



## **News Release**

For Immediate Release  
20 February 2018

### **Fifth Nautical Nights Speaker Series Featuring Robert Turner**

The Maritime Museum of BC is thrilled to host our fifth Nautical Nights Speaker Series featuring Robert Turner, who will speak on Canadian Pacific's B.C. Coast Steamship service and the challenges of the coast. This Speaker Series runs on the last Thursday of every month from September to April, with the exception of December.

#### **Talk Summary**

The Canadian Pacific's Princess steamships helped shape the history of coastal British Columbia, Washington and Alaska from the early 1900s until the 1970s. Not only were they some of the finest vessels working on the entire Pacific Coast of North America, they were also some of the fastest and most luxurious. Elegant and well built, they carried generations of thousands of travellers, families, seasonal workers, members of the armed forces, trappers, miners, loggers and others on fast inter-city services, on cruises to Alaska, and on services to remote logging camps, fish canneries, mines and settlements.

The west coast is treacherous, and it has claimed many fine vessels including the Princess Sophia in 1918 and the Princess Kathleen in 1953 and most recently the Queen of the North. It took skill and experience to navigate this rugged coast especially in the days before many areas were systematically charted, and when GPS, radar and other modern aids to navigation were just distant dreams.

The Princesses became legends along the coast and decades after they have passed into history, vessels such as the Princess Maquinna, Princess Joan, Princess May, Princess Mary, Princess Marguerite and Princess Kathleen are well remembered.

The program will feature many photographs and stories of the Princesses and the people who travelled or worked on them.

  
The  
**MARITIME MUSEUM**  
of BRITISH COLUMBIA



**Photo of Robert Turner**



## **About Robert Turner**

Robert Turner is the author or coauthor of 18 books on transportation history and several others are in preparation. He has also written over 400 articles and reviews in magazines and journals. He has given numerous lectures and over 4,000 of his photographs have been widely published in books and magazines and well as being featured in exhibits.

He is a Curator Emeritus at the Royal British Columbia Museum in Victoria after having been their Chief of Historical Collections for many years. As a heritage consultant, he has extensive experience with heritage sites, historic railway operations, restoration projects and museum developments from many countries. He has worked for the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Canadian Parks Service, the City of Vancouver, the Prince George Railway and Forestry Museum, the Dawson City Museum, the City of Nelson, the Canadian Museum of Rail Travel, the Cowichan Valley Regional District (Kinsol Trestle Restoration), and a number of other institutions and government agencies. Since 1988 he has been Historian and restoration and interpretation advisor for the SS Moyie National Historic Site at Kaslo, BC. He has also provided volunteer services to many heritage and community organizations throughout British Columbia and Yukon.

In 2017 he was awarded a Certificate of Merit by the British Columbia Historical Federation "For being an internationally recognized authority on British Columbia transport history; an expert heritage consultant; and one of BC's premier published historians." In 2005 he was awarded the *Life Achievement Award* by the Canadian Railroad Historical Association for his many contributions to Canada's railway heritage. Five of his books, *Vancouver Island's Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway* (co-authored with Don MacLachlan), *Steam Along the Boundary* and *The Skyline Limited* (both co-authored with Dave Wilkie), and *Logging by Rail*, and *West of the Great Divide* have won the Canadian Railroad Historical Association's *Book Award* and he has also received the American Association for State and Local History's *Award of Merit for Excellence*. His book *Those Beautiful Coastal Liners* received a Certificate of Honour from the British Columbia Historical Federation. He was also awarded the *Norris Adams Memorial Award* by the Pacific Coast Division of the Canadian Railroad Historical Association for outstanding service in the preservation of railway history.

His newest book is *The Klondike Gold Rush Steamers, A History of Yukon River Steam Navigation*. Other recent titles include *The Canadian Pacific's Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway, 1905-1949*, (2012) and *Vancouver Island's Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway, 1949-2013*, (2013) both co-authored with Donald MacLachlan. Books in preparation include a maritime history focusing on the coastal steamers of the Klondike and Alaska



gold rushes, and an extensive treatment of the last uses of steam locomotives around the world based on a decade of extensive world-wide travels, interpretative photography and historical research in remote and diverse places including China, Vietnam, Burma, Romania, Paraguay, Java, Botswana, Inner Mongolia, and many others.

Nautical Nights Speaker Series is hosted at the Maritime Museum of BC at 634 Humboldt St.. Doors will open at 6:30pm with the talk starting at 7:00pm. Drinks are available by donation.

Tickets are:

- \$8 Museum Members
- \$10 General Admission

Tickets are on sale now and will be sold till the day of the event, or till sold out. Tickets can be reserved directly through the Museum by either coming in in-person, or by calling 250-385-4222 ext. 103. Tickets are also sold online and can be purchased here:

<http://mmbc.bc.ca/events/nautical-nights-speaker-series-robert-turner/>

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For further information, please contact:

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