

ANNUAL REPORT

2025



alberniarts.com

Presented at the
Annual General Meeting
Char's Landing, 4815 Argyle St
Port Alberni, BC V9Y 1V9
May 11th 2026

łekoo (thank you) to the first nations Hupačasath & Čišaaʔath

We thank you and are grateful to be on the unceded traditional lands of the Hupačasath & Čišaaʔath First Nations, who have deep connections to the broader language and cultural group of Peoples known as the Nuu-chah-nulth (Nuučaałul).

These Nations knowledge and practices inspire us as we work together to create an inclusive and thriving creative community.

The arts council is guided by three foundational elements: Vision, Mission, and Values. Together, they provide clarity about where the organization is going, what it does, and how it chooses to operate.

- The Vision describes the future we are working toward.
- The Mission explains what we do and why we exist.
- Values describe how we work and what we believe in.

OUR VISION

We strengthen the Alberni Valley through diverse arts and cultural development, collaboration, and creative community engagement.

OUR MISSION

Alberni Arts embraces and supports arts and culture in all its forms, recognizing arts as a foundation on which to build a thriving, healthy, diverse community.

Through connections, supporting local initiatives, hosting creative events, and strengthening communication, we develop social and economic benefits for a vibrant Alberni Valley.



Smiling travellers on the 2025 "Crafty Cruise"

OUR VALUES

These seven values describe how we work and what we believe in.

Collaborative

We understand and value collaborative work. We work with artists, organizations, businesses, and community members to co-create programs, share resources, exchange knowledge, and work collectively to strengthen arts and culture in the community.

Connective

We are creative connectors. We lead with clear, intentional communication that builds meaningful relationships and connects people, ideas, and creative voices across the community.

Inclusive

We seek and share new voices. We welcome and respect people of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities, ensuring everyone has a place in the arts, and everyone can share their voice safely.

Sustainable

We're here for the long-haul. We make thoughtful, responsible decisions that support the long-term health, stability, and growth of the arts, our organization and the Alberni Valley.

Dynamic

We stay relevant. We encourage creativity, innovation, and adaptability to keep arts experiences vibrant, engaging and responsive to the needs of the Alberni Valley.

Intergenerational

We believe the arts are for any age. We create opportunities for people of all ages to learn, participate, and share creative experiences together.

Accessible

We work to identify and remove barriers. We consistently aim to develop arts and cultural experiences that are open, welcoming, and available to everyone in the community.

Vision, Mission & Values were updated and approved March 2026.

A MESSAGE FROM AMY MAYO, CO-CHAIR

On behalf of the board, I would like to first acknowledge the invaluable work of the staff and volunteers in 2025. The year brought new challenges and focus for the long-term stability of the organization to benefit the community. We want to also thank the members and community for support in this transitional year, as tough decisions were made.

The focus of the year was the sustainability of the organization, with rising costs and a loss in 2024. We saw three major themes emerge: listening to our community, honoring our past, and moving forward together.

We kicked off 2025 with some housekeeping that we think matters: in February we added a student/senior artist membership rate, valuable for our tracking of intergenerational artists, ensuring they are represented. We also formalized how we develop and review events, utilizing an events rubric to gauge events against mission alignment, reconciliation, access/inclusion and diversity. Staff also prepare written overviews within two months of any major event, so we can store documented successes and ways to improve. This led into our feedback process, which is still in development.

In March, Jane Victoria King became the current representative at the City of Port Alberni Heritage Commission, an important relationship for an organization like ours. We also approved a board recruitment policy and application form, replacing past practices. Many governance development items were put on pause temporarily, as we began bigger conversations regarding our location and financial stability.

By April, the board engaged Realtor Jack Roland to explore alternative locations for our operations, as operating the gallery without a lease subsidy, with costs rising, wasn't sustainable. Board representatives also met with CAO Mike Fox, to revisit the discussion around a reduction to our lease and clarity on why the City will not support this request. Around the same time, we hired consultant Patricia Huntsman to support our long-awaited Strategic Planning process, as well as a financial analysis from ArtsBC and an HR analysis thanks to Community Futures. These discussions helped us explore closer relationships and partnerships with the city, as we move towards seeking modern arts council and municipal/regional agreements, such as fees for service agreements.

In July, Patricia Huntsman led us through a "primer" session — a chance to really understand what a modern arts council looks like before we dove into planning. This foundational understanding led to the drafting of the Strategic framework, which began with community consultation.

A MESSAGE FROM AMY MAYO, CO-CHAIR

We launched our community consultations with a sticker survey at the Fall Fair, a digital Arts & Culture survey and artist Roundtables, giving members and artists a direct voice as we navigated the gallery's future. At this same time, we announced we will be moving and closing the Grove Gallery, leading to honest, difficult yet necessary conversations. We also held a 'sounding board' at the Harbour Quay, inviting walking traffic to engage in several questions about the future of arts & culture.

In September, the board made the difficult decision to eliminate the gallery program in its current form, with a clear intention to pursue rent-free spaces for a future community gallery model. The state of the Permanent Art Collection prompted some of the hardest conversations of the year. The board explored deaccessioning the Permanent Art Collection (PAC), noting the imminent need to better store and care for the works, as we are not currently capable of doing so. Thankfully, this led to passionate community members stepping forward to put pressure on not only ourselves, but the City of Port Alberni to find a solution together. We're grateful to the City of Port Alberni for providing temporary storage for the collection while we work through the path forward, establishing a formal committee in 2026 to navigate the ethical, legal, and financial considerations carefully. The collection is current not being deaccessioned until the committee, community and board further explore the issue and create sustainable solutions.

October was a turning point. The board approved a partnership intent with the Chamber of Commerce, moving the Arts Council to the Visitor Centre offices in 2026, renting space and building joint benefits. We gave notice to end our current lease as of February 28, 2026. November was about setting the foundation for what comes next. The moving of our operations was a final, immense task to our board and staff in the year, but is absolutely necessary for our future.

We enter 2026 with purpose, strong partnerships, and a community that has consistently shown it values what we do. That means everything. Thank you to our board, our staff, our artists, and everyone who walked through our doors this year.

With gratitude,



Amy Mayo, Co-Chair of the Board of Directors
Community Arts Council of the Alberni Valley



Smiling guests at the 2025 "Children's Arts Festival"

TOP STATISTICS FOR 2025

12

The Grove Gallery held 12 gallery exhibitions. Notably, our annual High School student exhibit themed on social justice issues.

14

We held 14 community events, partnering on an additional 5 events, hosted 2 major festivals, delivered 38 days of art-making programming, and awarded a youth arts bursary.

176

The Arts Council held 176 active members in 2025.

1,754

Within our programming, we saw over 120 volunteers who supported us with a total of 1754 hours

9,120

Within our programming, we engaged with over 9,120 members of the Alberni Valley community

12,466

The Grove Gallery saw 12,466 visitors throughout the year.

12,772

The Arts Council paid \$12,772 to local artists through its events and programming

37,487

The Grove Gallery paid \$37,487 to artists on consignment in the giftshop.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS WHO SERVED IN 2025

President
Mike Hill

Vice President
James Street

Secretary
Brianna Harvey

Treasurer
Amy Mayo

Directors at Large (alphabetical)

Kim Babin
Nicole Crouch
Suzanne Dube
Tracy Fenner
Jane Victoria King
Tamsin Miller
Claudia Romaniuk
Randy Smith

STAFF IN 2025

Arts Administrator
Angela Skaley

Gallery Coordinator
Hatchet Craig

Gift Shop Coordinator
Mary-Ann McGrath
Adrianna Miranda

Gallery Attendant
Milo Dvorak-Charlesworth

VOLUNTEERS

We are grateful for the enormous support received from all our volunteers in all areas. In 2025, we logged over 1,500 volunteer hours! Without volunteer support, we would not be able to accomplish all that we do.

CONTRACTORS

In 2025, we collaborated with contractors who have allowed us to excel in our community offerings. A very heart-felt thank you to Tracy Fenner who managed and operated our 'Teas at the Mill' event series impeccably. As well, a huge thank you to our bookkeeper Debbie Pollievre who has assisted us in monthly financial oversight and reporting for 2025.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

We work cooperatively with many organizations in our role as advocate for the arts community and as an agency for cultural development.

In 2025, we maintained strong working relationships with community partners:

- City of Port Alberni
- Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Arrowsmith Rotary Club
- Community Futures
- Alberni Valley Makerspace
- Portal Players
- ArtRave

We participate in the following committees and networks:

- Heritage Committee
- Alberni Child & Youth Network
- Youth Planning Committee
- Alberni Valley Learning Council
- Harbour Quay Merchants
- Arts BC Roundtable
- Artsvest

A MESSAGE FROM ANGELA SKALEY, ARTS ADMINISTRATOR

2025 was one of the most dynamic years of growth for the Grove Gallery and Community Arts Council, as we saw operations (grants, gallery sales, gift shop sales, and sponsorships) grow substantially! From a busy season of workshops and events, to meaningful new partnerships, to the difficult but necessary process of strategic transition, this year demanded flexibility, courage, and hard work. I am proud of what our team and community accomplished together.



"60 Years of Alberni Arts" exhibit display at the Grove Gallery

Our exhibition year opened with "60 Years of Alberni Arts" and including the always-meaningful ADSS Student Exhibit, titled "Voices Unveiled", which celebrated themes of social justice, environmental activism, and identity. Three awards were presented for most creative, most thought provoking, and community favorite, thanks to a generous donation by the Alberni Toy Run. We are happy to have exhibited a variety of diverse mediums and themes, for an engaging year of visual arts.

The year began with Mary-Ann McGrath's departure, who was a longstanding gallery staff and assisted us in the move from the Rollin centre to the Harbour Quay. Her hard work and dedication is appreciated and recognized, and we wish her the best in her future endeavours and powerful performances as a member of the Portal Players. We saw the welcome addition of Adrianna Derbyshire, hired in response to the BCAC Early Career Development Grant, which supported 43 weeks of an administrative mentorship for Hatchet Craig. Adrianna quickly became an invaluable part of the team, reorganizing and managing the gift shop, working directly with artists, teaching Watercolour Wednesdays, and supporting exhibitions.

The gift shop saw exciting additions this year, including new work from woodworkers, local first nations jewelry, prints, magnets, and locally themed stickers. Demand for Port Alberni-specific products has been enthusiastic, and we had been actively expanding our offerings to meet it.



Artwork in the Grove Gallery gift shop

A MESSAGE FROM ANGELA SKALEY, ARTS ADMINISTRATOR

We also welcomed Milo Dvorak-Charlesworth who assisted us in expanding our hours to Sundays, as well as hosting Kids Drop-In Saturdays. Milo taught kids workshops specific to programming, such as aligned with The Great Bloom touring exhibit. During these free drop-in sessions, children crafted a "Mailfly" finger puppet, and took home a scavenger hunt to prepare for the live performance.

Our programming was lively and well-received throughout the year. Highlights included the Learn to Weave workshop with the Fibre Guild, the return of Social Studio sessions, a Playhouse Paint Night, Crafty Cruise aboard the Frances Barkley and much more. This very demanding schedule was only possible thanks to the mentorship of Hatchet Craig, thanks to the BCAC Early Career Development Grant.



Milo hosting a free drop-in art making workshop for families, leading to "The Great Bloom" event.

Hatchet worked alongside myself, learning the monthly administrative process, sitting in on meetings, learning partnership development and event management. Many communications tasks were taken over by him as well. His flexibility in his mentorship was notable. One particular task was in regards to the Permanent Art Collection. Hatchet catalogued, documented, and wrapped over 120 pieces of art.



Anne Ostwald from ADSS, Marnie Grimes from Toy Run, and Angela Skaley from the Arts Council, proudly supporting the ADSS Exhibit.

We were very proud of the year we developed and provided to the community, which has set forth a highly engaged community. This community has shown support for us, and we are working hard to ensure that the next stage in our organization's evolution is one that is focused on shared communications, honoring our past and developing a future together.

GALLERY EXHIBITIONS

"60 Years of Alberni Arts" Jan. 6 – Feb. 1

This exhibit will explore the past 60 years with a roadmap on the gallery walls, incorporating text, imagery, and drawing.

"Iconic Alberni" Feb. 4 – Mar 1

Showcasing local landmarks through the artistic lens of our community members and also supports the Arrowsmith Rotary in developing a fundraising puzzle. A cash prize for the artwork selected to become the puzzle was awarded to Kama Money.

"Feathers and Foliage" by Pauline Surrell, Mar 4 – Mar 29

Pauline, a self-taught artist, typically creates what she is inspired by in the moment, be it a particular spot on one of our many hiking trails, the local wildlife, her pets, even old barns with their rustic charm.

"It's a Long Story..." by Ann McIvor & Sue Thomas, Apr 1 – Apr 26

Ann McIvor and Sue Thomas's work centers around themes of nature. These two often trek out into nature whether it's a hike or a plein air expedition.

"The Wednesday Collection" by the Alberni Valley Wednesday Painters, Apr 29 – May 24

A group exhibition featuring paintings, drawing and unique mediums on display, such as paverpol, and fiber art.

"Voices Unveiled: A Youth's Perspective on Art, Social Justice, and Climate Change" by Alberni District Secondary Students, May 27 – Jun 14

A powerful and unfiltered expression of our youth responding to urgent challenges of our time.

"Fluid Motion" by Julia Oscarson, Jun 17 – Jul 12

An exploration of flow within nature, creativity and ourselves. Exploring the interplay between abstraction and realism using fish as the central motif.

"Sea Level" by Faye Hoffman, Jul 15 – Aug 9

Watercolour and pottery exploring observations and experiences walking the waterways of Port Alberni.

"Coastal Craftsmen" by Todd Robinson & Adam McLellan, Aug 11 – Sep 6

Two woodworkers drawn to Vancouver Island and inspired by its beautiful and distinct coastline.

GALLERY EXHIBITIONS CONTINUED

“Wild Fish” by Douglas Blackwell (Sockeye King), Sep 9 – Oct 4

Lifetime fisherman who utilizes the Gyotaku style to print and explore fish, bringing awareness to habitat preservation.

“Sq. Ft” Members Show, Oct 6 – Nov 8

This exhibit, in the style of other popular “Square Foot Shows”, is both a celebration of our local artists and fundraiser for the arts council, all while providing the public a fun and accessible way to purchase artwork for themselves, friends or family.

“Mistletoe Market” Members Sale, Nov 17 – Dec 23

Starting early November, discover a plethora of local handcrafted goods, including ornaments, jewelry, pottery, paintings, and more! With something for everyone, you’re bound to find that perfect gift for the people you love.

FESTIVALS

- **“Alberni Valley Children’s Arts Fest”**, Feb. 16, Gyro Youth Centre
- **“Łuukʷatquuʔis Harbour Quay Light-Up and the Great Sail Past”**, Nov. 28, Harbour Quay

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

- “Photoshoot Fundraiser” featuring Ali Penko, Jan. 26, The Grove Gallery
- “Playhouse Paint Night”, Apr. 10, The Capitol Theatre
- “Book Sale and Literary Celebration”, May 9 & 10, Athletic Hall
- “Solstice Crafty Cruise”, Jun. 20, aboard the MV Francis Barkley
- “Pet Portraits”, Sep. 9, Arrowsmith Breweing Company
- “Rummage Sale”, Oct. – Dec., The Grove Gallery

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES/PARTNERSHIPS

- “2026 Info Session”, Jan. 23, The Grove Gallery
- “Spring Equinox Market at Cherry Creek”, Mar. 22, Cherry Creek Hall
- “The Great Bloom”, touring child and youth performance, Apr. 19, ADSS Auditorium
- “Dock + Mural Painting and Youth Mentorship”, May 3, 24, 25, The Dock+
- “Canada Day Celebration”, artist management, Jul. 1, The Harbour Quay
- “Teas at the Mill”, Jul. 6, 20, Aug. 3, McLean Mill
- “Salmon Festival”, live painters management, Aug. 29, The Harbour Quay
- “Thank you to Firefighters” letter writing campaign, Sep. 1 – 14, The Grove Gallery
- “Kama Money Celebration of Life”, Sep. 27, The Grove Gallery
- “AVCAF Planning Party”, Oct. 23, The Grove Gallery

WORKSHOPS (ADULT) AT THE GROVE GALLERY

- "Learn to Weave" series by the Alberni Valley Fibre Guild, Jan 18 & 19
- "Social Studio" series by Jillian Mayne, Jan. 16, 30, Feb. 13m Mar. 27
- "Abstract Painting" by Stephen Mann, Feb. 1
- "Watercolour Wednesdays, 18 classes from Apr. to Dec.
- "Pride Watercolour Classes", May 31

WORKSHOPS (CHILD/YOUTH) AT THE GROVE GALLERY

- "The Great Bloom artmaking drop-in", Mar. 29, Apr. 5, 12
- "Kids Drop-In Art making", Mar. 1, 8, 15, 22, 27
- "Pride Workshops", Jun. 8
- "Port Day Art Making", with Kalin McDowell, Jun. 14
- "Canada Day Workshop" with Julia Oscarson, Jul. 1

STRATEGIC PLANNING, COMMUNITY SURVEYING AND DEVELOPMENT

- "Fall Fair Sticker Survey", Sep. 4-7, The Fall Fair grounds
- "Strategic Planning Primer" with Patricia Huntsman, Jul. 21, The Grove Gallery
- "Artist Roundtable 1", Nov. 1, The Grove Gallery
- "Arts & Culture Roundtable" hosted by Arts BC, Nov. 8, Tofino Community Hall
- "Artist Roundtable 2", Nov. 17, The Grove Gallery



(left image, left to right) Anna Berry, Cheryl Hamilton, Kama Money, Terry Deakin, Pam Craig.
(right image) Kama Money's winning artwork, depicting The Frances Barkley

We want to recognize a special member of our community who passed too soon. Kama Money, seen here being awarded the prize for the "Iconic Alberni" fundraising puzzle prize, from the Arrowsmith Rotary. Kama was an active artist and beloved member of our community. Kama passed in late 2025, leaving a legacy of kindness and cancer advocacy.

ARTS ADVOCACY, MARKETING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

We maintained a strong public presence as community leaders in the Alberni Valley by:

- Writing weekly articles in local newspaper
- Contributing regular features to "The Scoop" video news segments for social media and local television
- Maintaining a monthly email newsletter, weekly social media posting, active website blog, and website events calendar
- Sharing events with local groups
- Attending biweekly zoom roundtables hosted by Arts BC
- Managing community board for posters of local events
- Selling tickets for local non-profits
- Actively developing partnerships that are mutually beneficial.

ONGOING FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

- Spring & Fall raffle baskets and 50/50
- In-gallery donation box
- Bottle depot donations

AWARDS AND BURSARIES

Each year through its bursary programs the Community Arts Council supports young artists in the community who are continuing their post-secondary education in the arts field.

The recipient in 2025 of the \$250 bursary was Eli Ginger. Congratulations!



Angela Skaley, awarding Eli Ginger, the 2025 recipient of the young artist bursary.



Spring Raffle Basket winners

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Community Arts Council of the Alberni Valley acknowledges the financial support of the following public agencies in 2025:

- BC Arts Council, Operations
- BC Arts Council, Programming
- Province of British Columbia, Gaming Grant
- City of Port Alberni, Community Investment Program
- Business / Arts Community Matching Program
- Alberni Valley Community Foundation, Project Driven Grant
- Alberni Valley Toy Run
- Arrowsmith Rotary Foundation

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

We receive additional funding from the following:

- Alberni Arts endowment "Forever Fund", interest
- Directors & officers insurance, administration fee
- Administration fees for services related to arts community development
- Product sales, such as in-house designed stickers



λuuk^watquu?is Harbour Quay Light-Up and the Great Sail Past

We are very proud of 2025 Harbour Quay Light-Up, as it was a testament to community collaboration and partnership. Alongside the Sail Past, run by the Blue Marlin Inn, and supported by the City of Port Alberni, the event saw thousands of attendees, more than any Arts Council driven event we have on record. The event saw the usual lighting of the tree, Santa and the lit-up boat competition, plus many activities, such as free hot dogs, hot chocolate, art making, fireworks, and music. Plus, community groups such as the Riders of the Alberni Valley (ROAV) who donated over 10 bikes to children and youth during the event. We are so grateful for the many sponsors who made this event possible.

THANK YOU TO OUR LONG-TIME SUPPORTERS

The following people are also acknowledged for their outstanding support of the Community Arts Council of the Alberni Valley:

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

Robert Aller (1970)
Richard Christie (1971)
Ed Gibney (1971)
Jan Peterson (1979)
Meg Scoffield (1980)
Margita Hartmann (1992)
Faye Marcellus (1992)
Isabelle Redford (2004)
Marta Williamson (2017)

HONOUR IN THE ARTS RECIPIENTS

Aileen Devereux (1981)
Merwyn E.B. McVicar (1983)
Peter Szachiv (1987)
Ted McKay (1989)
Robert Aller (1995)
Shannon Kjernisted (2019)
Elspeth Watson (2019)
Dorothy Nicholson (2021)
Norman Nicholson (2021)

PAST VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

Lily Diotte (1999)
Lawrence Gavelin (2000)
Elsie Reynolds (2001)
Joan Roach (2001)
Lawrence Gavelin (2015)
Janice Konkin (2021)

Anna Cole (2019)
Cheryl Granneman - PAACL (2019)
Brittney Corringe - PAACL (2019)
Sherry Williams (2019)
Trent Martin (2020)



Angela Skaley, Arts Administrator and Hatchet Craig, Gallery Coordinator attending the Chamber of Commerce Breakfast at the McLean Mill.

IMAGES FROM 2025



(top left) "The Great Bloom" performance on stage, (top right) a family at the Children's Arts Festival enjoying the Makerspace booth, (middle left) hanging the "Sq.Ft" Show at the Grove Gallery, (middle right) Aaron Watts from the Čisaaʔath nation performing a welcoming ceremony for the Children's Arts Festival, (bottom left) a family making "Gyotaku" fish printing at the Canada Day Celebration, (bottom right) Arts Council visit to the AV Museum for a private tour thanks to Sylvia Gropp, Education Curator.

IMAGES FROM 2025



(top left) Adrianna Derbyshire installing the Harbour Quay Sounding Board, (top right) a Social Studio workshop session, (bottom left) the illuminated Clock Tower during the Light-Up, (mid right) Elliott Hearte from Arts BC speaks at the Arts & Culture Roundtable in Tofino, (bottom right) the Harbour Quay Light-Up festivities featuring hand-crafted luminaries provided by ArtRave.

IMAGES FROM 2025



(top left) Outside the Grove Gallery with window painting by Josee Baillargeon, (top right) Local poet Stephen Novik performing at the annual Book Sale, (middle left) volunteers painting The Dock+ in partnership with the Port Authority, (middle right) finished paintings from the Playhouse Paint Night, (bottom left) Xixi and The Bandit performing at the Playhouse Paint Night, (bottom right) a group of friends enjoying the Solstice Crafty Cruise near the oyster shucking station.

