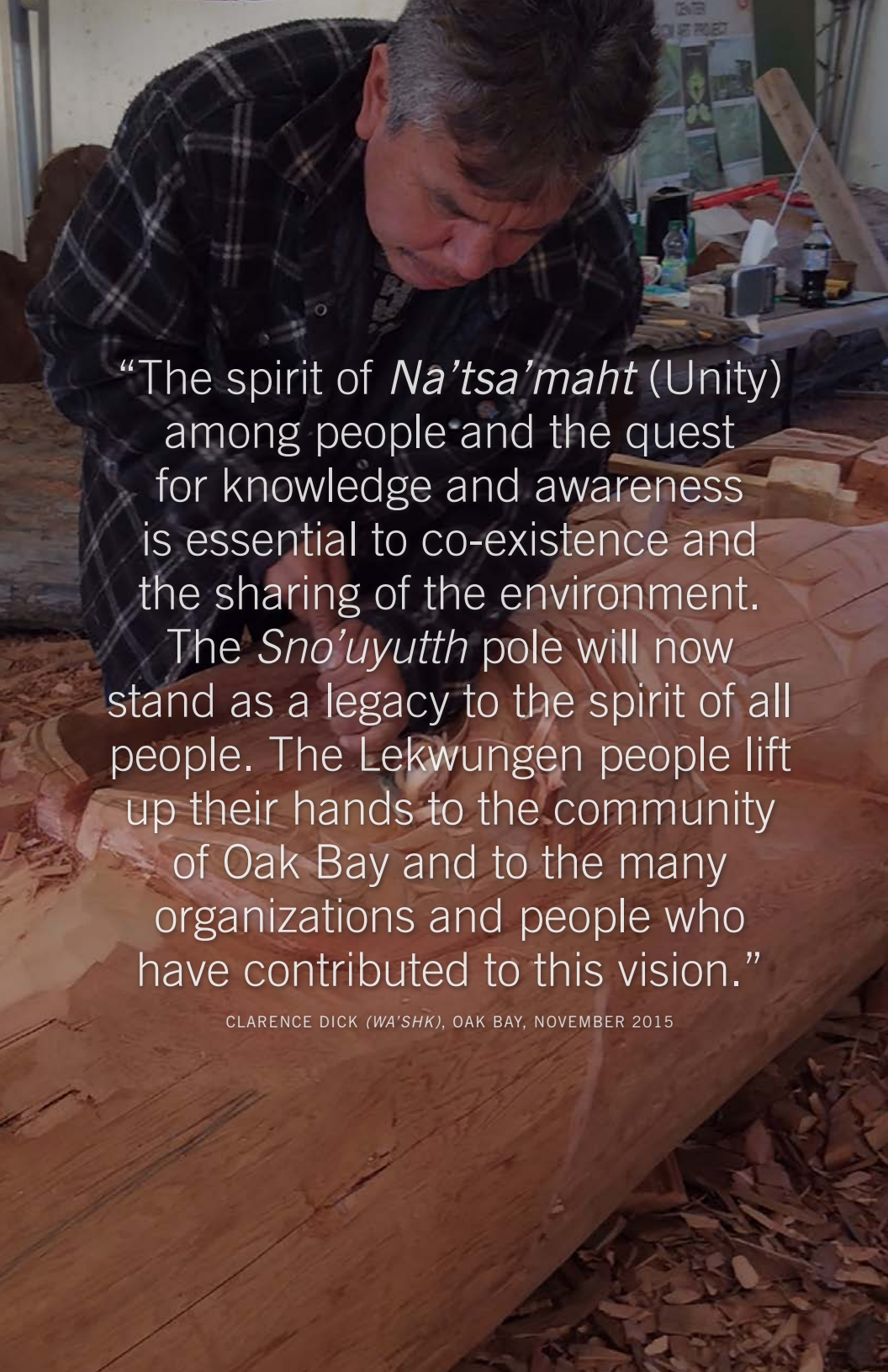


Sno'uyutth

"SPREADING GOOD ENERGY"



OAK BAY HIGH SCHOOL
VICTORIA • BC • CANADA

A man with grey hair, wearing a dark plaid shirt, is leaning over a large, light-colored wooden pole. He appears to be working on the pole, possibly carving or smoothing it. The background shows a workshop or construction site with various tools, materials, and a table. The lighting is natural, and the overall atmosphere is one of focused craftsmanship.

“The spirit of *Na'tsa'maht* (Unity) among people and the quest for knowledge and awareness is essential to co-existence and the sharing of the environment. The *Sno'uyutth* pole will now stand as a legacy to the spirit of all people. The Lekwungen people lift up their hands to the community of Oak Bay and to the many organizations and people who have contributed to this vision.”

CLARENCE DICK (WA'SHK), OAK BAY, NOVEMBER 2015

A new future together

A strong new relationship with First Nations is critical to the future for all Canadians and for those of us who work, live, and study in Oak Bay.

In fall 2015, the Community Association of Oak Bay and its partners, Greater Victoria School District #61 and the District of Oak Bay, along with the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations raised a 20-foot-tall “Welcome Pole” at the newly-completed Oak Bay High School to symbolize a new beginning between our students and community, and the Songhees and Esquimalt (Lekwungen) people, whose traditional territory includes Oak Bay.

Designed by Songhees master-carver, Butch Dick (*Yuxwelupten*), and carved by his son, Clarence Dick (*Wa’shk*), the pole is called *Sno’uyutth*—“spreading good energy” in the Lekwungen language.

Sno’uyutth recognizes the history, culture and traditions of the Songhees and Esquimalt people, promotes mutual respect and understanding between our communities, and supports our new future together. It stands at a main gateway to the municipality.

Sno’uyutth also embodies the spirit and resilience of the original inhabitants of this land and serves as a tribute to the ancestors of the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.

Sno’uyutth was conceived by the Community Association of Oak Bay who worked in partnership with the Rotary Club of Oak Bay Foundation to raise funds in the community. The active involvement of local businesses, organizations and citizens helped to turn this vision into a reality and will ensure that the “good energy” of this initiative has an enduring place in our community.

The figures of *Sno'uyutth*

Sno'uyutth is carved from a 200-year-old red cedar log from the Jordan River area.

At the top stands **Earth Mother**, the foundation of all living things. She is embracing two **blue herons** (*Snuckwa*) who symbolize serenity and peace.

Below are two **coho salmon**. They represent Bowker Creek which flows behind the school and which was once a salmon-spawning stream. Salmon were an important food source for the Lekwungen people.

Then come **sea and river otters**, who were a source of “good medicine” for Lekwungen people who may have lost their spirit. Carvings of otters once adorned the house posts of long houses.

The **frog** at the base of the pole is a sign of new beginnings; a symbol representing reconciliation.

On the back of the pole the Earth Mother's **hair** cascades down, symbolizing the Earth's ground waters that are essential to life, while the flowering plants are **camas**, a source of nutrition and an important trade item with other nations.

The full length **eagle** symbolizes the messenger between Grandfather Sun and the people on Earth.

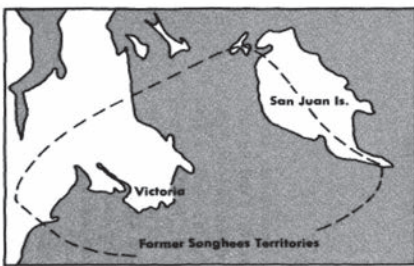




History of the Lekwungen

The traditional territory of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations (Lekwungen) incorporates land from the shores of the southern entrance of Haro Strait from Open Bay to Eagle Cove and on to San Juan Island. The territory runs on Vancouver Island from Cordova Bay to Mount Douglas and on to Mount Finlayson to Parry Bay and back to Cordova Bay (*Sungayka*).

This covers the present day municipalities of Victoria, Esquimalt, Saanich (southern portion), Metchosin, Langford, Colwood and Oak Bay.



The eight family groupings

The eight distinct family groupings—the *Chewaytsun*, *Kakyaaken*, *Teechamitsa'*, *Whyomilth*, *Chekonein*, *Chilcowitch*, *Kosampson* and the *Swengwhung* lived, fished, hunted and harvested these lands.

Two families; the *Chilcowitch* and the *Chekonein*, lived in small temporary settlements found in protected bays along the waterfront running from Turkey Head by the present-day Oak Bay Marina to Cordova Bay (*Sungayka*).

Larger villages were located at McNeill Bay and Willows Beach. Here the families lived in cedar-plank communal dwellings. *Sitchananlth* was the name given to the large permanent settlement located at Willows Beach.

The neighbouring village at McNeill Bay was known as *Chilcowitch*. This location provided a great lookout spot from the top of Gonzales Hill for the families and enabled them to watch for approaching canoes.





RBCM PN8838

Sustaining life in the communities

The pristine environment was rich with natural resources such as fish, shellfish, water fowl and seal which were hunted and used for food and clothing.

During the annual salmon spawning season, the Lekwungen people travelled further afield to such places as San Juan Island and the Fraser River to find sockeye salmon, a staple of their diet. Locally, Bowker Creek, Goldstream River and the rivers in Sooke were a source of spawning salmon and fresh water for the families.

Changes to the traditional way of life

In 1843 Fort Victoria, known as Camosun, was established on the Inner Harbour by colonists from the Hudson's Bay Company.

Gradually the Lekwungen families moved closer to the fort in order to participate in the new way of life. Initially, they traded deer and elk, water fowl, shellfish and salmon for goods, helping the colonists to survive in the new land.

Gradually this trade and barter gave way to a monetary system and many Lekwungen men and women were employed by the colonists.

After some time the camps close to the fort were dismantled and the Lekwungen people were relocated across the bay to Laurel Point. The new village was known as *Pahlutsuss*.

In 1863, following a devastating smallpox epidemic that brought much sickness and death to the village's inhabitants, a further move to the present day site at Esquimalt Harbour took place.

Sno'uyutth's designer and carver

DESIGNER: BUTCH DICK (YUXWELUPTEN)



Butch Dick is a Songhees Nation elder and an acclaimed artist. Inducted into the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts and recipient of Leadership Victoria's Lifetime Achievement award, his designs are showcased in carvings and public art at Centennial Square (Spirit Square), Ogden Point breakwater, the University of Victoria and the Spirit Whorl projects throughout Victoria. He is an educator and Artistic Director at the Songhees Wellness Centre in Esquimalt, where his designs and sculptures are displayed.

HEAD CARVER: CLARENCE DICK, JR. (WA'SHK)



Clarence Dick, son of Butch Dick, is a veteran Songhees carver whose style reflects his Coast Salish, Kwakwakka'wakw, and Nuuchah-nulth heritage. Clarence credits his father, Ted Wilson, Victor Newman, Jim Gilbert, Bill Reid, Richard Hunt, Willy Sewid, Charlie James, Rudy Charlie and Mungo Martin as major influencers. His work is showcased at Centennial Square (Spirit Square), the Esquimalt Graving Dock and the Songhees Wellness Centre. He hopes his work inspires young First Nations artists to use carving as an avenue to discover themselves and their culture.



Giving thanks

This publication was made possible through the collaborative efforts of Butch Dick (*Yuxweluptun*) of the Songhees Nation, the Community Association of Oak Bay, and Greater Victoria School District #61, and the generous support of Island Savings (a division of First West Credit Union).

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Kris Nichols (Chair), John Armitage (school & trades liaison), Bruce Kilpatrick, Rick Marshall, Jan Mears, Tasha Noble, Gerald Smeltzer, Heather Stokes, Arifin Graham

and the support of the Mayor and Council of the District of Oak Bay and the Rotary Club of Oak Bay Foundation, in particular treasurer Rod Sim.

We wish to recognize the financial contribution of the following donors:

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PHOTOGRAPHS: BC ARCHIVES; ROYAL BC MUSEUM; ADRIAN LAM/TIMES-COLONIST (BUTCH DICK); GAIL PRICE-DOUGLAS; ARIFIN GRAHAM (FRONT COVER) **MAP:** BC ARCHIVES **DESIGN:** ALARIS DESIGN

The Community Association of Oak Bay is hopeful that the students of School District #61 will continue the work begun in this publication to create a lasting digital learning resource for Greater Victoria residents that acknowledges and records the sound and spellings of Lekwungen names for the places, animals and figures referenced herein.



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