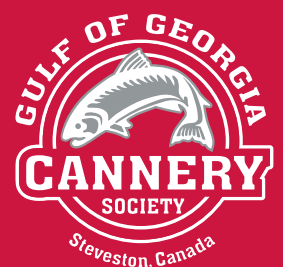




2023 Annual Report





CHAIR'S MESSAGE

In my 2020 farewell message, “Weathering the Storm,” little did I know that the storm was far from over and I would be back as Chair only a year and a matter of months later. Since then, the Society has overcome staffing changes, environmental impacts, and maintenance issues, (dare I mention the owls).

Throughout the year, the Society continued to thrive and bring positive change to the Cannery. Our funding model significantly changed in 2023 as we enjoyed a renewed level of support from Parks Canada and new grants to support growth in many areas. I cannot express enough gratitude to our continuing and new staff and our Board members for their enthusiasm and devotion to helping us flourish.

The Cannery has never been in such a good position fiscally. Our new exhibits created an inclusive and diverse contribution to the stories in our community. This would not have been possible without the dedication of our staff, board, members, community partners, and let's not forget—our visitors. Much of this success can be directly attributed to the leadership of Elizabeth Batista, our fantastic Executive Director. For someone who has been involved with museums and museum education for over twenty years, I can honestly say that I have learned more from watching and admiring the work that Elizabeth has brought to the position than from all my academic background.

Our feature exhibits, *Fish Tales* and *The Water We Call Home*, and programs such as *Haunted Sea*, *Easter at the Cannery*, *Welcoming the Sun*, and *Festival of Trees* would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our staff and volunteers. Our gift store, collections, school programs and tours are expanding and resonating to local and international visitors. We will continue to prioritize our relationships with Indigenous partners, the Steveston community, stakeholders, and Parks Canada, all the while emphasizing the importance of adaptability while advocating for the Society.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society, we commend all our staff and volunteers. Members of the Society, you should be proud of our success and extremely proud of the commitment, passion, and dedication of all those who make the Cannery such an important place to visit.

Sincerely,
Kit Grauer, *Chair*



Front Cover
Top row: Coastal Wolf Pack performing at *Welcoming the Sun*, GOGCS photo.
Salmon eggs beginning to hatch, GOGCS photo.
Squamish Nation storyteller and cultural specialist Tsitsáyxemaat Rebecca Duncan on the *Welcoming the Sun* stage, GOGCS photo.
Middle row: Salmon leather items from an Indigenous vendor at *Welcoming the Sun*, GOGCS photo.
Indigenous artisans/vendors selling their artworks at *Welcoming the Sun*, GOGCS photo.
Two youths learning about the local fish that were processed at the Cannery, photo by Parks Canada.
Heritage Interpreter sharing information about the Cannery site to visitor, photo by Parks Canada.
Bottom row: Women hand filling cans at an unknown cannery. GOGCS, CFC-3-21-10.

Opposite page
Top row: Coastal Wolf Pack performing at *Welcoming the Sun* event, July 23, 2022, GOGCS photo.
Cheo Yamamura (far left) standing with fellow cannery workers at Namu Cannery, Namu, BC, ca. 1953. GOGCS, G2000.001.003.011.
Middle row: Five Japanese Canadian women hand patching half-pound cans of salmon at a B.C. Packers Imperial Plant in Steveston, BC, ca. 1960. GOGCS, G2004.034.018, BC Packers Collection.
Visitors learning about the various coastal fish species on the Fish Wall, GOGCS photo.
Bottom row: Interpreter sharing Canning Line stories to visitors, photo by Parks Canada.
Crew on the *Eva D. II* seining for salmon, ca. 1940s. GOGCS, G2005.050.010.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Our efforts in 2023 to revitalize our core strengths produced some positive outcomes. We learned to embrace change as a normal course of life, adapt to it and build the framework to take advantage of new opportunities.

We often talk about change as inevitable. In a more positive light, change provides a way to reset attitudes about how to meet successful outcomes. If the last few years taught us anything, it is that we cannot assume the path to success remains static. 2023 was a year of substantially moving forward with some of our aspirations. In this report you will learn about how we adapted to financial demands, created value for our visitors through our events and programming and changed roles within our organization to meet the needs of our audience.

During all this, our diligent staff and volunteers kept us on track for meeting challenging deliverables. The support and advice from our board bolstered our commitment to preserving the history of Canada's West Coast fishing industry in new ways. Our friendships with community members also contributed to this successful year. I am always grateful for working with such dedicated members of this community.

Parks Canada's role in 2023 continued to form a substantial contribution to our ability to sustain our operation. This year marked a significant milestone with Parks Canada as the Society entered into two new agreements and an increase in funding. We have departed from a traditional contract relationship and entered into a more flexible way to work together.

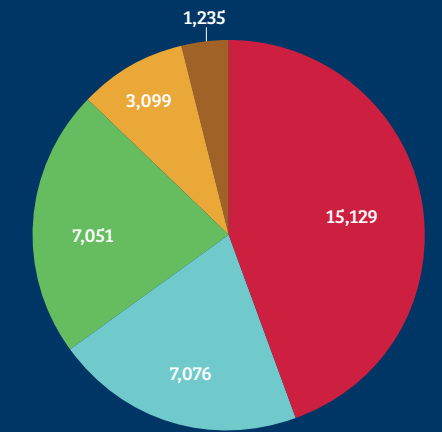
We're ready to make the next year and years to come, full of positive milestones and achievements, providing a memorable experience for all who visit the Cannery.

Elizabeth Batista

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Batista, *Executive Director*



Welcoming guests to the Gulf of Georgia Cannery NHS, GOGCS photo.



2023 VISITATION TOTAL
42,122

GENERAL ADMISSION	15,129
PROMOTIONAL ADMISSION	7,076
SPECIAL EVENTS	7,051
SCHOOL PROGRAMS	3,099
GROUPS/RENTALS	1,235

THE GULF OF GEORGIA CANNERY NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

The Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site stands at the mouth of the Fraser River on the ancestral, unceded and ceded territories of the Musqueam and Hən̓q̓əmiṇəm speaking peoples who have lived here since time immemorial. It is here that we are privileged to work, live and learn together.

Constructed in 1894, the Gulf of Georgia Cannery was one of fifteen canneries located in Steveston on the South Arm of the Fraser River. Known as the Monster Cannery, this facility canned salmon until 1930 when it was repurposed as a net loft, fresh fish depot, and then later a herring reduction plant. After operating for 85 years, the facility was designated a National Historic Site in 1976 and opened to the public in 1994.

Visitors from around the world experience this hallmark of Canada's West Coast fishing industry from the permanent exhibits which includes a functioning salmon canning line, a herring reduction plant, and fishing methods used on the West Coast. These are also complemented by a flexible feature space displaying various temporary exhibitions connected to the Society's mission.

SOCIETY OVERVIEW

Established in 1986, the **Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society is an independent, non-profit society and registered charity whose mission honours the importance of Canada's West Coast fishing history.**

Working in collaboration with Parks Canada from the beginning, the Society preserves, presents, and promotes the history of the Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site. The Society endeavors to interpret the history of West Coast fishing by sharing stories of the fishing industry and communities through exhibitions, collections, programs, and events.



Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site, photo by Parks Canada.

Board of Directors - Elected May 2023

Board Chair	Kit Grauer
First Vice-Chair	Perry Mazzone
Second Vice-Chair	Susan Stiene
Treasurer	Ryan Garnett
Secretary	Nigel Evans

General Directors

Adam Bent	Jim Van der Tas
Bruno Gerves	Karen Lee
Geoff Matheson	Mark Turpin
Gilles Assier	Mike Barnsley
Joan Bennett	Ralph Turner

Honourary Lifetime Members

Jim Barlow since 2005
Robert Johnson since 2005
Bud Sakamoto since 2011
Everett Pierce since 2020
Eileen Carefoot since 2021
Jim Kojima since 2022
Dave Semple since 2023

Ex Officios

Dave Semple
National Historic Sites Superintendent, Coastal BC Field Unit, Parks Canada



Guest engaging with a Cannery automaton, GOGCS photo.



Captive audience at story time during Easter at the Cannery, GOGCS photo.



Visitors viewing the canning line model, GOGCS photo.



(Left to right) Jim Kojima (Society Lifetime Member); Jim Van der Tas (current Board); Councillor Bill McNulty, City of Richmond; Kelly Greene, BC MLA Richmond-Steveston.



Society staff, volunteers, and community partners enjoyed the Cannery social event held on December 15, 2023 at the Chinese Bunkhouse, Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site.



Guests at the Society's December 15, 2023 social event pose in front of a beautiful sunset.

SOCIETY ACTIVITIES

A healthy increase in visitors from the previous year complemented the Society's substantial progress toward our three strategic goals: expand our collaboration with Parks Canada, be fiscally strong and be a leader in reconciliation.

The Society and Parks Canada entered into a new modernized agreement in 2023. Parks Canada renewed their commitment to collaborate under an agreement that streamlines management and provides more tools such as fundraising flexibility for the Society to carry out our important work. This collaboration resulted in improved processes, simplified approaches to administrative processes and a robust document to call out our roles and responsibilities. As part of this modernization we were fortunate to receive an additional \$100,000 as part of Parks Canada's contribution to supplement site operation.

The Society's staff carried out a project to standardize and test the feasibility of a grant applications library. Building on the work of previous staff, we were successful in obtaining much needed funds for our own modernization and revitalization, especially after the pandemic. One example was receiving much needed funds to evaluate our Human Resources policies and procedures. This was a welcome addition to our process improvement initiatives aimed at keeping the Society updated, relevant and ready to hire and retain adequately compensated staff.

As you will see in our Funding section of this report, we achieved a good portion of funding in 2023 that will carry over into 2024. This initiative has laid the groundwork for future grant applications and has determined the actual resources needed to contribute to our fiscal strength and resilience.

The Society continued our commitment to reconciliation and to provide a place for Indigenous voices in an invited exhibit called *The Water We Call Home*. Co-curated by Rosemary Georgeson, Kate Hennessy, Jessica Hallenbeck, and the advisory circle at the Yellowhouse Art Centre (2022) on Galiano Island, BC. We have been honoured to share the re-presencing Indigenous women's connections to fish, water, and family around the Salish Sea with visitors from near and far.

While we are proud of the progress we have made, we do not take it for granted. Our passion to preserve the history of fishing on Canada's West Coast will keep us moving forward in new and imaginative ways, keeping us agile and ready to meet any challenge.

CANNERY CREW UPDATES

We welcomed several new members to our Cannery Crew and created opportunities for improvements to our organizational structure.

Here are some highlights:

Elizabeth Batista, Executive Director

After one year as Interim Executive Director and a review of several other candidates, Elizabeth moved to our permanent Executive Director position and continued to build stability and growth for the Society. She is excited to see what lies ahead and is grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the Society's mission.

Tatyana Beck, Curatorial Program Manager

As a result of evaluating our approach to programming we created a new position to enhance our ability to curate public programming and events. Tatyana joined us from the Vancouver Maritime Museum and has brought valuable knowledge of public programming in a museum setting. She quickly demonstrated her passion for storytelling and continues to be the creative heart of the Cannery.

Heidi Rampfl, Collections and Exhibits Manager

We embraced the work of activating our collections and creating a more collaborative and holistic approach to exhibit change and creation. Heidi, a senior member of the Cannery crew, excitedly began planning for our 2025 exhibit. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated member of our team.

Rachel Meloche, Education Program Coordinator

We welcomed 'back' Rachel Meloche as a member of our crew. Previous to her joining us in 2023, Rachel was volunteer, a former heritage interpreter and a friend of the Society through her involvement with the Steveston Historical Society.

We were also happy to welcome new additions during the summer of 2023. Lucy, Jocelyn, Judy and Jordan joined us as heritage interpreters, making a well-rounded team for the busiest part of our season.

Growing Membership & Society Volunteers

In 2023, we welcomed 64 new individual and corporate members, finishing the year with 262 active members.

Society memberships support our ongoing objectives and activation of our mission by allowing us to expand our programs and continue sharing the stories of the Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site.

Support also shines from our volunteers. The Gulf of Georgia Cannery is very fortunate and sincerely grateful for their invaluable resource of time and energy to events like *Easter at the Cannery*, *Welcoming the Sun*, *Salmon Festival*, *Haunted Sea* and more. Their continued service to enrich their community exemplifies a deep passion for our treasured and beloved national historic site. Accomplishments in this report would not have been possible without their kindness and generosity.

Top: Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society Heritage Interpreters, in costume for Summer Experience Tours (left to right)—Lucy, Jocelyn, Judy, and Nadya, GOGCS photo.
Bottom left: Susan and Debbie (Volunteers) welcoming Tourism Challenge participants, GOGCS photo.
Bottom right: Nadja (Volunteer) restocking savoury gifts in the Cannery Store, GOGCS photo.



GIFT SHOP REPORT

Cannery Store Sales Reached New Heights in 2023.

The Gulf of Georgia Cannery Gift Shop was very pleased to experience growth in sales as national and international tourism increased in 2023.

A few of the top selling items were stuffed animals, cans of sturgeon, and mermaid pens! The Cannery Store's goal is to provide a curated collection of products that will resonate with visitors whether they are international visitors looking for mementos of their Cannery experience or local residents shopping for gifts. The supply chain challenges are largely behind us, but we have found the wholesale price of goods continue to rise, which in turn affects retail prices for consumers. Despite these challenges, 2023 was a record year for the store.

Thanks to our team of dedicated volunteers for their time and energy in keeping the shop tidy and well-stocked, and to our helpful staff who engage and assist shoppers from all over the world. The success in sales for this year would not have been possible without their collective efforts. Proceeds from the gift shop help sustain the Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society's operations and continue to be an important source of revenue for us. Thank you to our valued visitors for supporting our organization and choosing to contribute to our future!

A curated collection of offerings in the Cannery Store: fashion, home accessories, toys, and locally-sourced, canned goods. GOGCS photo.





Top left: Royal Line brand canned salmon label. GOGCS, G991.030.001ee
Bottom left: A worker applies Lighthouse brand labels to one-pound tall cans of salmon, at the Lighthouse Cannery, Steveston, BC, ca. 1898. GOGCS, G2022.001.

Top right: Jean Nakatsuru (L), Carol Mori (C) and Kay Toyota (R) operating the skinning machine at BC Packers Imperial Plant, Steveston, BC, ca. 1950s. GOGCS G1998.001.016, BC Packers Collection.
Middle right: Overseas Brand canned salmon label. GOGCS, G991.052.001.
Bottom right: Grandee brand canned salmon label. GOGCS, G991.030.001cc

COLLECTIONS

The Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society cares for over 7,500 artifacts in two collections: one belonging to Parks Canada, and the other to the Society.

In addition to these three-dimensional objects, the Society maintains a Reference Library and an Archival collection featuring historical documents, images, oral histories, reference books, and more. Collectively, these items tell the story of fishing on the West Coast and reflect the people, places, and events that were integral to this history.

In 2023, the Gulf of Georgia Cannery restarted conversations with Parks Canada regarding the evaluation and the review of artifact collections at this site. The goal of the collections review is to identify significant objects from the Parks Canada collection that align with the site's reasons for its historical designation. As well, objects from the Society collection are reviewed to ensure that it aligns with our mission to enhance the meaningful narratives of fishing along the West Coast. This process also helps identify objects that no longer fit the

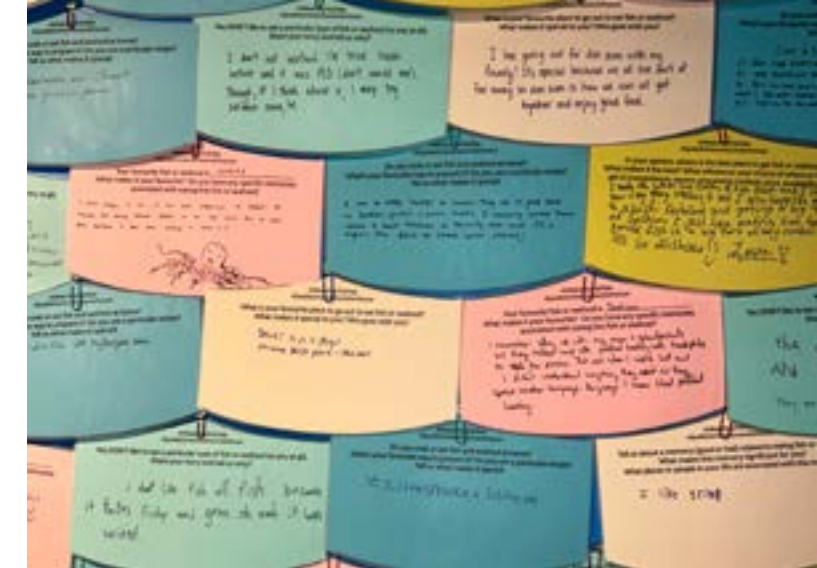
scope of our collections (eg. duplicates, objects in poor condition or containing hazardous materials, or lacking context or connection to our mission, etc.), allowing us to formally remove them from the collection. This is a proactive, healthy part of collections management. It enables us to better share, celebrate and honour objects that uphold our mission and goals as well as effectively hone our limited resources for managing collections. We are looking forward to continued collaboration with Parks Canada to review the collections in 2024.

EXHIBITS

The Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society works together with Parks Canada to develop and maintain the permanent exhibits at the site, including the Canning Line, Herring Reduction Plant, and Fishing the West Coast exhibits.

Additionally, the Society manages a temporary exhibit program that allows us to feature stories from diverse communities and topics relevant and engaging for new and returning visitors alike.

In 2023, the Society installed two new exhibits in the Cannery: *Fish Tales* and *The Water We Call Home*, both of which will remain on display until 2025.



Detail of *Fish Tales* story card wall—each card has a question relating to eating fish and seafood, prompting visitors to share their own stories in the exhibit. GOGCS photo.

Fish Tales

Based on a partnership project between the Society and the University of British Columbia's Initiative for Student Teaching and Research in Chinese Canadian Studies (UBC INSTRCC), *Fish Tales* celebrates the ways seafood connects diverse communities to Canada's West Coast fishing history. Using interviews with a variety of community members, this connection to seafood is explored in the exhibit through three key focuses: how we obtain our seafood, where we consume it, and who we share it with.



Dr. Henry Yu, Director, University of British Columbia's Initiative for Student Teaching and Research in Chinese Canadian Studies (UBC INSTRCC) speaking with visitors at the *Fish Tales* exhibit opening.



Executive Director, Elizabeth Batista interview with Talentvision talking about the *Fish Tales* exhibit.



Fish Tales interviews with the community sharing their connection to seafood, GOGCS photo.

The Water We Call Home

The Water We Call Home exhibit shares Indigenous women's connection to fish, water, and family around the Salish Sea. It is the result of a lifetime of research by Coast Salish/Sahtu Dene artist Rosemary Georgeson and emerges from her decade-long collaboration with Dr. Jessica Hallenbeck. The exhibit is co-curated by Georgeson, Hallenbeck, and Kate Hennessy, and features a series of films about the gatherings of an advisory circle of six Indigenous women, as well as new works in photography, video, and sound by Kali Spitzer, Richard Wilson, and Georgeson. It was originally displayed at the Yellowhouse Art Centre on Galiano Island from July 23-August 21, 2022. We are honoured to have these stories of Indigenous women's connections to fish, water, and family as told in their own words featured at our site, as it allows our visitors to experience a different perspective of the history of fishing on Canada's West Coast.



Above: Photo wall of *The Water We Call Home* exhibit. Upper right: Another view of exhibit. Lower right: Rosemary Georgeson, halibut caught on a handline. Milbanke Sound, August 1978, photo by Stuart Georgeson.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Across all Group Programs, we saw an increase in bookings to 2023:



56% increase in participation from 2022

Our programs, tours and events help us share stories and experiences of the diverse group of people that formed the rich history of fishing on Canada's West Coast. Here are some important examples of our achievements in 2023:

Our Education programs focused on enhancements to *Salmon People & Cannery Stories*. We were pleased to receive positive comments from teachers and students during trial runs of these programs. We're also looking forward to implementing further improvements to align with additional feedback.



Curatorial Program Manager, Tatyana Beck shared stories during our *Easter at the Cannery* event. GOGCS photo.

A sharp increase in attendance and engagement for Events & Public Programs was highlighted by *Welcoming the Sun* in June which also received tremendous partnership and sponsorship interest. *Haunted Sea* allowed us new opportunities for collaborations with Parks Canada, Ocean Wise, and Ocean Legacy. This was a welcome addition to sharing knowledge of environmental sustainability in a family-friendly Halloween experience.



Coastal Wolf Pack sharing their performance at *Welcoming the Sun*. GOGCS photo.



The *Festival of Trees* welcomed the jovial return of Santa at the Cannery. GOGCS photo.

Our community's much loved, *Festival of Trees* saw the return of *Santa at the Cannery*. This holiday program's capacity increased thanks to funding from Tourism Richmond. We received more than twice the votes cast for the tree-voting competition from last year. Capping the program was the 1400 visitors welcomed to the Cannery during the *Santa at the Cannery* event on December 3rd.

Finally, not to be forgotten, a new special interest tour dedicated to Japanese tour groups, was developed and has received support and broad interest from tour groups and organizers.

Upcycled materials transformed into an immersive, glowing jellyfish installation for *Haunted Sea*. GOGCS photo.



FUNDING

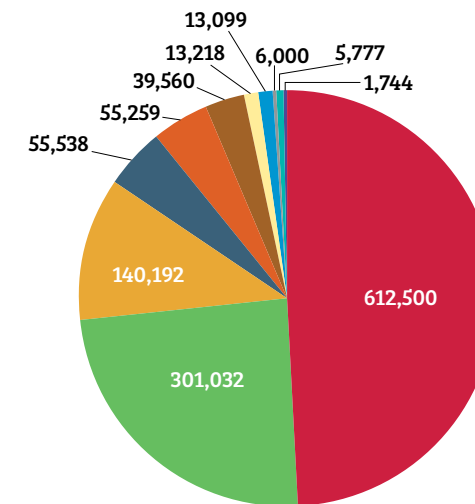
Our total revenue, which included Parks Canada contributions, gift shop sales, admissions and supplementary funding achieved a 24% increase from 2022.

2023 marked a year of significant actions toward strengthening and diversifying our revenue stream. We were fortunate to experience growth in our visitor numbers from the previous year. This and targeted activities to seek support from various channels helped to generate positive results.

Our relationship with Parks Canada continues to be a steadfast and positive collaboration. With new agreements in place and additional funding, our Society can work toward resilient and adaptive strategies for funding. Their contribution along with support received from other organizations have given us opportunities to invest more resources for our staff, volunteers and the evolution of our programming, exhibits and events.



Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society Heritage Interpreter, in costume for Summer Experience Tours sharing stories to visitors. Photo by Parks Canada.



2023 REVENUE: \$1,243,909

PARKS CANADA AGREEMENTS	\$612,500	SITE RENTALS	\$13,218
GIFT SHOP SALES	\$301,032	OTHER REVENUE	\$13,099
GENERAL ADMISSIONS	\$140,192	SPONSORSHIPS	\$6,000
GRANTS	\$55,538	MEMBERSHIP	\$5,777
GROUP ADMISSIONS	\$55,249	DONATIONS	\$1,744
PARKING REVENUE	\$39,560		

2023 SUPPORTERS

Grantors and Sponsors

British Columbia Museums Association
 Canadian Red Cross
 City of Richmond
 Gulf and Fraser Community Foundation
 Pacific Salmon Foundation

Province of British Columbia
 Tourism Richmond
 University of British Columbia
 Vancouver Airport Authority
 Vancouver Fraser Port Authority

Donors

Donna Cargill
 Ed and Anne Ikeda
 Hans Segelken
 Haydn Richardson
 Jack Dlugan
 Leslie Merson

2023 IN REVIEW

2023 was a year of growth and renewal. We are proud to share and celebrate our many successes. Here are some highlights:



MORE THAN 40,000 VISITORS

Representing a 25% increase in visitors compared to 2022, and including a 17% growth in general admission visitors.



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, GROUP PROGRAMMING, AND RENTALS

We experienced a 38% increase in participants of our education programs as well as a sharp increase in group programming and rentals by over 4,000 attendees.



64 NEW SOCIETY MEMBERS



788 VOLUNTEER HOURS

Volunteers contributed a total of 788 hours, with 40 new volunteers joining our team.



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Building on solid foundations we continued our collaborations with Tourism Richmond, Parks Canada, City of Richmond, Ocean Legacy, Rosemary Georgeson, University of British Columbia's Initiative for Student Teaching and Research in Chinese Canadian Studies (UBC INSTRCC) to name a few.



SPECIAL PROGRAMMING SUCCESS

For the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic started, we welcomed Santa back to the Cannery and we hope he and Mrs. Claus will make another appearance in 2024.

LOOKING FORWARD

2024 will be a year of building on the work we achieved in 2023. The Society will continue to focus on our strategic goals outlined in our 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.



DIVERSIFICATION OF REVENUE

With a focus on working together with Parks Canada, fundraising, sponsorships and grants.



GROWTH IN GENERAL ADMISSION VISITORS BY 2%



GROWTH IN SHOP SALES REVENUE BY 6%



VISITOR EXPERIENCE ENHANCEMENTS

Completion of the audio tour and formalized visitor experience evaluations.



INCLUSIVITY & RECONCILIATION

Finding new opportunities to provide a space for Indigenous partners to tell their stories.



Cheo Yamamura and Ruby posing along the boardwalk at Namu Cannery, Namu, BC, ca. 1953. GOGCS, G2000.001.003.063



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