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# NEWS RELEASE

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## **The Reach: Gallery Museum Abbotsford Officially Opens**

**Abbotsford, September 22, 2008** – A new era for Abbotsford began today with the official opening of the first of the three new civic buildings planned for the community. The new Abbotsford Cultural Centre opened with a spirited procession of school children and dignitaries accompanied by the MEI Marching Band. The Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, Steven L. Point, local officials and business leaders cut the ribbon and unveiled the new facility name: The Reach: Gallery Museum Abbotsford.

Abbotsford Mayor, George F. Ferguson, officially welcomed visitors on behalf of Abbotsford City Council.

“Our community has long needed an art gallery and museum and I’m very proud that this day has come in Abbotsford,” said Mayor Ferguson. “This will be a place to showcase our talent, to celebrate our rich history and share our diverse culture and creative spirit with the rest of the world. “

Councillor Bruce Beck, who was also the Chair of the Plan A Steering Committee, along with the President of the Board of Directors, Milt Walker, unveiled the commemorative plaques.

“This opening is a milestone for the City of Abbotsford,” said Councillor Beck. “This facility is a legacy for future generations of Abbotsford residents. I congratulate everyone involved in the project that saw the vision for our community. It was delivered by the residents for the benefit of generations to come.”

The budget for the Cultural Centre was \$10.8 million dollars, and was completed on time and is expected to be \$347,000 under budget. The Cultural Centre was originally approved with 4,000 square feet of exhibit space, but has been delivered with 6,000 square feet of exhibit space. The 20,000 square foot facility houses an art gallery, museum, archives, studios for public programming, and collection storage spaces for art and heritage artifacts.

The building also followed sustainable construction practices for reducing its environmental impact. Contractors used local products whenever possible including Clayburn Brick and local concrete. The building features energy efficient lighting and water efficient fixtures as well as a geothermal heating and cooling system.

A variety of free activities are planned for opening week, September 22 to 27. The building is open to the public from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Activities include live lunch time entertainment, guided tours, artist demos and Taiko drumming workshops. Current exhibits include 'People of the River, People of the Land, People of the Valley', 'Keeping the West Alive' by Abbotsford artist Hank Funk and 'The Big Picture', an Abbotsford student show.

Opening week event details are available at [www.thereach.ca](http://www.thereach.ca)

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*Attached: Facility Backgrounder and Opening Week Schedule.*



## **INFORMATION SHEET**

### **Abbotsford Cultural Centre**

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Abbotsford's new cultural centre is envisioned to be a memorable landmark building providing an open platform for the cultural life of the community and its visitors. The facility will be a destination for visitors, providing dynamic exhibitions and interactive exhibits telling the Abbotsford story and will engage visitors and encourage active participation.



The Cultural Centre is a key deliverable, identified in the Parks, Recreation & Culture Master Plan. The initial conception of the cultural centre was a direct result of the Arts and Heritage Steering Committee's 2006 program study and business plan. The Arts and Heritage Steering Committee is made up of community members and represents a cross section of arts and museum members. A sub-committee, of the Parks, Recreation & Culture Commission, this group has made the majority of recommendations and has worked closely with the architects in fine-tuning the design and maximizing the functionality of the space.

### **Design-Build Cultural Centre Team**

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- MHPM Project Managers Inc.
- PCL Constructors West Coast Inc.
- Hughes Condon Marler Architects
- Toby Russell Buckwell and Partners, Design Management
- D. Jenson & Associates, Exhibit Design
- Read Jones Christoffersen, Structural Design
- Stantec Consulting, Mechanical & Electrical Design

### **New Facility Name**

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- The Reach: Gallery Museum Abbotsford

### **Board of Directors**

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|---|----------------------|
| • Suzanne Greening – Executive Director | • Myrtle-Anne Rempel |
| • Janet Barrie                          | • Jati Sidhu         |
| • Kim Brar                              | • Perry Smith        |
| • Dianne Common                         | • Ted Strocel        |
| • Jane Darville                         | • Milt Walker        |
| • Madeleine Hardin                      |                      |
| • Andrew Franklin                       |                      |

### **Ex-Officio Members**

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- Mayor George F. Ferguson
- Juanita Gosling
- Satvir Gill
- Mark Taylor

### **Location**

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- 32388 Veterans Way, Thunderbird Memorial Square, Abbotsford, BC, V2T 0B3
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### **Cost**

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- \$10.85 Million Budget
- Project is expected to come in approximately \$347,000 under budget

### **Schedule**

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- Construction began June 2007, completed on time
- Grand Opening September 22, 2008 at 1:30pm

### **Facility Square Footage**

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- 20,000 square feet total
- 6,000 square feet of exhibit space

### **Building Details**

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- Environmentally controlled and secure gallery space for traveling and locally developed exhibits
- Built on sustainable construction principles using existing land and local products whenever possible ie.: Clayburn brick
- Storm waters diverted to a bio-swail, returning water to replenish the aquifer
- Concrete floors
- Energy efficient lighting including occupancy activated lighting and external LED lighting
- Water efficient fixtures
- Under floor radiant heating reduces building energy usage
- Geothermal heating and cooling system
- All public spaces are located on one level, making the facility accessible without ramps or stairs

### **Archives**

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- Archive space is designed to operate like a library, giving public access to all records and allowing the space to function as a heritage resource centre
- State-of-the-art heating and ventilation system, cost effective and designed for sensitive archival storage needs

### **Multi-Functional Use Space**

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- 2,000 square feet of multi-use space that can be reconfigured depending on size and scale of chosen exhibits
- This space can be fitted with moveable walls to suit a variety of community groups, events and exhibits

### **Studio Space**

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- Dedicated studio space
- Two studios are versatile and various sizes that have equipment such as sinks, tables and easels to accommodate a variety of activities including classes

### **Parking**

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- Direct access on west side from Veterans Way