Henry Desrosiers	Christine Wolter
Valeria Diaz	Shelley Yurko
Mike Dornian	Yvette Zhou
Kealan Dunbar	
Frank Ferrara	
Kelsey Fisher	
Rachael Fleming	
Jacqui Frehlick	
Shannon Grant	
Reese Harper	
Mira Harvey	
Bob Hayes	
Warren Henderson	
Sasha Johnston	
Ravi Kausal	
Bogdan Khomulenko	
Carolyn Labun	
Archie Morrison	
Wayne Moore	
Joachim Nierfeld	
Sonia Payay	
Kirk Penton	
Hannah Pink	
Randy Prost	
Cindy Rhodes	
Cathleen Rivard	
Alexander Rousseau	
Heather Semeniuk	
Cara Shaw	
Sharon Shepherd	

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

Staff

Jillian Povarchook, Executive Director
Amanda Snyder, Curatorial Manager
Christopher Butt, Finance & Operations Manager

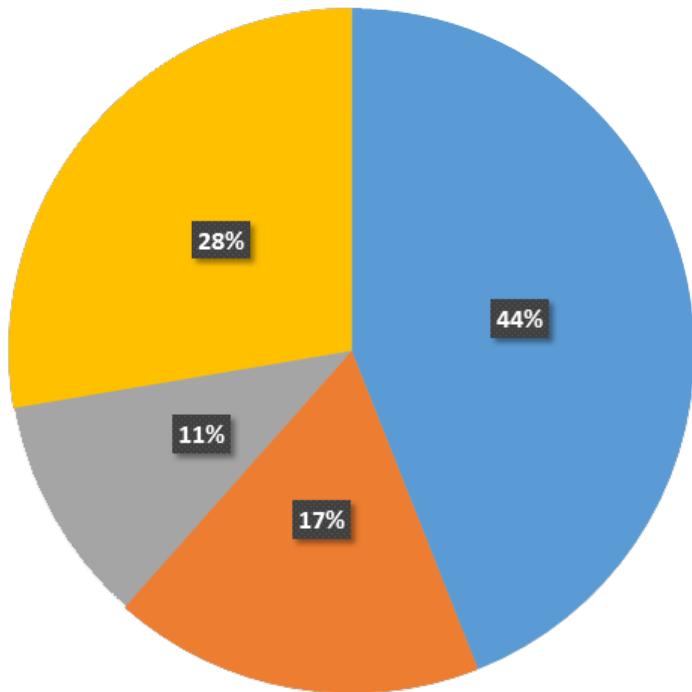
Tara Hurley, Head of Archives
Sarah Cipes, Archives Associate
Allison Wardle, Archives Associate
Elena Plotnikoff, Archives Intern
Megan Fisher, Conservation Associate
Elizabeth King, Collections Associate
Malik Prasad, Collections Intern
Keith Boehmer, Military Historian
Jasmine Marshall, Head of Exhibitions

Solange Massicotte, Head of Programming
Alana Firedancer, Indigenous Engagement
Coordinator
Erik Beardmore, Programming Associate
Marshall Bond, Programming Associate
Sofia Grael, Programming Associate
Nick Paquin, Programming Intern

Ally Morrow, Head of Laurel Enterprise
Shelley Weber, Laurel Enterprise Coordinator
Annie Beserekien, Event Attendant
Sarina Bouvier, Event Attendant
Maria Buncekova, Event Attendant
Reid Gratz, Event Attendant
Lauren Finlay, Event Attendant
Chandra Manzo, Event Attendant
Rose Maunder, Event Attendant
Lori Stokes, Event Attendant
Katya Torin, Event Attendant
Amy Vezeau, Event Attendant

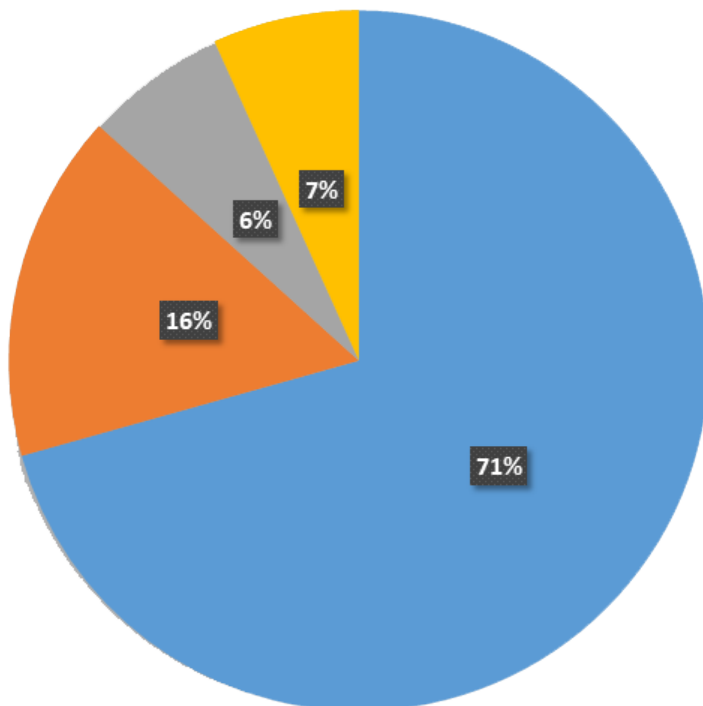
Mallery Barnett, Web & Social Media Associate
Teresa Boehmer, Visitor Attendant
Maria Garcia, Museum Services Associate
Nancy Ross, Bookkeeper
Tom Kilpatrick, Museum Facilities Associate
Ryan Wong, Museum Facilities Associate

2024 Financial Overview



TOTAL REVENUES:
\$1,706,597

City of Kelowna	\$750,781
Provincial and Federal	\$299,217
Contributed	\$184,222
Self Generated	\$472,377

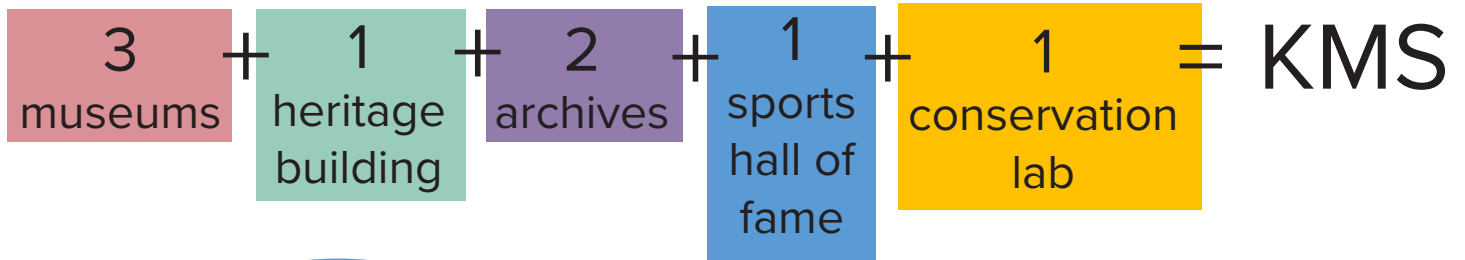


TOTAL EXPENDITURES:
\$1,708,506

Staffing	\$1,206,511
Premises Costs	\$274,591
Programs and Collections	\$111,711
Administration	\$115,693

2023 Total revenues: \$1,608,999 Total Expenses \$1,640,995

By the Numbers



In 2024 we welcomed a total of
24,694
visitors to KMS spaces

4,129
at the OMM

Education and Public Programming connected with **6,009** people on school trips or other private bookings, and had **3,200** more join public programs

17,882
at the OHM

2,683
at the OWOM

36 staff members put their skills to work to make KMS great!

53 volunteers in **8** areas gifted us
2,331
hours of their time and energy