

Ethnohistory Field School Report 2019

A History of Friendship: Collaboration and Interpretation of Stó:lō Voice in Chilliwack's Museum Soowahlie First Nation

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The Ethnohistory Field School is a collaboration of the
Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, Stó:lō Nation & Stó:lō Tribal Council, and the
History Departments of the University of Victoria and University of Saskatchewan.



Museums, as we know, are as much about the present and future as they are about the past.....it is critical that museums support Indigenous communities in our efforts toward decolonization, through privileging Indigenous voice and perspective, through challenging stereotypical representations of Native people that were produced in the past, and by serving as educational forums for our own communities and the general public.¹

We must all learn to live together in a good way - T'xwelátse Herb Joe

PREFACE

As one of eight field school history graduate students from the University of Victoria and University of Saskatchewan invited to participate in the Ethnohistory Field School, I spent the month of May immersed in Stó:lō culture and community in Chilliwack BC. Living at first with host families, and then communally in the educational longhouse on the Coqualeetza grounds, we were asked to research topics that were selected by our hosts and co-facilitators at the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC) and by Stó:lō community. In its twentieth year², the Ethnohistory Field School is based on community-engaged scholarship that depends on long-term partnerships, trust and familiarity as the basis for collaboration.

In my professional life I work in museums³ and for my field report, I was asked to research the history of the relationship between the local civic Chilliwack Museum and Archives and the Stó:lō people with specific emphasis on the interpretive history of Stó:lō people and culture in the museum. I was

¹ Amy Lonetree, "Museums as Sites of Decolonization: Truth Telling in National and Tribal Museums" in *Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives*, ed. Susan Sleeper-Smith (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 334.

² The field school runs every other year, making the 20th year the 10th field school.

³ My experience is in art museums with five years spent in administrative roles at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria and the last six years at the University of Victoria Legacy Art Gallery as the Community Engagement Coordinator. My educational background is in Art History (BA) and Museum Studies (Professional Graduate Certificate) and now I am working in completing a MA in History in the Public History stream.

charged to explore the origins and history of the relationship and the elements that nourish it.⁴ One of the clearest outcomes has been that everyone that I have interviewed indicated that the relationship between the Stó:lō and the Chilliwack Museum and Archives has always been positive, collaborative and importantly it has been built on relationships. In this way, the topic that I have been asked to explore has been explicit in its framing, the relationship and its longevity, its components and sustaining elements will all be explored in this report that will pull from archival research both at the SRRMC and Chilliwack Museum Archives and oral interviews with current and past staff at the SRRMC and Chilliwack Museum and Archives combined with primary research. The findings will be framed within the contemporary museological climate where many leading museums are adopting revised inclusive policies and formalized partnerships with Indigenous communities and organizations. This report will ask the question, where does the Chilliwack Museum and Archives fit in to this paradigm shift? With museums repositioning themselves in response to decolonization, in part by moving towards collaborative exhibition development, can it be said that this small civic museum has been ahead of the curve?

I write now in the final days of August. It is important to note that I was given permission to leave field school one week early and a project deadline extension for scheduled medical reasons. Perhaps one of the most significant aspects of the Ethnohistory field school is that is made up of people and relationships and because of this, life happens at field school. I don't see a way around including this aspect of my experience in my report because there are consequences in reducing an already tight timeline. First, it has been a long process to reengage with the research materials that I collected during my time at field school and as a result it has moved more slowly than anticipated. Second,

⁴ I have paraphrased the original topic wording that I was given that reads "History of the relation between the Chilliwack Museum and Archives and the Stó:lō people / the interpretation history of Stó:lō culture at Chilliwack Museum. The Stó:lō have a long and positive relationship with the Chilliwack museum. How did this relationship develop, what sustains it, and how might this be a model for others?"

though I was able to interview eight people during my time there and spend substantial time at the Chilliwack Archives, that process was probably more rushed and less far reaching as a result. Had there been more time, it would have been essential to plan interviews representing more Stó:lō voices and people involved with the Coqualeetza Cultural Education Centre from both the past and present whose voices have been unintentionally omitted due to time constraints. Further, this report is by no means an exhaustive list of collaborative projects between Stó:lō and the Chilliwack Museum and Archives or histories of the organizations involved. Instead, I have given brief overviews and included examples where the memories or those that I interviewed were typically strongest and where the archival records were most complete.

INTRODUCTION

At the initial project meeting with staff from the SRRMC⁵ and the field school professors,⁶ it was clear that this project was assigned in part because long time Chilliwack Museum director Ron Denman had recently permanently retired, and the museum was in a time of transition. The SRRMC staff communicated that there had been a long collaborative relationship with the museum, and in this time of transition that was in many ways built on the long-term relationships between Ron Denman and SRRMC staff. There was some uncertainty about how that relationship would take shape moving forward. At the time of our interviews, the museum's relatively new staff was headed by executive director Shawna Maurice who had been at the museum for only five months. Set in this context, the project was geared towards investigating how the relationship developed, and determining its

⁵ Dr. David Schaepe, Director / Senior Archaeologist, Naxaxalhts'i, Albert (Sonny) McHalsie - Cultural Advisor/Historian and Honorary Doctorate of Law, University of Victoria, Tia (Patricia) Halstad - Librarian / Archivist, Amber Kostuchenko, Researcher.

⁶ Dr. Keith Carlson, former SRRMC Staff Historian and Research Coordinator, and in May 2019 still the Research Chair in Indigenous and Community-Engaged History, University of Saskatchewan. As of September 2019, Keith is the Canada Research Chair Indigenous and Community-Engaged History at the University of the Fraser Valley and Dr. John Lutz, Professor and History Department Chair, University of Victoria.

influences and components was the underlying question, how would the relationship change moving forward?

In 2003, Ruth B. Phillips contributed to new critical museological theory when she wrote about community collaborations in museums, specifically at the Museum of Anthropology. Positioned from the perspective that museums, and specifically exhibitions, much like popular culture like film and media, function as producers and influencers in societies. Phillips argues that historically, museums have largely contributed “to the formation of the universalist ideologies and nationalist power structures that inform modern societies.”⁷ And while Indigenous collaboration in museum spaces has at times led to criticism of further marginalization and tokenism, there also exists a long history and increasing focus on model collaborative partnerships, that at their best work to “validate” Indigenous cultural knowledge⁸ to audiences that might otherwise be out of reach for Indigenous organizations. In Canada, museums are largely viewed as reliable and authoritative sources of historical truth, but can they also become agents of change in the era of reconciliation and decolonization? In a survey conducted in the early 2000’s of 3,419 respondents across Canada, Indigenous respondents were overwhelmingly less likely than non-Indigenous respondents to consider museums as “very trustworthy” (46 percent to 66 percent).⁹ In the wake of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), museums in Canada are increasingly responding to the TRC’s *Calls to Action*. One way that this is unfolding is through increased partnership and collaboration with Indigenous scholars and communities to establish an “unsettling pedagogy” that challenges and works to “restory” colonial

⁷ Ruth B. Phillips, “Introduction: Community collaborations in exhibits: toward a dialogic paradigm,” in *Museums and Source Communities, A Routledge Reader*, ed. by Laura Peers and Alison K. Brown (London/New York: 2003), 155.

⁸ Phillips, “Introduction”, 155.

⁹ Pasts Collective (Margaret Conrad et al.), *Canadians and their Pasts*. (London; Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 7.

history and “makes space for collective critical dialogue”¹⁰ by creating exhibitions that tell a more complete version of history. It is because museums are so trusted by non-Indigenous Canadians and so untrusted by Indigenous Canadians that there are few venues more appropriate than the museum to tell a more complete and ‘restored’ history. In museums, there are longstanding biases that act to enforce mainstream power structures such as the settler-colonial nation-state. These can be challenged and addressed, through collaborative and community-engaged process and self-representation of voices that are often marginalized within these structures. There is a growing emphasis within museums to “challenge dominant narratives and established relations of power, even at the same time as they also reproduce them.”¹¹ This dichotomy is ushering in a exciting era in new museum theory.

Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM) Chief Executive Officer Jack Lohman recently wrote that the museum role has traditionally been “understood as conserving, studying and displaying in order that the place of cultural heritage can be understood as a fundamental aspect of our common yet diverse human story.”¹² And while the RBCM has long collaborated with Indigenous peoples, a recent shift in collaborative models is taking shape in museums. In the last two decades, museological literature has leaned from discussions about colonialism and nationalism as sources of authoritative power in museum, to how museums try to make change by becoming more inclusive places and by sharing the voice of authority.¹³ In his 2017 address to the museum’s newly formed First Nations Advisory

¹⁰ Paulette Regan, *Unsettling the Settler Within : Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada*. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 12.

¹¹ Caitlin Gordan-Walker, “Beyond Inclusion: Canadian and Indigenous Sovereignties in Mainstream Museums,” *BC Studies*, 199 (Autumn 2018), 130. <https://ojs.library.ubc.ca/index.php/bcstudies/article/view/191077/188534> (accessed September 29, 2019)

¹² Jack Lohman, “Repatriation in the Service of Society and its Development,” in *Museums at the Crossroads? Essays on cultural institutions in a time of change*, 2013, 129-138

¹³ Caitlin Gordan-Walker, “Beyond Inclusion, footnote #4, 130.

Council made up of eight expert Indigenous members,¹⁴ Lohman purposefully referred to Article 31 of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to emphasize that “the intellectual cultural property rights to control both the tangible and intangible aspects of the objects, archives and the knowledge in the museum does not belong to us but conform with Article 31 of the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples, of which Canada is a signatory.”¹⁵ Article 31 states:

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.¹⁶

Ultimately Article 31 is about agency, and in the context of this report, not least the right for Indigenous peoples to decide how they are represented and how their material culture should be cared for in museums. In a museum where the didactic panel addressing the potlatch ban is discreetly tucked around a corner in the dimly lit First People’s Gallery that was created in 1977, this prioritization and revamping of policy and practice relating to Indigenous representation is overdue. The shift towards inviting Indigenous peoples to meaningfully participate, and more importantly control their own representation and interpretation in the museum is already having profound

¹⁴ The members were Tracey Herbert, CEO First Peoples’ Cultural Council, Karen Aird, President, Indigenous Heritage Circle, Nika Collinson, Curator, Haida Gwaii Museum, Dr. Ron Ignace, Simon Fraser University, Lou-Ann Need, Artist, Kwakwaka’wakw Interim Director, Aboriginal Education, North Island College, Ron Sam, Elected Chief, Songhees Nations, Tewanee Joseph, Royal BC Museum Board of Directors and Angela Wesley, Royal BC Museum Board of Directors. November 20, 2017 Press Release https://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/sites/default/files/documents/releases/11-20-2017_fnac.pdf (accessed August 19, 2019)

¹⁵ Jack Lohman, Royal BC Museum website, “Address to the Royal British Columbia Museum’s First Nations Advisory Council (FNAC)”, On the occasion of their first meeting, November 20, 2017. <https://staff.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/2017/11/21/address-to-the-royal-british-columbia-museums-first-nations-advisory-council-fnac/> (accessed August 19, 2019)

¹⁶ United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article 31. 22-23. https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf (accessed August 19, 2019)

affects on the RBCM's policy and the way that Indigenous collaboration is done that goes beyond educating the wider non-Indigenous community and museum visitors.

Among these policy changes is an announcement that the museum will no longer collect ancestral remains and items collected during sixty-seven year potlatch ban that ended in 1951. Those objects from the collection are now eligible for repatriation.¹⁷ The museum has further undergone structural revision by creating an Indigenous Collections and Repatriation Department that has produced an Indigenous Repatriation Handbook¹⁸ that was released while I was in Chilliwack at field school in May of 2019. Created with community partners, the handbook is intended act as a practical resource to Indigenous groups to "carry out the process of repatriation in ways that alight with the cultural traditions of each respective community,"¹⁹ and to other museums.

With these major ideas in recent museum theory and contemporary museum practice in mind, if the Chilliwack Museum and Archives can be considered a model small museum in its collaborative process with local Indigenous communities, how are these ideas represented in it's practices and policies? Certainly that is a tall order for a museum that only now has a core staff of five. Yet if larger museums are agents of change in the larger spectrum of influence, can small museums and their staff perform and export their agency on a smaller scale?

¹⁷ Terri Theodore, "New Royal B.C. Museum policy highlights return of stolen, confiscated Indigenous remains, artifacts," Globe and Mail, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/british-columbia/article-new-royal-bc-museum-policy-highlights-return-of-stolen-confiscated/> (accessed August 19, 2019)

¹⁸ Prepared by Jisgang Nika Collison, Sdaahl K'awaas Lucy Bell and Lou-ann Neel, the Indigenous Repatriation Handbook was created in partnership with Royal BC Museum staff, the Haida Gwaii Museum at Kay Llnagaay, the First Peoples' Cultural Council and the 2018 Repatriation Grant. The handbook is available online:

https://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/sites/default/files/indigenous_repatriation_handbook_v01_screen_jw_20190327.pdf

¹⁹ Message from Professor Jack Lohman, CBE, Chief Executive Officer, Royal BC Museum, and Tracey Herbert, CEO First Peoples' Cultural Council, *Indigenous Repatriation Handbook*, (Royal British Columbia Museum, 2019)

https://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/sites/default/files/indigenous_repatriation_handbook_v01_screen_jw_20190327.pdf (accessed August 19, 2019)

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE CHILLIWACK MUSEUM

Long before the Chilliwack Museum and Archives was established, there were several versions and organized historical groups in Chilliwack that contributed to the foundations of the current museum and archives today. The Chilliwack Pioneer Association formed in 1903, shortly after changing it's name to the Chilliwack Pioneer and Historical Society²⁰, an organization without a physical location. The next incarnation was in 1940-41 and amounted to not much more than enthusiastic, but ultimately failed efforts to generate sufficient interest in re-establishing the association. Third generation Chilliwack resident Casey Wells' radio broadcasts, consisting of the fledgling association's meeting minutes and scripted enthusiastic pleas for "historical progress" were intended to rally interest, but the association soon fizzled out. Of the nearly six typewritten pages of the broadcast, representation of Indigenous communities hardly makes an appearance with only a solitary line dedicated to their acknowledgement amidst the pioneer-focused broadcast. It reads, "(a)nd don't let us forget Indian history in the Valley."²¹ In the post-WW2 era, renewed interest in heritage preservation gathered fresh momentum, and in 1956 the Chilliwack Historical Society was born with Casey Well's brother Oliver as its first president. The Chilliwack Museum's grand opening in its first one room location finally took place in 1958.²²

By 1966 the museum-affiliated Chilliwack Valley Archives operated out of Casey Wells' home until 1976. In 1971 following Oliver Wells death, the museum was renamed, becoming the Wells

²⁰ I've come across records of both versions - Chilliwack Pioneer and Historical Society and Chilliwack Historical and Pioneer Society. I have opted to go with the version cited in the Chilliwack Archive fonds; Chilliwack Historical and Pioneer Society.

²¹ Chilliwack Museum and Archives, Archives Research Centre, Chilliwack Museum, Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society Fonds, The Chilliwack Historical and Pioneer Association, Series 1, File 1.1, transcript of the Chilliwack Historical and Pioneer Association Broadcast, Page 5, February 17th, 1941.

²² Chilliwack Historical Society correspondence from 1958 show that letters were sent to community members requesting loans from private collections of "Indian artifacts" for the new museum. This effort to collect Indigenous objects, or belongings at the establishment of the museum shed light on the influence of the Wells brothers' relationships with Stó:lō peoples and the resulting impact on the development of the museum collection. Chilliwack Museum and Archives, Archives Research Centre, Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society, Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society Correspondence Fonds, Series 3, file 3.2, letters requesting loans, 1958.

Centennial Museum when it was moved to a location adjacent to Evergreen Hall where the Archives remain today.²³ It is in this early era, that the first meaningful collaboration with local Indigenous community was established, at least by the standards of the day. In a 1987 Chilliwack Progress article celebrating the Historical Society's 30th anniversary, Yakweakwioose Chief Richard Malloway (Th'eláchiyatel) is listed as a member of the first charter board of trustees for the Chilliwack Historical Society in 1957-58.²⁴ Again in the Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society Newsletter, Malloway is recorded as having received a lifetime membership award along with sixteen other members including Oliver and Casey Wells.²⁵

The Wells family were an early settler family with a long standing family-based connection to the Malloways who were one of the original Stó:lō families in the area. Richard Malloway's early involvement on the board signifies that collaboration with Indigenous community was a priority for the early version of the museum and that Malloway himself was open and willing to participate in non-Aboriginal bodies.²⁶ The Wells family, Oliver in particular, spent decades visiting with Stó:lō friends and recording and preserving oral histories, often told by elders in the Halq'eméylem language. An amateur ethnographer, historian and collector, he is credited with helping to revitalize traditional Salish weaving techniques, the Halq'eméylem language and arts, as well as collecting many of the foundational Indigenous material in the museum and archives.²⁷ After his death, a

²³ Chilliwack Museum and Archives, Archives Research Centre, Chilliwack Museum, Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society Fonds, Fond 214, Accession no. 988.49, Inventory completed by Michael A. Avery, December 13, 1991.

²⁴ Lois Dickinson, "Museum Society Marks 30 Years", *Chilliwack Progress*, March 18, 1987, 52.
<https://theprogress.newspapers.com/image/81100443> (accessed May 17, 2019)

²⁵ Chilliwack Museum and Archives, Archives Research Centre, Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society, Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society Newsletters 1977-1991, Series 6, file 6.1, Winter 1989 – February.

²⁶ Dr. David Schaepe Interview, May 17th, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

²⁷ Ron Denman Interview, May 21st, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

traditional feast was hosted in his memory at the Tzeachten Hall. Richard Malloway later said this of their friendship, “We grew up together, we were neighbors and friends. He was one of us.”²⁸

THE NEW MUSEUM

In 1981, the museum and society were renamed the Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society, and in 1985, Ron Denman was hired as the second ever director who spent the majority of his forty-plus year career at the museum. He and the small museum team spent the first two years organizing records and bringing the collection management up to professional standards such as transitioning the records management from index cards to computer systems.²⁹ Finally in 1987, the Chilliwack Museum moved from Evergreen Hall to its current location in Chilliwack’s historic first City Hall. In our interview, Denman directly attributed the inspiration for the museum’s new direction to the foundations that the Wells family had established in the decades prior, and a desire to “keep those kinds of links active.”³⁰

The first exhibition in the old city hall building was of Stó:lō artist Stan Greene’s work, (fig. 1) and with this exhibition Denman wanted to establish right away in the new space that there had been connections and relationships between the museum and Stó:lō peoples created by Wells and others that should endure.³¹ Denman further attributed the institutional memory that was rooted in those early relationships as trickling down in the culture of the museum board, who over the years were supportive of collaboration with Stó:lō peoples and Indigenous communities.

²⁸ Oliver Wells et al., *The Chilliwacks and their Neighbors*. (Vancouver: Talon Books, 1987), 6-7.

²⁹ Ron Denman Interview, May 21st, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

³⁰ Ron Denman Interview, May 21st, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

³¹ Ron Denman Interview, May 21st, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.



Figure 1 Stan Greene Salish Artist exhibition poster, Chilliwack Museum and Archives, Archives Research Centre.

However it is clear that Ron Denman’s previous experience and his own relationships played a significant role in the museum’s new direction and continuance of Well’s inspired community relationships. By the time Denman arrived in Chilliwack he had spent nine years in the Museum of Northern BC in Prince Rupert, a community that he says at that time was rich and diverse with many immigrants and a large Indigenous population. Working with the local carving community as well as those from the Queen Charlotte, Nishka and Gitksan villages who would pass through on their way to Vancouver to sell their work, Ron and the

museum would support the artists by selling their work in the museum shop which eventually led to a grant to build a carving shed where artists would carve and create jewelry. He remembers collaborating to create and the first northern Indigenous women’s art show and many other similar projects. Significantly, Ron Denman credits his time in Prince Rupert as having shaped him.³²

STÓ:LŌ ORGANIZATIONS: MOVEMENT TOWARDS SELF DETERMINATION

Social and political activism in Indigenous communities in Canada following the government withdrawal of the White Paper in 1969 resulted in a profusion of political and cultural organization in the Fraser Valley and beyond. The White Paper proposed dramatic changes intended to constitutionally and legally classify Indigenous peoples as equal to all other Canadians³³ by repealing the Indian Act. According to Ruth B. Phillips, the White Paper would act to “prevent recovery from a

³² Ron Denman Interview, May 21st, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

³³ Ruth B. Phillips, *Museum Pieces: Toward the Indigenization of Canadian Museums*. Montreal: MQUP, 2011, 5

century of oppressive assimilationist policies and the scourge of residential schooling and would impede the restoration and preservation of indigenous cultural traditions.”³⁴ It was from this political moment that a resulting influx of Indigenous activism in the 60’s and 70’s challenged founding settler historical narratives that had previously situated Canada’s identity as having been formed and influenced almost solely by French and English foundations,³⁵ omitting much of Indigenous history.

One of the ways that Indigenous activism and rights assertion took form in Stó:lō communities was with development and establishment of the Skowkale History Project in 1971. Skowkale (Sq’ewqéyl) First Nation members³⁶ began to document their community’s oral histories without the interference of non-Indigenous interviewers, anthropologists and other outside academic interests.³⁷ The project eventually expanded to become the Stó:lō History Project which included other Stó:lō communities in Chilliwack and the Fraser Valley.

Around the same time, the Coqualeetza grounds in Sardis BC was undergoing a shift in governance and function. Coqualeetza, a traditionally significant place and fishing spot³⁸ and the site of a *sxwōxwiyám*,³⁹ was by 1893 home to the Methodist Coqualeetza Industrial Institute, followed by the Coqualeetza Residential School, the “Pre” (a tuberculosis preventorium), the Coqualeetza Indian Hospital (closed in 1969) and in 1974 some of the old hospital buildings were used as barracks by the

³⁴ Ibid, 6.

³⁵ Ibid, 6.

³⁶ Members like Roy Point, Steven Point, Bob Hall and Mark Point.

³⁷ Dr. Keith Carlson Interview, May 23rd, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

³⁸ Keith Carlson et al., *A Stó:lō Coast Salish Historical Atlas* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, Seattle; University of Washington Press, Chilliwack: Stó:lō Heritage Trust, 2001) 74.

³⁹ I was told this *sxwōxwiyám* by Sonny McHalsie while at field school and I feel compelled to include the story which tells the Stó:lō place name history of Coqualeetza. The name was appropriated by Methodist Missionaries and though the residential school called Coqualeetza, the Stó:lō have re-appropriated the meaning. “The new “cleansing place” is now a centre for cultural renewal where the pain of unfulfilled assimilation policies is washed away and the dust of generations of colonial control is beaten off and transformed into a new assertion of Stó:lō culture, rights and title.” The name Coqualeetza comes from a *sxwōxwiyám*, a Stó:lō story of the long ago and “mythological” past. A short version of the *sxwōxwiyám* can be found in the Stó:lō Atlas. Keith Carlson et al., *A Stó:lō Coast Salish Historical Atlas* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, Seattle; University of Washington Press, Chilliwack: Stó:lō Heritage Trust, 2001), 75.

Canadian Armed Forces. In 1929, the United Church of Canada sold the land to the Canadian Federal Government and from 1968 to 1979 negotiations took place between government and Stó:lō leaders seeking transference of ownership of the Coqualeetza site to the Stó:lō people. In 1976 following growing protests, Stó:lō activists occupied the Coqualeetza grounds and twenty six protesters were arrested.⁴⁰

Several years prior to the occupation, Stó:lō representatives already had a vision for the future of Coqualeetza. In 1973 the Coqualeetza Cultural Education Centre that grew out of the Coqualeetza Cultural Education Training Society that had already leased space on the grounds for several years, was incorporated and designated as a non-profit organization and in the same year, received a forty million dollar Cultural Centre Program grant.⁴¹ The centre was part of a larger move towards self-representation in Stó:lō communities that was indicative of a larger still movement in Canada and beyond. Scholar Moira G. Simpson writes that in the 60s and 70s:

(t)here was a growing movement towards cultural revival and self-representation by tribal groups seeking to re-establish and enhance their cultural identity through the preservation and revival of traditional culture, history and art, and to counteract the negative and stereotyped image of the Indian. One manifestation of this self-determination movement was the establishment of Native American museums and cultural centres.⁴²

For Stó:lō, one of the ways this self determination movement took shape was with the cultural programs run by the Coqualeetza Cultural Education Centre, whose mandate was and continues to be, to broadly represent Indigenous culture and history⁴³ and operate with the philosophy that they

⁴⁰ Carlson et al., *A Stó:lō Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, 74-75.

⁴¹ Jonathan Clapperton, "Building Longhouses and Constructing Identities: A Brief History of the Coqualeetza Longhouse and Shxwt'a:selhawtxw," *The University of the Fraser Valley Research Review*, (Volume 2: issue 2): 96, footnote 5, <http://journals.ufv.ca/rr/RR22/article-PDFs/6-clapperton.pdf>. (accessed August 25, 2019)

⁴² Moira G. Simpson, *Making Representations: Museums in the Post-Colonial Era*, (New York: Routledge, 1996), 135.

⁴³ Dr. Keith Carlson Interview, May 23rd, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

would be “open to all aboriginal peoples, students and educators.”⁴⁴ Coqualeetza’s main goal was to preserve Stó:lō history and culture for the future through cultural revival strategies including community-based and educational programs with an understanding that non-Stó:lō people should also be educated about Stó:lō history.⁴⁵

The initial vision of how to accomplish this mandate was a multi-Indigenous cultural centre and interpretive grounds. The project was driven by the independent Stalo Centre committee group representing Coqualeetza, who in 1974 were working on a heritage plan to create a “Stalo Centre” that would have been composed of “replica native Indian villages”, representing Stó:lō historic villages.⁴⁶ When that vision didn’t come to pass, Coqualeetza refocused locally on both internal and public educational projects. In 1977, Coqualeetza created the Stó:lō Sitel curriculum kit for use as a cultural educational tool in public schools. The kits were created in consultation with the Coqualeetza Elders Group (formed in 1974) that held weekly elders meetings conducted in Halq’eméylem. 1977 was a year of great momentum during which Coqualeetza produced community-engaged projects including the first Halq’emeylem writing system, organized the first annual Coqualeetza Summer Festival and released a Halq’emeylem language colouring book.⁴⁷ In those early years, Coqualeetza established a material culture collection, facilitated Coast Salish weaving and other ‘craft’ revival, and inherited the Skowkale and Stó:lō History oral history project materials. With many of the original oral history project participants and creators descending from the Wells’ oral history collaborators,

⁴⁴ Qw'oqw'elith'a ABOUT US section of the Coqualeetza Cultural Education Centre website, <http://www.coqualeetza.com/page2.html> (accessed August 25, 2019)

⁴⁵ Clapperton, “Building Longhouses and Constructing Identities,” 102-104.

⁴⁶ Bill Lillicrap. “Stahlo Centre: seeking the authentic village”, *Chilliwack Progress*, January 16, 1974, 2A. <https://theprogress.newspapers.com/image/77087325> (accessed August 25, 2019)

⁴⁷ Qw'oqw'elith'a ABOUT US section of the Coqualeetza Cultural Education Centre website, <http://www.coqualeetza.com/page2.html> (accessed August 25, 2019)

the connection to Wells, the Chilliwack Historical Society and the museum was established from the outset.⁴⁸

In 1985, the Stó:lō Tribal Council (STC) and Stó:lō Nation Canada (STN), both stemming out of the Stó:lō Resource Center that had itself developed out of the East Fraser District Council,⁴⁹ were established on the Coqualeetza grounds with both organizations functioning as service agencies with somewhat parallel but separate priorities. During the next decade representatives from both organizations as well as the Coqualeetza Cultural Education Centre collaborated on projects with the Chilliwack Museum. Over time, the Aboriginal Rights and Title Department (AR&T Department) within Stó:lō Tribal Council expanded its mandate to include managing Stó:lō cultural materials through establishing an archive, and an increase in emphasis on prioritizing collaboration through co-creating community-engaged projects with museums and the school districts. Where once Coqualeetza had functioned as the primary Stó:lō community collaborators, there emerged an oppositional dynamic between STC, STN and Coqualeetza as all three organizations fulfilled this role in various ways.⁵⁰

In 1995 Stó:lō Tribal Council and Stó:lō Nation Canada amalgamated to become Stó:lō Nation with all of the previously separate resources merging. But in 2003 Stó:lō Tribal Council reconstituted, and separating from Stó:lō Nation, eventually moved off of the Coqualeetza grounds. What had been the AR&T Department shifted to become the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC), an independent body that provides services to independent bands as well as the Stó:lō Tribal Council and Stó:lō Nation and the bands that they represent.⁵¹ By the end of the Two Thousands, the portable buildings on the Coqualeetza grounds that had housed the Coqualeetza

⁴⁸ Dr. Keith Carlson Interview, May 23rd, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

⁴⁹ Byron Plant, "In Principle": Stó:lō Political Organizations and Attitudes Towards Treaty Since 1969', Stó:lō Ethnohistory Field School report, 2002. <https://web.uvic.ca/stolo/pdf/Plant-Fieldschool%20Paper.pdf> (accessed August 26, 2019)

⁵⁰ Dr. Keith Carlson Interview, May 23rd, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

⁵¹ Dr. Keith Carlson Interview, May 23rd, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

Cultural Education Centre since 1974, were condemned and the centre moved offsite to an available space at Squiala First Nation in Chilliwack BC. From the 90s onwards, the AR&T Department, and later the SRRMC, were the primary Chilliwack-based collaborative partners for the Chilliwack Museum and other museums in the Fraser Valley.

COLLABORATION

When Indigenous individuals seek input from collaborators in order to share their knowledge and histories in written forms, I believe it is both intellectually justified and ethically imperative to employ scholarly platforms to amplify their voices.⁵²

- Paige Raibmon

An early example of community collaboration in exhibition development at the Chilliwack Museum and Archives, was the 1989 exhibition entitled *Sto:lo: the River People*⁵³ which ran during the Festival of B.C. Arts that was held in a different B.C. community each year.⁵⁴ The festival was an opportunity for the museum to collaborate with Stó:lō organizations to reach a province-wide audience. Former Chilliwack Museum and Archives director Ron Denman remembers the project as having “opened the doors”⁵⁵ to collaborations with Stó:lō organizations. In February 1989, Donna Yates from the Chilliwack Community Arts Council initiated the project that would develop into an exhibition when she approached manager Mark Point at the Stó:lō Tribal Council (STC) seeking Stó:lō involvement in the festival. Point responded by allocating time and resources of staff Randel Paul, Gordon Mohs and *Naxaxalhts’l* Sonny McHalsie, who met with Ron Denman at the Chilliwack Museum and Archives to begin planning the “logistics, framework and content” of the exhibition. The resulting project included object loans from Coqualeetza’s collection, Halq’eméylem cultural object and place names

⁵² Paige Raibmon, “Introduction: Listening to ʔems taʔaw,” in, *Written as I Remember It: Teachings (ʔams taʔaw) from the Life of a Sliammon Elder*, Elsie Paul (Vancouver, 2014), 10.

⁵³ May 7 to June 30, 1989.

⁵⁴ Ron Denman Interview, May 21st, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

⁵⁵ Ron Denman Interview, May 21st, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

and the following exhibition themes, “canoe making, Salish weaving, basketry, archaeology, fishing, structures and artistic impressions.”⁵⁶ The archival exhibition notes and a Chilliwack Progress newspaper article cite the both the Coqualeetza and the STC as collaborative partners in the creation of the exhibition.⁵⁷ Detailed information about Coqualeetza and the STC’s specific roles and how they differed from one another is unclear in the exhibit notes, but perhaps more significantly, the intent of the collaboration was recorded in the museum records: “One goal is to improve-cross-cultural communications and help educate and sensitize the non-Indian community about Sto:lo culture and traditions.”⁵⁸

The next exhibition in the museum was entitled *Alyomex Qew Eyem*, (Fig. 2) meaning “beauty and strength” in Halq’eméylem. Organized by then Chilliwack Museum curator Louise Shaw, the exhibition was a different kind of collaboration that relied on Stó:lō community contacts and connections, but did not have a publicly stated formalized partnership. The exhibition was focused on Stó:lō artistry in knitting, weaving and basketry in recognition that this type of labour was traditionally and predominantly seen as woman’s work. The goal of the exhibition was in-part to acknowledge museum collection processes have often stripped the identity of the artist from the work, leaving the artist makers identities largely anonymous. To address this issue, living artists contributed their work and the historical erasure of identity was countered by including biographies and photos of the artists accompanying their work.⁵⁹ The exhibition featured twenty-five contributing artists⁶⁰ with

⁵⁶ Chilliwack Museum and Archives, Archives Research Centre, Chilliwack Museum, Ron Denman Fonds, 2011.066.034, *Sto:lo: the River People*, Exhibit Notes 1989.

⁵⁷ “Festival of B.C. Arts Heads up Festival Season,” *Chilliwack Progress*, May 24, 1989, B7. <https://theprogress.newspapers.com/image/80519723> (accessed on Jul 22, 2019), Chilliwack Museum and Archives, Archives Research Centre, Chilliwack Museum, Ron Denman Fonds, 2011.066.034, *Sto:lo: the River People*, Exhibit Notes 1989.

⁵⁸ Chilliwack Museum and Archives, Archives Research Centre, Chilliwack Museum, Ron Denman Fonds, 2011.066.034, *Sto:lo: the River People*, Exhibit Notes 1989.

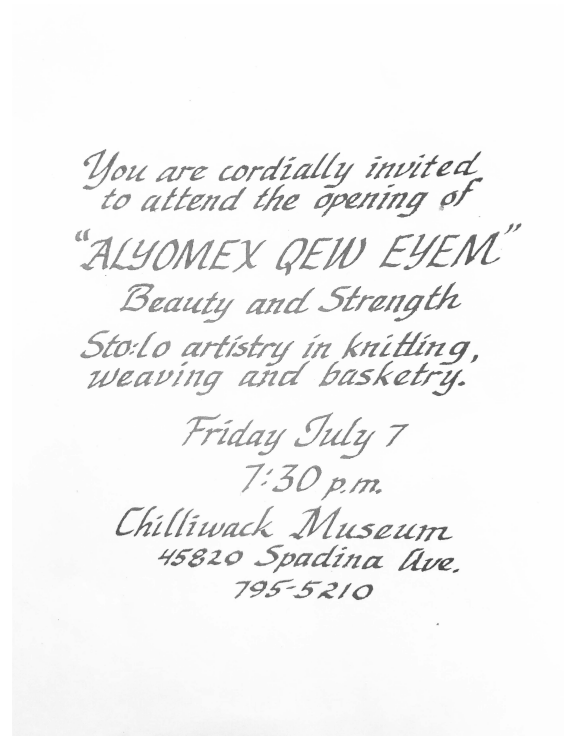
⁵⁹ Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society fonds, AM 0814.2

⁶⁰ “Museum Holds Baskets”, *Chilliwack Progress*, July 12, 1989, B3. <https://theprogress.newspapers.com/image/80520326> (accessed May 17, 2019)

Lynne Henry and Shirley Leon from Coqualeetza providing the vast majority of the artist contacts.

Ron Denman recalls that the museum was always in touch with Coqualeetza and their director Shirley Leon and that it was a good relationship, but that their mandate was different then the museum's which made working together less organic over time. Denman considered the relationships between the various Stó:lō organizations like the SRRMC and Coqualeetza as equally important.⁶¹ But as Coqualeetza became increasingly underfunded with fewer resources, the frequency of their collaboration and involvement in exhibition development with the Chilliwack Museum and Archives declined.⁶²

Figure 2 *Alyomex Qew Eyem* exhibition hand-drawn opening invitation. Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society fonds.



⁶¹ Ron Denman Interview, May 21st, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

⁶² Dr. Keith Carlson Interview, May 23rd, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

SELF-REPRESENTATION: STOLO AGENCY AND VOICE IN REPRESENTATION

Over the years, the relationship shifted from the museum primarily inviting the Stó:lō community to participate in exhibitions, to moving towards a more co-designed collaborative model that involves organizational support for each other's initiatives. In addition to responding to invitations to collaborate, the SRRMC is increasingly developing their own initiatives like the Shxwtà:selhawtxw Longhouse Extension Program that includes the House of Long Ago and Today⁶³ and the Coqualeetza Educational Longhouse that offer cultural interpretation and hands-on interpretive experiences on the Coqualeetza grounds. In 2006 *Naxaxalhts'* Sonny McHalsie said, "Right now whenever there's an opportunity we try to contribute, because it's important for us to make sure that people know who the First Nations people are, and what our culture and history is about. So it's something that we do right away if somebody calls."⁶⁴ And as he also points out, museums are filled with collections of Stó:lō belongings and often because of this, museums take the lead. Yet more and more, cultural materials are returning to Indigenous communities collections via repatriation.

One example of repatriation between the Chilliwack Museum and the SRRMC is the return of the Watson Collection. The collection that is composed of Stó:lō cultural belongings⁶⁵ has left a paper trail in the museum and SRRMC archives that tell of a fifty-six year long and contentious story starting with the loan of the A.R. Watson collection to the Chilliwack Historical Society in as early as 1963. In the 60's and 80's members of the Watson family attempted to reclaim the collection, resulting in a kerfuffle involving lost paperwork and disagreement over where the collection should reside. In

⁶³ Educational program and exhibition content was developed by Stó:lō Nation curator Theresa Carlson with content development, research and installation assistance from the Chilliwack Museum and Archives. From the Exhibits at the Chilliwack Museum document, updated in 2006, Chilliwack Museum and Archives, Archives Research Centre, Chilliwack Museum Fonds.

⁶⁴ S. M. Fortney, "Forging New Partnerships : Coast Salish Communities and Museums", (PhD dissertation, University of British Columbia, 2009), 47. <https://open.library.ubc.ca/collections/ubctheses/24/items/1.0067741>. (accessed Aug. 12, 2019)

⁶⁵ Stó:lō elders refer to artifacts or material culture as "belongings" because they belong to those that made them: makers, ancestors, known as "treasures". For Stó:lō attitudes relating to heritage resource ownership and management practices, see pages 34-35 written by David M. Schaepe in *A Stó:lō Coast Salish Historical Atlas*.

1989, on behalf of Stó:lō Tribal Council, Gordon Mohs requested the transference of ownership from the Watson family who agreed. But that didn't occur until 2011 when the collection, which by then was considered abandoned by the Watsons, was returned to the SRRMC where it is now housed in the repository. SRRMC Director and Senior Archaeologist David Schaepe feels that this transferal represents recognition by the museum that the capacity of the SRRMC has grown over time and can support direct caretaking of cultural belongings on behalf of communities.⁶⁶ This reflects a significant shift from the early days of the relationship. Perhaps the most significant example of repatriation of Stó:lō cultural belongings and for the SRRMC was the return of the ancestor stone *T'xwelátse* from Washington State's Burke Museum of Natural and Cultural History.⁶⁷ The subject of a lengthy repatriation process initiated in the mid-2000s, stone *T'xwelátse* 'visited' the museum where a celebration with the permission of the family and protocols took place to mark his return.⁶⁸ Both of these visits were arranged at the request of *T'xwelátse* Herb Joe Sr. and other members of the family, to provide an opportunity for Stó:lō community members to talk publicly about repatriation and its significance to their daily lives and cultural practices.⁶⁹ A permanent booth with a film about *T'xwelátse*'s return remains in the Chilliwack Museum to tell the story from the Stó:lō perspective.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Dr. David Schaepe Interview, May 17th, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.

⁶⁷ See "The Transformative Power of *T'xwelátse*: A Collaborative Case Study in Search of New Approaches to Indigenous Cultural Repatriation Processes." By Emmy-Lou Campbell, MA thesis, University of Victoria, 2010. <https://dspace.library.uvic.ca/handle/1828/2895> and the *Man Turned to Stone: T'xwelátse* exhibition and project website <http://www.srrmcentre.com/StoneTxwelatse/1Home.html> and online catalogue <http://www.perrierdesign.com/pd/txwelatse/manturnedtostonetxwelatsebook.pdf>

⁶⁸ Dr. David Schaepe Interview, May 17th, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.

⁶⁹ S. M. Fortney, "Forging New Partnerships : Coast Salish Communities and Museums", (PhD dissertation, University of British Columbia, 2009). Retrieved from <https://open.library.ubc.ca/collections/ubctheses/24/items/1.0067741>. August 12, 2019, 48.

⁷⁰ *T'xwelátse: We Have to Learn to Live Together in a Good Way* is an ongoing installation at the Chilliwack Museum. Pulled from the museum's website, the exhibition description is as follows: "We have to learn together to live together in a good way" is a lesson that rings as true today as it did during the first contact between early European settlers and Aboriginal Peoples. The exhibit, based on the lesson by Stone *T'xwelátse*: an ancestor of the Stó:lō, encourages visitors to imagine what the meeting of these two world viewpoints resulted in as thousands of newcomers gathered in the Chilliwack area during the 1858 gold rush. <https://www.chilliwackmuseum.ca/exhibitions/current-exhibits/> (Accessed September 24, 2019)

In the interviews that I conducted there were many examples of Stó:lō initiatives that were supported and facilitated by the Chilliwack Museum. These ranged from displaying the companion exhibit⁷¹ to the 2001 Stó:lō Nation publication *A Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, to smaller scale informal day-to-day acts like providing temperature and humidity control advice for the Stó:lō Interpretive Centre, pro-bono historical photo production, research services, and when the museum purchased new display cases, SRRMC was offered the old ones. These small gestures of cooperation went both ways. Recently retired SRRMC Archivist and Librarian Tia Halstad told me that the relationship in the past has always been informal and personal. She said for instance, the long-term loan paperwork for the Billy Sepass Canoe,⁷² typically a complicated process in museums, was informal in comparison to the recent paperwork renewal with the newer museum staff,⁷³ who are more recently trained museum standards than some of their predecessors may have been.⁷⁴

More recently, an exhibition produced by the SRRMC in collaboration with Sq'ewlets First Nation entitled, *Sq'ewlets: A Stó:lō-Coast Salish Community in the Fraser River Valley*, was shown in the museum.⁷⁵ *Sq'ewlets* was the third iteration of the community-led exhibition that had previously

⁷¹ Entitled *Transformations*, the exhibition acted as a launch for the *Atlas* and was created “Working closely with the Stó:lō Nation including their Historian, Archaeologist, Cultural Advisor and other staff the exhibit focused on specific pages from the *Atlas*. Many of the graphics provided to us via the book’s designer Jan Perrier.” W.R. Paul Ferguson was the Chilliwack Museum Curator from January, 1993 to March, 2014. From the Exhibits at the Chilliwack Museum document, updated in 2006, Chilliwack Museum and Archives, Archives Research Centre, Chilliwack Museum Fonds.

⁷² The Billy Sepass Canoe technically belongs in the museum collection, but after a formal request and petition initiated by the Sepass family, the canoe was returned to the care of the SRRMC from the Xáy:tem Longhouse Interpretive Centre where it previously had been housed. Ron Denman and the Chilliwack Museum obliged and the canoe is now on long-term loan and housed in the recently renovated House of Long Ago and Today Interpretive Centre on the Coqualeetza Grounds. For more information see Madeline Knickerbocker’s field school report, “Bring Home the Canoe”: History and Interpretation of Sepass Canoes In S’ohl Temexw, http://web.uvic.ca/vv/stolo/pdf/Knickerbocker_Sepass_Canoe_2011.pdf

⁷³ Tia Halstad Interview, May 23, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.

⁷⁴ CMA curator Anna Irwin holds a BA in History from the University of the Fraser Valley and a certificate in Collections Management from the University of Victoria. Executive Director Shawna Maurice holds a BA in Art History and Anthropology and graduate diploma in Heritage Resource Management from Athabasca University. She is currently working towards completing her MA in Social History and Heritage.

⁷⁵ Exhibition dates: November 2, 2017 to April 28, 2018.

been on display at two other Fraser Valley museums.⁷⁶ Initially a web-based virtual museum platform, the project emerged out of archaeological digs at Qithyil where over 6,000 belongings were discovered and are now held in collections in three locations.⁷⁷ The website was initially creating to bring the objects now in different places, together in the digital realm and later evolved into exhibition format. Grand Chief Clarence “Kat” Pennier from Sq’éwlets First Nation acted as the cultural advisor for the exhibition at the Chilliwack Museum, facilitating connections and bringing the Sq’éwlets community to the museum for the opening (Figs. 3 & 4), despite the snow storm that prevented some from attending, and to the closing event where school children had the opportunity to ask elders questions.⁷⁸



Figure 3 Installation image of Sq’éwlets exhibition. Photo by Lori Johnson.
<https://www.chilliwackmuseum.ca/blog/2017/11/09/new-exhibition-focused-on-sqewlets-first-nation-now-open/> (accessed September 24, 2019)

⁷⁶ Previous installations of the exhibition were shown at the Bill Reid Centre at Simon Fraser University and The Reach Gallery in Abbotsford.

⁷⁷ Laboratory of Archaeology at the University of British Columbia, the Department of Archaeology at Simon Fraser University, and the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre.

⁷⁸ Grand Chief Clarence “Kat” Pennier Interview, May 24, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.



Figure 4 Welcome by Chief Robert Coombes at the exhibition opening.

<https://www.chilliwackmuseum.ca/blog/2017/11/09/new-exhibition-focused-on-sqewlets-first-nation-now-open/> (accessed September 24, 2019)

RELATIONSHIPS, COLLABORATION AND PEOPLE

The collaborative projects involving cross-institutional support outlined in this report represent only a small number that was produced over the years. Dr. Keith Carlson told me that the collaborative relationship between the AR&T Department and the CMA and Ron Denman was such that not once, but twice, the idea to create a new museum that would merge settler and Stó:lō voices was considered, explored and planned before fizzling out. And while both times the idea met with oppositional forces and agendas, the spirit of collaboration was so, that at least for a while it had seemed possible for the two organizations to co-fund, co-direct and co-staff a new shared museum.⁷⁹

I was able to attend the opening event of the museum's current *Five Faces, Five Corners: The Social Experience of Chilliwack's Downtown* exhibition that was put together by new CMA curator Anna Irwin.⁸⁰ While the staff at the CMA have changed over time and some of the foundational players in the relational development have moved on, Irwin says that when the museum is planning an exhibition that includes Stó:lō perspectives and content, one of the first steps is to contact the SRRMC to receive direction and guidance and research assistance.⁸¹ Usually, recently retired SRRMC archivist and librarian Tia Halstad is the first point of contact aiding research and facilitating

⁷⁹ Dr. Keith Carlson Interview, May 23rd, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

⁸⁰ May 16, 2019 – April 18, 2020, Chilliwack Museum and Archives, Chilliwack BC.

⁸¹ Anna Irwin Interview, May 24, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C. Confirmed in Tia Halstad Interview, May 23, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.

community connections. Similarly, Naxaxalhts'i Sonny McHalsie is a significant collaborative force for the museum, participating on museum advisory boards, providing Stó:lō place-based and language knowledge and history. For the *Five Faces, Five Corners* exhibition, he contributed Stó:lō perspective consulted on the Halq'eméylem, provided one of the "five faces" contacts,⁸² and attended a series of meetings including one for the final text sign off.

Naxaxalhts'i is invested in collaboration for good reason. There are times when he has encountered tokenism in museum exhibitions, "(you) have to make sure that it's done respectfully and seriously.....because its important you know because it is one of the relationships that we have, when we look at museum exhibits that we are involved with. One of the things that we didn't like in the past was when you walked in and they would have the quaint little section on First Nations"⁸³ But there has been some confusion in the recent transitional period. The collaborative process hasn't totally continued as business as usual and there has been some perceived breakdown in protocols. At the recent exhibition opening, the territory and collaboration acknowledgements were delivered by curator Anna Irwin, who at the time of our interview had been in her new role for just over a year. Because no microphone and speakers were used, unless one stood in close proximity to her, her talk was not audible. Naxaxalhts'i, who attended the opening believed that they territory acknowledgement had not occurred and this created some confusion about protocol adherence. Further, the absence of a welcome song or words given by a member of the Stó:lō community was noticed as these elements have been important occurrences at recent museum events. Noting this, Naxaxalhts'i reasonably assumed none had been invited and this added to the sense that some

⁸² In addition to providing knowledge about Halq'eméylem and the history of the downtown "five corners" area, Sonny connected Anna Irwin with elder Gary Williams from Skwa, who is one of the "five faces" in the exhibition and Sonny's former brother in law.

⁸³ Naxaxalhts'i, Albert (Sonny) McHalsie Interview, May 22, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.

ground had been lost since Ron Denman's final retirement.⁸⁴ When I mentioned this in my interviews with Tia Halstad, she told me that an invitation to a Chief had been extended, but he was unfortunately unable to attend.

Further, there was a sense with some SRRMC staff that there was a delay in the new CMA leadership making contact with SRRMC staff and leadership because a meeting had not yet occurred. However, other SRRMC staff had been in almost continuous contact with the new museum staff working on the *Five Faces* exhibition. By the third week of field school CMA Executive Director Shawna Maurice and SRRMC Director David Schaepe had connected and made plans to meet. I got the sense that I was present at the moment when a new relationship was unfurling and developing in real time.

MOVING FORWARD

The longstanding relationship between the CMA and various Stó:lō organizations was built on more than good luck and happenstance. It was built on the strategic intentions of the TRC and AR&T Department and SRRMC leaders like Mark Point, Kat Pennier and David Schaepe and CMA Director Ron Denman and the personal relationships between staff like Tia Halstad, Sonny McHalsie, former CMA curators Louise Shaw, Paul Ferguson⁸⁵ as well as Keith Carlson, Theresa Carlson, Oliver Wells, Chief Richard Malloway (Th'eláchiyatel), Coqualeetza Cultural Education Centre staff and many others spanning decades. Current SRRMC Director David Schaepe believes that museums provide space to access a wider audience for representation of Stó:lō voices. In his future meetings with new CMA executive Director Shawna Maurice, he plans to discuss the potential for an institutional agreement of understanding between the two institutions that will outlast any staff that may come

⁸⁴ Naxaxalhts'i, Albert (Sonny) McHalsie Interview, May 22, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.

and go.⁸⁶ He would like to see the SRRMC continue to work with the museum to help inform and develop new or reformed policy to “provide a bridge” around topics like repatriation and other relations.⁸⁷ Moving forward, he doesn’t want to lose sight of the connection that has been built with the CMA in relation to the interpretive spaces and with management of the material and cultural collections. He sees the upcoming meetings with Shawna Maurice as an opportunity to continue the historical progressive relationship and to deepen it by continuing to prioritize “a more authentic and direct representation of the people who from these things originate, and to include them directly in the conversation.”⁸⁸

Ron Denman’s legacy, is in part the lingering persistence of the long established institutional collaborative culture at the CMA. When Stó:lō donations are brought to the museum, staff know to defer the donations to the repository at the SRRMC.⁸⁹ This unwritten policy is one of many in which the museum’s long relationship has been maintained. Shawna Maurice, a self proclaimed “procedural oriented person” plans to consult with the SRRMC to ensure that this informal practice is still consistent with the repository’s expectation before formalizing it as policy.⁹⁰ Another instance of informal ‘Denman era’ practices is a SRRMC representative on the museum board. She doesn’t remember exactly when, but archivist and librarian Tia Halstad was invited by Ron Denman to sit on the museum board, which until recently, she did for many years. Her role was to liaise between the museum and the SRRMC and to act as a bridge of connection between the two organizations, a role that she would like to see continue more formally in the future, especially knowing that the museum would welcome it.⁹¹ All of this suggests that the uncertainty felt by SRRMC staff in this transitional

⁸⁶ Dr. David Schaepe Interview, May 17th, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.

⁸⁷ Dr. David Schaepe Interview, May 17th, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.

⁸⁸ Dr. David Schaepe Interview, May 17th, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.

⁸⁹ Anna Irwin Interview, May 24, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.,

⁹⁰ Shawna Maurice Interview, May 24, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

⁹¹ Tia Halstad Interview, May 23, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.

period, stems from lack of formal policy that ideally would set expectations and establish a clear relationship that will ensure that when key individuals like Tia Halstad and Ron Denman retire or move on, the relationship continues unwaveringly.

During his years in leadership roles with the Stó:lō Tribal Council and Stó:lō Nation and the AR& T Department, Clarence “Kat” Pennier would respond to requests from the museum by authorizing staff to allocate some of their time towards collaborative projects. From a strategic planning perspective, Pennier felt that the best way to develop community relationships with people and organizations was to “just do it”.⁹² He felt that his staff understood their roles and responsibilities and could carry them out without his micromanaging their every move. In our interview, he told me that this approach led to development of many of the relationships that the SRRMC now fosters, including relationships with museums, Universities, students and field schools. This strategic planning is rooted in his belief that Stó:lō people need to share their stories to let “people know who we are as a people so that they could better understand us and why we’re here and why we’re still here after thousands of years.”⁹³ Approved in 2003, the Stó:lō Heritage Policy Manual includes a vision statement that echoes Pennier. Part of the statement reads, “(w)e are determined to promote the integrity and well being of our *Stó:lō* heritage in all its forms. We wish to share our heritage with our neighbours. We promote better understanding between peoples in order to create a better and healthier way of life for all living within *S’ólh Téméxw*.”⁹⁴ Further, the purpose of the policy is in part to “cooperate with other organizations - both *Stó:lō* and non-*Stó:lō* - in the protection, preservation and management of Stó:lō heritage” and “advance knowledge and understanding of *Stó:lō*

⁹² Grand Chief Clarence “Kat” Pennier Interview

⁹³ Grand Chief Clarence “Kat” Pennier Interview

⁹⁴ S’ólh Téméxw - “our world”. STÓ:LŌ HERITAGE POLICY MANUAL

<http://www.srrmcentre.com/files/File/Stolo%20Heritage%20Policy%20Manual%20-%20May%202003%20-%20v1.2.pdf>, (Accessed September 29, 2019)

heritage.”⁹⁵ With this vision in mind, the SRRMC’s steady movement towards self-representation for Stó:lō people through collaboration is solidified and speaks to a long-term strategy that has been enacted over decades.

The Chilliwack Museum and Historical 1993 Collections Management Constitution and Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society Constitution, or the board of trustees constitution (no date), are much simpler documents than the Stó:lō Heritage Policy Manual. But in the latter, it states that one of the main purposes of the Society is “to promote the study and understanding of the indigenous people.”⁹⁶ The Collections Management document speaks more generally to care of all objects in the collection and does not explicitly name any one cultural or community group. In our most recent communications, Shawna Maurice told me that both the museum mandate and the Collections Policy are under review and revisions will be released within the year.⁹⁷

CONCLUSION

In retrospect, the long relationship between the CMA and Stó:lō organizations has been both institutional and personal, which in the scope of new museum theory is the ideal mixture of building blocks for a progressive community-engaged museum. However, up to this point the mixture’s quantities have not been balanced and the relationship has relied more on individuals than policy at the institutional level.⁹⁸ Ron Denman loved the personal and collaborative aspect of the role, he said, “...the huge number of people I have gotten to meet over the years, really nice people. Who've got lots to say and just need or want someplace to say it. Well, giving voice, giving voice to people. So it

⁹⁵ STÓ:LŌ HERITAGE POLICY MANUAL <http://www.srrmcentre.com/files/File/Stolo%20Heritage%20Policy%20Manual%20-%20May%202003%20-%20v1.2.pdf>, (Accessed September 25, 2019) 2-3.

⁹⁶ Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society Constitution. Obtained through personal communication with Chilliwack Museum and Archives Executive Director, Shawna Maurice. September 3, 2019.

⁹⁷ Personal communication with Chilliwack Museum and Archives Executive Director, Shawna Maurice. September 3, 2019.

⁹⁸ Dr. David Schaepe Interview, May 17th, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.

was always an important thing for me.”⁹⁹ In a time when the large museums are only just formalizing many of their own policies relating to self representation and voice, challenging authority, ‘restoring history’ as well as repatriation and collaboration with Indigenous community partners, it seems that the Chilliwack Museum and Archives and Stó:lō communities have been in step with critical museum theory for decades. While the institutional policies need refreshing, the staff from both organizations have already set in motion policy revision and plans that will seek to formalize the existing longstanding informal relationship that has been forged by generations of people over decades, impacting cultural production by telling a more complete version of the past that includes both settler and Stó:lō histories and culture. At the CMA, gone are the days of the “‘old neo-colonial paradigm’ in which people are represented ‘through the voices of foreign interpreters’”.¹⁰⁰ Instead, the history of the relationship between the Chilliwack Museum and archives and Stó:lō communities share a long collaborative history that was formed by individuals, who acting as agents of change, built cross-cultural relationships and to work together through the process of collaboration that continues to deepen over time.

⁹⁹ Ron Denman Interview, May 21st, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

¹⁰⁰ Museum of Anthropology Director Anthony Shelton, quoted in Ruth B. Phillips, “Introduction: Community collaborations in exhibits: toward a dialogic paradigm,” in *Museums and Source Communities, A Routledge Reader*, ed. by Laura Peers and Alison K. Brown (London/New York: 2003), 158.

INTERVIEWS

(Listed alphabetically)

Dr. Keith Carlson Interview, former Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC) Staff Historian and Research Coordinator, Research Chair in Indigenous and Community-Engaged History, University of Saskatchewan. As of September 2019, Keith is the Canada Research Chair Indigenous and Community-Engaged History at the University of the Fraser Valley. May 23, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

Ron Denman Interview, former Director at the Chilliwack Museum and Archives, May 21st, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

Tia Halstad Interview, former Archivist / Librarian Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC) May 23, 2019, Chilliwack, B.C.

Anna Irwin, Curator, Chilliwack Museum and Archives, May 24, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

Shawna Maurice Interview, Executive Director, Chilliwack Museum and Archives, May 24, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

Grand Chief Clarence “Kat” Pennier Interview, former Executive Director, Aboriginal Rights and Title Department (AR&T Department), Stó:lō Tribal Council. May 24, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

Naxaxalhts’i, Albert (Sonny) McHalsie, Cultural Advisor/Historian, Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC) and Honorary Doctorate of Law, University of Victoria. May 22, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

Dr. David Schaepe Interview, Director and / Senior Archaeologist, Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC) May 17th, 2019. Chilliwack, B.C.

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