

November 20, 2017

First Nations community and cultural leaders join the Royal BC Museum's First Nations Advisory Committee

VICTORIA, BC—Today, the eight Indigenous members of the newly-formed First Nations Advisory Committee (FNAC) will meet at the Royal BC Museum to confirm their terms of reference, meet museum staff and review the progress and future plans of the museum and archives regarding First Nations initiatives.

Members of the FNAC are expected to bring their varied perspectives, experience and knowledge to bear on museum matters, advising the Royal BC Museum on effective and respectful engagement with First Nations.

"The primary role of the First Nations Advisory Council is to provide expert Indigenous advice to the Board and CEO regarding the Museum's activities that represent and serve the interests of First Nations people. It will help guide the Museum's forward agenda. Its members have extensive experience in museums, cultural heritage, history and repatriation," says Prof. Jack Lohman, CEO of the Royal BC Museum. "A key dimension of this work is repatriation, reconnecting Indigenous people with their cultural heritage and discussing how to prioritize such legacy work."

The FNAC members are Tracey Herbert, CEO, First Peoples' Cultural Council; Karen Aird, President, Indigenous Heritage Circle; Nika Collison, Curator, Haida Gwaii Museum; Dr. Ron Ignace, Elected Chief, Skeetchestn Band and Adjunct Professor, Simon Fraser University; Lou-Ann Neel, Artist, Kwakwaka'wakw Interim Director, Aboriginal Education, North Island College; Ron Sam, Elected Chief, Songhees Nation; Tewanee Joseph, Royal BC Museum Board of Directors; and Angela Wesley, Royal BC Museum Board of Directors.

Each serving a three-year-term, the committee members have expertise across a range of areas of concern to First Nations in BC, with a particular focus on tangible and intangible cultural heritage, repatriation, cultural interpretation and education.

Among its many responsibilities, the FNAC will provide advice on matters of cultural protocols, provide advice on policies, exhibitions, programs and the curation of collections related to First Nations in BC, and will consult regularly with individuals working at the community level on Indigenous issues.

The creation of the FNAC comes at a time of maturation for the Royal BC Museum's First Nations and Repatriation Program, which is in recruitment mode for a new position: Repatriation Specialist.

The committee meets for the first time today, in Victoria, to review its terms of reference and discuss some of the museum and archives' First Nations



initiatives, including the museum's plans to refresh its First Peoples Gallery and the museum's repatriation efforts to date.

During the day, the committee will have the opportunity to meet with all Royal BC Museum staff members and take in-depth orientation tours of the museum's ethnology and archaeology departments and BC Archives, areas that have a particularly strong emphasis on First Nations materials.

The day will conclude with a screening and discussion of the documentary *Stolen Spirits of Haida Gwaii*, in the Newcombe Conference Hall at 7:00 pm. The public is welcome to attend, but please note that seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis and will go quickly. Admission to this screening is by donation.

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. We are a hub of community connections in BC—onsite, offsite and online—taking pride in our collective histories.

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