Annual Report 2012
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Message from the Chairman of the Board of Directors

The Board has been occupied this past year with planning for a move of our collection housed at our old museum premises at 402 Anderson Street. Part of the agreement with the City of Nelson when we took over our current premises was that we would make arrangements to return the Anderson property to the City. Board members have explored various options including building an addition onto our existing premises on Vernon Street, renegotiating with the City for us to remain at the Anderson facility and to refurbish it to meet our long term storage needs, the new railway station owned by the Chamber of Commerce at the foot of Baker Street, and leasing a portion of the basement of the Post Office building next door.

Another major objective in moving the collection is to make the Ladybird speed boat more accessible for public viewing. As most people closely associated with Touchstones Nelson are aware, this magnificent wooden racing boat with the V-12 Liberty engine was completely restored to pristine condition by devoted society members of past years. We are exploring ways to temporarily store her in her own secure quarters on a trailer specially constructed to transport her. She could be made available for parades, festivals and special events to help market Touchstones Nelson and our community. This project will continue to be a major focus for the coming year.

It has indeed been a privilege and a pleasure to work with and receive the support of our Executive Director and her strong team this year, for which I sincerely thank each and every one of them. Their creativity and devotion is truly inspiring.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Ken Watson
In 2012, the Society adopted an updated Strategic Plan (2012-2014) – a concise, action-oriented document that will guide the board and staff in their activities over the next three years. Based on a facilitated stakeholder engagement process as well as a rigorous evaluation of current policies and procedures, and then placed within the context of current cultural sector practice, the Strategic Plan is a tough but realistic road map for the near future.

Implementation of the initiatives articulated in the 2012-2014 Strategic Plan got underway in 2012. For example, a Visual Arts Advisory Committee was established, a members’ show was planned to kick off the 2013 exhibition schedule, the professional development budget for staff was increased, and the development of a future storage plan for the artifact collection began to take shape. The Strategic Plan will continue to guide planning activities throughout 2013 and 2014.

All the initiatives in the Strategic Plan are aimed at carrying the Society forward in a manner that defies preconceived stereotypes of “institutions.” We plan to do this by:

- Maximizing the vitality and impact of exhibitions and programs
- Building relationships and key constituencies
- Increasing and improving fundraising resources
- Reducing barriers to accessing Society programs and activities

The current economic environment notwithstanding, in 2012 the Society adjusted priorities (and budget line items) in order to action-out the initiatives in the Strategic Plan. In 2014, we’ll evaluate our progress and begin the process of developing another update. In the meantime, the Board and Staff will continue to implement the Strategic Plan and make stronger steps towards greater stability and more effective delivery of cultural services to the community.

Leah Best
Executive Director
Forest for the Trees
February 11 to April 15
Gallery A • Curator: Jessica Demers
*Forest for the Trees* brought together local artists Ian Johnston, Tanya Pixie Johnson, Barbara Maye and Nadine Stefan whose work explores the interplay between nature and culture.

Deborah Thompson
*Tales from the Underworld*
April 21 to July 8
Gallery A • Curator: Rod Taylor
Included recent work of well known local artist, teacher and curator Deborah Thompson who continues to explore the human psyche through her intuitive and gestural paintings.

Landon Mackenzie
*Mapping History*
July 14 to September 16
Gallery A • Curator: Jessica Demers
An exhibition featuring some of the most celebrated work of Vancouver-based Landon Mackenzie, who has garnered national and international acclaim for her work.

Megan Dickie & Diana Burgoyne
*Klang & Squeal*
September 22 to November 25
Gallery A • Curator: Jessica Demers
A two-person exhibition that featured interactive sculptures by Megan Dickie and sound drawings by Diana Burgoyne.

Aliens Among Us
December 1, 2012 to February 24, 2013
Gallery A • RBCM travelling exhibit
A travelling exhibit from the Royal BC Museum that aimed to inform and educate British Columbians about the growing threat of alien plant and animal species in our natural environment.
The History of Radio in Nelson
February 4 to April 8
Gallery B • Curator: Rod Taylor
A look at the history of radio in Nelson, with a focus on the earlier years of broadcasting when the medium was at its most popular.

Kootenay School of the Arts at Selkirk College Graduation Show
April 14 to June 17
Gallery B • Guest Curator: Deborah Loxam-Kohl
This exhibit featured the work of graduating students from the Kootenay School of the Arts at Selkirk College.

Baker Street Then and Now (and the Future of Heritage?)
June 23 to September 9
Gallery B • Curator: Rod Taylor
This exhibit featured a montage of past and present photos of many of the historic buildings on Baker Street from the Archives, as well as considering other examples of what heritage may look like as we move further into the 21st century. The exhibit photos were also posted on the website Historypin, where they may still be viewed.

What I Eat: Around the World in 13 Diets
September 15 to November 18
Gallery B • Curator: Rod Taylor
A compelling collection of photos and descriptive text from photographer Peter Menzel and writer Faith D’Aluisio, drawn from What I Eat: Around the World in 80 Diets. Developed by Touchstones Nelson with material provided by the authors, the exhibit was the Canadian gallery debut for the work. Also featured was What Nelson Eats, a supplementary display of local individuals photographed by Karen Redfern which ran concurrently at the Nelson Public Library.

Arin Fay
Beyond the Batholith: Writing Women of the Kootenay/Columbia Basin
November 24, 2012 to February 17, 2013
Gallery B • Curator: Rod Taylor
A series of portraits of women authors with local connections done in pyrography and paint by artist Arin Fay.
Public Programs 2012

- Anniversary of David Thompson’s Brigade — Film Screening and Guest Speakers
- Art Joyce Talk (History of the Streetcar in Nelson)
- Artist Talks (5) - Gene Leavitt talk and demonstration, *Forest for the Trees*, Deborah Thompson, Landon Mackenzie, Megan Dickie and Diana Burgoyne (*Klang & Squeal*)
- BC Day Display
- Bob Inwood presentation — *Baker Street: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*
- Canada Day Celebrations at Lakeside Park
- Community Group Meetings (Social Planning Action Network, Kootenay Literary Society)
- Curator Talk: Ken Marr (*Aliens Among Us*)
- Docent Training and Guided Tours
- Electronic Art Workshops (*Klang & Squeal*)
- Family Fun Day (*Aliens Among Us*)
- Memory Kit Outreach Visits
- Multiculturalism Day Display
- National Aboriginal Day Display
- School Programs and Tours (Elementary) in the Permanent Museums Exhibit (419 students from 10 schools plus home learners)
- School Programs and Tours (High School) of the Museum exhibit and temporary art exhibitions (226 students from 5 schools)
- Summer Kids’ Camp in partnership with the Nelson and District Community Complex and Nelson Municipal Library
- Winter and Fall Family Fairs
- Writing Women Talk - (*Arin Fay: Beyond the Batholith*)

**Picture key**

1. Winter Family Fair
2. Touchstones Nelson Canada Day program booth
3. Fall Family Fair
4. Aliens Among Us school tours
5. Aliens Among Us school tours
Archives & Collections — by Laura Fortier

Shawn Lamb Archives

In 2012, the Shawn Lamb Archives completed two digitization projects involving over 500 negatives from the Society’s Collection.

The Archives also received donations from thirty donors and transfers of materials from three different institutions, such as a hand-tinted J.H. Allen photograph from the Kelowna Museum.

Staff and volunteers replied to over 150 research requests - 20% of which were genealogy related; completed two house histories; created ten in-house displays; and two out-of-house displays at the Nelson Public Library and the Nelson Post Office; and added over 100 photographs to the online shop site. Staff also contributed photographs from the Society’s Collection for display on the hydro boxes surrounding Nelson’s downtown core and the Hume Hotel’s top floor renovation. We also purchased a new scanner with support in part by the British Columbia History Digitization Program.

Touchstones Nelson Collection

In 2012, the collection took in artifacts from twenty-two donors. Artifacts of historical significance that were acquired include a glass pickle jar with cork lid from the wreckage of the S.S. City of Ainsworth, a sternwheeler that was built in 1892 to provide the growing settlement at Ainsworth with a means of consistent transportation of goods and passengers from Nelson and Bonners Ferry, Idaho; an Orilux World War I trench torch, which belonged to William Garland Foster, a Captain in the 54th Battalion and former editor of the Nelson Daily News; and the lifesaver from the MV Amabilis, a boat used by the West Kootenay branch of the Forest Service.

Picture key
1. A glass pickle jar with cork lid
2. An Orilux World War I trench torch
3. A lifesaver from the MV Amabilis
• Annual Columbia Basin Cultural Tour
• Arts BC Regional Summit Reception
• Annual General Meeting
• ArtWalk
• BC Transit Information Open House
• Book Launches (2) for Larry Jacobson and Sam McBride
• Exhibition Opening Receptions (7)
• Launch of Historypin Channel
• Launch: The Renwick Portrait Studio Collection on Touchstones Nelson’s Flickr® Photostream
• Virtual Exhibition Launch: Landscape Lost: Forestry and Life in the Duncan River Valley
• Member and Volunteer Stakeholder Meetings (3)
• Members’ Sales at the Shop: 6 monthly promos & Christmas sale
• Raffle: Deborah Thompson and Arin Fay paintings
• Volunteer Appreciation and Recognition events (5)
• West Kootenay Women’s Association: Kootenay Feminist History Project Launch
• Live Performances:
  - Corazón Performance 67/360 (67 singers, 360 degrees)
  - Ali & Johnny
  - Thomas Loh performance at opening of Klang & Squeal
2012 Special Projects

Turret Banner Replacement

In 2012, the small, vertical banner on the facility’s turret was replaced with a (much) larger banner. The new banner now faces out to the main intersection of Vernon (Hwy 3) and Ward Streets in an effort to catch the attention of drivers as they pass through Nelson. The new banner features an archival photograph of the Ladybird speed boat - part of the Society’s permanent collection. The banner template will be used again in the future and will feature another artifact from the collection. The new banner hanging system allows for banners to be changed when needed.

The banner project is part of a larger effort to prioritize marketing in order increase awareness of the Society’s programs and location. In addition to the banner, flood lights were tested throughout the fall of 2012 to determine their efficacy in showcasing the facility at night. In 2013, the Society’s marketing budget will be increased by 35% with a concomitant increase in print and online advertising and promotion of services.

What Nelson Eats

Developed as part of the fall exhibition, What I Eat, What Nelson Eats featured portraits of local Nelson residents photographed by Karen Redfern, with text developed by curator Rod Taylor. Linked thematically to What I Eat, which looked at diets from around the world, the five individuals selected for What Nelson Eats were photographed with every food item s/he consumed in a single day.

Community partners, like the Nelson Food Cupboard and Karen Redfern of Redfern Photographics, assisted in identifying individuals with different backgrounds and a wide variety of diets. From someone who relied on the Nelson Food Cupboard to make ends meet, to home schooled teenagers responsible for developing their own menus, to a dancer and to a potter - What Nelson Eats was an innovative and insightful way to look at the intersection of food, culture, education and economics. What Nelson Eats was displayed at the Nelson Public Library.
2012 Online Projects

Historypin and Baker Street

The Baker Street Then and Now exhibit featured a virtual component via the website Historypin. Visitors to the Touchstones Nelson channel on the site can view the exhibit photos online, see their actual location on a map, and add their own stories if they wish. The site also offers free apps that include the ability to overlay historical images that are near their location onto the present day view using their mobile device.

Although the exhibit in our gallery has now ended, our Historypin channel lives on, with more photos from the Archives being added on a regular basis. If you have a photo, video or audio recording from Nelson’s past that you’d like to share, please get in touch with curator Rod Taylor! To visit our channel, go to Historypin.com and search for Touchstones Nelson under Channels.

Landscape Lost: Forestry and Life in the Duncan River Valley Virtual Exhibition

Nelson’s newest online exhibit, Landscape Lost: Forestry and Life in the Duncan River Valley, was launched in October 2012. The site is a collection of photographs by Robert “Bob” Wallace of the Upper Duncan River Valley. Over 200 photographs document the area prior to the construction of the Duncan Dam that flooded the valley in 1967.

The exhibit is available at http://touchstonesnelson.ca/exhibitions/wallace/

Renwick Portrait Studio Collection: on Touchstones Nelson’s Flickr® Photostream

Archie Renwick owned and operated Renwick’s Portrait Studio in Nelson for over 30 years. The numerous portraits that form the basis of this collection are significant to the visual history and heritage of Nelson. The portraits include those of Nelson residents, city council members, and community leaders.

The Collection is available at http://www.flickr.com/photos/touchstonesnelson/collections/72157629369881034/
In 2012 the Shop proudly offered the largest selection of gifts, crafts and books in our seven years of operation! We now represent the goods of 104 local and regional artists, artisans and authors.

The Shop hosted several events including ArtWalk with Lainey Benson and Beth Callis. We launched two books: Larry Jacobsen hosted an informative slideshow and talk supporting his new book, *Salmo Stories* and Sam McBride shared stories and photos of his grandfather with locals for his book, *The Bravest Canadian*.

In the fall we established a retail partnership with four other organizations from South Eastern British Columbia to produce unique and inexpensive souvenir and gift items. The partnership allows smaller organizations, like Touchstones Nelson, to take advantage of large order purchasing keeping the wholesale and retail costs low. We expect the first product to be available in mid-spring and that we will have more organizations on board for our next project.

At Christmas-time the Shop collected food as part of the Members’ Shop Promo which was donated to the St. Saviours Food Pantry. As always, our Christmas Market was a huge success, the goods spilling out into the lobby, offering shoppers a wonderful selection of holiday gifts.

*Picture key*

1. Julie Gibb, Sand Piper Studio
2. New Retail Partnership — merchandise development
3. Alex presents food donations from Members’ Shop Christmas Promo
Staff 2012

... including student staff

- Leah Best—Executive Director
- Alex Dawkins — BCAC co-op student/archive (January - April)
- Jessie Demers—Curator
- Lindsay Dew — Summer Student Programs Assistant
- Alexandra Dudley — Visitor Services Manager
- Laura Fortier — Archivist/Collections Manager
- Chelsea Gogal — Program Coordinator (contract: January to June)
- Alexandra McGowan — CBT Wage Subsity student/archives (started in October)
- Rachael Moulson — Summer Student Visitor Services Assistant
- Linda Sawchyn — Executive Assistant, Volunteer/Membership Coordinator
- Rod Taylor — Curator

Pictured above, Touchstones Nelson staff and summer students step out in style in costumes from the Capital Theatre.

Clockwise from bottom left:
Lindsey, Rod, Alex, Leah, Rachael, Linda, Laura (and lil Brandy)
Touchstones Nelson Volunteers

Touchstones Nelson is grateful for the dedication of a strong team of volunteers in 2012. Thank you!

Kathy Alexander  Jean Elliot  Joan Jordan  Ray Neumar  Linda Sussenguth
Gretchen Backus  Ralph Elliot  Audrey Kempin  Marnie Newcom  Bill Sweet
Lisa Backus  Della Fenkner  Shawn Lamb  Kathleen Nichol  Lola Swetlikoe
Sasha Baines  Alistair Fraser  Joan E. Lang  Frances Nicolson  Nicole Tremblay
Elena Banfield  Scott Fraser  Kathy Letham  Harry Quesnel  Joyce Tremblay
Candice Batycki  Ric Gerzey  Cath Little  Carol Reynolds  Katherine Van Der Veen
Carolyn Beck  Chelsea Gogal  Ron Little  Shawna Roeland  Linda Van Hombeeck
John Best  Elizabeth Golata  Don Lyon  Heather MacAskill  Bobbi Vecchio
Marilyn Best  Angus Graeme  Ed Mannings  P. Rogers  Rosemary Wallach
Kim Chanasyk  Ines Hartmann  Isa MacDonald  Angela Schade  Sari Wallace
Linda Chapman  Eric Hartmann  Eric Martin  Gregory Scott  Peter Ward
Barbara Couch  Linda Hoffman  Della McLeod  Natasha Scott  Warren Ward
Patrick Davis  Suzanne Holmes  Holly McRann  Phyllis Stanley  Ken Watson
David Dobie  Brian Holmes  Dorothy Measures  Wendy Steed  Frances Welwood
Lana Donaldson  Linda Homeniuk  Judy Mulloy  Meg Stewart  Meg Stewart
Laura Duncan  Chris Ingles  Teyana Neufeld  Jerry Sussenguth  Wendy Steed
Graham Edwards  Anita Janz  Dorothy Measures  Peter Ward  Ken Watson

Touchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History

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Program Partners 2012

- Central School
- Columbia Basin Trust
- Earth Matters Cottonwood Urban Garden Education Project
- KSA/Selkirk College
- Nelson Library
- Regional District Community Complex
- Royal British Columbia Museum
- West Kootenay Invasive Species Council
- West Kootenay Amateur Radio Club

Community Partnerships in 2012

Corporate/Business/Government:

- BC Arts Council
- BC Wine Guys
- BC Museums Association
- Berg Lehmann
- Cameron Foundation
- Canada Council for the Arts
- Canada Summer Jobs
- Canadian Museums Association
- CIBC – Wood Gundy
- City of Nelson
- Columbia Basin Trust
- Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance
- Community Gaming Grants - Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
- Cowan’s Office Supplies
- David Dobie Design
- Dr. Dean Zarikoff
- DHC Communications
- Ellison’s Market
- Hall Printing
- Hamber Foundation
- Harrop Procter Community Forest
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
- Irving K. Barber Learning Centre
- Tim Pearkes Law Corporation
- Kootenay Country Market Cooperative
- Kootenay Co-op Radio
- Kootenay School of the Arts at Selkirk College
- Nelson Brewing Company
- Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce
- Nelson and District Credit Union
- Nelson Lions Club
- Nelson and District Arts Council
- Nelson Star
- Redfern Photographics
- Rotary Club
- Safeway
- Save On Foods
- Ward Engineering
- West Creek Developments
- Young Canada Works