

Repatriated 200-year-old Indigenous headgear on display at northern BC museum

Victoria Fetcher • December 3, 2022



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The return of a 200-year-old Susk'uz headdress that stood on display at the Royal Ontario Museum for some 140 years will be celebrated in a repatriation ceremony in northern BC on Saturday.

The Keyohwhudachun (chief) headdress is a cultural artifact of the Maiyoo Keyoh, a family territory about 100 kilometers northwest of Prince George. The

ceremony to welcome the Headdress House will take place on Saturday afternoon at Prince George's museum, The Exploration Place, which is displaying it as the centerpiece of a new exhibition.

Jim Munroe, President and CEO of the Maiyoo Keyoh Society, says the headdress is significant for several reasons, including the fact that it is linked to the system of land stewardship and stewardship of the indigenous families' territory.

"It's something that not only matters to us, but I think provides an opportunity for society at large to connect with the society that has carried us for hundreds, if not thousands, of years."

"It's a fantastic opportunity to be able to share this with everyone."



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The headdress has flute-shaped shells, humpback whale baleen and long braided hair of female ancestors of Hereditary Chief Petra A'Huille. (Maiyoo Keyoh Society)

Headdress return 'means a lot'

The headdress consists of flute-shaped shells, humpback whale baleen, and long, intricately braided hair from the female ancestors of Munroe's wife, Petra A'Huille, who is Maiyoo Keyoh, Hereditary Chief.

The headdress originally belonged to A'Huille's great-great-grandfather, George A'Huille, and dates to the mid-19th century.

"It's really good to have it back," said Petra A'Huille. "It means a lot to me that it's back in my family."

George A'Huille is shown in a sketch. He is the original owner of a headdress returned from Ontario and on display near his home range in northern BC (Maiyoo Keyoh Society).

A chance discovery led to the return

Munroe discovered the headdress by accident while browsing the Royal Ontario Museum's online collection in 2017. He says he was taken by a Catholic priest, Father Adrien Morice, around 1887, at a time when the early Canadian government forbade First Nations from engaging in any traditional ceremonies.

Morice eventually delivered the headdress to a Toronto museum, and it was then given to the Royal Ontario Museum.

According to Munroe, work to bring the headdress home to northern BC began about three years ago. With the support of numerous partners — including provincial and federal politicians, the BC Museums Association, the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada — he said it would be back on BC soil in "May or June" of 2022.

An agreement between the Maiyoo Keyoh Society and The Exploration Place now has the headdress in the museum, which Munroe called "the host facility."

The Susk'uz headdress will be the focus of an exhibit that will also feature other artifacts and photos, Munroe said.

Tracy Calogheros, CEO of The Exploration Place, said the exhibit will be there "for the next few years" while the Munroe family decides what to do with the headdress.

Source



Here's the latest on Ryan Hartman's potential return

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The Minnesota Wild were without Ryan Hartman as he remains in rehab with an upper-body injury, but his return remains up in the air, according to The Athletic's Michael Russo.

In an article co-written with Athletic colleague Joe Smith, Russo reports that Hartman started skating this week "to get his legs back on track," but the Wild don't have an official schedule for offered his return. Russo explains the reason for no schedule is because the Wild "just hope" Hartman can return at some

point.

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