



Cortes Island MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

reflect imagine celebrate

REPORT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR OF 2021

We wish to respectfully acknowledge the toq qaymıx^w (Klahoose), ƭəʔamen qaymıx^w (Tla'amin) and ʔop qaymıx^w (Homalco) Nations upon whose territories the programs and activities of the Cortes Island Museum & Archives take place.

This year, there were significant changes and challenges to the work of the Board and volunteers of the Cortes Island Museum & Archives Society (CIMAS). For example, the pandemic restrictions and precautions changed the culture of the whole organization. Meetings were held via Zoom rather than in person, greatly affecting the interpersonal connections of the Board as they struggled to find the best ways to serve the community. Even the 2021 AGM, featuring a presentation by mason bee expert Gordon Cyr, was Zoomed, causing a downturn in attendance of members. On the positive side, we learned new technical skills, and connections with other organizations and training opportunities were made possible.

Recognizing that cultural organizations like CIMAS were financially impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, Heritage Canada and BC Arts Council provided extra funding to minimize the damage to our organization and programming. During this year, CIMAS took the opportunity to focus resources and energies on several projects outside of our usual public programming efforts, including Artifact and Archives collections management and upgrading our accessibility.



The accessibility of the Museum was significantly improved when the main porch and entrance were remodelled. The wheelchair ramp was widened, and the level of the porch was raised to eliminate a step up into the building. Previously, access required a heavy ramp to be moved into place.

Our generous funders include:



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BOARD FOCUS

In 2021, the Board prioritized several key initiatives:

- Participating in webinars and training opportunities
- Visioning workshop
- Strategic planning
- Commitment to reconciliation and repatriation
- Completion of *Unlocking the Archives* project
- Artifact Committee expansion
- Wild Cortes emphasis
- Grant writing
- Seeking community involvement in programming and curation
- Recruiting a new Managing Director/Curator
- Improving accessibility to the Museum's front entrance

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021

Acting President: B. MacDonald
Vice President: N. Kendel
Treasurer: N. Disney
Secretary: C. London
Directors: L. Bohart, D. Collins,
I. Disney, D. Dragseth, B. Ellingsen,
R. Hanson, D. Manson, D. McLaren,
J. Milton

STAFF FOCUS

Jane Newman, the Managing Director/Curator (MD/C), has been with us for several years and has continued to impress us with her work ethic, imagination, and ability to represent CIMAS with grace and wit. Jane informed the Board, late in 2021, that she would be retiring. It was a sad moment for the Board members. Jane has agreed to stay with us to assist with the training of her replacement, Melanie Boyle.

STAFF 2021

Managing Director/Curator: Jane Newman
Administration/Host/Website Content
Editor: Gina Trzesicka
Summer Host/Interpreter: Natalia Nybida

Gina Trzesicka, who provides administrative assistance, exhibit interpretation and website management, was depended upon more than ever. Providing enticing and interactive online experience has largely occupied Gina's creative and technical expertise. This included scanning 25 History Albums for the Online Archives.

In a normal year, the summer host/interpreter would provide exhibit interpretation and tourist information and would assist guests with their purchases from the Museum Shop. In 2021, our host/interpreter Natalia Nybida had an added responsibility – to ensure the Museum's COVID-19 protocols were followed by every visitor. Natalia also researched and wrote several blogs for our website.

CIMAS FUNDRAISING

CIMAS generates income through programming, donations, memberships, the Museum Shop and Misty Isles Historic Cruises. Our fundraising income increased in 2021, but not to pre-COVID levels.

GRANTS RECEIVED

- Employment and Social Development Canada – covers a portion of the summer host’s wages
- BC Arts Council Operating Assistance – covers Managing Director/Curator wages
- Strathcona Regional District, Grant-in-Aid – covers Visioning Workshop/Board Development
- Documentary Heritage Communities Program (Library and Archives Canada)
- Emergency Canada Supplement Heritage Canada – covered accessibility upgrade project
- BC Gaming

TRAINING FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- CIMAS – in-house staff and volunteer training as required
- BC Museum Association – online conference – three days
- Managing Personal Information in Collections
- Digital Preservation
- Webinars – for exhibit and program development
- Archives Association of BC – Social Media & Archives and Digitization for Small Archives webinars
- Jane Newman represented the Museum in a roundtable discussing volunteers and archives

MEMBERSHIPS

We had 205 members in 2021 (more than in 2020, but less than in 2019 and previous years).

VOLUNTEERS

101 volunteers donated 5211 hours. Thank you!

TOURIST VISITOR INFO BOOTH

CIMAS, as the official Tourist/Visitor Information Booth for Cortes Island, provided pamphlets, maps and local information. This service benefits the community by promoting local businesses, services and activities. CIMAS also benefits because many visitors take the opportunity to explore the exhibits, access the archives, and often provide donations at the door.

EXHIBITIONS

Doreen Thompson Gallery: Our latest exhibition, *Listening to Bees*, focused on the challenges facing both native and honeybees worldwide and what we on Cortes Island can do to support and protect these important pollinators. This exhibit appealed to both adults and children as they explored the artifacts, videos and interactive displays.

Planning for the 2022 exhibition, *Reflecting Light*, with photographs by Annie Rosenberg and guest curator Laura Balducci, commenced in November.

<p>MAIN GALLERY: (Visitors – 1609) <i>That Was Then / This Is Now</i> <i>Listening to Bees</i></p> <p>WILD CORTES: (Visitors – 498) <i>The Big Three</i></p>
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Wild Cortes: *The Big Three: Bears, Cougars and Coastal Wolves* exhibition opened on Earth Day 2021. The exhibition investigates the characteristics of Cortes Island’s three apex predators: bears, cougars and coastal wolves. Working with Friends of Cortes Island (FOCI), we have included educational information about their bear and wolf projects, and how to live successfully among these majestic creatures.

**WILD CORTES
NATURAL
HISTORY
CENTRE**

Wild Cortes Natural History Centre, housed at the Linnaea Education Centre, had a blast of new life in 2021 – a renewal of a sort. A new exhibition – *The Big Three: Bears, Cougars and Coastal Wolves*, co-curated by CIMAS and FOCI, was enjoyed by almost 500 visitors, up from 72 the previous year. Wild Cortes can now be found on Google maps. This was also the first year Wild Cortes was open five days a week. We achieved these extended hours thanks to a group of committed volunteers. Thank you!

We were fortunate in 2021 to welcome Daniel Tucker, a researcher-in-residence specializing in mosses. During his time here, Dan compiled detailed information about Cortes Island mosses, led a guided walk to explore local moss habitat and presented an illustrated talk. Both public events were well attended by the community.

Late in 2021, work began on a new exhibit to replace *The Big Three*. The new exhibit will open on Earth Day, 22 April 2022.

Programming, participation and direction is provided through the collaboration of five organizations (CIMAS, Linnaea Farm Society, Friends of Cortes Island, Children's Forest Trust, and Discovery Islands Ecosystem Mapping Project) collectively known as the Cortes Wild! partnership.

**ARTIFACT
COLLECTION**

Great progress was made by the Artifact Committee this year. Since the last report, Donna Manson, Debbie Dragseth, Ian Disney, Bruce Ellingsen, Ann Dewar and Bonnie MacDonald have accessioned a total of 140 artifacts into the collection. One intriguing object was an elegant wooden trophy engraved with "R. Manson, Cortes Island." Was this referring to Robina Manson, daughter of Michael Manson, the mother of May Ellingsen, grandmother of Bruce, great grandmother of David Ellingsen? Or was this Rose Manson, daughter of John Manson, sister of Nicol, aunt of Mike Manson at Sunny Brae Farm? It's a beautiful object but the provenance remains a mystery.

CIMAS houses a collection of Indigenous stone tools and fishing implements donated by Nellie Jeffery and accessioned in 2008. As a step toward reconciliation with Klahoose First Nation, a letter was sent to the Chief and Council letting them know that CIMAS has signed and endorsed the Rod Naknakim Declaration. This document states that ownership of all Indigenous artifacts "resides with Indigenous peoples." We are hoping that Klahoose First Nation will be interested in working with us to repatriate the collection. The CIMAS Board of Directors has adopted a Repatriation Policy that will help guide our way when the call comes to return the Indigenous artifacts to their rightful owners.

**HERITAGE
GARDEN**

This was a year of extreme weather in the garden, with a heat dome in late June and a hot July. Fortunately, the three large heritage apple trees in the garden thrived in the heat as did the perennial and shrub plantings with a modest amount of watering from the drip irrigation.

We measured water use rates in the garden and prepared an updated guide to the drip irrigation system. Even in the very hot weather, visitors to the garden could enjoy the shade while sitting on the benches under the apple trees.

The garden was included in Museum social media outreach. A blog was posted on the Museum website in June about the seven heritage roses in the garden with information about their history and a photo of each rose.

A Heritage Garden Album was created in the photo section of the Museum Facebook page. The album has a short introduction and includes 38 photos taken at different seasons. As the garden evolved over the season, we added some heathers to provide early bloom for pollinators, removed an overgrown shrub near the fence and added several summer blooming perennials to the raised beds. The garden was maintained this year by six volunteers.

**PUBLIC
PROGRAMMING
& COMMUNITY
OUTREACH**

CIMAS was unable to offer much of our usual programming for residents and visitors due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, we conducted the following events safely and received appreciative feedback:

CIMAS Events and Tours:

- *Listening to Bees*, opening on World Bee Day, audience – 82
- *The Big Three: Bears, Cougars and Coastal Wolves*, Earth Day
- *Spring Bird Count*, audience – 29
- Speaker Series, audience – 200
 - via Zoom:
 - Jeanette Taylor – *Twin Islands, History and Legacy on the BC Coast* book launch
 - Gordon Cyr – *Mason Bees* presentation
 - in person:
 - Bryan Thompson – *Mystery Mountain Project* speaker/film presentation
 - Daniel Tucker – *Moss Walk and Moss Talk*
- three School Tours, audience – 119
 - two *Live-hive* demos
 - one *Big Three* tour
- one *Artist in the Garden*, audience – 11

Co-sponsored Events:

- four Nature Tours (*Gumbooting the Lagoon*), with FOCI, audience – 48
- *Christmas Bird Count*, with Bird Studies Canada, audience – 24
- four *Literary Afternoons*, with Cortes Island Seniors Society, audience – 60
- three Historic Cruises, with Misty Isles Adventures, audience – 24
- three Radio Talks (*The Big Three, Love on the Air, Easter*), CKTZ Radio, radio audience – 5,000

**ONLINE
PRESENCE**

The Online Presence Committee was established to analyze the CIMAS website and our social media accounts and to make recommendations for additions and improvements.

Website (cortesmuseum.com)

We had 12,468 users of our website in 2021. This is another increase. Donna McLaren, Christian Gronau and Natalia Nybida added seven blogs to our website. Blogs are our most popular pages. Gina was busy scanning the contents of 25 CIMAS History Albums. The Butterfly Sightings page continues to be relevant; each year adds more sightings. Finally, in December, a Radio Program was made available as an audio file.

Online Archives (collections.cortesmuseum.com)

Users can search our archival database, view digital images, browse History Albums and listen to audio interviews.

Tideline (www.cortesisland.com)

Tideline is our most successful advertising platform. We'd like to thank Ester Strijbos for her excellent assistance making certain that our posts are perfectly done.

Facebook (www.facebook.com/CimasCortes)

Our Facebook page has 593 followers, up from 482, an increase of 23%. The activity on the page was up to 68 posts for the year.

MemoryBC (www.memorybc.ca/cortes-island-museum-and-archives)

A description of all CIMAS archival holdings is available on this provincial website hosted by the Archives Association of British Columbia.

Instagram (www.instagram.com/cortesislandmuseum)

We made 157 posts on Instagram, mostly from our Online Archives. All posts had excellent responses.

**ARCHIVES
COLLECTION**

The Archives Committee is celebrating the completion of a two-year project, *Unlocking the Archives*. In the first year, we digitized almost 4,000 photographs and launched collections.cortesmuseum.com, a new interactive website. This year, we continued to scan and upload photos to the Online Archives and added the Information Files to the database. Using Instagram, a social media campaign raised awareness of the new website and generated a lot of feedback – 3,400 likes, shares, and comments! Visits to the new website soared: from 475 page views in April to a high of 4,007 in June. The Online Archives averaged 106 users each month for the past nine months and feedback provided identification for 192 photographs. We thank Library & Archives Canada for the funding, which allowed us to open our Archives to the world!

There were five donations to the Archives: letters from a deckhand on the Columbia Coast Mission (CCM) ship *John Antle*; photos of the Playschool from the 1990s; an album of logging photos from Bobby Hayes; accruals to the Maclean family; and the Cortes Island Seniors Building Society fonds.

There were 42 research requests, up from 16 in the previous year.

We drafted a Reproduction of Archival Materials Policy document, and forms and fees for purchasing copies of photographs.

Next year, we'll continue to process new donations, work on keeping the online database current, and upload more digital records as they become available.

imagine

Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world... – Albert Einstein

CIMAS's programs and activities take place at the intersection of knowledge and imagination. Now more than ever, we are seeking collaboration and connectivity with YOU – the individuals, groups, businesses, and families – the fabric of our island community. What are you imagining? How can we collaborate with you and bring your ideas to fruition? Let's *imagine* together! By inviting the community

to present ideas for new exhibits and programming, we hope to bring more diversity to our organization and to the design and implementation of our programs.

As a start in 2022, the space currently housing the *That Was Then / This Is Now* exhibit will be replaced with a new installation, *Reflecting Light*. Photographer Annie Rosenberg is collaborating with CIMAS and artist/guest curator Laura Balducci to produce this new exhibit. CIMAS is providing curatorial support for the project and is assisting in various ways with its production.

Some goals that CIMAS aspires to accomplish in 2022 and beyond include:

- develop a respectful working relationship with Klahoose First Nation
- expand our online presence with the inclusion of a searchable database of all Museum holdings
- explore new programming models and funding opportunities
- explore funding opportunities for Wild Cortes
- explore hosting a travelling exhibit
- process artifact backlog and digitization using the new collection management software
- consider redesign of website
- repair/replace Heritage Garden fencing
- explore new fundraising activities for CIMAS & Wild Cortes
- update the strategic plan
- explore more collaboration opportunities with other Cortes Island organizations
- create a coordinated statistical collection system

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celebrate

Difficult times can bring out the best in a small community, and last year was no exception. We pulled together and will continue to draw on the spirit, compassion, dedication and dreams of those around us. For this we are deeply grateful. We *celebrate* our supportive members, generous volunteers, local and off island visitors and community partners, and give a warm shout-out to all who gave their time and energy in 2021.



Moss Walk with Daniel Tucker, November 2021, photo Leona Jensen



Beehive Demo with Jenny Hartwick, August 2021



Artist in the Garden, Donna Collins and Laurel Bohart, August 2021