

PORT ALBERNI

# VALLEY VIBE

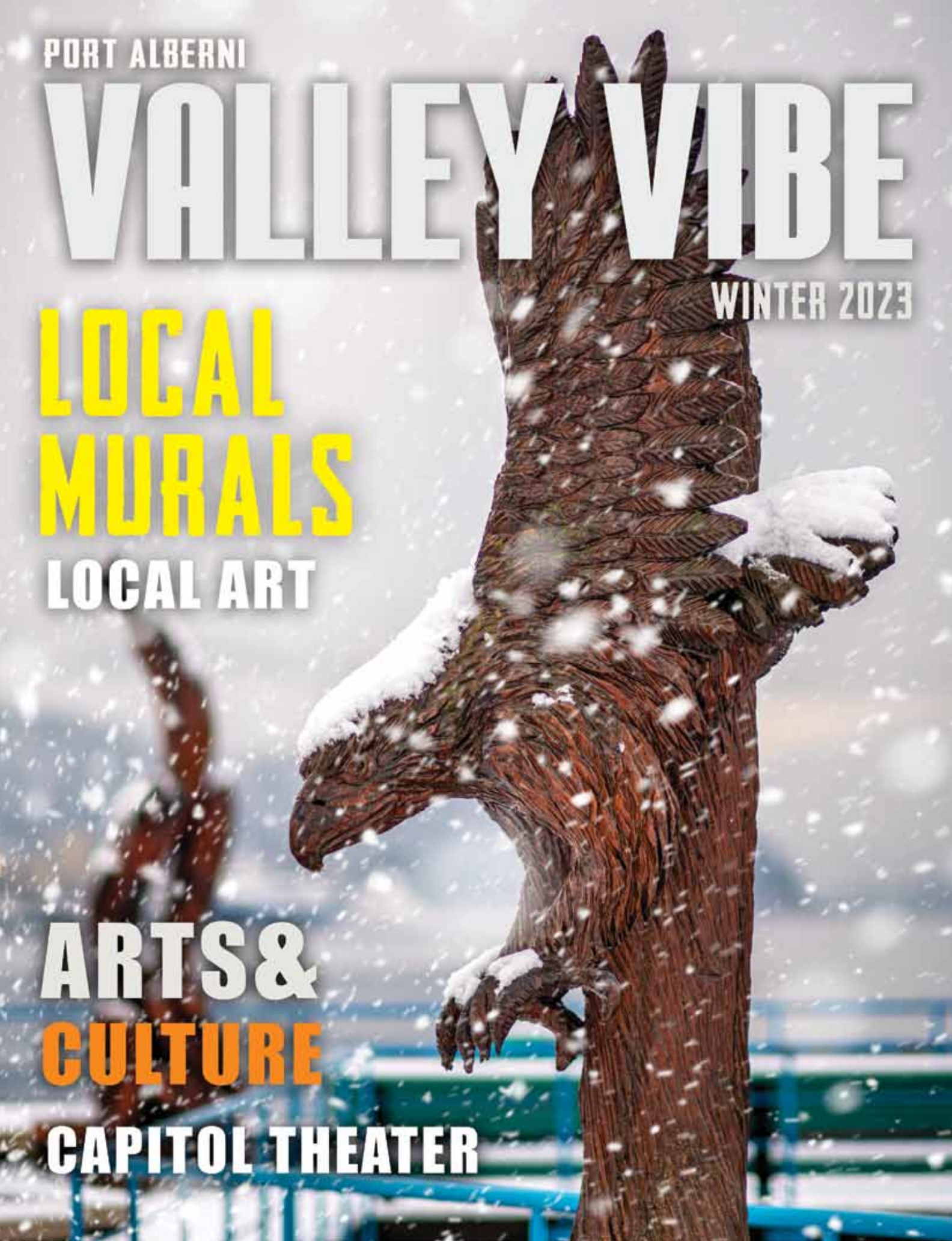
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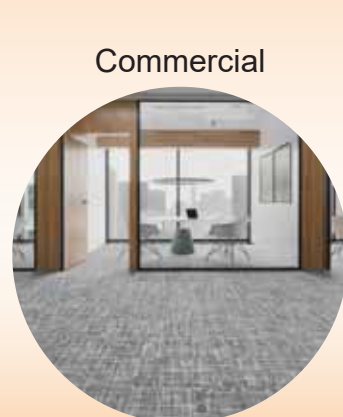
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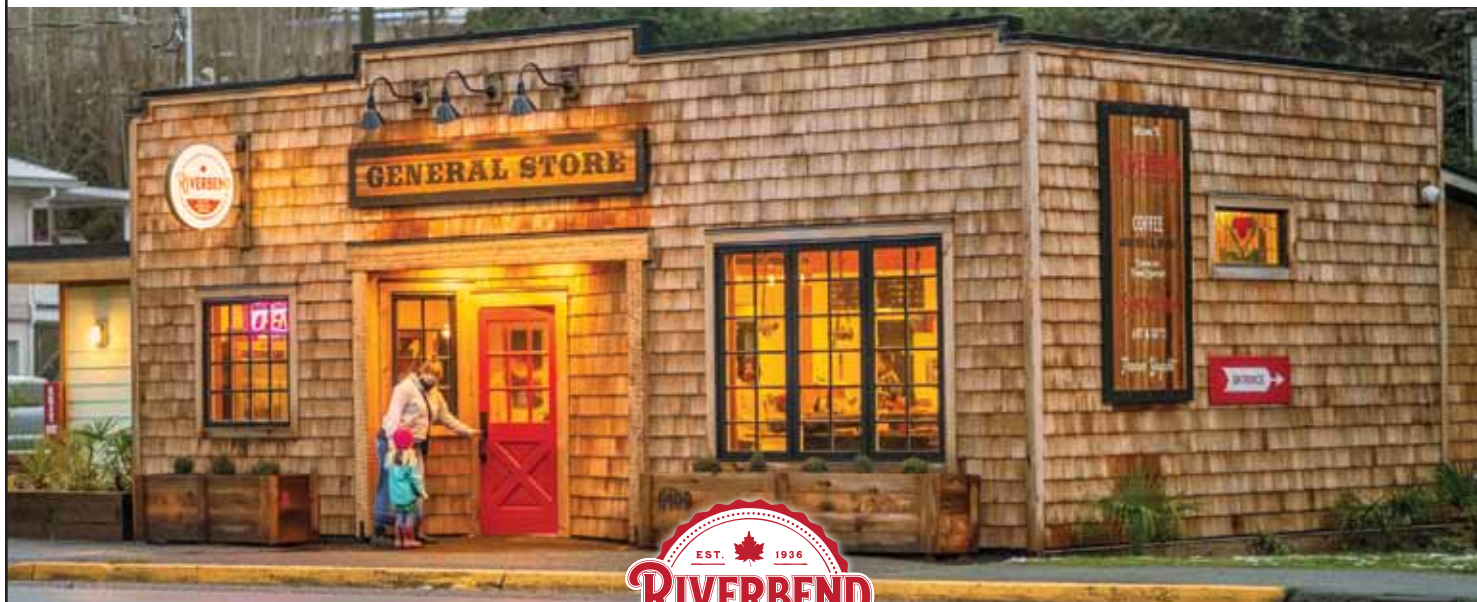


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Letter from the Publisher,

This issue has truly been a treasure hunt. When I started researching about the Arts & Culture in the Valley, I quickly discovered that I only knew the tip of the iceberg in our arts community. We have an absolutely astonishing Arts culture in our Valley. I know that there is still much that I haven't yet had a chance to discover and showcase in this issue. Our Valley is full of many amazingly talented and passionate individuals, who have dedicated countless hours and devotion pouring into the culture that surrounds our community. I am honored to share what I have learnt over the last few months, and look forward to continuing on this journey. It has been a joy connecting with artists, and community members who are passionate about the arts. Thank you Port Alberni for your continued support in reading and enjoying the Valley Vibe.

- Megan Warrender



Photo Credit Haley Anderson

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# LOCAL ART

## Cedar Plank Mural - ART THOMPSON (1948-2003)

Art Thompson was born in the village of Whyac and is a member of the Nitinaht Band of the West Coast. Art is a third generation artist. His father and grandfather were carvers and his grandmother a basket weaver. Art's designs are structured upon the traditional form and symbol which he learned from his father. However the use of line and colour are a radical departure from these established patterns. Influenced heavily by the powerful atmosphere of the rugged West Coast environment, Art seeks to graphically portray the compassion for nature reflected in the legends and lives of his people. Art's use of colour as seen in the artwork "Thunderbirds and Wolves" has helped him develop his own unique West Coast style.

### "Thunderbirds and Wolves"

The design, which depicts a Thunderbird with outstretched wings flanked by two wolves, symbolizes the spirit of Western Vancouver Island. The City of Port Alberni commissioned the cedar plank mural for placement on the exterior wall of the Alberni Valley Museum building at Echo Centre.

Information and Photo provided by Alberni Valley Museum



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# LOCAL ART

Griffin Park is a playground installed by Amy Needham and her staff at the City of Port Alberni and is located in Uplands II subdivision at the top of Burde St, on Fernwood Lane. Donated by the developers of the subdivision, Dave Koszegi and Craig Bowerman, the park is dedicated in memory of Griffin Dolling, a young man who tragically passed away in Spring of 2018. The park was created for children 18 months to 5 years old and is home to a beautiful 14 panel mural which was completed by Anne Ostwald's grade 11 and 12 Art Students at ADSS.

Alberni will continue to add more to the area such as a children's flower garden and shade trees.

A heartwarming coincidence in the mural was in the form of a yellow butterfly. In the picture story, the butterfly signifies transformation. Griffin's parents, Greg and Leona have said that on the day of their son's funeral, a yellow butterfly followed the window of their truck for two blocks as they approached the funeral. Since that day, the yellow butterfly has always made their presence known with the family.

The mural is geared toward pre-literate children to tell a story of a baby otter who was separated from his family and works to reunite with them. Through pictures, the mural goes on to show the otter's journey to find his family, and meeting a new friend along the way. This wonderful work of local art is called waalsapaya ("Finding Home" in Nuuchah-nulth). The art students spent months on the project and the City of Port



Photo Credit Randi Clayton

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Tim Paul was born in a small village up north and is a residential school survivor. Tim has spent his life working throughout the province in different communities and museums and alongside elders to pass down important cultural teachings and language to generations to come. Tim's passion brought him to Port Alberni when he was asked by the school board and Tribal Counsel to develop cultural programs and art. About 2 years ago, Tim completed the magnificent 35' Totem Pole which is located at the bottom of Roger St. at the Victoria Quay. The windfall cedar used was obtained on the flats towards Bamfield.



The pole's foundation was built on the importance of saving what we have left in our culture, reconciliation, residential schools and missing women and children from the communities. There are 10 relatives throughout the work of art that represent the land, oceans, skies and beyond. Tim says, "the pole is a great piece of art but the greatest art above all is the art of giving." Tim was supported in the project immensely not only from our community, but Tofino, Nanaimo, Williams Lake, Victoria and Port Hardy. "The entire project had lots of support from the community, citizens and Maritime Heritage Society," says Tim.



# LOCAL MURALS







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## Every picture has a story. Did you spot them all?

Written by Megan Warrender

Four amazing artists have contributed to the many murals in our community over the years. Every picture tells a story, and every artist has a journey of how these murals came to be in our community. We encourage you to take the time to get out and find these beautiful masterpieces located all around the Alberni Valley.

In 2014, Alicia LaRue created a public mural located at Canal Beach. Alicia donated her time and all the supplies to create this mural. Alicia said, "She would have liked to continue on but eventually ran out of paint." Every mural has a story, this mural is one about nature, and to depict the working balance between our environment. "This is my envision of what that balance would look like," Alicia said. "From large old growth trees standing still, healthy salmon, wind generating power, and a bear reaping the rewards of a healthy environment." When you stand close to the mural, you'll notice that in the old growth tree are the handprints of Brownies during the creation of the mural. Alicia envisioned the young women in this mural as being about the youth generation, and the adult looking at the actions that are affecting the future. Six years ago Alicia moved to China Creek and operates Wind Rider Kiteboarding and Coho Cabanas in the summer months. She is currently working on her next mural in Ucluelet and coming up in Mexico.



## Port Alberni has many beautiful murals painted throughout our community. Do you have a favorite?

Over 15 of the murals in the Alberni Valley were painted by Brad Piatka and Walter Collins from the late 90's to early 2000's. Walter Collins said, "Me and Brad went through a five year painting frenzy; from painting murals on commercial buildings, to residences, and even in local schools." After speaking with Walter and Brad's daughter Denay, both agreed that their favorite was Della Falls, which is painted on the side of the Best Western Barclay Hotel. Walter said, "Me & Brad had a lot of fun doing this one. It went together fast. I have never kept track of my hours. We work on them, enjoy them, and then they are finished." Denay remembers this was her dad's favorite mural because they had to use gene lifts and scaffolding to paint to the very top. Denay said, "People would always come by to watch them paint, talk about the murals, and about Della Falls." Brad, Walter and their murals made quite an impression on our community even to this day. When talking with Walter and asking him how it all began, he laughed, and said, "One day I bumped into Brad in a bar, and of course he had his portfolio with him. After that we became instant friends, and the rest was history. We were so opposite that we just got along great." Over a five year span they painted countless murals in our community. Walter said, "Brad and I always collaborated on the theme. When we were hired to paint the Best Western Barclay, with the height we quickly agreed to paint Della Falls."

Walter lived in Port Alberni for over 30 years, and most recently moved to Victoria when the Clock Tower Gallery closed in 2014. Walter said, "I have always been an artist, so it was just natural to go and paint a blank wall." Another favorite mural of Walter's, that is no longer standing, was inside the old high school. Walter said, "I enjoyed the collaboration and participation from the students."



Photo Credit Walter Collins

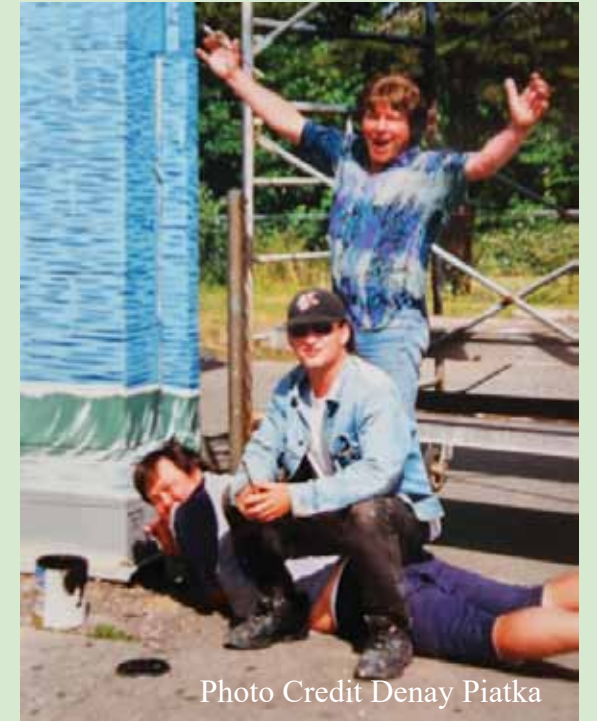


Photo Credit Denay Piatka

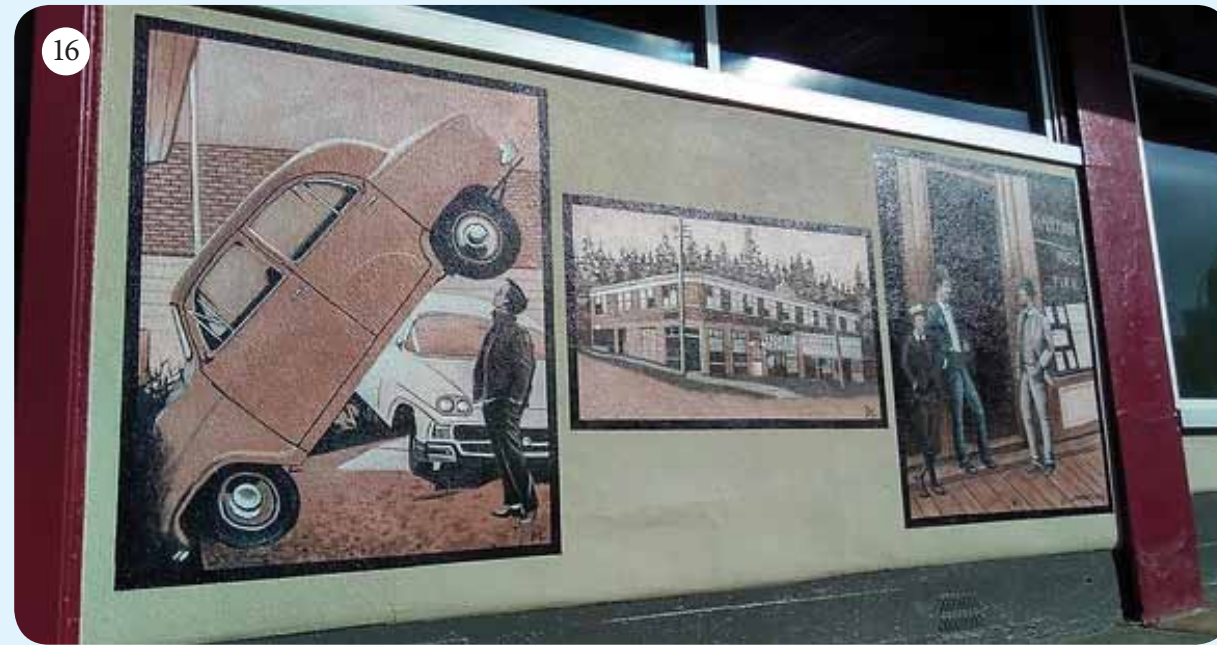
Denay remembers her dad as a very detailed painter. She said, "He would spend hours dotting and detailing his work, and when he painted murals his style did not change, it was just done on a larger scale." But it wasn't always murals for Brad, Denay said, "He painted rocks, and tree fungus that he would dry out and paint scenes on. He painted any surface he could; styrofoam, cardboard, walls, canvas. Over the years he was almost commissioned to do many custom orders, from house murals, floors, bathrooms and ceilings."



## Can you spot them all?

- 3rd Ave, by Port Dental  
Artists Walter Collins & Brad Piatka
- Harbour Quay  
Artist Walter Collins
- Blue Fish Gallery  
Artist Shayne Lloyd, 2022
- Victoria Quay  
Hupacasath Mural
- Johnston Rd, facing Pescadores  
Artist Shayne Lloyd, 2017
- Johnston Rd, above Tim Hortons  
Artists Walter Collins & Brad Piatka, 1998
- Harbour Quay, behind All Mex'd Up  
Artist Shayne Lloyd
- Capitol Theatre building  
Artist Shayne Lloyd
- Gertrude St, beside J&L  
Artist Brad Piatka & Walter Collins
- Best Western Barclay Hotel  
Artist Walter Collins & Brad Piatka
- Canal Beach  
Artist Alica LaRue
- Argyle Street  
Artist Walter Collins & Brad Piatka, 1997
- Roger Street & 10th Ave  
Artist Walter Collins & Brad Piatka, 1998
- Harbour Quay  
Artist Shayne Lloyd, Tim Paul & Gordon Dick
- Alberni Valley Museum,  
Artist Art Thompson
- Argyle Street, outside Schill Insurance  
Artist Shayne Lloyd
- Griffin Park  
ADSS Students
- Victoria Quay,  
Master Carver Tim Paul
- Alberni Valley Museum exterior,  
Master Carver Ron Hamilton

A local artist to Port Alberni, Shayne Lloyd relocated to Port Alberni in 2012, and has now painted 13 murals in the community of Port Alberni since 2014. Shayne's first mural (2014) located on 3rd Ave building Robbins & Accountants. When speaking with Shayne he had a chance to reflect back on his murals, and he said, "I have been blessed with many opportunities. I am honored to contribute to the artistic landscape in Port Alberni. I have loved doing all the murals, and working in collaborations with many other amazing artists." Shayne has done quite a few historical content murals, where clients have picked photographs from the Port Alberni Museum Archives, and Shayne has brought the pictures back to life on local buildings. The first historical mural Shayne did was on the Capitol Theatre. Shayne said, "This mural intended to look like an old sepia coloured photograph from the Capitol Theatres grand opening back in 1920." That project was the start of something new in our community, which led to three other similar styled murals. Do you know where they are? One is located on Schill Insurance, another on INEO, and Little Bavaria, which were all based on photos from the Port Alberni Museum Archives. Shayne's first "big" mural project was in 2017 at the bottom of Johnston by Pescodes facing the river. This was a collaborative design between Shayne and Master Carver / Artist Tim Paul. The mural was inspired by a memorial plate



that Tim Paul painted for Archie that now hangs inside Archie's Barber Shop. In 2017 Shayne was presented with the opportunity to collaborate with Arrowsmith Rotary, Tim Paul and Gordon Dick to paint a mural at the entrance to the Harbour Quay. This mural shows the history and amalgamation of the Tseshaht first nations. As we sit back and enjoy many of the murals Shayne has given back to our community, Shayne says, "I look at everyone and am very critical. I stand back and find myself thinking, what would I have done differently if I did it again. With every project I find a mix of excitement, learning, and consideration."



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# Port Alberni's Rotary Arts District

Written by Megan Warrender and Nicole Brazzale. With information provided by Pam Craig, Larry McGifford and Terry Deakin from the Rotary Club of Port Alberni Arrowsmith.

In 2008, the Rotary Club of Port Alberni came together with full support and partnership from the City Council and the Community Arts Council, to establish the Rotary Arts District, which goes along Argyle St from the Rollin Arts Centre and Gardens to the Harbour Quay. Larry McGifford, who was a member of the Arrowsmith Rotary Club at this time said, "The Club was looking for a long-term project, one that would have a positive effect on the community and its citizens. We chose the south end of Port Alberni as a way to invigorate the uptown area. A project that would draw more visitors and locals to the area" Arrowsmith Rotary has always been committed to maintaining arts and culture in our community. They have identified the area by placing the Rotary International wheel on all the stanchions along Argyle St.

Argyle Street was chosen to as the location for the Rotary Arts District because of a number of reasons, but mainly because there were already a number of art "pillars" that were already established in the area along the Argyle Street corridor; from the Community Arts Council located in the Rollin Arts building, to the Portal Players Dramatic Society located in the Capitol Theatre, Chars Landing, the Historic Train Station located at the foot of Argyle St, and all the amazing shops, view points, and famous Clock Tower (now Wolf Tower) located at the Harbour Quay. Larry said, "After careful study of all the factors and existing features, it just made sense to choose Argyle St, as the Rotary Arts District."

In order to move the Rotary Arts District along, the first project that the Rotary Arts District took on was the 'Lampstand Banner Painting' project in 2009 in partnership with the Community Arts Council and the City. "We invited the community to come and paint a banner, which was then



Photo Credit Pam Craig – Rotarians at Work



hung up along Argyle. We wanted to contribute to the beautification of the area." In the first year of painting (2009) there were only 14 banners painted and those banners were hung, and many lamp standards were left without one. The past couple years brought the introduction of a "paint at home" banner experience, which forced the Rotary to think outside the box. Rotary members put together all the supplies you need to paint your banner at home, providing paint, brushes, the banner itself, and a device to hold the banner in place while you paint. The Banner Painting Project is the perfect way to bring out your inner artist, and it is incredibly rewarding to see your banner hung up on Argyle St. This year was the 13th year of the project and there were over 90 new banners added. "It's more than just painting a banner - it's about skill and development for the youth in our community and showcasing the incredible artwork," said Larry McGifford.

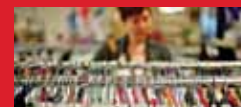
The most recent project that the Rotary Arts District completed was the Rotary Community Mural Project. This mural can be found at the entrance of the Harbour Quay and its theme is "Building Relationships Brick by Brick", and is in support of reconciliation. In 2017, Theresa Kingston, who was a member of the Port Alberni Arrowsmith Rotary at the time, had an idea to have a mural painted in the Rotary Arts District. "The Rotary Arts District was designed to bring awareness to the community of arts, showcase local artistic creations, and add to the attractiveness of the area. So the large blank wall of the building occupied by CME and owned by the Port Authority was the logical



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place,” said Terry Deakin, who was part of the team who led this project. This mural brought together the Tseshaht Nation, Shayne Lloyd who painted the mural, and Rotary members to relay the history of the Tseshaht First Nations. The mural preserves the feeling of the Tseshaht culture, while prompting communication between cultures and bringing people together on a human level.

“A wise man said to me, ‘how can we reconcile if we never had a relationship to begin with?’ This really hit home,” said Terry Deakin. “After that we quickly came up with the slogan for the project - Building Relationships Brick by Brick. We began to use this as our fundraising campaign and invited the community to purchase a brick to help fund the installation of the mural. Each person was offered a certificate of purchase with their name and a brick number in honor of their contribution.” The mural has become a beautiful addition to the Rotary Arts District, and an educational piece of

our indigenous history.

Right beside the mural, stands a piece of our local heritage, the Port Alberni E&N Railway Station. Sitting at the bottom of Argyle, since 1912. Between 1912 - 1970 the railway played a big role in the economics of our community. After 1970, transportation via road ways became much more popular, and the railway less. So in 1990, the City of Port Alberni purchased this building and restored it to its original appearance, and have been diligently maintaining it ever since as a historical building and museum.

“Art and Culture in community draws people together and connects them in understanding each other. People are impacted personally and emotionally when their lives are enriched by the presence of Art and Culture.” said the current President of Arrowsmith Rotary Club, Pam Craig. Rollin Arts Center

## LOCAL ART

### Alberni Valley Museum - Petroglyph – “From Nowhere Else in the World But Here”

The Petroglyph was carved by Ki- Ke-In (Ron Hamilton). It was commissioned by the Alberni Valley Museum during the summer of 1999 as part of an exhibit of Nuuchah Nulth art and craft. Ron titled the petroglyph “From Nowhere Else in the World But Here”, which is the way Nuuchah Nulth people identify themselves if their entire lineage is strictly from one place. Thus, placing a person in the context of where they and their ancestors live. The petroglyph is unique to the Alberni Valley and conveys a unique concept about the relationship of the Nuuchah Nulth to the world around them. The petroglyph speaks about life and death. There is strong reference to the life cycle of the salmon, which has integral links to the heart of Nuuchah Nulth culture. Petroglyph refers to ancient carvings in rock which are found around Vancouver Island, B.C. among other places.

The commission of this piece was made possible by the late Nuuchah Nulth artist Art Thompson. At that time, he donated an edition of silkscreen prints based on the mural, with the understanding that revenue generated from the sale of these prints be reserved to commission the next outdoor art project.



Photo Credit Shelley Harding

It took the cooperation of many people to pull together this project. First Ron Hamilton who carved the stone in the museum gallery. It was Ron who developed the concept for the petroglyph and came up with the amazing design. Ron remembers this project well, he mostly remembers the thousands of people who came to enjoy watching the carving at the museum. Ron said, “Soup Campbell, I will always remember his generosity, Soup always asked me what he needed and brought everything I needed. When I needed a compressor, he brought me an industrial compressor.”

The petroglyph is carved of Vancouver Island marble. Matrix Marble and Stone of Duncan were very generous with material and time. The technical issues around the carving and installation of the piece were large and could not have been solved without the assistance of many people: Port Machine, Stephens Sheet Metal, Acklands Granger,

Don Holmes, Joe Skipsey, Simon Kurk, Bill Asher Dave Tranfield, Clem Rousseau, Soup Campbell. The project was coordinated by Museum Curator Dave Goode, with much assistance from Roy Egglar.

Information and Photos  
Provided by Alberni Valley  
Museum

## Chars Landing Port Alberni's Live Entertainment Venue

Written by Stephanie Wakelin

Char's Landing has earned a strong following and vibrant reputation as Port Alberni's Live Entertainment Venue. Throughout the years, Chars Landing has hosted a wide variety of talented musicians from all avenues of the industry. In addition, the venue has also hosted writers, dance troupes and community organizations.

Charlene Patterson's vision is to host a venue that brings people together and be a hub for the Vancouver Island's Arts and Entertainment industry. Char purchased the building in 2010 and has not looked back since!

The building originally was a church, dating an entire century back to 1912. It was built by Wood & Story with the purpose to serve the Methodist congregation. Around 1925, the congregation of merged Methodists and Presbyterians moved out of 4815 Argyle St. and into a new building on Church St. Throughout the years the old church was home to different organizations including an antique store and The Salvation Army. For several years the building was left empty until Charlene purchased it and began her vision of a Public House for Arts on the Island. Renovations have brought this timeless space to life, making it a wonderful atmosphere to sit back and enjoy music and company alike. Char's Landing also offers unique accommodations for musician guests and those visiting the area. Located in the heart of Port Alberni's Arts District, Char's Landing is the perfect gem for both established and up-coming artists to perform, and locals to enjoy.

Today, Char's Landing is a place for everyone to enjoy the art of music, including your kiddos and pups! Char is always looking to expand and enjoy the Arts Community, join her on Sundays for Jazz Social Nights.



The First United Church on Argyle Street. Taken in 1961 just prior to it being sold to the Salvation Army. AVM photograph collection PN22823.



Photo Credit Char's Landing



Photo Credit Char's Landing



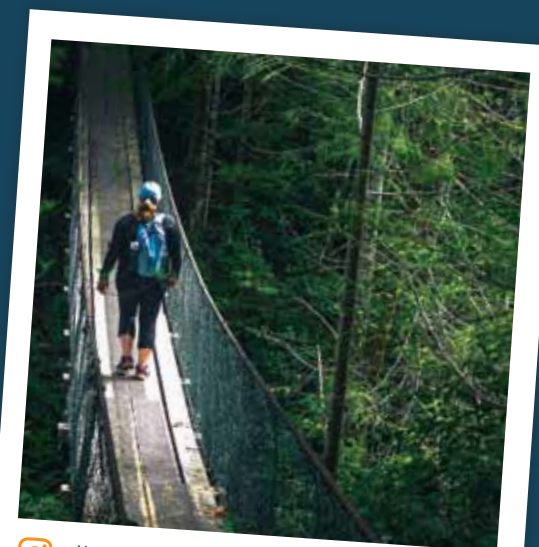


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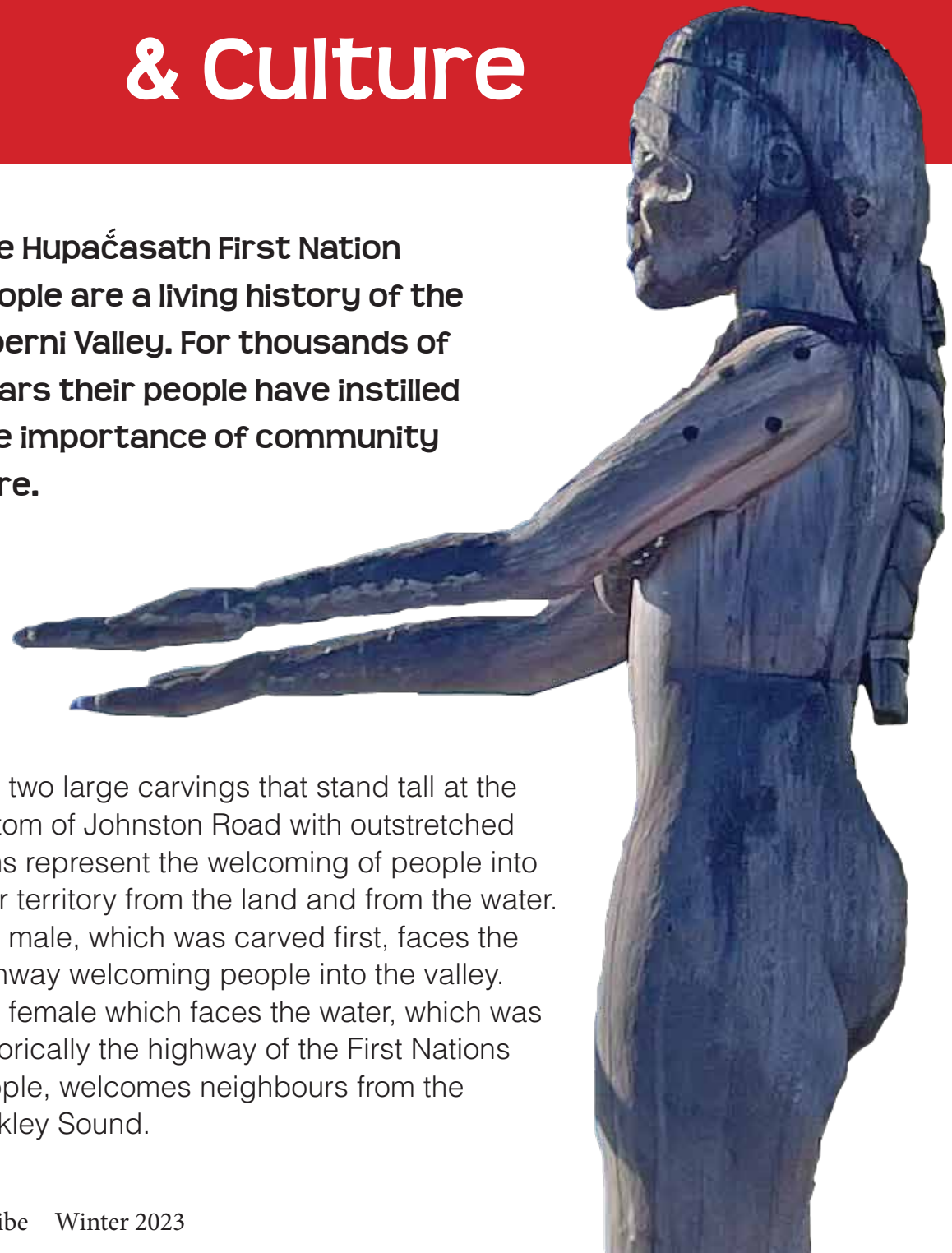
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# A Lifetime of Arts & Culture

**The Hupačasath First Nation people are a living history of the Alberni Valley. For thousands of years their people have instilled the importance of community here.**

The two large carvings that stand tall at the bottom of Johnston Road with outstretched arms represent the welcoming of people into their territory from the land and from the water. The male, which was carved first, faces the highway welcoming people into the valley. The female which faces the water, which was historically the highway of the First Nations people, welcomes neighbours from the Barkley Sound.



“There is no word for “art” in the Hupačasath language”, Rod Sayers tells us. He believes that is because art has always been an integral part of their being. Artwork has been used as a living record for the Hupačasath peoples; it is deeply integrated into daily life, and is a part of their identity through practice and ceremony.

Art is a living history of the Hupačasath people. They are influenced by the ever-changing world and this is reflected in the art that is created. Technology has had an effect on their approach to art making, but their artwork is rooted in our long and rich history and is informed by it.

Art will always continue to change and evolve in order to remain relevant, and the same applies for how the Hupačasath have created art over the years. It takes on many forms for the Hupačasath peoples; from totem poles, drums, wooden carvings, masks, to basket weaving, and paintings. Traditional Nuuchahnulth style artwork utilizes a balance of hard geometric lines and soft flowing lines, bold, broad shapes, asymmetrical elements, and forms based on shapes found in nature. One of the more prominent pieces of Hupačasath artwork in the Alberni Valley are the Welcome Statues at Victoria Quay, which portray a man and woman with open arms, welcoming visitors to our beautiful Valley. You can view Hupačasath artwork at the Alberni Valley Museum, Victoria Quay, The Hupacasath House of Gathering, and certain businesses in the Alberni Valley.

Thank you to Rod Sayers for sharing information on the significance of art to the Hupačasath First Nations.



## hupačasath First Nation

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# ART RAVE - Join the Fun

Written by: Alberni ArtRave



1 & 2 - Art Rave created the 12' salmon "Le Poisson" and mermaid "Luma" luminaries hanging in Char's Landing. Port Alberni's Spoken Word group, Electric Mermaid which hosts writers from all over North America and Europe, requested use of Luma as their brand and Art Rave was happy to allow them to do that.

3 - Wes Bloxham Art Rave Founder Opening Ceremony

Photo credits: Jillian Mayne

In 2010, the Island Arts Gallery on lower Argyle became a place where artists often gathered after hours. Previous owner of Island Arts Gallery, Wes Bloxham, was a charismatic man and the arts scene that flourished at his gallery became the nucleus of Art Rave. Art Rave became a Registered BC Society in 2012, with founding members Wes Bloxham, Colleen Clancy and Chris Doman who dedicated their shared vision of

highlighting the artists and creative potential in the Alberni Valley.

Throughout the past ten years, Art Rave has taken part in several three-Day Weekend Arts Festivals including juried art shows, fringe festivals, spoken word events, free family art workshops and evening dance with live music.

These have been done, where possible with community partners – including Portal Players, the City of Port Alberni, Community Arts Council, Tofino Lantern Festival, Art Matters, Community Futures and many other local businesses. During these years, two art shows were held at the Port Alberni Train Station and another at the Capitol Theatre. A major effort was put into the Rave On The Arts-Studio Sessions, a "Community Producer" show with Shaw Cable's, Nancy Wilmot. This series of nine productions focusing on area artists: Gordon Dick, Chris Doman, Cynthia Bonesky, Shayne Lloyd, Gittan Klemetsrud, Todd Robinson, Deb Phillip, Dave Parsanishi and Allison Tremain. Rave On is still running locally on Shaw Cable's Channel 4 and may also be found on Shaw's Youtube channel.

Art Rave continues to support an annual ADSS Post-Secondary Bursary for a student pursuing further studies in the Arts. Two fun examples of Art Rave designed and produced works can still be seen at Char's Landing. These are large collaboratively built and painted paper luminaries, lit with strings of small LED lights. An image of the large twelve foot mermaid originally christened Luma, became the logo for Port Alberni's Spoken Word group and is now known as the 'Electric Mermaid'. The twelve foot articulated salmon, "Le Poisson", travelled west to be featured in the Tofino Luminary Festival.

Art Rave has also worked to recruit artists Island wide to submit works to the AV Museum in a bi-annual Art Exhibit. The first was held in 2018. Covid meant the planned 2020 Exhibit was cancelled, but the exhibit returned in 2022 with, "Emergence: New Works, New Ideas" which included work from artists all over Vancouver Island and the Gulf Island.

In conjunction with this year's Emergence show run, Jolleen Dick addressed the issue of the cultural appropriation of Nuuchahnulth designs, with her illustrated talk 'Am I allowed to wear this?', a well-attended and provocative discussion. The Alberni Valley is attracting many new creatives and Art Rave welcomes new members. Art Rave can be found on Facebook at Alberni Art Rave and on its website: <https://alberniart rave.org>

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# Alberni Valley Museum Retrospective

Written by Megan Langley  
Museum Assistant, Alberni Valley Museum

Located in the heart of Port Alberni, the Alberni Valley Museum reflects the richly diverse past of the area, with a large collection of artifacts linked to First Nations culture, local and industrial history, and folk art.

The Alberni Valley Museum had its beginnings in the 1960's when the Alberni District Museum and Historical Society was formed. Members of the Society were concerned about the potential loss of local history and

started to collect artifacts, archival information and photographs that reflected settler life in the Alberni Valley. At that time the collection was stored in the Post Office because there was no place to display the items.

In 1971, the Society secured funds to build a permanent museum adjoining the Echo Community Centre. The Alberni Valley Museum opened in its current location in 1973. The artifact and photograph collections were transferred to the City of Port Alberni for management by professional museum staff, while the Society continued to manage the archival collection on a volunteer basis. In the early 1980's the Museum space was expanded, doubling the gallery area and adding a temporary exhibit space. Staff at the time recognized the value to the community in having access to its history and heritage and to do this the museum would share as much of the collection as possible. Staff introduced an innovative system for displaying artifacts. The



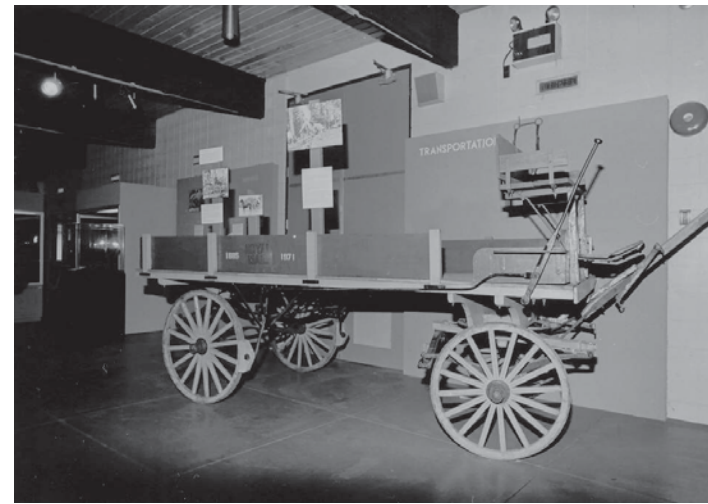
“visible storage” system had only been used in larger urban museums and Port Alberni was one of the first community museums to experiment with this approach. This concept has allowed access to a vast majority of the museum’s collection.

Currently the museum has about 5000 artifacts and 22,000 images. In the 1960's and early 70's items were donated by community members that mostly reflected the history of pioneers in the Alberni Valley. When the Museum opened in 1973, staff began collecting First Nations work, some works were purchased or commissioned while many other pieces were donated. In the museum today, you will find First Nations pieces, settler artifacts, textiles, furniture and household

items. The photograph and art collection are periodically displayed and are always accessible on the Museum's website.

In addition to the collection, the Museum presents an exciting and varied program of temporary exhibits each year as well as offering challenging hands-on school programs and a range of public programs. There is something for everyone to discover, or rediscover, at the museum.

Over the years, the museum's responsibilities have grown to include integral partnerships with three local heritage organizations which support a number of heritage related facilities. These include



First exhibits in the AV Museum 1973.  
AVM photograph collection PN898 and PN902



the Alberni District Historical Society, Port Alberni Maritime Heritage Society, and the Western

Vancouver Island Industrial Heritage Society. Together, this heritage network provides a wealth of resources that are preserved, interpreted and made accessible to the community.

The Museum will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2023. It was originally created by community members who recognized the importance of preserving and celebrating a shared history. Over the past fifty years the museum has grown, both in size and understanding of the diverse cultural legacies of the region. The Museum looks forward to continuing to work in consultation with community partners and local First Nations to increase the understanding and appreciation of the Alberni Valley's distinct cultural heritage.

## 1987.5.1 Basketry Covered Bottle

This basketry covered bottle was woven by Nellie Dennis, an Ohiat weave in 1987r. Nellie is related to many well known weavers such as Annie Clappis, Mary Moses and Frances Williams. Her mother was a Chester (maiden name) from Nitnaht. Her grandmother, also a weaver, was Annie George who lived at Polly's Point for many years.



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# The Community Arts Council of the Alberni Valley

Written by Megan Warrender and Nicole Brazzale, with information provided by Melissa Martin at the Community Arts Council of the Alberni Valley.



The Rollin Arts Centre and Gardens has been headquarters for the Community Arts Council of the Alberni Valley since their inception in 1977. Fred Rollin built the home in 1914 for him and his wife Ellen. While Ellen taught music, Fred tended to and grew the beautiful gardens on the property after retiring from the Alberni Pacific Lumber Company in his early forties. The Rollins were renowned for their wonderful gardens and unique plants. After their deaths, the house was left to the City of Port Alberni.

In 1965 local artists and community members came together to form the Community Arts Council of the Alberni Valley with the intent to support local artists. The council was incorporated as a non-profit in 1967 and exists to enhance the quality of life in our community by promoting the arts. They do this through arts education and information, providing quality programming services and events in all facets of the arts, participating in the preservation of art, planning and developing cultural facilities and institutions, and contributing to the development of cultural policies at the local, regional, provincial and national levels.

In 1977, the Community Arts Council took a lease from the City of Port Alberni to establish a home for the center. After much renovating and refurbishing, the building then became the Rollin Arts Center we see today. The property next to the Rollin Arts Centre is currently under renovation (2022), which left the Community Arts Council to temporarily relocate to the Harbour Quay. "The center continues to provide a home for the Community

Arts Council and is maintained through public and private funding, individual donations, and volunteer support, as well as revenue earned by Community Art programs and fundraising," says Melissa Martin, the Executive Director of the Community Arts Council of the Alberni Valley.

The Community Arts Council of the Alberni Valley is also known as The Grove, for short. They were inspired by the beautiful old growth forest of Cathedral Grove full of deep roots and impressive trees. The Grove works on growing the arts community in the same way, and for good reason. The Grove has been going through recent rebranding to distinguish their own identity separate from the Rollin Art Centre building on 8th Ave.

Art plays an important role in society; it allows people to express themselves and share their feelings with the world. Art is subjective and unique; it shows us the world through the eyes of the artist. It takes on many forms, from sculptures, carvings, paintings, written word, to photography, and everything in between. Art is incredibly important to our culture and society, and the Community Arts Council of the Alberni Valley is dedicated to keeping art alive in our community. "The Community Arts Council, thanks to its long lineage, plays an integral part of our creative community; supporting local artists and art groups alike. I am very grateful and honored that I have been a part of their legacy!" said Melissa.

You can support The Grove and our local artists by checking out exhibits, attending workshops, and purchasing things from the gift shop. The current exhibit, between January and March, is titled "Alberni Valley Landmarks". This is an open exhibit where artists can submit up to three pieces each, of their interpretation of the landmarks around the Valley. The Grove has partnered with the Alberni Rotary on this exhibit and will have a voters choice at the end which will be turned into a puzzle.

The best thing that you can do for our local arts community is to check out an exhibit, attend a workshop, or purchase a piece of art. The Community Arts Council of the Alberni Valley and the arts community relies on community support to succeed. Support Local!

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# TAKE A HIKE

## The Lookout

Written by Stephanie Wakelin



Photo Credit Tamiko Corlazzoli

The lookout is probably Port Alberni's most famous hike in our beautiful Alberni Valley. Once used as a fire watch location, the lookout is one of the most well known hikes in our community. Located behind Coombs Country Candy, the lookout's trailhead meets up with the Log Train Trail, which is a perfect location to stop and enjoy locally made fudge, frozen yogurt and other treats as a nice reward after the hike. The trail is 3.5km long and depending on how leisurely you hike, the lookout tends to take an average of an hour to an hour and a half to complete. Hikers would consider this moderate difficulty, with several areas being a steady climb.

Along the way you will see various ferns, wildflowers, mushrooms as you hike through mossy forest. The trail mirrors a logging road, so it is very easy to follow from start to finish. Once at the top, you are able to see panoramic views of our Alberni Valley including the inlet, Sproat Lake,

surrounding mountains and many locals can even spot their house from the top!

The lookout not only attracts hikers by foot, it is a very popular ATV and motorized vehicle trail. As you near the top, there are plenty of man-made mountain bike jumps by local adrenaline seekers. It's not uncommon to reach the top only to find other outdoor enthusiasts taking in the breathtaking views and cleansing fresh air. A fun addition to hiking the lookout trail is to Geocache along the way! There are a ton of geocaches to be found along the trail leading up to the top. If you are planning on geocaching your way up the mountain, be sure to bring your own treasures to leave and a pen!

Local hiker and outdoorswoman Tamiko Corlazzoli loves the lookout hike so much she did it 33 days in a row! Here's what she had to say about it, "We are so lucky to have such amazing mountains

and forest area surrounding the Alberni Valley, the lookout only being a small part of it. I have done the lookout hike 4-5 times a week if not more for the past 2 years because the feeling when I reach the top is just too good.. even if the views may be a blanket of fog. I often get asked if I get bored of the hike but no I do not because it truly is different every time, especially as seasons are changing! I also get asked if it gets easier each time and to be honest, no it doesn't.. you just get stronger physically and more than anything, stronger mentally to push yourself even more next time!"

Accessible by foot, ATV, truck and mountain bike, the lookout gives everyone the same charming views as you go up and of course once you've reached the top. If you are looking for a great viewpoint of our beautiful Valley, the lookout trail is a must-do.



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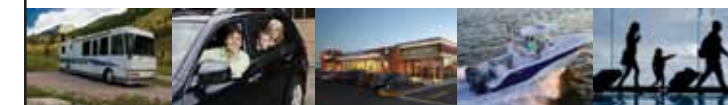


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Maureen was born and raised in the Alberni Valley with her family heritage dating back over 100 years in the region, giving her firsthand knowledge on the local hot spots and hidden gems.

Her favorite thing about the Valley is the wide variety of outdoor activities available.

One of her passions is volunteering; she is on the board for the Port Alberni Hospice and is the local founder and active member of 100+ Women Who Care Alberni

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# The Capitol Theatre, Past and Present

Written by Stephanie Wakelin, information and photos provided by Teresa Drew and www.atthecapitol.org



Over a century ago, in 1914 the Port Theatre opened their doors on 1st Avenue across from Alberni Hardware. The Theatre held movie viewings every Wednesday and Saturday night with seating for 200 people. Jack Warren, with the help of Walter Hamly and his wife ran the theatre until the mid 1930's when Mr. Warren decided he needed a bigger, more modern venue. It was then in 1934, Jack purchased the property at the corner of 4th Avenue and Argyle Street and began construction on what we know today as the Capitol Theatre. The building of the theatre took 2 years and \$30,000 to complete. Sadly, Jack Warren died in 1935 and did not get to see the finished product or opening of the new Theatre. After his passing, Jack's wife and children took over the management of the Theatre operations. The new

and improved theatre had 300 more seats, air conditioning and a "modern" sound system. It ran as a cinema playing movies from 1936 - 1982. In 1989, the theatre was then purchased by Portal Players Dramatic Society.

Portal Players originated in 1978 when a group of 20 or so Port Alberni residents got together to form a drama group. Some of the founding members include Allan Markin - a North Island College English teacher, Gordon Scoffield, John Andrews, Marita Hartman, David Lord and Pam Aspinall. Before the purchase of the Capitol Theatre, Portal Plays Drama Society was using the North Island College Gymnasium as their venue. The group of enthusiastic members were able to fundraise enough funds to make the purchase of the Capitol



AVM photograph collection PN9349.

A large group of children standing on the steps and sidewalk in front of the Capitol Theatre. The movie playing is "The Golden Arrow" with Betty Davis. Photograph was taken by Joseph Clegg in 1936.

Theatre and start a new legacy which still is active today. Throughout time, Portal Players has put on tremendous shows, attracting hundreds of viewers. Some notable shows in the earlier years of the Society include "Harvey", "Mark of Cain" and "Beauty and the Beast". Long time resident, Cindy Solda, who became a lifetime member in 2008, directed several of the plays and obtained multiple awards at the 1993 North Island Zone Drama Festival said, "I believe in the arts and in personal expression. My family grew up in the theatre, and has always been a part of us. I have a strong passion for the Capitol Theatre in our community, and am proud of all the people I have worked with over the years. And the results are the proof!" Today, Portal Players continues to have dedicated members and volunteers. Current PPDS President, Teresa Drew says, "All Portal Players Drama Society plays are entirely volunteer created and produced. We spend countless hours rehearsing, and creating. All to bring the script to life to share it with our community"

In 2004, the Capitol Theatre and Portal Players were thrilled to be able to completely renovate the theatre, thanks to the generosity of a local



Photo Credit Teresa Drew



Capitol Theatre 1968. AVM photograph collection PN223.

resident, Helen Ford. The renovations included the concession area, costume room, washrooms, member lounge tech room and furnishings. The lobby was then named after Helen and now stands today as the Helen Ford Lobby. Helen passed away in 1997 at the age of 91, the Performing Arts Community of Port Alberni will forever be grateful for her contributions to the Theatre. After obtaining various grants, the Capitol Theatre was able to continue renovations to enhance lighting and sound systems, a new roof, stage curtains, a new electronic reservation system and the timeless marquee sign at the entrance. Past-President, current member and director, Peter Wienold said, "Portal Players is an integral part of Port Alberni's rich, vibrant arts community. We have contributed immeasurably to it, and as a non-profit, volunteer organization, we are beyond grateful for the support we receive from our audiences - thank you."

The Vision and Mission of the Capitol Theatre has remained the same throughout history:

Vision: Portal Players Dramatic Society will develop, within the community, an enhanced



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appreciation for the performing arts, and will be recognized for offering progressive, innovative and dynamic entertainment & educational programs.

Mission: Portal Players Dramatic Society produces plays, offers education, and runs a civic theatre. We are a leader amongst our community theatre peers by providing specific educational programs, mentorships and outreach to youth & adults. As an inclusive volunteer organization, we collaborate with many arts and business partners to engage the community and our membership. As a vocal advocate for diverse cultural experiences in the Alberni Valley, Portal Players draws on its pool of member volunteers who work to strengthen and promote the organization. Through the operation of our own space, The Capitol Theatre, Portal Players is dedicated to fostering the performance arts, the presentation of art in all its diverse forms, and the preparatory work needed for public enjoyment. Ultimately, Portal Players believes in the power of Art to bring all people together.



Portal Players and the Capitol Theatre are always looking for enthusiastic volunteers and members to join their community. Cindy Solda said, "Everyone is an actor whether we believe it or not, life is acting." If you are interested please reach out to capitoltheatre@shaw.ca. "It takes a community to make these productions happen." Stay tuned Feburary for the upcoming production called "I Take This Man," by Jack Sharkey, and another in May called "I Hate Hamlet," by Paul Rudrick.



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