

September 30, 2016

The Royal BC Museum tunes up Lennon's Rolls

VICTORIA, BC – On Wednesday September 28, the Royal BC Museum brought the world-famous John Lennon 1965 Rolls-Royce Phantom V Touring Limousine out of storage for its annual spin, to ensure the mechanical longevity of this treasured piece of Beatles history.

“The main reason we run the car in this controlled situation is to ensure the mechanical parts—such as the suspension, wheel and transmission bearings, engine and exhaust—are lubricated by regular use and are running smoothly. Conservators first walk the track to ensure no small rocks can damage the vulnerable latex paint. It is a tightly monitored run and conservators check for vibration damage to the famous artwork,” says Dr. Lorne Hammond, Curator of History. “John Lennon’s Rolls-Royce has been running for over half a century. We do this to keep it in good order for the future.”

This Rolls-Royce delivered The Beatles to Buckingham Palace in 1965 to receive medals from the Queen. In 1967, John Lennon had the Rolls painted by artist Stephen Weaver in a Romany gypsy style that became synonymous with *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band*, the album they released a week after the freshly painted car was delivered to Lennon.

The Rolls-Royce was brought to America by John Lennon and Yoko Ono in 1970 then donated to the Smithsonian Institution in 1977. When it went to auction in 1985 BC businessman Jim Pattison purchased it for \$2.3 million. At the time it was the most expensive car in the world. Pattison generously donated the vehicle to the Royal BC Museum in 1987 after its display at Expo ‘86 in Vancouver.

It is the largest model made by the celebrated English car-manufacturing company. Lennon requested several customized updates, including modifying the rear seat to convert to a double bed. The 3,000 kilogram (6,600 pound) car has 5,800 kilometres (36,000 miles) on it, and is still in working order, 51 years later, thanks to the care of the team of Royal BC Museum conservators and curators, and contracted mechanics.

Experts available for interviews:

- George Field, Objects Conservator, Royal BC Museum
- Dr. Lorne Hammond, Curator, Human History, Royal BC Museum



Video footage of the maintenance run of the Rolls Royce is available here:
www.flickr.com/gp/36463010@N05/E9ZQZg

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To set up an interview please contact news@royalbcmuseum.bc.ca or call 250-387-3207.

About the Royal BC Museum

The Royal BC Museum explores the province's human history and natural history, advances new knowledge and understanding of BC, and provides a dynamic forum for discussion and a place for reflection. The museum and archives celebrate culture and history, telling the stories of BC in ways that enlighten, stimulate and inspire. Looking to the future, the Royal BC Museum will be a refreshed, modern museum, extending its reach far beyond Victoria as a world-class cultural venue and repository of digital treasures.

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