

BC Books Online: A Digital Collection

In 2007, a consortium of library organizations and publishers came together to initiate a project to deliver a digital collection of BC published books to the entire province. Building on the vision of the Libraries Without Walls strategic planning document initiated by Premier Gordon Campbell in 2004, **BC Books Online** supports equitable access to all British Columbians through internet technologies and collaboration among libraries and the private sector. This ground-breaking project will deliver a digital library collection to the BC public through school, public, and post-secondary libraries. It consists of a broad range of non-fiction titles from BC publishers that engage us and reflect who we are as British Columbians. The collection focuses on the genres of history, natural history, Aboriginal, arts and culture, political commentary, biography and autobiography, urban issues, the environment, and other contemporary issues that concern the people of this province.

BC's Literary Landscape

British Columbia is home to one of the most energetic, innovative, and entrepreneurial literary communities in the country. General trade, scholarly, children's, Aboriginal, and literary companies publish a diverse list of regional, national, and international titles. Roughly 1200 books are published each year generating sales of \$150 million plus. BC published writers and artists such as Douglas Coupland, David Suzuki, and Bill Reid have international reputations. Others such as M. Wylie Blanchet, Roderick Haig-Brown, and Terry Glavin represent the best of writing about our province. Aboriginal writers and those from BC's ethnic communities produce a literary culture of rich diversity and historical relevance.

A Pioneering Venture

BC Books Online marks the first-ever collaboration between publishers and libraries with the objective to deliver digital content to an entire province. There has been considerable interest in our progress from across the country and internationally. The project will undoubtedly serve as a model for similar initiatives in other jurisdictions.

There are currently over 1000 non-fiction titles in the collection, to which books will be added annually. All titles will be available to library users in perpetuity creating a lasting legacy for the people of British Columbia.

A list of titles currently available may be found at:

<http://www.canadianelectroniclibrary.ca/collateral/BCBooksOnline.xls>

BC Books Online: The Value to British Columbians

BC Books Online represents the cultural breadth and quality of BC publishing. Through digital indexing of the content, the collection provides enormous added value for students in primary and secondary schools, researchers at the university level, and the general public interested not only in enhancing their knowledge but increasing their enjoyment. Users will be able to access the entire collection through library portals from home, work, and school, and from anywhere in the world. The books will be fully searchable across the collection. As well, users will be able to bookmark, highlight text, cut and paste, and copy and print a limited amount of the content. Unlimited access will allow the books in the collection to be used without checkout or library processing.

BC Books Online: The Beta

The Association of Book Publishers of BC and the library consortia with the help of the service provider, Gibson Library Connections, have been assembling the collection over the past years. Concurrently publishers have been clearing electronic rights and working out terms and delivery issues for this complex but exciting project. In March 2010, thanks to a generous grant from the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre and the University of British Columbia Library, and with funding from Simon Fraser University and the Vancouver Public Library, a beta of the project was launched in 12 libraries and library systems in numerous BC communities. Publishers and authors donated 650 titles in the **BC Books Online** collection to British Columbians for one year. The beta may be found in the following invited libraries:

- » Central Okanagan School District #23
- » College of New Caledonia
- » Nanaimo School District #68
- » North Island College
- » Prince George Public Library
- » Prince George School District #57
- » Richmond Public Library
- » Simon Fraser University
- » University of British Columbia
- » University of Northern BC
- » Vancouver Island Regional Library
- » Vancouver Public Library

The beta will allow the BC Books Online consortium to identify technical challenges before further implementation throughout the province. It will also give the public a chance to view a version of the larger collection.

BC Books Online: Funding

The **BC Books Online** consortium is seeking funding to deliver the collection to all libraries in British Columbia. The financing of the project will flow through the BC Library Association, a registered charitable organization capable of providing auditing, accountability and charitable receipts.

BC Books Online: An Idea Whose Time is Now

In 2004 when Libraries Without Walls was launched, the Premier stated that it represented his government's desire for a "shared commitment to create communities open to new ideas, where learning and personal development are at the heart of all our endeavours." **BC Books Online** takes a significant step toward realizing this achievable objective.

The Consortium:

The **Association of Book Publishers of BC** is a trade association representing BC owned and controlled publishing companies and is an affiliate of the Association of Canadian Publishers. The ABPBC believes that a healthy publishing industry is essential to the educational, social, cultural, and economic life of the province.

BC Libraries is the name of the ad hoc structure involving BC's public libraries in a wide range of collaborative projects initiated in or developing from the Province's Libraries Without Walls strategic plan. You can find out more at: <http://www.bclibrary.ca/home/>.

The **British Columbia Library Association** has more than 800 members including librarians, library personnel, library trustees and other interested individuals. The BCLA encourages library organization and development throughout BC, coordinates library services, creates cooperation between libraries, and advances by education, research, friendly association and through cooperative effort the mutual interest of all libraries and library personnel.

BC Electronic Library Network works with post-secondary libraries to provide equitable, expanded, and cost-effective access to information for learners and educators throughout British Columbia.

Educational Resource Acquisition Consortium is an association of BC public school districts working collaboratively on a wide range of projects impacting the acquisition of educational materials.

Partner:

Gibson Publishing Connections is a commercial service provider assisting Canadian publishers in engaging with digital library business opportunities.

Community Partner:

University of British Columbia, Irving K. Barber Learning Centre is a facility dedicated to the intellectual, social, cultural, and economic development of people in BC. By providing and enhancing access to information, knowledge, and innovative teaching through the support of learning and research on an interactive basis with people in BC and throughout the world, the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre provides the opportunity for future generations to be at the forefront of learning.

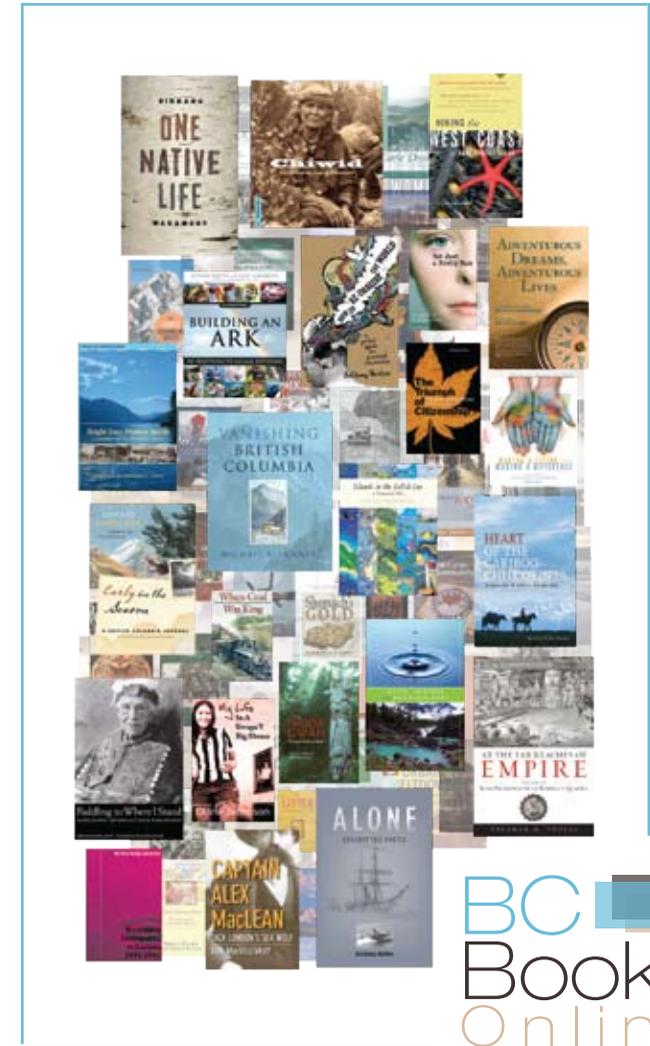
Participating Publishers:

Anvil Press • Arsenal Pulp Press • Brindle & Glass • Douglas & McIntyre • Greystone Books • Hedgerow Press • Heritage House Publishing • New Society Publishers • New Star Books • Orca Book Publishers • Pacific Educational Press • Rocky Mountain Books • Ronsdale Press • Talonbooks • Theytus Books • Touchwood Editions • University of British Columbia Press

Questions? Contact:

Margaret Reynolds
Executive Director
Association of Book Publishers of BC
600-402 West Pender Street
Vancouver, BC
V6B 1T6
Tel: 604-684-0228
Fax: 604-684-5788
Email: Margaret@books.bc.ca
www.books.bc.ca

Leigh Anne Palmer
BC Books Online Coordinator
Tel: 778-7825440
Mobile: 778-237-6297
Email: leighannep@ehlbc.ca



BC
Books
Online
A Digital Collection
www.bcbooksonline.ca

ABPBC Association of Book Publishers of British Columbia

ERAC Educational Resource Acquisition Consortium

BC Libraries

BCELN British Columbia Electronic Library Network