

Hlaa Hiyukwhl Gwildim-Goodam̓ Dim Dip Luu-diyaltkwahl Hli Haykwahl Ganiye'etguḡ Preparing to Bring Our Ancestors Home



“In Nisga’a culture, we believe that this pole is alive with the spirits of our ancestors. After nearly 100 years, we are finally able to bring our dear relative home to rest on Nisga’a lands. It means so much for us to have the Ni’isjoohl Memorial Pole returned to us, so that we can connect our family, nation and our future generations with our living history.”
- Sim’oogit Ni’isjoohl | Chief Earl Stephens

FEBRUARY 22, 2023
7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M. (PST)

BILL REID GALLERY
639 HORNBY STREET
VANCOUVER, BC CANADA

In-person RSVP: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/niisjoohl-memorial-pole-repatriation-an-international-panel-discussion-tickets-534854523277>

Panel Discussion Livestream (Zoom): <https://sfu.zoom.us/j/88098795913?pwd=aEhNV2hyM3k5K0ZHcHZtcjdxGhaUT09>

Passcode: 044861

YOU ARE INVITED TO AN INTERNATIONAL PANEL DISCUSSION ON NI’ISJOOHL MEMORIAL POLE

The Nisga’a delegation, alongside staff from National Museums Scotland will participate in the first public panel discussion on the Ni’isjoohl Memorial Pole re-patriation. The discussion will be moderated by Barbara Fillion, Programme Officer for Culture with the Canadian Commission for UNESCO. Among the topics addressed, the panel will discuss the specifics of this case, especially in relation to wider international contexts of law, culture, governance, education, and decolonizing mandates and actions in colonial institutional systems.

PREPARING TO BRING OUR ANCESTORS HOME

On December 1, 2022, the Nisga'a Lisims Government announced that a long-stolen memorial totem pole would be returned to the Nisga'a Nation in northwestern British Columbia. The decision follows a formal request to transfer the House of Ni'isjoohl Memorial Pole, made by a Nisga'a Nation delegation to museum officials at the National Museums Scotland in Edinburgh in August. A decision by the Board of Trustees of National Museums Scotland granted this request, and subsequently the decision was approved by the Government of Scotland Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, Angus Robertson.

The delegation was led by Chief Ni'isjoohl (Earl Stephens), Sigidimnak Noxs Ts'aawit (Dr. Amy Parent), and Shawna Mackay from the House of Ni'isjoohl. The memorial pole belongs to the House of Ni'isjoohl from the Ganada (frog clan) in the Nisga'a Nation. In 1860, House of Ni'isjoohl Matriarch Joanna Moody commissioned the pole to be carved to honour her family member Ts'awit,

who was next in line to be chief. Ts'awit was also a warrior who died protecting his family and nation. The historic visit was the first time anyone in the family had seen the memorial pole in more than 90 years.

The groundwork for the pole's return was developed in accordance with the Nation's governance systems and in close collaboration with the museum's leadership. The Nisga'a delegation was supported by Hlgu Aama Gat (Donald Leeson), Chief Councillor Laxgalt'sap Village Government, Apdii Laxha (Andrew Robinson), Mmihlgum Maakskwhl Gakw (Pamela Brown), and Theresa Schober, Director and Curator of Nisga'a Museum, Nisga'a Lisims Government who acted as witnesses, speakers and negotiators alongside the delegation.

READ THE FEATURED ARTICLE IN SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE ON THE NI'ISJOOHL MEMORIAL POLE RE-P/MATRIATION TO LEARN MORE:

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/inside-the-nisgaa-nations-fight-for-the-return-of-a-36-foot-totem-pole-180981342/>

PANELISTS

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE Owii`lo`ly`eyum`gaudlth`ni`Ki`insque

Halayt | Mr. Bruce Robinson
Nisga'a Peoples

NATIONAL MUSEUMS SCOTLAND REPRESENTATIVES

Dr. John Giblin
Keeper Department of Global Arts, Cultures & Design
Chanté St. Clair Inglis
Head of Collections Services

HOUSE OF NI'ISJOOHL DELEGATION REPRESENTATIVES

Sim'oogit Ni'isjoohl | Chief Earl Stephens
Sigidimnak Noxs Ts'aawit | Dr. Amy Parent
Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Education & Governance, Simon Fraser University
Hlgu Aama Gat | Donald Leeson
Chief Councillor, Laxgalt'sap Village Government
Apdii Laxha | Andrew Robinson
Industry Relations Officer, Nisga'a Lisims Government
Theresa Schober
Director and Curator, Nisga'a Museum, Nisga'a Lisims Government

PANEL RECORDING AND RESOURCES

Visit the Cassidy Centre for Educational Justice's curriculum library after the event for the panel discussion recording, background and other pedagogical resources.

This event is made possible with support from: the Nisga'a Lisims Government; UNESCO Canada; SFU VP External Relations; Cassidy Centre for Educational Justice; SFU Research Centre for Scottish Studies



Nisga'a Lisims Government



Hli Goothl Wilp-Adokshl Nisga'a

