

## **President's Report for 2010**

This report covers the calendar year 2010, and also the first quarter of 2011. Highlights include: the establishment of an endowment with the Vancouver Foundation, completion of bathroom and office renovations, significant website enhancement in both English and French, and resumption of the upward climb in attendance (after stalling in 2009 during the recession).

### The House

Our eagerly anticipated renovation of the original bathroom was completed. For this we have to thank particularly Bill and Maureen Tymkiw, Maureen and Phaeden Arvantidis, and the City of Vancouver. Bill and Maureen additionally donated the funds for refitting of the office, which is no longer primitive but fully professional, and the new computers acquired for the website project have now replaced the old computers which had reached the end of their lives. Thanks to Yassine Baba, an architect involved in the web design, plans have now been developed for completion of the display and storage fixtures in the second floor collections room. The estimated cost is \$15,000 which must be raised. Our security system was replaced by the City of Vancouver; much appreciated since the old one could cause us embarrassment on occasion! The need for a conservation plan for the House was mentioned last year. The discovery that 100 year old paint has started to separate from the exterior wood siding beneath it reinforces the need for a plan which would include remediation of this problem.

### Collections and Exhibitions

There were few additions to the collection in 2010. However, a cache of artifacts relating directly to Gustav Roedde was donated by the Arey family, having been left in the Roedde printing works when Gustav sold the business. There was a time when deer were hunted where Robson Street now runs. A member of the Roedde family has given us two stags heads, Gustav's trophies. A number of rotating exhibits took place: Easter Bonnets (a forerunner of the current larger exhibition "Two hundred years of hats"), costume jewellery, and seasonal (Valentines, Easter, Christmas) antique cards. During the Olympics there was a photo display of winter sports in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and Ivan Sayers kindly lent us a skating costume from the period. All these exhibits were presented by Maureen Tymkiw, Evelyn Hortobagyi, and Rose Rally, who deserve thanks for these demanding efforts. In addition, Cam Cathcart again kindly presented a militaria exhibition during November. Our own artifacts, including recent donations by the Carnsew family, were supplemented with items loaned by the B.C. Regiment (D.C.O.) Museum Society.

### Public Programs

Attendance more than recovered after the recession. Our open houses "by donation" on Victoria Day and B.C. Day, and concurrent with Barclay Manor's Strawberry Tea event, drew in a significant numbers of visitors. Thanks to Takaya Seto, an ESL student in Vancouver who was a dedicated volunteer with us for a full two months, we added Japanese to our set of room by room guides already in English, French and German. As usual our Parlour performances were varied. Don Mowat and Carolyn Findlay celebrated the relationship between Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) and his wife Olivia, and returned, this time with Cam Cathcart, once again to perform their Christmas Dickens readings. Counter Tenor Tony Lancaster performed, accompanied on Piano by Jason Chabot. And on a lovely summer afternoon Daniel Reynolds and Conrad Good gave a jazz concert in the Gazebo, with many passers by stopping to listen. Thanks are due particularly to Janet Bingham, one of our founders, for organising these events, backed by all those other volunteers working in the background to provide the refreshments.

### School Programs

Thanks to the concentrated work of Jenny Yule, Adonna Rudolph and Holly McMillan a revised and somewhat slimmer elementary curriculum is now on the website, and now in both English and French. Arranging school field trips remains a challenge. However, we do get visits year after year from some faithful schools where the value of our offering is appreciated. Our loyal docents are essential and much appreciated. Recently a



source of funding for visits by inner city schools has been arranged, sourced by Philip Waddell through the Vancouver Foundation. Transportation is to be provided by the Transit Museum Society using historic buses from the Coast Mountain Bus collection. Next – the French school system, for which we are actively seeking Francophone docents.

#### Marketing and Audience Development

A significant improvement to our website has been possible through a Job Creation Partnership between Roedde House and the Federal and Provincial Governments. We gained, at little actual cost to us, the services of Graphic Designer Genevieve Raiche, her successor Yassine Baba, photographer Jessica Gnyp, and writer/translator Benedicte Schoepflin. Thanks to a grant from 2010 Legacies now we were able to hire Denis Lebrun to put all their work onto the web. The site provides much more information, and is truly bilingual, English/French. Our entire collection was photographed by Jessica and is now on the website. This project was orchestrated by Jean-Francois Jutras and took up a lot of my time too. We should be very grateful for all J.F.'s efforts here. The project took over the Den for several months but it is now back to normal. Our new computers contain all the information generated and have replaced the old ones in the office. The website, with a choice of languages, speaks for itself at [www.roeddehouse.org](http://www.roeddehouse.org). We have a greatly enhanced marketing tool, and its interactive components will improve the efficiency of our operations. We also have an enhanced social media presence.

#### Human Resources

Our Manager, Helene Perndl, has been covering the day to day operations of the Museum. After three years she will be leaving us for new challenges. We thank her for her service to us and wish her well. Last summer she was assisted by Aviva Wolpert with a (reduced) contribution from the Canada Summer Jobs program. Our numerous volunteers, in addition to those already mentioned, enable us to keep the doors open. Chris Stocker comes every week, and has been studying the neighbourhood during the time of the Roeddes. Joanne Cram, another of our founders, will continue to advise us, and I hope produce newsletters, but she will no longer sit on the Board. We are enormously grateful for her past service. My fellow members of the Executive, Vice President and Secretary Sue Erb, and Treasurer Sharon Sprinkhuysen have put in exceptional efforts and hours. Regrettably, Sharon will be leaving Vancouver so will be unable to continue with us. However, we have appreciated her time with us.

#### Finance and Fundraising

By careful money management, and with significant fundraising, we were able essentially to break even during calendar 2010. Our donors are appreciated; they have been life savers. However, this was partly achieved by deferring a number of expenditures which we intend to achieve in 2011, partly through an application to the City for an infrastructure grant which we will have to match 50/50. For the last decade we have received a Direct Access Grant from the Provincial Government under the Human and Social Services envelope of gaming grants. This sustains our programs educating students of all ages. We apply each year based on expenditures which we

have already made. We have not been immune to the uncertainties over grants based on government revenues from gaming sources. However, we are most grateful that we did recently receive an unchanged \$25,000 to reimburse us for eligible 2009 expenses. This meant that we effectively operated for 18 months with no assurance that the eligible expenses would be reimbursed. This is a challenge which we managed successfully. Fortunately, we do have a modest additional source of revenue now. The late Cydney Holcomb was the great granddaughter of Gustav and Matilda Roedde, granddaughter of Gustav Jr. Upon her death funds from a trust which she had established were placed with the Vancouver Foundation. While the capital is protected the income will help to sustain our operations. The Foundation is ready to receive additions to this fund.

I want to thank sincerely the Board members and other volunteers who have made it possible to have achieved all this.

Respectfully submitted,  
Anthony Norfolk, President