

# Sept. 30 End Possible At Maritime Museum

The Maritime Museum of B.C. will close for good Sept. 30 if the "financial climate" has not improved by then, Col. J. W. D. Symons, museum curator, announced Monday.

The trustees have been fighting an uphill battle over finances for many years, the curator said, and the time has come when there just isn't enough money to carry on.

There is a hopeful sign in negotiations under way with the federal secretary of state, he added, but this is not a sure thing.

Grants have been made to the museum over the years by the province, the city of Victoria, and core municipalities but they were not continuing grants, Symons said, and it was necessary to go back year after year for assistance.

"We always point out that museums, operating as museums and not as tourist traps, do not make money and need assistance from governments," he added.

Requests for financial support have been made to the provincial government and to the secretary of state, the lat-

ter for a continuing \$25,000 yearly grant.

Symons said letters from the state secretary's department had indicated the request was being considered.

In March, the department launched a program for decentralization and democratization of museums and the help may be forthcoming under this program, Symons said.

### Local Display

Under the program, various museums and art galleries throughout Canada are to be given the status of associates of the National Museums of Canada, the curator explained.

"The idea is for them to take some of the nation's holdings of historical and cultural items for local display," he said.

Money from the program would also go to purchase Canadiana collections which would otherwise leave the country and to purchase collections which have already left, Symons said.

"We are being considered under this program, not, I believe, as an associate museum," the curator said, "but under the part of the scheme to give aid to museums to raise their standards to become associates."

"Our request is still being considered and we have some hope it will be considered favorably, and also some hope that the provincial government will also give us financial support."

### With Grants

Symons said the museum needs about \$100,000 a year. This could be made up with grants of \$25,000 each from

federal and provincial governments, the provision of the building, rent-free and tax-free, by the city (worth about \$20,000 annually) and the rest coming from admissions, memberships and other revenue.

The province over the past 15 years has given the museum \$93,000 and the city \$62,913 in the past 11 years, Symons said. Esquimalt from 1961 to 1968 gave \$2,032, Oak Bay gave \$5,315 from 1962 to 1972 and Saanich gave \$3,363 between 1961 and 1967.

Museum trustees will meet July 18 and Aug. 15 and, if finances have not improved, an extraordinary general meeting of the Museum Society will be called and asked to ratify the recommendation of the trustees to shutdown the museum Sept. 30.



Curator Symons  
... uphill battle

