

For immediate release

Now on Deck! Britannia Mine Museum's New Exhibits Celebrate Howe Sound

"Foundations" & "Howe Sound: Beauty Below"

Features 3D model art from Lower Mainland craftsmen and stunning underwater photography from local Vancouver marine conservationists

Opens May 26 on Britannia's Family Fun Day



Photo caption: Stunning photography of the secret underwater world of Howe Sound by Adam Taylor and Eli Wolpin. Their photography will be part of the Britannia Mine Museum's "Foundations" exhibit which celebrates Howe Sound.

Britannia Beach, April 27, 2018 – The **Britannia Mine Museum** is launching two new exhibits on Saturday, May 26 (the Museum's Family Fun Day) that celebrate the beauty, nature and recovery of Howe Sound, in addition to recognizing two significant legacies: the importance Britannia Mine played in BC's history; and the impact it made to the surrounding Howe Sound environment.

"As a Museum, we recognize the importance Britannia Mine has played in our province's history, economy as well as its impact on the surrounding Howe Sound environment," says Diane Mitchell, Curator of Education & Collections at the Britannia Mine Museum. "Our role is to educate the public on all aspects of the Britannia Mine including its environmental story, and these new exhibits are a great way to help tell the narrative of how the modern mining industry and society has learned lessons from our past and how we can continue to protect the Howe Sound area and move towards a sustainable future."

"Foundations", located on the newly restored Howe Sound Decks 40 feet above the Sea-to-Sky Highway just near the entrance to the Museum's Train Pavilion, is a new, permanent, outdoor, open air exhibit consisting of a Lower and Upper Deck with breathtaking 360 degree views of Howe Sound. The outdoor exhibit explores Britannia's colourful 114-year history and how mining has contributed to the community and province. It also recognizes its environmental impacts on the region, the resulting remediation efforts and the continued recovery of the Howe Sound area. The exhibit also looks at ongoing research and innovation in the Canadian mining industry towards more sustainable mining practices.

"Howe Sound: Beauty Below" is a temporary photo exhibit in the Museum's Machine Shop, which focuses on Howe Sound's recovery and features the stunning underwater photography of two local avid scuba divers, Eli Wolpin and Adam Taylor. Wolpin is a Vancouver-based architect and technical diver who often dives in the Howe Sound waters especially near Whytecliff Park in West Vancouver, and Adam Taylor is a fourth generation resident of Bowen Island and a marine conservationist as an active member of the Marine Life Sanctuary Society. Both of them are active in the marine conservation community and are focused on protecting the Howe Sound marine environment.

“What many people don’t realize as they drive along the Sea-to-Sky highway is that there is an absolutely stunning, secret underwater world right in our own Howe Sound backyard,” says Adam Taylor, a local scuba diver and marine conservationist. “For instance, recently discovered glass sponge reefs which were thought to have gone extinct 40 million years ago are an important habitat to Howe Sound and their continued protection is needed for a healthy ecosystem to thrive. We’re pleased to see the Britannia Mine Museum promoting the story of the environmental remediation, recovery and protection of this beautiful part of the country.”

In addition, the permanent outdoor “**Foundations**” exhibit features:

- What life was like in the early mining days at Britannia and how a century makes a resilient community,
- The Britannia Mine environmental remediation story and how it has contributed to Howe Sound’s continued recovery and regeneration,
- An original 3D interactive sculptural piece conceptualized and fabricated by internationally renowned artist **Ross Agro of Agro Arts** based in Mission, BC, who has worked on numerous projects with the Museum and is best known for the “Incredible Hulk” model at Universal Studios in Los Angeles,
- A large 3D geographical model illustrating the size and scale of Britannia in its Howe Sound setting, fabricated by Britannia Beach’s own **Mark Sampson from The Model Shop**, with GIS data provided by North Vancouver cartographer Bob Plummer of Smart Map.
- Interpretive panel by the **Squamish Lillooet Cultural Centre** exploring the Squamish Nation relationship with Howe Sound prior to the discovery of natural resources.

In the 70 years (1904-1974) Britannia Mines operated, there was an environmental impact on Howe Sound due to acid rock drainage, which occurs naturally when rainwater reacts with oxygen and exposed minerals, though little was understood about its environmental impacts in the early years.

Environmental standards changed over the years and in 2004, the Province of BC worked with Golder Associates to commission EPCOR to build and operate a water treatment plant. Since the remediation began, clean water now flows into Howe Sound and Golder Associates have been monitoring the shoreline at Britannia for dissolved metal levels and for its ecology. Marine life has now returned and there have even been recent sightings of whales in the Howe Sound area.

Both exhibits launches on Saturday, May 26th during the Museum’s **Family Fun Day**, a family-friendly event focused on fun, hands-on and educational activities recognizing the contributions of modern mining to British Columbians. Family Fun Day activities include interactive mineral activities from [MineralsEd](#) to learn about fossils and minerals, hands-on geoscience activities from [Below BC](#), a costume photo booth by [Double Shutter Images](#), a Finning loader, and live concrete drilling demonstrations.

The Britannia Mine Museum provides unique and memorable experiences that engage visitors of all ages. Visitors can enjoy fun exhibits and crowd favourites like the **underground mine train**, the **historic 20-storey concentrator mill** and **gold panning**, and learn about **Britannia’s history** as one of the largest copper mines in the British Commonwealth in the 1930s.

The “**Foundations**” exhibit is supported by the Province of British Columbia through the *British Columbia | Canada 150: Celebrating B.C. Communities and their Contributions to Canada* grant program.

The Britannia Mine Museum is open seven days a week from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. with guided tours throughout the day (last tour at 3 p.m.). Visit www.britanniamuseum.ca for more details or call 1-800-896-4044 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.britanniaminemuseum.ca.

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