



Yukon Historical &
Museums Association



Yukon Historical & Museums Association
Inspiring and sharing a passion for Yukon heritage

2015-16
ANNUAL REPORT

2015-16 Highlights

Fostered innovative partnerships with Yukon heritage institutions

YHMA worked with heritage institutions throughout the Territory to pilot innovative partnerships that harnessed creativity and collaboration to address capacity and sustainability issues.

Strengthened the Yukon heritage community network

Through new communication tools like our website and E-bulletin, YHMA laid the groundwork of a strong network that connects the Yukon heritage community with Yukoners, visitors, and the global heritage community.

Supported over 20 heritage projects undertaken across the Territory

From innovative museum programming to facility upgrades, YHMA continues to actively support initiatives to protect, conserve and celebrate Yukon heritage.

Provided over \$30,000 in support through the Heritage Training Fund

Long-term capacity of the Yukon heritage sector supported through over forty training opportunities.

Coordinated marketing through the Joint Marketing Program

This initiative provides marketing support and capacity development, and encourages collaboration among participating Yukon heritage organizations.

Advocated for Yukon's heritage and heritage community

Working with members, local community and national heritage partners, YHMA was active across the territory on several issues of concern to the Yukon heritage community.

Recognized Achievement through the 2015 YHMA Heritage Awards

Pat Ellis, the Diocese of Yukon, Bryan Clayson and the Hidden Histories Society Yukon were recognized for their exceptional contributions.

Raised awareness of the Yukon's heritage

Through contests, conferences and public events, YHMA worked to raise awareness of the special places, stories and groups that contribute to the Yukon's rich and diverse heritage.

A message from The President and Executive Director



Sally Robinson
President

The Yukon Historical and Museums Association's greatest strength lies in the community it serves. We are a family of historians, historical societies and cultural institutions active in the identification, protection, conservation and interpretation of our heritage. We work together to share our passion for history and heritage through events like the Yukon Heritage Awards and the Heritage Fair.

The work and passion of our staff and volunteers has allowed us to support our heritage organizations in many ways. The joint internship program is into its successful third year. The Heritage Symposium is now a yearly gathering and place for us to share our concerns and successes. We continue to administer the Heritage Training Fund and we are working with our Joint Marketing Committee to improve visitation to our museums and cultural centres.

This has been a busy year and a time of many changes. I want to thank our continuing and outgoing board members and volunteers and acknowledge the great contributions they have made to our organization.

I want to give special thanks to Mel Needham, who has retired from our board but continues to serve on the Heritage Training Fund Committee; the hard-working and much appreciated Joelle Hodgins who has taken up a new museum post in Trail, BC.; Janna Powell who now finds herself very busy as the new Executive Director of the Yukon Transportation Museum (Congratulations Janna!) and Bruce Barrett, now retired as head judge for the Heritage Fair but remaining as our official photographer.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sally Robinson".

2015 was another busy year for YHMA and the Yukon heritage community. With new faces at the head of several organizations, YHMA's role as hub of the heritage community shone as we helped to orient and connect practitioners with one another.

YHMA continued to build a northern heritage network by connecting with our neighbours in the Northwest Territories and Alberta. We also provided new ways for the heritage community to share knowledge and best practices through the reformatted Yukon Heritage Symposium.

Internally, we are focused on adopting sustainable organizational practices, including an ongoing restructuring of our programs. Looking ahead, we'll be exploring ways to improve the marketing and education/awareness of the Yukon's heritage and heritage organizations.

The Yukon's greatest strength is its diversity of heritage and heritage practitioners. We have world class natural and cultural heritage. With this, comes the privilege and responsibility of safeguarding, conserving and sharing this heritage for the benefit of future generations. It's ongoing, often challenging, but always rewarding work.

It continues to be a pleasure to work with the YHMA Board, members, volunteers and partners. YHMA is truly a 'small but mighty' organization. This Annual Report highlights some of the many accomplishments achieved by the Yukon heritage community in the past year—thanks in no small part to the focused passion and energies of our staff and volunteers.

Thank you, mashi cho and gunalchéesh!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nancy Oakley".



Nancy Oakley
Executive Director



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YHMA Board of Directors

Sally Robinson, President
Katie Newman, Vice-President
Cathy Hines, Secretary
Isabelle Frechette, Treasurer
Marc Johnston, Past President
Cindy D. Charlie
Susan Moorhead Mooney
Jake Paleczny
Dean Swaykoski
Owen Williams

Committees

Heritage Training Fund Committee: This committee meets as necessary to review Heritage Training Fund activities, develop standards and offer assistance and information to the HTF review committee. The review committee meets on a quarterly basis to review applications and ensure compliance with HTF Committee guidelines.

Joint Marketing Committee: This committee is comprised of YHMA institutional members who have opted into the Joint Marketing program. The committee meets twice a year and is intended as a forum to provide affordable, effective promotion for members, to build capacity by disseminating best marketing practices and relevant information, and to encourage cross-promotion and collaboration among participants.

Heritage Fair Committee: This committee meets as necessary to assist in the planning and coordination of the annual Yukon/Stikine Regional Heritage Fair.

Awards Committee: This committee convenes annually to accept and review nominations for the Yukon Heritage Awards.

Conference Committee: A conference committee is struck as necessary to organize YHMA's conferences and symposiums.



About the YHMA

MISSION

YHMA will inspire and share a passion for Yukon heritage by providing opportunities and support for education, networking, advocacy, partnerships and awareness.

VISION

- We will inspire a passion for Yukon history in everyone.
- We will have a well-defined and focussed role.
- We will be a central place where everyone can:
 - Learn about history, heritage and best practices
 - Share their interests and perspectives on heritage
 - Come together to identify common interests
 - Support the protection and preservation of Yukon heritage.
- We will use and share best practices in heritage.
- Our board and members will want to be actively involved in the YHMA.
- We will use creative partnerships for the promotion, protection and preservation of Yukon heritage.

YHMA at the heart of the heritage community:

60+ volunteers

80+ members

500+ participants in YHMA events

VALUES

Vibrancy Passion
 Fun Partnerships
 Inspiration Encouragement
 Sharing



Communicate, Connect, Collaborate

YHMA serves to connect, engage and share information among the Yukon heritage sector. No easy feat for a community scattered across over 480,000 km²!

In meeting this challenge, we adopted a simple philosophy: by better connecting our members to YHMA and one another, we can nurture a positive environment that encourages knowledge-sharing and collaboration among practitioners, while raising awareness about the Territory's unique and diverse heritage.

Building on the communication tools we developed in 2014, YHMA set out to activate the Yukon heritage network.

We did this in a number of ways:

- Grew engagement with Yukon heritage community by reaching out to heritage organizations and individuals not previously connected with YHMA
- Continued sharing timely heritage news and information through our **e-bulletin, website and social media channels**
- Actively partnering with members to develop and deliver capacity-building initiatives like our **Joint Internship**;
- Created a forum for the Yukon heritage community to share knowledge through the annual **Yukon Heritage Symposium**
- Strengthened relationships with extra-territorial partners through activities like the **Yellowknife Business & Trade Mission**

Growing an Audience

35,000+ annual website visitors

600+ social media following

350+ e-bulletin subscribers



The North and the First World War

The centenary of the First World War offers an opportunity to better understand the relationship between the North and the conflict--until now a relatively unknown chapter of Yukon and world history. In 2014, YHMA coordinated a series of initiatives to commemorate the First World War and explore its impact on the North.



THE NORTH
AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

These activities culminated in the *North and First World War* conference held in Whitehorse, May 9-15, 2016. This international event was co-sponsored by the International Centre for Northern Governance & Development at the University of Saskatchewan, in partnership with Yukon College and with the support of several community organizations.



Yukon Archives Photo/Oxford Historical Society Collection #84/78#112.

The conference featured training workshops, a variety of presentations and special events, commemorative activities, and was capped off with a three-day study tour to Dawson City.

2015 Yukon Heritage Awards

The Yukon Historical & Museums Association presented the annual Yukon Heritage Awards during Heritage Week, with the support of the YG Historic Sites Unit. The Yukon heritage community was on hand to celebrate the achievements of the following recipients:

Pat Ellis (Annual Heritage Award): Over the years Pat has been tireless in preserving, documenting, and presenting the stories of Yukon's history, especially the lesser-known stories. Throughout the past five years



Minister of Tourism & Culture Elaine Taylor and YHMA President Sally Robinson with Yukon Heritage Award recipients. (Credit: Bruce Barrett)



Pat has made outstanding contributions to the preservation of Yukon's heritage. Most recently in 2015, Pat published a book on *The Squatters of Downtown Whitehorse*. It was the culmination of years of research and hard work.

Pat recognized that this was a forgotten period in the development of Whitehorse. There was little written about the people who lived in those communities, other than passing references in other publications. Pat also recognized that many of the squatters are now in their 70s and 80s, and if their stories were going to be told it would have to be done soon. Over two years she scoured the Yukon Archives, City of Whitehorse Archives and the Lands Branch Archives, drew from her own memories, and collected anecdotes and photographs from former squatters and their families. In November 2015, she self-published a book entitled *The Squatters of Downtown Whitehorse*. The 60-page paperback outlines the political and social events leading up to the squatter settlements and it tells of the personal struggles of the people who lived in Whitehorse at the time. Pat's book brought these and other lesser-known stories to the forefront. People who lived in the squatter areas are able to see their stories in print, and newcomers who did not know about that part of the history now have a valuable resource. The book was launched at MacBride Museum in November 2015, and more than 140 people came out to share their stories and show their support. *The Squatters of Downtown Whitehorse* has since become a local favourite and a MacBride Museum bestseller. More than 500 of the books have been sold to date.

The **Diocese of Yukon** (Heritage Conservation Project of the Year): Sponsored by the Yukon Government Tourism and Culture Department, Historic Sites Unit. The award is presented to the Diocese of Yukon for the continued conservation and restoration of St. Paul's Anglican Church in Dawson City. Built in 1902, St. Paul's Anglican Church is a significant example of frontier mission architecture in the Gothic Revival Style. Designated a National Historic Site in 1989, the Church's prominent location on Front Street in Dawson and its impressive architecture have made the church an important component of the Dawson Historical Complex National Historic Site. St. Paul's, which took the place of an earlier log building on the same site, is a symbol of the long-standing presence of the Anglican Church in Canada's north. It has been in continuous use as a church since its construction.

The Diocese has shown tremendous commitment to the preservation of this important landmark through years of conservation and maintenance. Over the past year the Diocese of Yukon undertook extensive repairs and restoration while abiding by the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* to ensure the heritage value of St. Paul's Church is maintained for present and future generations.



Bryan Clayson (Helen Couch Volunteer of the Year Award): Bryan has been an integral part of the Miles Canyon Historical Railway Society for many years, and his love for streetcars and his mechanical skills have lovingly kept the 90 year old Whitehorse Waterfront Trolley functioning for over 15 years. Although Bryan lives out on the Carcross Road, on many occasions and on any day of the week he has driven in to town to respond to cries for help. . Every summer, he mentors young staff in the mechanics of the diesel generator and general maintenance and operations in the Roundhouse.

Although the trolley is not originally from the Yukon, its route along the waterfront on the old White Pass and Yukon Route narrow gauge rails contributes greatly to the education of thousands of tourists and locals alike. Riding the trolley

provides an opportunity to learn about the history of downtown Whitehorse from Whiskey Flats to Shipyards Park to Spook Creek. This attraction continues to bring smiles to everyone who sees it. Thanks to the tireless work of Mr. Clayson, it is one that we will enjoy for years to come.

In recognizing those who have gone above and beyond in the name of heritage, the annual Yukon Heritage Awards celebrate outstanding efforts to protect, conserve and interpret the Yukon's rich and diverse heritage.

The Hidden Histories Society Yukon (Innovation, Education and Community Engagement Award): Over the last 15 years, HHSY has brought to light aspects of the Yukon's rich social cultural communities through exhibits and special events. It has reached out to the corners of the community to engage and involve them in celebrating the Yukon's rich heritage together.

HHSY sponsors research, displays and events mainly in Yukon communities. HHSY aims to enlarge the representation of Asian, Black and other ethno-cultural people in the documentation and interpretation of Yukon history. Society members strive to bring forward the stories and life experiences of these individuals and groups so that they see themselves reflected appropriately in the telling of Yukon's history. The results have enriched Yukon's social, cultural and economic foundations.

This work has included producing and circulating portable display panels and online exhibits on Black and Asian Yukon history, offering oral history workshops, coordinating CBC book discussions, speakers and films for Black and Asian history months, along with school presentations and cemetery visits to respect Yukon Black and Asian pioneers. They have also worked with a broad group of community partners to undertake these activities, from the Yukon Human Rights Commission to the National Association of Japanese Canadians.



EDUCATION



Yukon Heritage Training Fund

YHMA administers the Yukon Heritage Training Fund (YHTF), which

supports opportunities for Yukon residents to increase their skills and knowledge in the heritage sector. Over \$30,000 in funding was approved for applications that provided over 30 training opportunities between April 1, 2015 and March 31, 2016.

YHTF is funded by the Yukon Government's Department of Education, Advanced Education Unit. All training approved through this fund supports objectives to increase the employability of Yukon's heritage workers and provide Yukon employers with a better-trained workforce. YHMA is dedicated to leveraging the impact of the YHTF to develop the capacity and long term sustainability of the heritage sector. This is achieved by increasing the number of people with the skills necessary to obtain and maintain work in the heritage sector, increasing job satisfaction and labour market competitiveness, and by providing human resources which enable the Yukon to develop its heritage resources at a professional level.

Yukon/Stikine Regional Heritage Fair

The annual Heritage Fair is an educational initiative that encourages students to explore Canadian heritage in a dynamic and captivating learning environment. Students use the media of their choice to share their learning about Canadian heroes and legends, milestones and achievements – and then proudly present their research at a public exhibition.

The fairs give students a voice to tell stories in their own ways, and their enthusiasm, creativity and passion make the fairs a highlight of the school year. The 2015 Heritage Fair was held on May 1 at the Yukon Transportation Museum in Whitehorse. Over forty-six students from ten schools across the territory and Northern BC showcased their research to over thirty enthusiastic volunteers and the public. Over 200 people enjoyed the day's event.

YHMA will support education and provide training opportunities for heritage professionals and non-professional members. In doing so, we will help encourage a deeper commitment to Yukon history and heritage and improve the tools and practices that are used in interpreting and conserving Yukon heritage.



Credit: Bruce Barrett



NETWORKING



Yukon Heritage Symposium (credit: Ross Burnet)

YHMA will strengthen the ties of the heritage community through the facilitation of interaction among all stakeholders with an interest in Yukon heritage. This will be accomplished through fun and memorable events and activities that encourage learning and sharing.

Yukon Heritage Symposium

The 2015 Yukon Heritage Symposium took place on October 19th in Whitehorse. The Symposium concluded a week of heritage activities organized by the Yukon Government's Museums Unit and YHMA, which included the Museums Roundtable, a Canadian Conservation Institute Workshop on Archival Materials and special public events.

The Symposium provides an opportunity to meet and connect with others actively involved in heritage conservation across the territory--from those working in museums and cultural centres, to heritage planners, historians and others. It's a chance to meet new colleagues and catch up with old ones, be inspired by new ideas and trends from outside of the territory, and share knowledge and best practices on what works in the Yukon. Over fifty people from across the territory participated in this year's symposium.

Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon (TIA)

As a Designated Organization (DO), YHMA maintains a permanent seat on the TIA Yukon Board of Directors. Through this position, we share the interests and concerns of the heritage community with the broader tourism sector and play an important connecting role between these groups.

The importance of heritage and culture within tourism economies is being increasingly recognized across Canada. In the last year, YHMA has worked with our culture and tourism sector partners to initiate a broad discussion to explore the role our cultural community plays in tourism, to identify opportunities to better reflect this role in tourism marketing efforts, and to strengthen connections among tourism and culture stakeholders.



Annual Charity Croquet Tournament & Après Croquet

In 2015 YHMA saw the return of its major fundraising event: our charity croquet tournament! The event provided the opportunity for participants to win fantastic prizes, earn bragging rights and support the work of YHMA. The event raised some much-needed funds, helped raise awareness of Yukon heritage and heritage organizations, and proved to be a fun and sociable networking event. Over twenty participants squared off in this one-day event, which was held on the lawns of the S.S. Klondike National Historic Site in Whitehorse.

A huge thank you to all of the wonderful community and corporate partners who helped support this year's event!

Yellowknife Business & Tourism Trade Mission

YHMA participated on a business and tourism trade mission to Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, in October 2015. Together with representatives from several Yukon museums and First Nation cultural centres, YHMA met with colleagues at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre and other members of the NWT heritage sector to discuss shared challenges and opportunities to safeguarding, conserving and interpreting heritage in the Canadian north.

Recognizing the Yukon's heritage and stories extend beyond its borders, the mission helped lay the groundwork for a pan-territorial heritage community. Representatives discussed several common areas of concern, including education and training, legislation and policy, tourism, and conservation challenges for museums, and built heritage and historic sites in northern Canada. Communication among heritage organizations was cited as an important, ongoing concern in both territories, and all parties agreed it was important to build a strong network to share knowledge and best practices for the sector. YHMA would like to thank the Yukon Government Department of Economic Development for supporting our participation on the mission.



Credit: Bruce Barrett



ADVOCACY

In 2015, YHMA was active on several issues of concern to the Yukon heritage community across the Territory.

Increased investment to Yukon museums sector

In 2015, YHMA worked with its institutional members and the Yukon Government to successfully increase investment to the Yukon museums sector.

Yukon museums and cultural centres will see an overall increase of \$1.86 million in core and project-based funding provided by the Yukon Government over the next three years. The investment came at a pivotal time. Discussions within the museums community at the annual Museums Roundtable and Yukon Heritage Symposium highlighted the critical need to address significant sustainability issues in the territory's museums, cultural and interpretive centres.

This welcome investment is seen as an important first step in a continuing conversation between YHMA, Yukon Government and Yukon heritage organizations. YHMA will continue to work with its members to identify strategies and opportunities to enhance the ongoing, important work of the Territory's heritage community.

Ross River Suspension Bridge

Working with national heritage partners, YHMA continued to monitor and support the community-led campaign to successfully prevent the demolition of the Ross River Bridge.

Built in 1944, the bridge is one of the few remaining heritage resources related to the Canol pipeline. At over 300 metres in length, the structure is the longest suspension bridge in the Yukon as well as one of only two suspension bridges that remain in the territory. The bridge also has important social values: as a regional landmark, it provides a vital link across the Pelly River for local residents. The loss of this connection would be significant both to the local community and to a unique chapter of Yukon history.

Following community consultations, the Yukon Government announced plans to stabilize the Ross River Suspension Bridge. Repair work began in the winter of 2015. Currently, the towers have been stabilized, however the bridge remains inoperable until the cables, decking, railing and stairs are replaced.

Acting on behalf of membership and in partnership with heritage-related stakeholders, **YHMA will advocate on significant and relevant heritage-related issues.**





PARTNERSHIPS

Joint Marketing

The Joint Marketing Program is a cornerstone initiative of YHMA. First introduced in 1989, the program has evolved to adapt to an expanding Yukon heritage community, shifting visitor patterns and the latest marketing techniques.

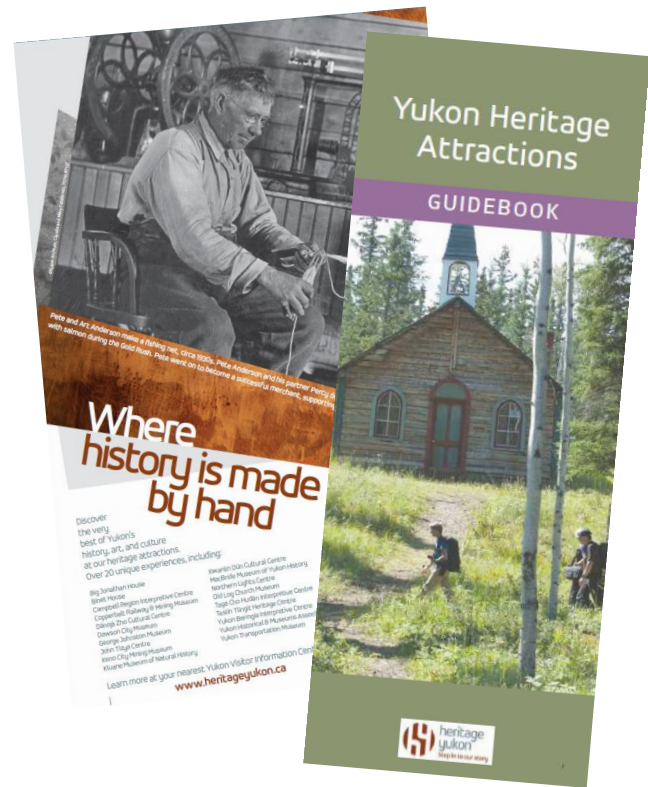
In addition to purchasing advertising that promotes the Yukon heritage sector, the program is structured to encourage networking and cross-promotion among participating institutions. This cooperative venture also provides a forum to explore and test different marketing strategies and best practices which members can incorporate into their own activities.

Activities are informed by the YHMA Marketing Plan, which balances print and online marketing. Over \$30,000 in direct advertising was placed through the Joint Marketing program, reaching an audience of over 500,000 Yukoners and visitors.

In 2015, YHMA also began a review of its marketing activities in preparation for updating its Marketing Plan. This included an assessment of whether or not to take on the Passport Program, currently administered by the Yukon Government. As a result of this report, YG will continue to run the program as an awareness piece while YHMA will work with the museums and cultural centres on complementary initiatives.

The review process provided valuable insight into challenges and opportunities for marketing the Yukon's heritage. These recommendations will be incorporated into the updated Marketing Plan.

Recognizing that everyone can have a role to play, **YHMA will develop long-lasting, respectful and innovative partnerships** for the promotion, protection and preservation of Yukon heritage.



According to a recent survey, Joint Marketing members value the program for providing marketing they would otherwise not be able to afford, the opportunity to network with others in the heritage community, and to learn more about marketing activities.



Joint Internship Initiative

In 2015, YHMA took its joint internship program on the road! For the third year of the program, we worked with the George Johnston Museum and the Teslin Tlingit Heritage Centre to expand its benefits to heritage organizations in the communities.

Funded through the Young Canada Works-Building Careers in Heritage program, this innovative initiative is a win-win-win for all involved. It is designed to address capacity issues in heritage organizations by providing access to semi-qualified professional staff. The paid internship is also a great early career boost to an emerging heritage professional with a particular interest in working in small- or medium-sized institutions. The internship helps build strong working relationships among participating institutions, fostering future collaboration and partnerships.

This year's intern, Daniel Becker, spend several months working at each institution. Dan worked on a number of initiatives, from organizing the opening of the new façade at the George Johnston Museum, to undertaking research to support the creation of outdoor exhibits at the Teslin Tlingit Heritage Centre, to developing a membership recruitment strategy for YHMA.



George Johnston Museum 

Teslin Tlingit Council





AWARENESS

Culture Days & Doors Open

YHMA worked with the Yukon Arts Centre to help coordinate Culture Days & Doors Open activities. Originating in Scotland in 1990, Doors Open has since spread to dozens of countries and thousands of cities, providing millions of visitors with the opportunity to explore buildings and sites important to their communities.



Doors Open Portes Ouvertes
Canada

culture fête
days de la culture

Culture Days & Doors Open are nationwide movements that help increase public access to and appreciation of culture and heritage through free events, encouraging residents to be tourists in their own town. Between September 25-27th, Yukoners and visitors took part in over thirty activities organized across the Territory.

YHMA and its members hosted several events. The YHMA offices in the Donnenworth House played host to a "Historian Fireside Chat": folks were invited to stop in for coffee and tea and visit with local historians as

they share some of their favourite stories from Yukon history and adventures while 'on the job'.

Heritage Day Colouring Contest

Each year, Yukon celebrates Heritage Day on the third Friday in February. Celebrating this year's theme of "Distinctive Destinations: Experience Historic Places", YHMA coordinated a newspaper colouring contest, featuring an image created by local artist Chris Caldwell. Kids were invited to colour and name historic places in each Yukon community. Submissions were entered into a draw for several fabulous prizes.

YHMA will inspire a passion for heritage by raising awareness. YHMA will raise awareness both within and outside of the Yukon through targeted marketing and communications. In doing so, we will encourage people to see history and heritage as fun, interesting and vibrant.





Engaging New Canadians

A gift to new Canadians for the first year of their citizenship, the Cultural Access Pass provides complimentary admission to more than 1,000 of Canada's cultural treasures from coast-to-coast-to-coast. The Cultural Access Pass encourages Canada's newest citizens to discover our rich cultural history, world-renowned artworks, historical figures and stunning parks.

25+ Cultural Access Passes
were provided to New Canadians
living in the Yukon



As part of its awareness-raising activities, YHMA distributes Cultural Access Passes to new Canadians in the Yukon. In 2015, we provided over twenty-five passes to local community members.

Thank You Supporters Circle

The Yukon Historical & Museums Association is pleased to recognize the support of our members, the Yukon community, business, and government partners who support our work.

Our ongoing work helps to safeguard, conserve and share the Yukon's rich and diverse heritage with Yukoners and visitors from around the world. Your ongoing support ensures this heritage enriches the lives of current and future generations.

THANK YOU...

—To the dozens of volunteers who commit hundreds of volunteer hours to our programs and activities, year after year.

—To our generous individual donors, community organizations and corporate partners who support our activities through sponsorship and donations.

—To our local, territorial and federal government funders for their continued support of important heritage initiatives.