

## About Michael Clague



Michael Clague works in the fields of adult education, social policy and planning, and community development. He has done so in rural and urban areas for three levels of government, the voluntary sector, and as a private consultant. He has also taught, written, and published extensively on public policy issues, community development, and social planning.

Michael was executive director of three voluntary agencies, the Britannia Community Services Centre (Vancouver), the Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria, and the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC of BC, Vancouver). From 1996 to 2005 he was director of a City of Vancouver facility, the Carnegie Community Centre. It was during this period that Michael learned about the power of the arts for building community.

Michael grew to care deeply about the community at Carnegie and feels honoured to have been welcomed in. He explains, “I was a middle-class white guy with a university degree. I came from privilege, and they accepted me. We built real relationships with the members.” Michael says the relationships he built over the years have been based on connecting as human beings knowing that we all feel the same emotions and we all have challenges in our lives. He focused on making people feel comfortable, involving them in projects and supporting them in finding their purpose. He was careful not to give advice, preferring instead to ask questions and share his own struggles.

“At Carnegie I connected with human strength and human frailty, and a pulsating sense of our shared humanity.”

It was in the Carnegie programs both inside the building and outside on the streets of the Downtown Eastside, that he witnessed the power of the arts to build community and help people connect with others. This realization prompted Michael to work with the community on several art projects and programs, culminating in the 2003 100th Anniversary celebrations of the Carnegie Center and the Downtown Eastside Community Play produced by Vancouver Moving Theatre. Many of his initiatives continue to this day.

Michael is Past President of the Community Arts Council of Vancouver, past President of the Carold Institute for the Advancement of Citizenship in Social Change (Harrowsmith, Ontario), and of the Canadian Council on Social Development. Michael was inducted into the Order of Canada in 2008.

Through his many endeavours and advocacy, Michael continues to be a champion of Arts & Culture in our neighborhood and we are forever grateful.

Michael's most recent book is called “So, How Have I Been Doing at Being Who I Am? At 82, A Life in Progress.” Amazon 2022.