

Department of Museum Volunteers: Celebrating 50 Years

Production: Ian Daffern and Jeun Lee

Narration: Koula Bouloukos

Media Productions, New Media Resources

Royal Ontario Museum

[Animated ROM logo appears with sound sting]

[Montage of members of the Department of Museum Volunteers (DMV) greeting the public] Female narrator: The ROM is fortunate to have inspired the support of a group of dedicated individuals who have freely given their time and efforts for over fifty years. More than just the ROM's public face, the Department of Museum Volunteers or DMV are part of its backbone.

[Black and white archival photograph of a ROM gallery in the 1950s] The DMV got its start in the late 1950s, *[black and white archival photograph of four women with an encased Far Eastern statue]* when a number of university graduates searched for a way to become more involved in the life of the museum. *[Panning view of a black and white archival photograph of a volunteer with a selection of textiles]* They offered their services to the curators, beginning by helping to care for the collections. *[Black and white photographic portrait of Joan Fitzpatrick, Joan Randall and Joan Thompson in the former Bishop White Gallery of Chinese Temple Art]* In 1957, they united to form the Members Volunteer Committee. Among this earliest group were Joan Randall and Joan Thompson.

[View of Joan Randall and Joan Thompson, seated in front of a pair of French doors] Joan Randall: oh I did hear a very sad story of how the ROM didn't have enough people that they could dust the Chinese books and that's how the three of us... Dibs Rhind, and Nora McRae and myself went to see if we couldn't start a thing up that would help the curators *[panning view of an archival photograph of three women at the foot of a large sculpture]*.

[View of Joan R and Joan T] Joan Thompson: And I was asked the 2nd year that it was in existence, by one of the people who had started it, if I would like to come and dust the Chinese books, and I said, are you crazy?*[Laughs]* I don't want to just come and dust books, I want to learn something.

[Panning view of the north wall of the Heritage building as seen from the interior of Hyacinth Gloria Chen Court, fade to a view of a volunteer greeting visitors, ambient noise of people moving through Chen Court throughout]

Narrator: Starting with less than a dozen, the DMV has grown to over six hundred members. [Close up of volunteer describing a small object to three young students] Each day, volunteers share a wealth of knowledge of museum artifacts and history. They offer guided tours in French and English [Panning archival photograph of a volunteer leading a tour in Samuel Hall Currelly Gallery] as well as provide gallery interpreter [panning overview of children in a classroom for ROMKids Explorers' Club] and educational programs [still close-up of two children folding paper in a ROMKids Explorers' Club].

[Still shot of volunteer preparing labels in a collections area] Behind the scenes, the DMV is there as well, [still shot of volunteers at a table in the DMV office] planning activities and offering support for museum curators [still shot of two volunteers at the reception desk of the DMV offices] and administration.

Other members run groups [series of still photograph of people participating in a Japanese tea ceremony] such as The Bishop White Committee who are dedicated to promoting Far East Studies.

[Still photograph of the engraved silver Clarkson Cup on a grey background]

Other DMV committees include Studies in Silver, [still photograph of painted, porcelain tureen, 962.193.21.A-B] Decorative Arts, [still photograph of three mannequins with denim jackets, behind glass with a banner for Indigo Blue] Textiles, [close-up of a painted portrait of a woman] and the Canadian collections.

[Close-up of William Thorsell, Director & CEO seated in his office]

William: I think people in the DMV honestly treasure the treasures of the ROM, I think that whether it's in Natural History or in World Cultures...their primary spark that sparks them is their own connection to the collections, to the intellectual content of the museum.

[View of a page from a DMV photo album showing a series of candid, archival photographs of DMV members during the 1980s]

Narrator: In 1987, a volunteer named Joan Fitzpatrick [panning down the page to a photograph of Joan] oversaw the creation of one of the DMV's lasting legacies to the ROM. The ROM Reproductions Shop [fade to archival image of the ROM Reproduction Shop when it was located

in the Rotunda] creates high quality replicas of well known pieces from the museum's collections *[series of two panning views of visitors in the new ROM Reproduction Shop, located within the Museum Store, on the first floor of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal]*. Since it began, the shop has raised over a million dollars for new acquisitions and research.

[Archival photograph of DMV members accepting a framed document]
Narrator: Over the years, the DMV has also offered great financial support to the Museum. *[Photograph of DMV members and ROM executives at a cake-cutting ceremony in the Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Gallery of China]* Together they have donated over 5 million dollars, *[photograph of DMV members, Michael Lee-Chin and other donors with a red, blue, and red model of Museum]* with an additional 1.3 million given by members during the Renaissance ROM campaign. *[Fade to photograph of three DMV members, smiling]* But none of this takes in to account their greatest gift: countless hours of volunteered time, *[still image of volunteer at a table in the DMV meeting room]* shared by the DMV's hundreds of members, all for the love of the ROM *[fade to photograph of a DMV party in the RBC Foundation Glass Room]*.

[View of Joan Randall and Joan Thompson, seated in front of a set of French doors] Joan T: it was the opportunity to learn and that to me, and to a lot of us, that was the big pull, it wasn't just dusting things *[black and white archival photograph of a man studying at a table in the Library]* or looking things you were actually learning *[photograph of a volunteer showing reptile specimens to a young boy]* and the conversations with the curators were unbelievably interesting and unforgettable *[photograph of volunteer leading a tour of a dinosaur exhibition]*.

[Close-up of William seated in his office]

William: You know I've often wondered why people give so much to the ROM through volunteering, DMV, and you think what are they getting back? *[Series of archival, candid photographs of volunteers in various locations around the Museum]* and I think what they get back, is a sense going back to the core mission of the museum; the vision of the museum; I think they get back the sense of wonder of what is here; I think they get back a lot of knowledge of what is here; I think they get back a lot of comradeship; friendship... and being part of that is a very fulfilling thing *[close-up of William]* on a human ground.

[Montage of volunteers at work in the ROM Reproduction shop, guiding tours and speaking with visitors around the Museum] Narrator: The

Department of Museum Volunteers is an integral part of the ROM.
Together they present a level of passion, dedication and selflessness
that is unmatched, for which the ROM will be forever grateful.

[Video ends with animated ROM logo and sound sting]