



[www.princetonmuseum.org](http://www.princetonmuseum.org)



# MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

*Princeton & District Museum and Archives Society*

## Winter 2026



*Winter 1926 Allenby, BC*

We acknowledge the Similkameen Valley on which we learn, work, and organize is the ancestral, traditional and unceded territory of the Similamix People, and is home to the Upper Similkameen Indian Band

167 Vermilion Avenue, PO BOX 281, Princeton, BC V0X 1W0 | 250-295-7588 | [princetonmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:princetonmuseum@gmail.com)



# HAPPENINGS

Along with Bailey Hellyer-Sanderson from the Town Rec Dept. a “Night At The Museum” event was held for local children. The kids really wanted to make it a sleepover. Maybe next time!



Our speaker for October was Yasmin John-Thorpe who gave held an interesting discussion on her book “Grandpa’s Gift” about an elder explaining the Vimy Ridge experience to his grandson.

Renowned Author  
**Yasmin John-Thorpe**  
Will discuss the subject of her book:

Grandpa's Gift: The Story of the Canadians' WWI Battle to Win Vimy Ridge

A story through a grandpa's eyes to his grandson of an historical battle won by Canadians during WWI, released on the 100th anniversary. Winning Vimy Ridge from the Germans was instrumental in placing the young nation of Canada on the world map. Many Canadian lost their lives fighting to give the Allies a win after so many losses. An educational history lesson to all.

Yasmin John-Thorpe was born in the Caribbean on the island of Trinidad, married a Canadian and came to Canada in 1975. In 1984, with the help of four writers, she co-founded the Penticton Writers and Publishers, to help other writers.

Beginning in 2007, Yasmin organized a unique program for the South Okanagan through "Rise a Reader", sponsored by the Penticton Herald newspapers. Yasmin also launched the British Columbia Youth Writers Camp for 8-18 year old writers. She is a recipient of the British Columbia Community Achievement Award, The Queen's Jubilee Medal, a Community Partnership Certificate of Recognition and is an Honorary Fellow of Okanagan College.

**Grandpa's Gift**  
THE STORY OF THE CANADIANS' WWI BATTLE TO WIN VIMY RIDGE  
Yasmin John-Thorpe

Sunday October 5 2025 Princeton Museum 3:00 PM

ADMISSION BY DONATION  
167 VERMILION AVE., PRINCETON, BC  
250-295-7588  
PRINCETONMUSEUM@GMAIL.COM

TOWN OF PRINCETON  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Retired Professor and ex serviceman Howard Hisdal gave a fascinating talk about the BC Dragoons and their part in the Liberation of the Netherlands in WWII. He will be back for another talk in the spring.

**BC DRAGOONS**  
AND THE LIBERATION OF THE NETHERLANDS  
PRESENTED BY HOWARD HISDAL

Professor Howard Hisdal has been teaching history at Okanagan College since 2005. Howard has 25 years of military service, is on the Board of Directors of the Kelowna Museums Society and President of the Okanagan Military Museum Society.

SUNDAY  
**NOV.2, 2025**  
3:00 PM SAVE THE DATE!  
PRINCETON MUSEUM  
ADMISSION BY DONATION

PRINCETON MUSEUM

Join us for:  
*A short (half hour) reading of*  
**A CHRISTMAS CAROL**  
Adapted from Charles Dickens' classic tale by Tasty Palermo

SUNDAY, December 7th, 3pm  
Admission By Donation  
Refreshments will be served  
Food Bank donations welcomed

167 Vermilion Ave., Princeton  
princetonmuseum@gmail.com  
princetonbcmuseum.com  
250-295-7588

TOWN OF PRINCETON  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Java Junkies satisfied by:

  
**Frannie's Coffee**

Thanks to the Princeton Girl Guides for the awesome cookies!

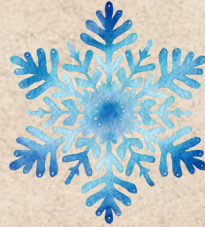
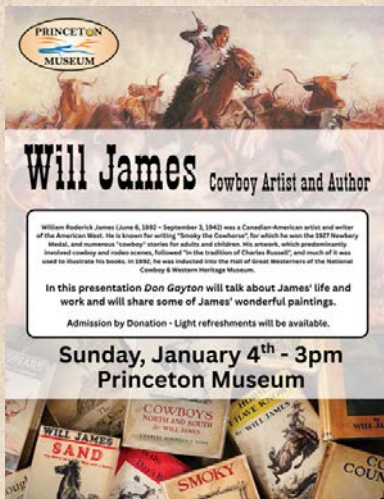


President Bob Long organized a radio play styled presentation of Dicken’s A Christmas Carol which was presented to a good crowd. Bob narrated the play while John Henry, Mark Redskye, Johanna Nott, Stella Holiday and Todd Davidson contributed vocal talents. Fran’s Coffee supplied the refreshments and the Princeton Girl Guides provided some cookies.



# HAPPENINGS

The Fiber Arts group continues to meet weekly in our facility. We appreciate the cooperation interacting and sharing with the other guests.



Don Gayton joined us on Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> and facilitated an engaging discussion on Will James, a famous Cowboy, Author and Painter from the Old West.



The Museum regularly hosts members of the Princeton Skills Centre Matrix program which supports young people from 16 to 29 years old in gaining skills to acquire employment.



The inevitable finally occurred with the demolition of the Masonic Hall beside the Museum. We were able to obtain the gold columns at the front of the building, along with many other valuable items and records, for the collection.

The Museum is seeing more use by other groups these days than in the past. We are visited by: Princeton Choir, Vermilion Forks Field Naturalists, Princeton Garden Club, Two Rivers Events Society, China Ridge Trails Society and the Granite Creek Preservation Society. The VFFN holds speaker events to which Museum members are also welcomed.







# Phifer's Fountain

Princeton Jewel –  
hidden in plain sight

A Blog Post from  
[princetonbcmuseum.com](http://princetonbcmuseum.com)

When I mention Phifer's Fountain to my friends and neighbours, I get the same quizzical stare every time. "What's that?" they say. It's that big wooden thing over by the Chevron. "Oh yeah. What is it?" Read on.

The "fountain's" journey to Princeton started in 2001, when a Vancouver Sun article by John Mackie announced that a distinctive sculptural art installation was about to lose its home due to commercial redevelopment of the Granville Square plaza at 200 Granville Street Vancouver, owned by Cadillac-Fairview Corporation. The structure, designed by artist Michael Phifer, was offered up for free to anyone willing to relocate it. For many communities, the logistics alone would have been a deal-breaker. Princeton, however, saw an opportunity. With the help of local organizations, sponsors, and volunteers, the town arranged to transport the fountain hundreds of kilometers from Vancouver to the Similkameen Valley.

The structure is made from solid Western Red Cedar logs donated by MacMillan-Bloedel Lumber Company. Originally unveiled in 1973, these were purportedly, the very last Red Cedar logs to be exported from Clayquot Sound (Haida Gwaii). The sculpture, consisting of 1 meter square blocks ranging from 1 to 6 meters tall, had to be disassembled in Vancouver, transported and reassembled in Princeton. The Vermilion Trails Society oversaw the raising of \$30,000 in private and business donations to pay for the move. Local businesses and volunteers cooperated to reassemble the sculpture. Ironically, it was the Canadian Pacific Railway that originally commissioned the sculpture and it now resides on the former right of way of the Kettle Valley Railway, which was owned by the CPR.

On Canada Day, 2002, the fountain was rededicated at an official ribbon-cutting ceremony. The event brought together a cross-section of Princeton's civic life: representatives from the RCMP, the Regional District, Princeton Light & Power, the Vermilion Trails Society, and the Town of Princeton itself stood alongside artist Michael Phifer to officially welcome the sculpture to its new home.

Today, Phifer's Fountain sits along the Trans Canada Trail, functioning as both a visual landmark and a waypoint for walkers, cyclists, and visitors exploring the area. Its placement near the trail underscores Princeton's broader emphasis on outdoor recreation and public art, two themes that define the town's identity. The fountain is part of a larger constellation of sculptures scattered throughout Princeton, including life-size bronze wildlife figures that celebrate the region's natural heritage.

In the end, the fountain is more than a relocated sculpture. It's a testament to Princeton's commitment to preserving and celebrating art, its ability to rally around a shared project, and its belief that even a piece of cast-off urban infrastructure can become a beloved local treasure. Princeton Museum – photo by Todd Davidson.



## RAMBLINGS

2026 is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary for both the Princeton Cenotaph as well as the Royal Canadian Legion. Branch 56 has agreed to work with us to create a display to honour this special event. They will make resources available to us to combine with our own collection. Volunteers are requested to get involved with creating this display. Additionally, several other displays around the Museum need updating so let's turn our thoughts and efforts towards rejuvenating our space.



Our contract worker, Kaitle Sevold, finished up at the end of October. Her time with us was very productive.

Our three most consistent and productive volunteers were recognized with a certificate at a luncheon held to honour the efforts of Eileen Brade, Deb Ireland and Ross Hodge.

In response to a request from the Town for a refreshed Historical Walking Tour and in recognition of the vast amount of data that Deb Ireland has been amassing on a variety of historical Princeton subjects, a new website has been created. [www.tourprinceton.ca](http://www.tourprinceton.ca) will allow the public to access information about any property in the Princeton area. This site gives us a place to deposit historical information as well as photos or links to outside sources, and make it instantly available to anyone. This will take time to build up, but we will try to have some of the more interesting places available for the upcoming tourist season.





## RAMBLINGS

We are very lucky to have received some interesting donations as of late. A Princeton resident recovered the Police Log book covering 1913 - 1923, and a set of leg shackles used by the BC Police from the Government building during renovations almost one hundred years ago. They are now part of our collection.



Past Executive Member Bob Wicks brought in numerous valuable items including a very old pair of ice skates from the Netherlands and two toy muskets. These are very special because they were created for the 1958 BC Centennial celebration. Bob's father, Lyle Wicks, was an MLA at that time and these are very rare. Now we have two of them!

Another gentleman brought in a Princeton 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorative plate. Many of you will recognize Shirley Freding's work immediately. Surprisingly, we don't have that much of it in the collection, so this piece is most welcome.



We have a conversation ongoing with a lady in Alberta that attended the Allison Pass one room schoolhouse in the very early 1950's. This family also had connections with the Similkameen Falls Cabins. We will continue to work with her and her family to gather information and publish stories about these subjects in the near future.



## NEW VIDEOS

Did you know that the Princeton Museum has a YouTube channel? Furthermore, did you know that our channel has 101 offerings? Many of these are oral history recordings, but there are many videos there as well.

Like most things in the Museum, many hands have worked on these projects. Most recently, Kaitle Sevold edited and released five videos to our channel (they are available from:

[www.princetonbcmuseum.com](http://www.princetonbcmuseum.com), as well).

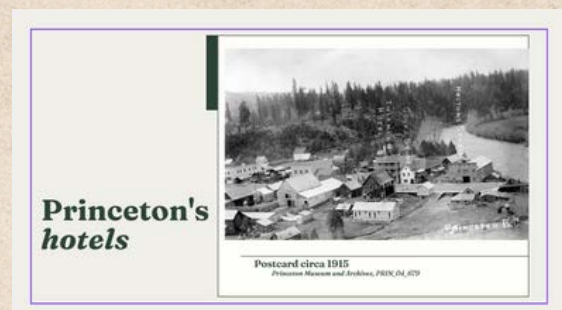
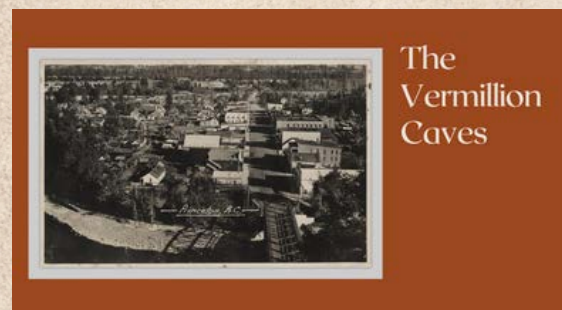
Terry-Dayne Beasley worked on some of these a few years ago but they were not complete and have been waiting for some attention.

Kaitle is solely responsible for the Hope-Princeton Highway video and it is a gem. We keep these videos fairly short for several reasons, so much more could be said about the subject but it is definitely worth watching.

The second video that bears Kaitle's stamp is one on the Vermilion Caves. Yes, there was more than one, but you will have to watch the video for the answer.

[www.youtube.com/@princetonmuseum](http://www.youtube.com/@princetonmuseum)

The images on this page have clickable links if you are reading this on a computer, tablet or smart phone.





## BLOG POST LISTING

Some of you may not realize that we post interesting stories on our research website from time to time. Here is a listing of the existing posts, all of which are “clickable” from a computer, tablet or smart phone:

[The Blue Bridge](#) - the history of the Town of Princeton cannot be told without making reference to the many bridges that have served over the years. A recent donation of photos gave birth to this post.

[Scouting in the Similkameen](#) - we have an associate by the name of Gerry Lamb who is dedicated to collecting and preserving the history of Scouting in our province. He wrote this accounting and has permitted us to share it.

[Skiing in the Similkameen](#) - Another gem from the Goodfellow collection. Rev. J.C. Goodfellow wrote this in 1940.

[Fur and Gold in the Similkameen](#) - Details the earliest European ventures into the area. Rev. J.C. Goodfellow wrote this in 1938.

[The Story of the Similkameen](#) - Rev. J.C. Goodfellow wrote this in 1958 in support of the BC Centennial celebrations.

[The Hope Trail by Dave Taylor](#) - Dave Taylor was the editor of the Similkameen Star for decades and was an avid historian, as well. The Hope Trail was very important in early BC history and he wrote about it in detail several times.

[The History of Coalmont](#) - Society Member Diane Sterne wrote this excellent article on a subject that she knows very well.

[Sam Adler of Granite Creek](#) - Another post by Diane Sterne on an important figure in the history of Granite Creek.

[Princeton War Memorial 1926](#) - This is particularly appropriate as we will soon be working with RCL Br. 56 to create a display to celebrate the anniversary of this event.

There are other posts on the site and we will continue to create more as the opportunity arises.




## UPCOMING EVENTS



# Dawn Johnson

will discuss:

Life in Princeton during  
**World War II**

**Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 3pm**  
**Princeton Museum**

**Admission by Donation - Light refreshments will be available.**

Please visit [www.princetonmuseumevents.com](http://www.princetonmuseumevents.com) for upcoming events. They are also posted on our public calendar, on bulletin boards around town, on several FaceBook groups and in our emails. Make sure you are on our email list!

*This edition edited by Todd Davidson-Editor position available!*





# Just a reminder...

## Is your membership up to date?

Now that we are in the New Year, Membership Fees are due. Please pay your dues (still only \$12). We can now accept many different methods of payment including debit, credit, cash, or e-transfer to [princetonmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:princetonmuseum@gmail.com), to make it as convenient as possible. Please include your name in the e-transfer notes, so we know who paid.

**The Princeton Museum is a partnership between the Princeton & District Museum and Archives Society and the Town of Princeton.**

**We gratefully acknowledge the support of:**



**VOLUNTEERS**

*Thank you to all of the great volunteers that keep our institution running. There are many jobs that need to be done so whatever your skill level, if you have some time to spare, consider helping out at the Museum.*