

BRITANNIA MINE MUSEUM

For immediate release

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Britannia Mine Museum Celebrates 110th Years of Discoveries Tuesday, July 1st 110-Year Anniversary Kick-off Event on Canada Day 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.



Photo: Britannia Mine Museum located between Vancouver and Whistler on the Sea-to-Sky Highway

Britannia Beach, BC – This year, the Britannia Mine Museum is celebrating 110 years of discoveries since the Mine first opened in 1904. To commemorate this significant milestone, the Museum is hosting an anniversary kick-off event on **Tuesday, July 1st on Canada Day**. The day will feature family-friendly activities, including:

- an interactive, story-telling experience with audience participation (11 a.m. & 2 p.m.),
- a Lego scavenger hunt, and
- the ever popular underground mine train and gold panning.

In recognition of the Britannia mine's 110-year history, the Museum has put together two special, summer-long exhibits that showcase what life was like for families and workers who lived and worked in Britannia throughout the years.

- The “**Celebrating 110 Years Photo Exhibit**” located in the Museum's conveyor shed, is a collection of 110 historic photos pulled from the Museum's extensive archives of more than 9,500 images, many of which were donated by former residents and mine workers.
- The “**Best of Britannia: Life in a Company Town**” multi-media exhibit located inside the machine shop, is a collection of historic artifacts, antiques, artwork and photos which represent what life was like at Britannia. Supplemented with stories that are poignant, bizarre or even heartbreaking, the exhibit will show how Britannia residents lived, worked and played.

The Museum is also hosting a **Reunion Weekend on June 27-29**, bringing together former Britannia residents, workers and families to share old stories and memories and learn new ones. The exclusive reunion weekend will include an off-road vehicle tour of the former Mount Sheer town site, coffee socials, BBQ dinner, tours of the underground mine and the EPCOR water treatment plant. More information on the Museum's 110-year events can be found at <http://www.britanniamuseum.ca/celebrating-110-years>

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“It is truly an honour to be able to share 110 years of Britannia’s story and legacy as a mining town that played a major role in Canada’s minerals industry,” says Kirstin Clausen, executive director of the Britannia Mine Museum. “Our Museum not only educates visitors on the contributions of minerals to society, and the ideas and practices of environmental renewal and sustainability, but it also showcases B.C.’s jewelled history and serves as a unique and memorable tourist destination.”

Brief History of Britannia Mine:

- The Britannia Mine first opened in 1904 and closed in 1974 and in its 70-year history, more than 60,000 people from over 50 countries around the world lived and worked at Britannia Mine. In the 1920s and 30s, the Britannia Mine was a major economic backbone of British Columbia as the largest copper producer in the British Commonwealth. It operated mainly as a copper mine although other minerals such as gold, silver, lead, zinc and cadmium were also extracted.
- There were two main town sites at Britannia: one at the base of the mine next to Howe Sound, and one at the top of the mine on Mount Sheer. Although the Britannia and Mount Sheer town sites were quite isolated with the area only accessible by boat until the railway (1956) and highway (1958) were built, life was never dull. Facilities included a school, hospital, libraries, clubrooms, billiard rooms, tennis courts, a swimming pool, a roller-skating rink and a bowling alley. A thriving social calendar saw sporting events, theatrical productions, dances, movies and parties held throughout the year.
- In 1975, the Britannia Beach Historical Society opened the Britannia Mine Museum. In 1988, Mill 3 was designated as a National Historic Site and is one of the last remaining gravity-fed concentrator mills in North America.
- In 2004, the Province of BC worked with the Britannia Mine Museum and Golder Associates to commission EPCOR to build and operate a water treatment plant. Acid rock drainage was a problem in Britannia, which occurs naturally when rainwater reacts with oxygen and exposed minerals resulting in contaminated water. The EPCOR Britannia Mine Water Treatment Plant uses natural materials to filter minerals and neutralize surface water runoff collected from the area, resulting in clean water flowing into Howe Sound.
- In 2005, a restoration project began on the Mill 3 building, which included stabilizing the concrete foundations, re-roofing each level, re-siding the building and hand-glazing each of the 14,416 panes of window glass.
- In 2010, the Britannia Mine Museum completed the first phase of a major \$14.7-million redevelopment project that transformed a mining legacy site into a multi-award winning, internationally recognized education and travel destination. New sites include the Beaty-Lundin Visitor Centre (theatre, mineral gallery, Canadian Mining Hall of Fame and gift shop), the Britannia A-Z Exhibition Building, a new post-and-beam gold panning area, expanded children’s play area and event plaza.

The Britannia Mine Museum provides unique and memorable experiences that engage visitors of all ages in the spirited history of Britannia, from riding the underground train to exploring how minerals contribute to our daily lives.

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The Britannia Mine Museum is open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. with guided tours throughout the day. Visit www.britanniamuseum.ca for more information.

About the Britannia Mine Museum:

The Britannia Mine Museum is a mining legacy site and a vibrant, internationally recognized education and tourist destination located between Vancouver and Whistler on the Sea-to-Sky highway. It is a National Historic Site and a non-profit organization encouraging mining awareness through entertaining, experiential education programs and exhibits, important historic collection preservation and insightful public engagement that allows guests to leave with a better understanding of mining in BC; past, present and future.
www.britanniamuseum.ca.

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*Note to media: More in-depth historical info available in the Britannia Mine Museum Press Kit and is available upon request. Historical photos and video are also available.

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