

News Release

For Immediate Release
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Nominations Now Open for the *SS Beaver* Medal Award for Maritime Excellence



The Maritime Museum of British Columbia is once again inviting nominations for the *SS Beaver* Medal, an annual award that recognizes outstanding achievements in B.C.'s marine sector.

Nominations are encouraged for individuals who have made noteworthy contributions to our Province's marine interests, including but not limited to: science, technology, business, applications of maritime skills, nautical heritage and culture, and academic offerings. An award is also made to recognize a noteworthy organization, vessel or technological project.

"We have been encouraged by the growing diversity of nominations as the award becomes more widely known", said Jan Drent, a member of the medal steering committee. "The 2017 competition will be our sixth one. The marine sector generates roughly 8 percent of B.C.'s GDP and this involves a wide span of activities. We hope that the *SS Beaver* award will help raise awareness about this diverse sector. The list of past winners ranges from entrepreneurs to naval architects to publishers, authors, historians, a hydrographer, innovators in technology, a marine artist and a museum curator. "The Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable Judith Guichon, presented the 2016 awards in November to Captain David Brown, deep sea mariner and shipping manager, Captain Dave Woodman whose work collating Inuit oral history contributed to the successful searches for the Franklin expedition, Doctor John Harland, retired physician who is an international authority on sailing ship technology and John Horton, marine artist and outstanding search and rescue volunteer. BC Ferries was recognized by a special award.

The gold-plated medal is struck from copper salvaged from the pioneering paddlewheel steamship *SS Beaver*, built in England in 1835 for the Hudson's Bay Company. After rounding the treacherous Cape Horn, *Beaver* reached the northwest coast where she served for 53 years. This iconic vessel pioneered commercial navigation on the BC coast as a floating trading post, hydrographic survey ship and towboat. She grounded near Vancouver in 1888 and after foundering, some of her machinery was recovered providing the metal for the Beaver Medal.



“To our knowledge, no other award encompasses all aspects of our coastal industry, history, technology, or practical application of skills,” said former Ambassador and retired Admiral John Anderson. “What a fitting namesake—the Beaver—or Castor Canadensis.”

The Museum urges members of the public to nominate outstanding marine achievers for the SS *Beaver* Medal. Potential recipients will be selected by an awards committee with members from the Chamber of Shipping of BC; the Prince Rupert Port Authority; BC Ferries, a former Coast Guard Captain, a distinguished marine historian a well-known marine writer and a past president of the Maritime Museum.

Nominations for 2017 close on May 20. Nomination information, easy-to-complete forms and due dates are located at [www. http://mmbc.bc.ca/about-2/s-s-beaver-medal/](http://mmbc.bc.ca/about-2/s-s-beaver-medal/).

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