150 Years of Shared History

This community culture initiative was generously supported by the Province of British Columbia, through a BC 150 Grant that honours 150 years of shared history in British Columbia (1858 through 2008), and through the efforts of the Esquimalt Lagoon Enhancement Association, The Esquimalt Lagoon Stewardship Initiative (ELSI), City of Colwood, Capital Regional District, Esquimalt Lagoon, West Shore Chamber of Commerce and Royal Roads University.

About the Artist

CLARENCE “BUTCH” DICK
Master carver and Songhees First Nation elder Clarence “Butch” Dick (Haliy̓eł̓e̓y̓ł̓), is an inspiring local visionary trained in fine art who continues to play a pivotal role in youth empowerment. An internationally renowned artist, Butch is from the Ukwungen community, better known today as the Songhees First Nation. Butch’s tireless commitment to creativity, and championing the Songhees carving style, has touched every generation.

Through his lifelong dedication to art, culture and community service, Butch has become an educator and mentor to many. Countless students in the Victoria School District 70, where he has taught First Nations art and cultural awareness for more than two decades, and including his two sons, Clarence Dick Jr. and Bradley Dick, whom he taught to carve, have had the pleasure of learning from Butch.

Butch believes intrinsically in leading by example. As a Songhees education liaison worker and artistic director, he has helped launch the Songhees Recreation and Wellness Centre in 2013. This centre includes a gymnasium, elders, youth centre, adult education centre and a youth kitchen. Butch was also the driving force behind the Indigenous Youth Showcase, where youth from ages 15 to 24 work with artists, mentors and elders to develop an artistic vision and practice a focus on a career path.

Among other works, Butch designed and created the Signs of Ukwungen Interpretive Walkway, found along Victoria’s Inner Harbour. With its seven large unique metallic markers, it honours art, history and the culture of the Coast Salish People. Butch was also directly involved in carving the two poles in Spirit Square, formally known as Victoria’s Centennial Square, which includes a performance stage, market, and gardens with native species.