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Summer 2018 Newsletter

1. The Northern Secwepemc Exhibit Roadmap Project

The first very encouraging piece of news is that the Soda Creek Band Council has resolved to resume its full participation in the affairs of the Society, with the result that all five of our member Bands will be involved in this crucially important phase of our overall project.

Our consultants for this phase are David Jensen & Associates who have been associated with our project since 2006. David Jensen is a universally renowned exhibit design specialist who has received numerous awards over the years, including the 2014 Canadian Museums Association Award for Distinguished Service. His work can be enjoyed in numerous North American museums and cultural centres that include the Alaska Native Heritage Centre, the Haida Heritage Centre, the Squamish Lil'Wat Cultural Centre, the Royal British Columbia Museum and the UBC Museum of Anthropology. Associated with David on our project is Lesia Davis whose lengthy career has been recognized by numerous awards for outstanding achievement within the Canadian museum industry.

Following several weeks of preparation, this project got off the ground with a series of five meetings during the week of August 27th, and involved a full day's session with each of our five Bands. All five meetings were extremely successful and resulted in David's team receiving a wealth of information and ideas about how to move forward with this project. His team will now review all of the input they received from the five meetings, and are planning to return to Northern Secwepemc traditional territory in October to meet each Band for a half day during which they and the Band representatives will jointly review their summaries and reach consensus on final versions. Those five separate summaries will then be submitted to the respective Band Councils for their consideration before the project moves forward.

2. A Changing of the Guard Among our Member Band Chiefs

We had noted in an earlier edition that several of our member Bands had recently elected new Chiefs or were on the point of doing so. Earlier this year, the Canim Lake and Soda Creek Bands elected new Chiefs and in August of this year the Williams Lake Band elected a replacement for the long-serving Chief Ann Louie. In September, the Esk'etemc First Nation will elect a replacement for Chief Charlene Beaulieu, leaving our own Chief Patrick Harry of the SXFN as the only Chief amongst our five Bands with more than six months in office. The significance of these changes will be discussed in the next section.



3. The Road Ahead

We anticipate the Exhibit Roadmap Project occupying at least the next 12 months, by the end of which period we should have a good idea of the stories, artifacts, photographs and handicrafts that our member Bands will want to have exhibited in our proposed museum and cultural centre.

We had earlier thought that with new leadership in four of our Bands, the time would be most opportune to resume the discussion of how to finance both the construction of the Centre - estimated at close to \$5 million - and the ongoing cost of subsidizing its operations - estimated at \$125,000 annually, but instead of starting those discussions this Fall and Winter, our annual general meeting that will be held this Fall, will consider as an alternative the hiring of a professional fundraiser for the purpose of trying to acquire the construction funding, leaving the issue of funding the operating deficit until a time following the completion of David Jensen's report - expected to be by the summer of 2019. That will permit the five Bands to consider the value of the overall project against the background of a much better understanding of what the exhibits will look like.

4. Our Annual General Meeting

Our President hasn't yet set a date for our 2018 annual general meeting which must be held before the end of this year, but in order to avoid December which is such a busy month for all concerned, it is most likely to be held at some time in November. As the result of recent resignations, three of our Bands have vacancies to fill. Helen Sandy has been forced for health reasons to vacate her position as one of the Williams Lake Band's two representatives. Patricia Chelsea has felt obliged by the pressure of her work commitments to resign as one of Esk'et's two representatives, and the Soda Creek Band will be expected to appoint and confirm its two representatives - hopefully all in time for the AGM. We all thank Helen and Patricia for their dedicated and valuable service to our Society during the time they were members, and wish them both well in the future.