

## **Klahoose Cultural Modified Tree Ceremony**

On Friday November 15<sup>th</sup>, Klahoose Councillor Kathy Francis and a team of professional and cultural leaders made way to Yekwamen (Toba Inlet). The group were on their way to perform a traditional ceremony for the relocation of a recently identified culturally modified tree which was found recently by a forestry worker in the area.

“The tree is a significant find for the Klahoose and continues to prove our occupation of the land and use of the area.” said Kathy Francis. “We are looking forward to housing the find in our administration building to share with our membership.” The image in the tree has been identified to have been carved in the late 1800’s. Great care and attention has been ongoing with the preservation and the correct procedures how to manage the find. Kathy Francis contacted Al Mackie and Owen Grant at the BC Archeology Branch and George Field, Conservator at the Royal BC Museum to combine efforts for the next steps.

The forestry company ‘Fireball Contracting’ owned by Klahoose members Bill Brown and John Reedel was the first to recognize the find for what it was weeks before the ceremony. Employees Rob Reynolds and his Partner Keith McCrea spotted the face on the tree and immediately knew it was something special. Klahoose Forestry LP Manager Kim Olney informed Klahoose First Nation and Kathy and Kim began to get the plans in place.

The Klahoose Cultural Leader Norman Harry Sr. and a Tla’amin Cultural Leader Erik Blaney witnessed and performed a ceremony to ensure cultural protocol was observed. The heartfelt moments before the tree was harvested was both moving and surreal on that snowy winter Friday. Needless to say that the emotional event was a historical moment for those who witnessed.

After the ceremony a host of people were involved carefully moving the priceless find to the beach where eventually the journey will begin to the final resting spot. John Head of Toba Montrose General Partnership was coordinating the transport and Coulson Heli crews, Mayco Noel and Jordan White coordinated the flying of the tree to safe ground.

As for the next steps, Klahoose plans to have a ceremony unveiling the tree in its new home in the near future and to share this great find to the entire Klahoose membership for all to enjoy. A plaque will be constructed at the site of the find.

The Cultural Modified Tree is going to be at the Klahoose offices at T’oq (Squirrel Cove) for permanent display. Klahoose wishes to thank the individuals and contractors who assisted in these efforts.

For more information contact: Councillor Kathy Francis or Chief James Delorme

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