



NEWS RELEASE

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FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITY YOUTH-LED CARVING PROJECT AT MUSEUM

A group of First Nations youth will be working on a house post carving project at the Langley Centennial Museum on August 15 and 16, under the direction of the internationally recognized carver Xwalacktun. A member of the Squamish Nation, Xwalacktun has initiated this project, and the youth have led the design process, choosing something that represents the values and traditions that they hold close to their hearts.

The carving will start on Monday, August 15 at 11:00am, and again on Tuesday, August 16 at 11:00am, and the group will work together to create a piece that showcases their stories and talents. The community is encouraged to drop by the Langley Centennial Museum at 9135 King Street in Fort Langley to see the project develop, ask questions, and chat with the artists on site.

Xwalacktun was born Rick Harry and raised in Squamish. He was given his indigenous name by his father, Pekultn, who was a hereditary chief, originally from the Seymour Creek North Vancouver area. The artist gained his skills and education from the Emily Carr College of Art and Capilano College, but also feels he learned a lot through trial and error.

Some of Xwalacktun's well-known pieces include a welcome figure at Whistler's Peak 2 Peak Gondola and the thunderbird and serpent on the Squamish Nation overpass on the Sea to Sky Highway. He is also known for the numerous and continuing work he has done with a large number of schools, including a ten-foot carving of a bobcat in yellow cedar for Brookwood Secondary School. In addition to this, Xwalacktun carved two sets of yellow cedar doors for BC Hydro's Burnaby and Vancouver offices, and Harrison Hot Springs Resort commissioned him to create a set of doors placed at the entrance of its spa.

"It is just a way of life for me," Xwalacktun said. "I was inspired from the get-go and just never stopped. I enjoy what my hands could do and people appreciate it: my mother, my father, my community. The work pays for itself in the end if you do it right, if you put your heart and your soul into it."

For more information, please contact the Langley Centennial Museum at 604.532.3536.