

## The British Columbia Historical Federation Preserving British Columbia's Colourful History

**T**he British Columbia Historical Federation has worked to preserve British Columbia's history for 85 years.

Its first secretary, John Forsyth, the provincial librarian, played an important role in its humble beginnings. Finding that many local societies were interested in matters relating to British Columbia's history but were duplicating their efforts, the founders organized a public meeting in Victoria in October 1922.

There, they formed the British Columbia Historical Association to coordinate their efforts and to act as an auxiliary to the Provincial Archives Department. A year later, the Association had 53 individual members "in distant parts of the province" and 3 affiliated societies.

To reflect the fact that it is a federation of societies as well as of individual members, the Association changed its name to the British Columbia Historical Federation (BCHF) in 1983. The Federation currently has 108 members comprised of historical societies, museums, archives, and historical sites with over 10,000 individual members, plus 11 affiliate societies.

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The Federation promotes historical writing and Websites reflecting BC's colourful history by awarding a number



*Opening remarks by The Honourable Iona Campagnolo, Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia*



*Jane Watt, winner of the BCHF 24th Annual Book Awards, with BCHF President Patricia Roy (left), The Honourable Iona Campagnolo, and Russ Fuller, Victoria BCHF organizer*

of prizes. This year's 24th Annual Competition for writers of BC history offered a medal as well as certificates and monetary awards for the best books on BC history published in the previous year.

This year, *High Water: Living with Fraser Floods* by K. Jane Watt, published by the Dairy Historical Society of British Columbia, received the Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for historical writing. The medal was presented by the Honourable Iona Campagnolo at Government House.



Approaching Craigdarroch Castle, Victoria, BC



Fort Rodd Hill Lighthouse, Esquimalt Harbour

The Federation also offers the W. Kaye Essay Scholarships for essays written by students at BC colleges and universities and the Anne and Philip Yandle prize to the author of the best article published each year in the Federation's quarterly magazine, *British Columbia History*. In addition, a cash award is given annually to recognize a Website that contributes to the understanding and appreciation of British Columbia's past.

The BCHF promotes the preservation of materials and sites with the provincial and federal governments. It has a seat on the Stakeholder Advisory Committee of the Land Title and Survey Authority of British Columbia.



Conference Chair Russ Fuller passing over the Conference Yardstick to the 2008 New Westminster Conference Chair Jacqueline Gresko

**The Federation has also joined other historical societies in encouraging the federal government to preserve historic lighthouses.**

BCHF is actively promoting the creation of a provincial historic park in Black Canyon, the area between Alexandra Bridge and Hell's Gate in the Fraser Canyon. The park would include Anderson's Fur Brigade Trail.

The Federation has also joined other historical societies in encouraging the federal government to preserve historic lighthouses.

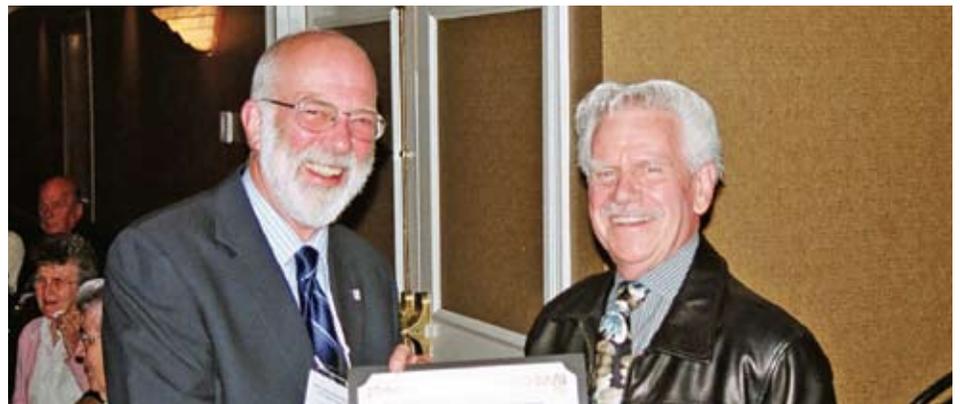
The Federation publishes the magazine, *British Columbia History*,

with historical articles about British Columbia and reviews of books relating to the province's history. Its quarterly newsletter offers information on events, programs, and exhibits throughout BC and provides members and others an opportunity to advertise sites, new publications, events, etc., to members, member societies, museums, and libraries in British Columbia and beyond.

For additional information about the Federation, its awards, its publications, and other activities, visit our new Website at [bchistory.ca](http://bchistory.ca). For other information, please contact Ron Hyde. ▲

**Ron Hyde is Honorary President of the British Columbia Historical Federation.**

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Author of this article Ron Hyde (right) presenting an Honorary Life Membership to Ron Welwood