

— LUU-HILYALTKWHL HLAGAHAYKWHL GÁ'ANGIGATGUM' —



— THE SPIRIT OF OUR ANCESTORS HAS RETURNED HOME —

# Anhluut'ukwsim Anhooya'ahl Nisga'a

## The Sacred Artifacts of our Ancestors

Nisga'a Museum

Nisga'a Village of Laxgalts'ap

Wednesday September 15, 2010



SAYT-K'ILIM-GOOT — ONE HEART, ONE PATH, ONE NATION

## Agenda

Master of Ceremonies: W'ii Ajiskim Gibaygum X̄sgaak, Kevin McKay, Executive Chairperson

- 1:00pm Welcome  
Kevin McKay, Executive Chairperson – Nisga'a Lisims Government
- 1:05pm Opening Prayer  
Sim'oogit K'amksidakhkw - Reverend James Moore
- 1:10pm Welcoming Remarks  
Sim'oogit Ni'isy'uus, Willard Martin, Chief Councillor Laxgalt'sap Village Government  
Sim'oogit K'amluugidis, Edmond Wright, Secretary-Treasurer Nisga'a Lisims Government
- 1:20pm Arrival of Artifacts
- 1:50pm Dim K'aa'axkwahl Gal'ink - Opening of the Boxes  
Traditional Address:  
Sim'oogit Ksim X̄saan – Oscar Mercer, Chairperson – Council of Elders  
Sim'oogit Hleek – Dr. Joseph Gosnell, Nisga'a Ambassador  
Accompanied by Members of the Council of Elders:  
Sim'oogit Haym'aas – Chester Moore, Ḡanada – Gingolx  
Sim'oogit Wisin Xbil'tkw – Andrew Mercer, Gisk'aast – Laxgalt'sap  
Sim'oogit Hlayim Wil – Alex Angus, Ḡanada – Laxgalt'sap  
Sim'oogit K'amayaam – Arthur Johnson, Gisk'aast – Gitlaxt'aamiks  
Sim'oogit Sin'alga – Raymond Stewart, Laxgibuu - Gingolx  
Sigidimnak' Noxs W'een – Peggy Nyce, Laxsgiik - Gitwinksihkw  
Sigidimnak' Yool' – Rosie Robinson, Laxgibuu – Gitlaxt'aamiks  
Sigidimnak' Tk'igapks - Alice Azak, Laxsgiik – Gitwinksihkw
- 2:10pm Official Signing of Declaration
- 2:20pm Official Addresses:  
Nisga'a Nation – Sim'oogit K'aw'een, H. Mitchell Stevens, President  
Royal British Columbia Museum – Pauline Rafferty, Chief Executive Officer  
Canadian Museum of Civilization – Moira McCaffrey, Vice-President Research & Collections
- 2:50pm Presentation of Gifts
- 3:00pm Nisga'a Cultural Dancers
- 3:20pm Artifacts Display Open House
- 4:00pm Closing Prayer
- 5:00pm Tribal Picnic and Cultural Dancing at the Greenville Recreation Centre



## Amalite

Collected: 1906

Collector: C. F. Newcombe

Traditional Owner: Nathaniel Robinson, Laxsgiik

Community: Laxgalts'ap

The amalayt is used by the sim'oogit and is part of the wii halayt regalia. When dancing, eagle or swan's down was often placed in the crown of the frontlet, and the dancer by bobbing his head is spreading the down around the house, this is to represent "peace".



## Mask

Collected: 1912

Collector: C.F. Newcombe

Traditional Owner: William Smith, Laxsgiik

Community: Laxgalts'ap

Dance mask. From eagle clan.

## Rattle



Collected: 1913  
Collector: C.F. Newcombe  
Traditional Owner:  
Community: Nass River

## Rattle



Collected: 1913  
Collector: C.F. Newcombe  
Traditional Owner: Alfred Livingston Skatiin  
Community: Gitlaxt'aamix  
Usage: Part of Halayt's regalia



## Tray

Collected: 1912

Collector: C.F. Newcombe

Traditional Owner: Leonard Douglas

Community: Laxgalts'ap



## Mask

Collected: 1912

Collector: C.F. Newcombe

Traditional Owner: Kate Gitxhun

Community: Gingolx



## Mask

Collected:  
Collector: C.F. Newcombe  
Traditional Owner:  
Community: Nass River



## Mask

Collected:  
Collector: C.F. Newcombe  
Traditional Owner:  
Community: Nass River

Mask depicts human face. Made of red alder.



## Mask

Collected: 1909

Collector: C.F. Newcombe

Traditional Owner:

Community: Nass River



## Mask

Collected: 1912

Collector: C.F. Newcombe

Traditional Owner: Paul Moody

Community: Laxgalts'ap



## Mask

Collected: 1912

Collector: C.F. Newcombe

Traditional Owner: William Smith

Community: Laxgalts'ap

## Whistle



Centrally bulging cylindrical whistle made from a piece of cedar that has been split, hollowed and bound together at a constriction near each end with root. One end tapers to mouthpiece, other end is carved in indented rectangular shape, painted red.

Collector: Newcombe, Mr. William A.

Community: Angidah Village

## Soulcatcher



Charm, a soulcatcher. Hollow bone cut horizontally at each end to form an open mouth. On one side, ends are carved as heads of zoomorphic creature. Centre carved as head with short body and arms. Eyes, of all 3 faces, plus nose of centre face, are inlaid with abalone. Bone is unpainted but incised areas have become brown. Babiche passes through 2 holes on top, and are tied together.

Collector: Newcombe, Mr. William A.  
Community: Kidladamiks Village



## Head-scratcher

Head scratcher carved from bone; curved, tapering to point. Anthropomorphic figure on top of head scratcher; open down centre. Abalone inset for eyes; vertical lines incised around top of head, tassels of hair extend from hole along top edge of head.

Collector: Newcombe, Mr. William A.  
Community: Kidladamiks Village

## Figure



Wood carving of canoe containing man and pairs of animals, painted with red ochre. Small carved canoe with enormous snouted animals sitting on bow and stern as part of canoe. Pegged in place is the full figure of a man sitting in middle of canoe, wearing a crown. Front and rear thwarts are pegged in place, each has a similar pair of animals pegged in place at end of thwarts, overhanging sides. Eye areas darkened with graphite.

Collector: Newcombe, Mr. William A

Community: Laxgalts'ap

## Whistle



Bone whistle, possible beaver design. Hole is bound on either side with ? material.

Collector: Newcombe, Mr. William A

VII C 179 (1)



## Charm

Small bone carving depicting seated man, legs and arms bent, hands out turned under chin. Circle and dot designs carved down back.

Collector: Newcombe, Mr. William A



## Charm

Carved charm (eagle) hung with other charms on blankets worn by Shamans. Flat bone plaque carved to represent an eagle with folded wings. Ends are slightly curved up. Features are incised: feather markings on wings and tail.

Collector: Newcombe, Mr. William A

Community: Laxgalts'ap

## Charm



Bone charm (double headed snake) (a c) hung with other charms on blankets worn by Shamans. Flat bone plaque bearing incised feathers of a double headed snake, with both mouths opened. Two ears (?) at top curving towards centre. Cross braided surface separates the two heads

Collector: Newcombe, Mr. William A

Community: Laxgalts'ap

## Mask



Wooden face mask resembling human face. Barrel shaped with hole cut in back. Sits upright. Moveable eyes controlled from back with strings and lever. Nostril holes. Wide black horizontal strip painted across eye area. Remainder of face reddish brown. A pulley system and cross beams nailed to top of head at one time possibly, controlled some elaborate head gear. (b) Headdress, found in storeroom with no number 2/80. Consists of 16 curved metal "claws" attached equidistantly to circular wooden band with two metal nails. Circular hole is drilled through apex of each. Metal rod is attached across diameter to secure headdress to top of mask (a).

(Kaitlin McCormick, 2008/01/28) This object was acquired by the Museum in 1911 according to the Sapir register. Version 2 of Perry's list indicates the mask was used up to 1840. The date of collection by Perry has not been identified in the original documentation, however a letter of correspondence from the collector to an M.P.P. of the B.C. Provincial Legislature in Victoria is dated 1911/01/18, and advertises the potential sale of this group of masks.

## Mask



Wooden face mask resembling a human face. Large prominent eyebrows continue down into large wide nose, which has nostril holes. Moveable mandible missing. Leather strips nailed on along moustache line and eyebrows. Network of bent wooden braces nailed to back of mask and covered with burlap. This and forehead act as a support for a crown in the shape of a bear's claw crown. Metal claws lashed to a leather band which is lashed to a wooden band, both of which are lashed to burlap as in a bear's claw crown, tip of claws are joined together in this case by means of a notched wooden peg in tip of each claw lashed with a continuous string. Lips and nostrils painted red. Black and white eyes. Light brown forehead and lower cheeks. Upper cheeks and bridge of nose dark brown.

## Rattle



Raven Rattle: five figures: painted red, blue and black. Raven with sun in his mouth, man lying on bird's back, sharing a tongue with frog who is sitting on his chest. Hawk face carved onto back of tail away from the man. Hawk face on underside of rattle. Rattle handle pegged together with two wooden pegs. Held together in same way. Two red bars at raven's back wings

Dr. Gunther notes 'Rattle of a type carried by a high ranking man in the winter dances'.

## Rattle



“Chief’s dancing” raven rattle carved in the shape of a raven with a hawk on its breast and a shaman and a frog reclining on its back.

Main body is carved from a single piece of wood (yellow cedar or alder) which has been split horizontally through the centre and hollowed out to contain noisemakers (small stones or shot). The two pieces are then resecured with a single stitch of black cotton thread at each side. Cylindrical wooden handle is carved to form a square extension which is inserted into proximal end of rattle and secured with glue. The handle is also split through the center and reinforced with a circular wooden dowel 1.5 cm from proximal end.

Raven is carved in relief with outstretched head and narrow projecting wings. A black circle and blue/green ellipse outlined in black are painted on the upper surface of each wing; underside is painted black with two wide and a single narrow parallel line. The raven’s head is pierced with a triangular slit through the throat and a frog painted blue/green with red mouth, protrudes from its hooked beak. A shaman figure reclines on the raven’s back with its arms bent and hands resting on its flattened knees. A frog, painted blue/green, sitting on the shaman’s chest, holds the tip of the shaman’s projecting tongue in its mouth. The shaman’s legs and upturned red feet are contained within the head of a hawk (thunderbird ?) facing the handle. The head has a curved beak, oval shaped mouth opened to expose the tongue, ovoid eyes and four horizontal crest feathers representing the tail feathers of the raven. Another hawk is carved in shallow relief on the raven’s chest. A primary black formline encloses the ovoid eyes and dips between them to produce an angular forehead notch. A curved hooked beak is carved in relief above a downturned mouth which is open to expose rectangular teeth and a red tongue. Two eyes in same motif as above are carved at the base of the handle beneath two red split U motifs. Designs are painted black, red (7.5R4/10) and blue/green (7.5BG7/4).

Handle is unpainted. Label glued to top of raven’s right wing is inscribed “Indian rattle Nass River BC 1879” in brown ink.



# NISGA'A LISIMS GOVERNMENT



## SAYT-K'ILIM-GOOT

ONE HEART, ONE PATH, ONE NATION

... LAXSGIIK / GISK'AAST / CANADA / LAXGIBUU ...

# A Proclamation

THE NISGA'A NATION, as represented by the President, Executive officers, Council of Elders, Simgigat and Sigidimhaanak of K'alii-aksim Lisims.

*Hear witness to all mentioned herin — Welcome*

**WE ARE NISGA'A**, people of the mighty K'alii-aksim Lisims (Nass River). We have lived here on British Columbia's northwest coast, since before recorded time. The resources of the Nass River have sustained our people for millennia. This bounty allowed us to develop one of the most unique and sophisticated Aboriginal cultures in North America — one with a rich legacy of arts, crafts, dance, and oral history. Today, people of the Nisga'a Nation reside in the communities of Gingolx, Laxgalts'ap, Gitwinksihlkw, Gitlax't'amiks, Terrace, Prince Rupert, Vancouver — and across North America.

**WE ARE A TREATY PEOPLE.** On May 11, 2000, after 113 years our leaders brought home the landmark Nisga'a Final Agreement, British Columbia's first modern treaty. On September 14, 2000, the new administrative building of Nisga'a Lisims Government opened, where Wilp Si'ayuukhl Nisga'a — the legislative assembly of Nisga'a government — is seated in the Nisga'a Village of Gitlax't'amiks.

**WE NISGA'A ARE LEADERS.** We live our lives in accordance with our Ayuuk (Nisga'a laws and customs). Nisga'a culture fosters respect for the natural world and the wisdom of the elders. Our society is based on Sayt Kilhl Wo'osim / Nisga'a Common Bowl — our system of shared resources and responsibilities. Our art and culture celebrates our ties to this land.

**IN THE SPIRIT OF SAYT-K'ILIM-GOOT**, the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, and the Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada transfer to the Nisga'a Nation without condition all its legal interests in, and possession of, the Nisga'a artifacts set out in Appendix L-1 and Appendix L-3 of the Nisga'a Final Agreement respectively.

**WHEREAS**, as directed by our ancestors who came before us and the children who are our future — we are:

## Bringing our Ancestors Home

**WITNESS** Sim'oogit K'aw'een, H. Mitchell Stevens, President, Nisga'a Nation; Sim'oogit Ksim Xsaan, Oscar Mercer, Chairperson, Council of Elders; Moira McCaffrey, Vice President, Research and Collections, Canadian Museum of Civilization; Pauline Rafferty, Chief Executive Officer, Royal British Columbia Museum, in the Nisga'a Village of Laxgalts'ap, in the province of British Columbia, Canada, this fifteenth day of September, two thousand and ten in the tenth year of Wilp Si'ayuukhl Nisga'a.

### BY AUTHORITY

SIM'OOGIT K'AW'EEN,  
H. MITCHELL STEVENS  
PRESIDENT  
WILP SI'AYUUKHL NISGA'A

SIM'OOGIT KSIM XSAAN,  
OSCAR MERCER  
CHAIRPERSON  
COUNCIL OF ELDERS

MOIRA MCCAFFREY  
VICE-PRESIDENT  
RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS  
CANADIAN MUSEUM OF CIVILIZATION

PAULINE RAFFERTY  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
ROYAL BRITISH COLUMBIA MUSEUM

**NISGA'A  
MUSEUM  
CELEBRATING  
OUR CULTURE  
AND HERITAGE  
ON LAND  
THAT IS OUR  
OWN.**

**N I S G A ' A  
M U S E U M**



**NISGA'A  
MUSEUM  
OUR ARTIFACTS  
ARE SACRED,  
LIVING OBJECTS  
WE WILL BE  
ABLE TO SHARE  
WITH FUTURE  
GENERATIONS.  
REPATRIATION  
MEANS  
'BRINGING OUR  
ANCESTORS  
HOME.'**