





BOARD OF DIRECTORS
(MAY 2021)

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Mark Virgin

Sally M. Rudolf

Margot Spence

Katie (Katharine) M. Armitage

Jeff (Jeffrey) W. Locke

Doug (Douglas) Nelson

Graeme Keirstead KC

Guramritpal (Nikki) Hair

Adam La France

With thanks (outgoing Board members)

Mark Virgin and Adam La France



BACKGROUND

CLBC is a not-for-profit registered charity under the BC Societies Act and is funded primarily through major contributions from the Law Foundation of British Columbia and the Law Society of British Columbia. CLBC also receives project funding from the Notary Foundation of BC. The Ministry of Attorney General provides physical space for the library in 30 courthouses throughout the Province.

CLBC Values

Accountability	Equity & Inclusion
Excellence	Adaptability
Service	Kindness

CLBC Vision

Everyone in BC has ready access to the legal information & resources they need.

CLBC's mission is to provide the legal community and public with legal resources, Librarian expertise & informed referrals, to help people research and manage their legal issues. We strive to meet this by providing the following core services:

- 1. Providing information services:** connecting clients to legal information and services.
- 2. Curating print and digital materials:** developing and maintaining legal information collections that meet our clients' needs.
- 3. Delivering training and outreach programs:** building the capacity of our clients to use legal information and services.

CLBC's **strategic plan** guides the overall direction of the library by outlining objectives and activities intended to achieve **four goals**:

- 1.** Expertly curate and protect the quality of our legal information & resources.
- 2.** Invest in the acquisition & sharing of staff expertise.
- 3.** Reduce barriers to accessing high quality legal information & resources.
- 4.** Empower people to effectively research and manage their own or client legal issues.

Foundation

We continuously improve our business processes & governance to support this work.

“A RISING TIDE LIFTS ALL BOATS.”

Sean Lemass



2021 IN FOCUS

We often describe libraries as gardens - places that grow and nurture curious, resilient and knowledgeable citizens. Law libraries are no different in that regard, but we also have a special responsibility to grow the legal research skills of lawyers, intermediaries and the public so they can manage their own or their client's legal issues - both now and in the future. This empowerment approach is a key component of our service model, supporting both the legal research competency of the legal profession, and the "raising of all boats" when it comes to public legal literacy and access to justice.

In 2021 our commitment to access to justice continued to guide us as we carefully re-established public access to our people and resources. With the continued closure of physical access to JACs, CLBC became the sole courthouse technology resource for members of the public. Partnering with Court Services staff and sheriffs throughout the province, we were able to help people resolve problems with amending, printing and filing court documents or otherwise participating in tech-dependent legal steps on their legal journey. This partnership service model prevented multiple trips to the courthouse - all opportunities for COVID19 transmission -- during critical periods of 'essential travel only' public health direction. We also worked with Court Services, the sheriffs and the judiciary

to provide alternate use of library spaces in smaller communities when no other safe COVID-distancing space was available in the courthouse for jury deliberations, first hearings, etc.

By the end of 2021, we saw a return to a more normal 50/50 split between public and lawyer legal information inquiries, which we consider a major success given the significantly decreased public traffic to courthouses throughout the year. We also saw increased access by the legal community to our online services including the CLBC website, remote subscription databases, Book-in-a-Box, and temporary free Quicklaw/Westlaw links that we successfully negotiated with the publishers.

Our first new library in decades was opened in Abbotsford, accessible to the legal profession in February and to the public in September. Feedback from the local community has been extremely positive. It was also a big year for our work with public libraries, with \$203k of Law Foundation funds distributed to support access to legal information in local communities, along with the delivery of a virtual training program and 13 community forums in partnership with PovNet and Legal Aid BC.

Our IT systems are performing at a

consistently acceptable standard, supported by ongoing investments in their maintenance and improvement. Several important decisions related to IT infrastructure will be coming up in the next few years, and we took initial steps to develop a future-focused project called CLBC 2025 to generate the operational model requirements that will guide those decisions. CLBC 2025 will also build on community-based research conducted this year, to improve public access to our 'virtual library' of PLEI and legal resources currently accessed through Clicklaw.

Thanks to the strong support of the Law Foundation of BC, the Law Society of BC and the Ministry of Attorney General, we continue to invest in the people, resources and services required to 'raise all boats' and support both access to justice and lawyer competence throughout the province. Our staff is energized, and our work has changed in ways that we expect will have lasting positive effects for those who rely on our resources and services. We are proud of what we accomplished in another extraordinarily challenging year, and we remain very optimistic about the future!



2021 SERVICE STATS



Training

The number of training attendees settled in 2021 with many people back in the office, but overall growth trends continued their pre-pandemic trajectory, with 32% growth in 2021 over 2019.



Remote services

Usage remained strong across all remote services, even with the return of onsite services. Traffic for the CLBC website trended upwards with new users in 2021 up 22% over 2020.



Book-in-a-Box

2021 was another exceptional year for growth of Book-in-a-Box orders, increasing 21% over 2020 despite the disruptions to library operations.



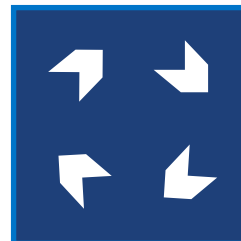
Database subscriptions

Growth in database subscriptions was up again in 2021, with both usage and new accounts seeing 11% and 10% growth respectively.



Front-line reference information requests

While quick reference and directional type requests still remain far below pre-pandemic levels, complex requests in 2021 completely recovered to 2019 volumes.



Print circulation, Public Access Computers, WIFI

Print circulation saw a recovery of 18% in 2021 over the previous period, and onsite digital services remained below average.

“A SMOOTH SEA NEVER MADE A SKILLED SAILOR.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt



Information services

Our library staff continued to deliver legal information services to our clients virtually through our phone and email services, and in-person through our limited onsite services. The collective knowledge of staff continued to grow, as we used technology and new workflow processes to allow staff in multiple locations to respond to phone and email inquiries that had previously been answered only by Vancouver staff.

The LawMatters program distributed \$203,000 in grants to public libraries across

BC to support legal information collections in communities across BC. We expanded our selection criteria and curated list of suggested titles to include resources promoting a greater understanding of the Canadian justice system, with a focus on truth and reconciliation, equity, inclusion, and social justice.

In person

Our seven larger libraries all re-started limited in-person information services on a regular part-time basis in January of 2021, providing drop-in and appointments for members of the

public. The legal community continued to have access to all library spaces by following the “after hours” protocol with security at local courthouses.

By the fall all eight of our larger libraries and most of our local libraries had returned to regular public hours - full time in our eight larger libraries, and one day a week in our smaller locations. We continue to enjoy excellent relationships with registry staff and sheriffs in our library locations.

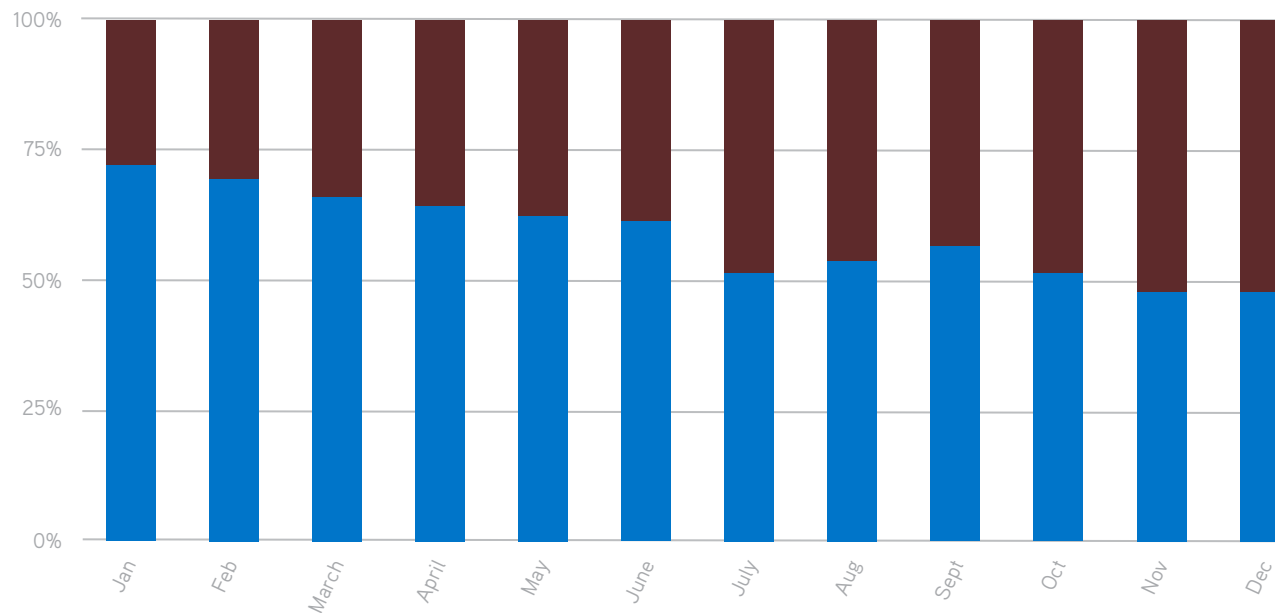


Figure 1:
Opening of branches rebalanced the client demographics, with the lawyer / public split back to 50%

Public Lawyers

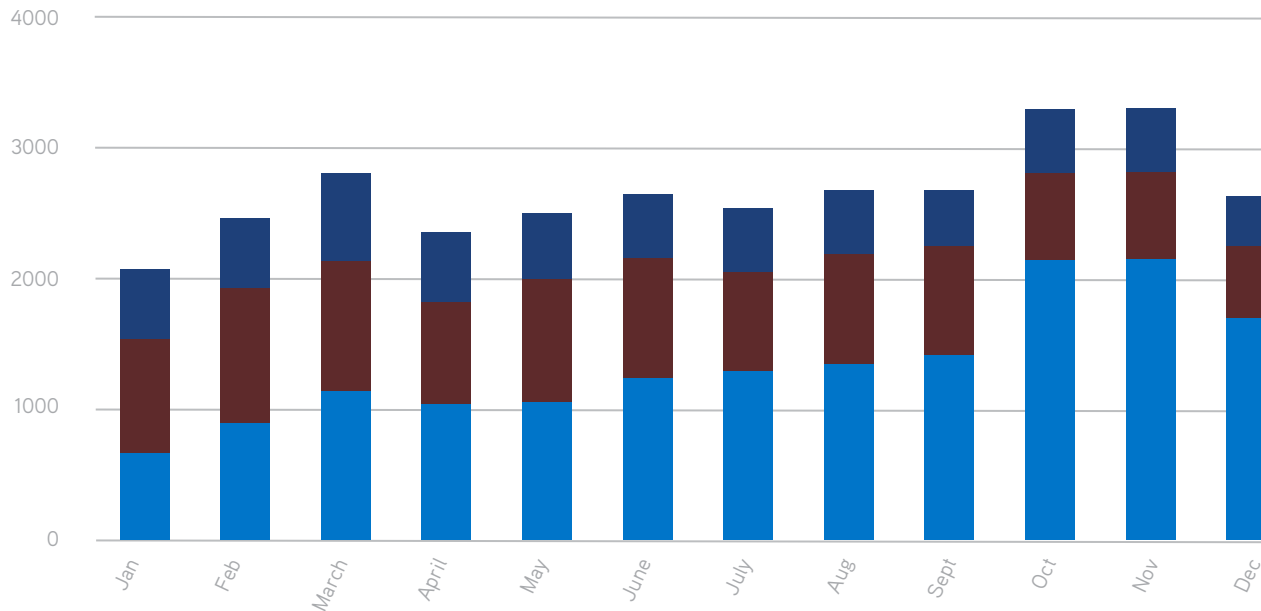


Figure 2:
Service demand grew and re-balanced throughout 2021 to reflect the return to more normal branch operations.

Phone Email Desk

Online

CLBC provides a variety of information services and repositories online, hosted across several web properties. Demand for these services continued to increase.

In addition to the main website, CLBC curates and manages:

Clicklaw Wikibooks

Clicklaw Wikibooks, CLBC’s highest traffic online site, is a web-based publishing platform that makes available public legal education to BC residents. 2021 work included an improved mobile view experience.

Lawbster.net

(online group discussion and collaboration platform)
By the end of 2021, Lawbster’s largest online Community of Practice, the Family Law Organizer (“FLO”) community, had 475 members. FLO Working Groups included collaborative family lawyers, paralegals who work in family law, parenting coordinators, and practitioners (lawyers and paralegals) who have practice-oriented and procedural questions.

Lawbster also hosts the Vancouver Association of Law Libraries (“VALL”) forum that supports local law librarians, primarily in private law firms. By the end of 2021, the

VALL group on Lawbster had 68 members, and approximately 40 percent had engaged in posting topics or replies to the VALL Forum.

Clicklaw.bc.ca

BC’s “library of PLEI” is now 13 years old and its IT and functionality is being re-examined with the goal of creating a more user-focused site that easily connects people with trusted legal information and service providers. Research was conducted in 2021 to evaluate the current landscape of PLEI and to provide guidance for how CLBC can add value to what currently exists and how it is accessed by the public. Further user experience research and design work will continue into 2022.

Curating print and digital materials

Curation of print collections in 2021 faced several challenges, including supply chain issues and hyper-inflation. The curation team met those challenges and delivered several improvements that optimized both purchasing and usage of valuable print materials. Digital collections continued growing in use, and the team effort focused on maximizing distribution and impact of the online collection.

Usage of the print collection remained lower than pre-pandemic years as clients shifted

to new ways of working, and public health restrictions reduced on-site traffic in libraries. The CLBC print development team put effort into improving the print collection across the province, with a focus on the collections in smaller, more rural libraries.

2021 was another exceptional year for growth of Book-in-a-Box orders, increasing 21% over the previous year, servicing remote communities and lawyers and notaries unable to come into the branches.

Remote subscription accounts kept lawyers and notaries connected with the information and networks they depend on to run their practices. New accounts and total usage of remote access subscriptions grew again in 2021, as clients continued to take advantage of our library resources.

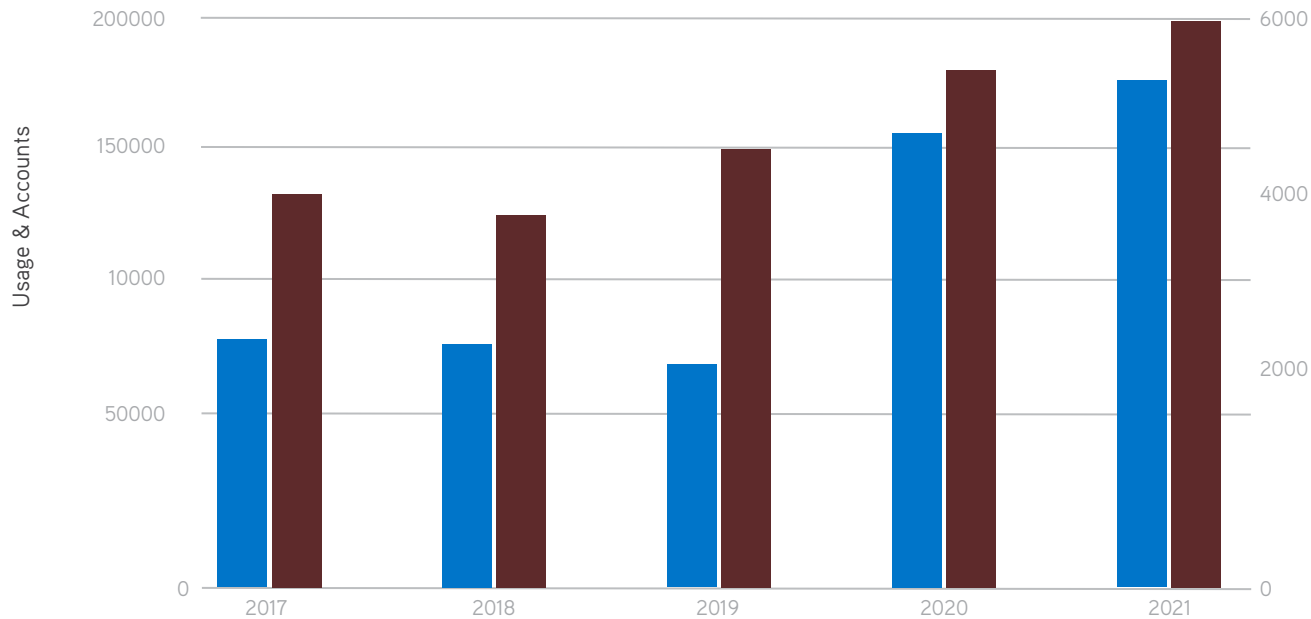


Figure 3:
Remote subscription accounts and usage both increased 10% and 11% respectively in 2021.

■ Total usage ■ Total accounts

Delivering training and outreach programs

CLBC provides training on the use of legal information tools and practice management skills, and works in partnership with subject matter experts to deliver training on substantive and procedural law. Training is aimed at the legal community, including lawyers, judges, law students, paralegals, as well as frontline intermediaries including legal advocates, community workers and public librarians.

In 2021, we worked with 20 organizational partners and 115 subject-matter experts

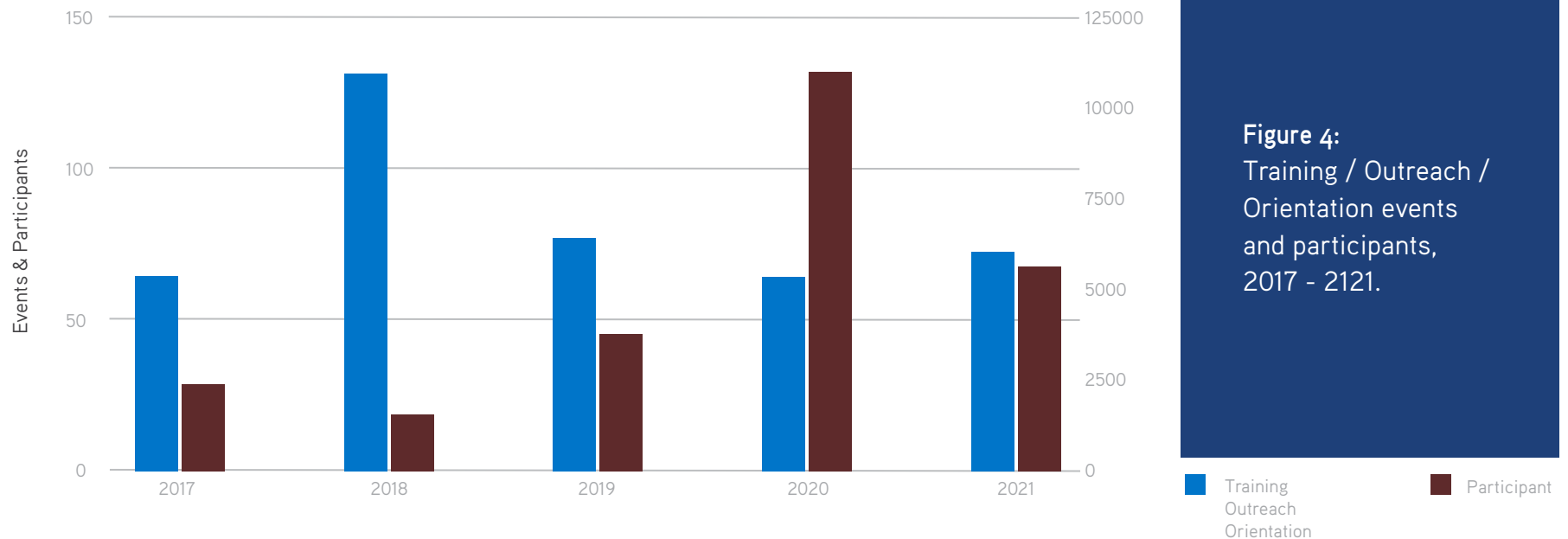
to deliver 59 training sessions for the legal community, including 43 for CPD credit, and 12 as part of the LawMatters program.

5,067 live viewers participated in training sessions in 2021. While lower than 2020's exceptional increase, this number is higher than 2019 and aligns with the pre-pandemic growth trend.

Participants rated their confidence in their knowledge about the presentation topic at the beginning and end of the presentation,

increasing from an average of 2.88 to 3.91 (on a 5 point scale), or a 36% improvement.

In partnership with PovNet and Legal Aid BC, CLBC hosted 13 regional virtual gatherings bringing together over 400 advocates, support workers, and public library staff who help with legal matters, in order to increase connections among service providers. Discussion focused on common barriers and challenges, and will inform library activities for 2022 and beyond.



**“SHIPS IN HARBOR ARE SAFE, BUT
THAT’S NOT WHAT SHIPS ARE BUILT FOR.”**

John Shedd



2021 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Highlights for the year ended
December 31, 2021

Complete Financial
Statements and Independent
Auditors' Report available
upon request.

SOURCES OF FUNDING

Law Society of British Columbia	2,694,000
Law Foundation of British Columbia	2,567,653
Fees, interest and other income	79,331
Total	5,340,984

USES OF FUNDING

Information resources (including capital)	1,559,226
Human Resources	3,161,225
Operating expenditures	824,727
Total	5,545,178



British Columbia Courthouse Library Society

800 Smithe Street, Vancouver, BC V6Z 2E1

604.660.2910
www.courthouselibrary.ca

CLBC has branches across the lands now known as British Columbia. These lands are the ancestral home of a diverse population of Indigenous peoples. We acknowledge and respect the continued connection between the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous peoples within our local communities. We are thankful to live and work on these lands. This report was authored on the traditional and unceded territories of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.