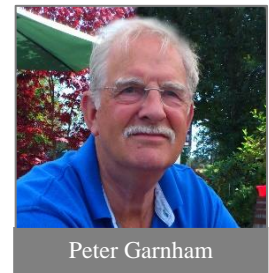




MEDIA RELEASE

Big Changes Coming to Sidney Museum

Sidney, British Columbia, July 22, 2020 — After 25 years with Sidney Museum, and over two decades as its Executive Director, Peter Garnham is taking his first step towards retirement. After September 12th, 2020 Peter will be operating in the capacity of Associate Director three days a week for a limited time during the transition for the new Executive Director. After the period is finished, a new Assistant Director will be hired. Please join us in thanking Peter for his long service to our community and congratulating him as he enters this new chapter.



Peter Garnham

Sidney Museum was created in 1971 by the John family and operated in the old Customs House at the bottom of Beacon Avenue until the late 1990s. While there, it expanded to include the Marine Mammal Museum. With the creation of the Pier Hotel, the Customs House was moved to the top of Beacon Avenue to become the Information Centre. At this time, the Museum split with the Marine Mammal portion going to what became the Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea, and the historical collection moving with the Sidney Museum to its present location in the basement of the Old Post Office building. In the early 2000s with this move, Peter Garnham created the Society which runs the Museum after it ceased to be operated as a department of the Town of Sidney. A large portion of the collection pertains to North Saanich, as before the Town's incorporation, this area was all part of the District of North Saanich. For many years, Peter was the sole employee of the Museum and ran it with the help of a dedicated team of volunteers.

Today, Sidney Museum collects objects which are specific to the Saanich Peninsula, including nearby islands, and Sidney or North Saanich in particular. Earlier in 2020, a joint effort was put forth by the District of North Saanich and Town of Sidney to support the Museum in hiring a third staff member as Assistant Archivist and Education Programmer. This person will assist in bringing the archival collection in line with modern sector standards, as well as develop and deliver new education programs within the community. Hiring this position has been delayed due to the pandemic. Peter has seen the Museum grow in exceptional ways during his time as Executive Director. The Sidney Museum will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary in 2021.

With Peter stepping back as Executive Director, the Board of the Sidney Museum and Archives Society has chosen to offer the role to Alyssa Gerwing, the existing Assistant Director for nearly three years. Prior to her work at Sidney Museum, Alyssa was the Assistant Archivist at The Exploration Place Museum and Science Centre in Prince George, BC. She brings a Master of Arts in the History of Medicine, and a Masters in Library and Information



Studies, in addition to over ten years' experience in a variety of archives and museum settings, to the role. During her tenure at Sidney Museum, the Museum has won Non-Profit of the Year from the Saanich Peninsula Chamber of Commerce, increased its grant funding ten-fold to undertake many large- scale projects, and hosted professional travelling exhibits from the North Vancouver Museum and the Canadian Museum of History.

“It has been an exceptional experience creating a home for the museum in the Old Post Office building,” said Peter Garnham, Executive Director of Sidney Museum. “This has been achieved throughout the years with the assistance of a dedicated team of volunteers, as well as the invaluable support of successive Boards of Directors, the Town of Sidney and the District of North Saanich”.

“Peter has done so much more than simply guide the Museum through its growth over these past many years”, said Richard Novek, Board Chair of the Sidney Museum and Archives Society. “He has woven the Sidney Museum into the very fabric of daily life in Sidney”.

“Having lived in both Sidney and North Saanich over the last few years, I am proud to live and work in this community.” said Alyssa Gerwing, Assistant Director of Sidney Museum. “I’m looking forward to the challenge of guiding Sidney Museum as an important community organization through its next chapter as we continue to grow, learn and find new ways to engage with our community on the Saanich Peninsula.”

The Sidney Museum is located at 2423 Beacon Avenue, in the lower level of the Old Post Office, in historic Sidney-by-the-Sea, British Columbia. The museum hours of operation are Wednesdays through Sundays, 10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. Admission is by donation and visit bookings are recommended.

For further information about the museum or to book your visit, please consult our website at www.sidneymuseum.ca; by telephone at 250-655-6355 or email us at info@sidneymuseum.ca.

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