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December 2019 Newsletter

1. Our Project

We remain poised and hopeful that 2020 will witness the launching of our campaign to raise the funds we need in order to proceed with the construction of our long-awaited Cultural Centre. Before we can start that campaign, however, we require the financial support of our member Bands in order to cover the estimated annual shortfall between projected expenses and expected revenues.

It is worth pointing out that there is no museum or cultural centre of any size in North America that is able to cover its cost of operation without a subsidy. The largest and best-known Canadian museums are currently subsidized to the extent of 65% to 80% of their costs, and smaller centres do not fare much, if at all better. Our anticipated annual shortfall is forecast to be close to 50%, and that amount is almost matched by our estimated annual payroll cost that will be dedicated to Band members.

We have previously reported that our request for a five-year commitment to fund the operations of our Centre, has been approved by the Band Councils of Canim Lake and Canoe Creek. The request was unfortunately rejected by the Williams Lake Band Council, and the Esk'etemc First Nation's Band Council plans to submit the matter to a community meeting, probably in February.

If the Esk'etemc Band Council ends up approving our request, we plan to ask the Williams Lake Band Council to provide our leadership with an opportunity to make a presentation of our history and our plans for the future, in the hope of persuading the Band to reverse its earlier decision.

Finally, we hope that in due course after we have made more progress, the Soda Creek Band will be able to sense the value of our overall project and will be able to find the means to make its respective financial contribution. We will not be pressing this issue at this time.

In the meantime, we plan to explore what, if any provincial funding might be available to finance the next phase of David Jensen's exhibit design work. If we are successful in raising \$80,000 from that or any other source, David and his team will carry out this next phase in conjunction with the Canim Lake Band. Our hope is that the success of that project will facilitate the acquisition of additional funding that would enable David to continue his work with our other four members Bands.



2. Our Benefactors

Since early 2004 when our project was initiated, we have been the beneficiaries of numerous grants from many organizations both public and private. As we head out into a new year, it seems timely to recognize all of them one more time.

Chief among them are our five participating member Bands who have provided financial and moral support throughout the almost 16 years of our combined efforts. Many of the external grants would not have been available to us in the absence of Band contributions that acted as leverage.

The external sources that are listed in alphabetical order, have our everlasting gratitude for their generosity and for their belief in the objectives we have been pursuing since the project's inception.

- Aboriginal/Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
- Aboriginal/Indigenous Tourism BC
- ArtsVest
- BC Rural Dividend Fund
- Department of Canadian Heritage
- Cariboo Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition
- Cariboo Regional District
- CN
- Community Futures Development Corporation
- Numerous Local Business Sponsors
- New Pathways to Gold Society
- Northern Development Initiative Trust
- Union of BC Municipalities
- Western Economic Diversification Canada



3. Renewed Holiday Greetings

Although we extended our best wishes to all our faithful readers in the previous edition, we are so grateful for all the support – both financial and moral – that we have received over the years, that we make no apology for repeating ourselves in this edition. We sincerely hope that the holiday season was good to you and to your loved ones, and we once again wish you all the best for this New Year.

As a footnote we wish to state that we realize that we are not all blessed with good health, and to all those who are suffering or who might have left us to join our Creator, we extend our prayers for peace and comfort.



Notes to the Reader

1. If you would prefer not to receive future monthly Newsletters, please notify us by email addressed to grahamleslie@shaw.ca.
2. If you are not on our direct emailing list, but would like to be added to it, please notify us by email addressed to grahamleslie@shaw.ca.