

President's Report for 2011 and the first quarter of 2012

I am happy to report that 2011 was a steady-as-you-go, basically break-even year.

The House

After completion of several major projects reported in 2010, 2011 was comparatively quiet. Development of the long anticipated Conservation Plan commenced in January 2012. This essential planning tool, cost shared between Roedde House and the City, will establish what is required for the preservation of the House into the future. The major outstanding project inside the House is completion of the storage and display fixtures designed for the second floor collections room. As mentioned last year, we have yet to raise the estimated cost for the two components: \$10,000 and \$5,000 respectively.

Collections and Exhibitions

There were no major donations of items in 2011, though a few small items were accessioned, and we have been examining and organizing a number of Roedde family photograph albums recently received. Thanks to the initiative of Keate and Co. Designers, the sofa in the Parlour was reupholstered at cost with donated fabric, a significant saving. Its construction date, 1861, was revealed during the process. The major exhibit in 2011 was "200 Years of Hats", kicked off with a fundraising fashion show by Ivan Sayers. Maureen Tynkiw, Rose Rally and Evelyn Hortobagyi worked long and hard to make this a success and are to be congratulated for a widely applauded achievement. This second floor display was succeeded by several smaller exhibits. One shows pre-1930 weddings and is ancillary to our work publicizing Roedde House as a wedding venue. Another exhibit displays pre-1930 photography, including a quantity of German cartes de visite and parlour portraits, together with period photographic equipment. The exhibited items were mainly drawn from our own collection. During November, as in previous years, with Cam Cathcart's assistance, we mounted a Remembrance exhibit of World War I militaria. In this case, items from our own collection were supplemented by loans, primarily from the B.C. regiment (D.C.O.) Museum Society, and from Janet Bingham, one of our founders. Photographs of all these exhibitions have been posted on our website.

Public Programs

Our attendance confirmed the upward trajectory which has been consistent every year except for 2009. Open houses "by donation" on Victoria Day and B.C. Day continue to be popular. Rentals, particularly for weddings, have increased steadily. In October, Itsazoo Productions rented the House for sold-out evening performances of a play set in the House, "Debt" by Mack Gordon. At the time of writing, Osimous Theatre is renting the House for evening performances of Ibsen's Hedda Gabler. Parlour entertainments continued to be varied. We are grateful to the volunteers who worked in the background to assist with the organization and provision of refreshments.

- Cliff Ridley and Anna Vavilova Art Song Recital (Shubert-Dichterliebe)
- "An Evening with Anton and Olga Chekhov" - Don Mowatt, Carolyn Finlay and Cam Cathcart
- "Women of a Certain Age" - Cheryl Mullen, Sandra Head, Stephen Greenfield
- "An Evening with Charles Dickens" - Don Mowatt, Carolyn Finlay and Cam Cathcart
- "An Evening of Parlour Entertainment with Pat Stark and Nina Shoroplova".

Schools

We receive a number of visits from English as a second language schools. The number of elementary school visits has increased. In addition to those schools who come every year, we are now visited by a number of inner city schools with transportation is provided by the Transit Museum Society using a historic bus from the Coast Mountain Bus Company collection, driven by Angus McIntyre. We thank the Vancouver Foundation for contributing from the McGrane-Pearson fund. We are dependent, of course, on our much appreciated docents, many of whom have been long time contributors to the program. They are co-ordinated by Jenny Yule. Now that our curriculum is available in French we

are in need of francophone docents. We have heard that our curriculum is being used by schools out of the Lower Mainland as a distance learning resource. This is aided by the availability of the collection photographs online. This is great news, though we will have to investigate how we can record this development.

Marketing and Audience Development

Our bilingual, English/French website was launched, receiving rave reviews. The process by which this was achieved was described in last year's report. We have new rack cards now with a QR code. Our activities in this field have been guided by the recommendations of a report carried out some time ago by Kinexus Consulting. While we have been able to perform most of the recommendations, many of them are labour intensive and we do need assistance in several areas.

Human Resources

Following Helene Perndl's departure, we appointed Benedicte Schoepflin as Manager. Benedicte was the translator on the website project, so was already familiar with the operation of the Museum. An earlier organisational review, advised that we should plan to employ "full time or equivalent" staff. We chose the "equivalent" route by retaining Benedicte as Manager on the customary part-time basis, also retaining Margaret Young on a part-time basis, but with a different focus. Margaret, already familiar with the Museum as a volunteer, is responsible to recruit and deploy volunteers, to provide personal tours and to market the Museum in the neighbourhood and to the tourist community. The new arrangement commenced June 1st and has been working well. The number of volunteers has increased. They perform a range of tasks which would otherwise remain undone and the opportunity for increased interaction with visitors improves the experience of visits all around. Our Canada Summer Job student this year was Katie Koncan who has now combined her S.F.U. course work with fundraising as a volunteer. My fellow members of the Executive, Vice-President and Secretary, Sue Erb and Treasurer Nikhila Prakash, have put in exceptional efforts. In addition to these responsibilities, Sue has managed Human Resources and has been responsible for all collection records and acquisitions. She is much appreciated for this and as a Tea and Tour volunteer. Our Chief Founder and Board Member Janet Binham ensures that the Parlour entertainments are always carried off in style. Board Member Philip Waddell actively promotes public and school tours, and maintains local relationships. Board Member Chris Stocker gives tours one day a week and continues his research into "Mr. Roedde's neighbours". After unwinding the Hats exhibit, Maureen Tymkiw found it necessary to resign from the Board. Her contribution to the Museum has been tremendous and much appreciated. We are glad that when time permits she will continue her involvement, joining Joanne Cram as an identified Special Advisor. Earlier in the year, Evelyn Hortobagyi also resigned, though she has been assisting Maureen when called upon. We thank her for her contributions. Rose Rally, who has been working with them, has also indicated that she will not be continuing as a Director, we thank her for her contribution too. Succession Planning is always an essential process. While our service volunteers generally have been increasing in numbers, resignations from the Board necessitate recruitment of volunteers specifically for Board positions, most notably to watch over Marketing and Audience Development and Fundraising, and also to develop the Parlour Entertainments.

Finance and Fundraising

Once again, we can report a close to break-even year, which is satisfying. This includes making provision for our half share of the cost of the Conservation Plan for the House (the other half contributed by the City of Vancouver). Some uncertainty was initially created by a 50% reduction in the Provincial grant from what is commonly called "gaming" sources. We were recently restored to 100% of historic levels for which we are most grateful. We are now engaged in negotiations with the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch, concerning other issues such as our classification as Human and Social Services. During the initially uncertain period of 2012, our members were generous, and this is much appreciated. Our operations are now assisted by the income from the endowment fund established at the Vancouver Foundation through the generosity of a Roedde descendant, the late Cydney Holcomb. With the capital protected and wisely invested, the Vancouver Foundation is ready to receive additions to the fund. I want to thank all those mentioned above, and unmentioned, who have contributed to achieving all the above.

Respectfully submitted, Anthony Norfolk, President