

SPEAKER SERIES

The FGCA Reconciliation Circle has sponsored several events over the past two years. Our speaker series has been very popular with the community. The speakers are selected mainly through personal contacts of the members of the circle. The speaker choose their topic that is related to the Truth and Reconciliation commissions action plans.

The format of the evening is: a presentation, a short break and then a Question and Answer period between the speaker and the community. The events are normally held on Sunday evenings in the Garry Oak Room at the FGCA, check the website for upcoming events.

We welcome all community members, not just those that live in the Fairfield or Gonzales neighbourhoods.

Understanding and Acceptance

Presented by Rebecca Atleo Taataasupaxa (to speak straight forward)
February, 2018

Rebecca Atleo's presentation on *Understanding and Acceptance* touched on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations, but she also spoke from personal experience of how being from Ahousaht is an honour but challenging sometimes, when not in a First Nations community.

Rebecca Atleo is from Ahousaht and comes from the Atleo family, who are Nuu-chah-nulth. Her people reside in Ahousaht Territory which is part of the Nuu-chah-nulth, comprised of 14 Nations.

Rebecca is currently the Director of Education for the Ahousaht Membership overseeing Daycare through to Post Secondary. Her home is in Ahousaht, but she travels the Island and Lower Mainland meeting with families and students about the importance of education and supports students who are at places of higher education. Rebecca also advocates for equity in the education system that is funded through DIA. Rebecca has a Master of Education from UVic, a Bachelor of Education from UBC. She is semi-fluent in her language of Nuu-chah-nulth. Her nephew, Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, was the national chief for the Assembly of First Nations. Her guidance was important for him while he was chief.

The History and Role of Native Friendship Centres

Ron Rice and Tanya Clarmont of the Victoria Native Friendship Centre
January 2019

Ron Rice is a member of Cowichan Tribes from Duncan and has lived in Victoria on and off for over 25 years. Ron Rice is the Executive Director of the Victoria Native Friendship Centre and has passed his first year in the position.

Previously, he worked with BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres. Ron has served on various boards in Duncan and Victoria, including the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness.

Ron, has been a member of Camosun College's Board of Governors since 2013, was elected Chair of the Board on December 4, 2017.

Ron planned the Opening Ceremonies for the Cowichan 2008 North American Indigenous Games. The Spirit pole was his brainchild for the games held in Duncan in 2008. The extensive, public carving process included having various people throughout British Columbia participate in the carving, as the raw log made its way around the province. The pole is located in Duncan outside the Aquatic Centre near the big hockey stick.

Tanya Clarmont is Teme-Augama Anishnabai on her father's side and her community is Bear Island Reserve in Ontario, a water access only community. She is also French Canadian from the Ottawa Valley on her mother's side. She acknowledges and embraces both sides of her culture and has made efforts to learn both the Anishnabai and French languages.

Tanya Clarmont, Director of Human Resources and Management Supports at the centre. Tanya's most recent work has centred around the topics of Reconciliation, TRC Calls to Action, UNDRIP and financial literacy.

Native plants and their Indigenous uses as Food and Medicine

Earl Claxton, Jr
March 2019

Earl presented to our community on native plants and their Indigenous uses as food and medicine. He shared his knowledgeso that we might better understand about the importance of native plants to Indigenous communities and to the local ecosystem.

Earl Claxton Jr. is an elder of the Tsawout First Nation in Saanich, B.C. He is a self-described ethnobotanist whose learning was passed down to him from his grandmother. Earl works in the Sooke School District as an elder role model, and tutors' students at the Tsawout Tribal School. He grows vegetables with students and grows native plants with students for planting into sites in Tod Inlet. He has had a long career contributing to his community and his nation; in the early 1970's he was the only employee of the Tsawout First Nations and over 17 years he has had the opportunity to do the work of almost every employee in the administration today!

Storytelling: The ancient art of spinning wool and leadership development. Co-creating community through the practice of self-awareness, self- discovery and shared leadership.

Stephanie Panigavluk Papik
May 2019

Fibre Arts. Learning to spin is more than just the positioning of the drop spindle or knowing the tensile strength of the various wool fibers. It's about being authentic with your challenges and becoming aware of your habits, tendencies, and impulses, without blame or shame. Stephanie has used her fibre spinning journey as an opportunity to bring awareness and bring intentional practice to reclaiming and reaffirming ancestral practices that are inclusive to all human beings. Stephanie has used spinning as a practice of acknowledgement, healing, forming steel threads

of self-awareness, self-discovery and shared leadership. Join us for a journey together on a pathway to reconciliation.

Stephanie Panigavluk Papik, is of Inuit and Irish ancestry; born in Akaitcho Territory (Yellowknife, NWT) and grew up on Lekwungen Territory (Victoria). Stephanie pursued an academic career in Montreal at Concordia University where she earned an Honors Degree, with distinction, Bachelor of Science. At the age of 24, Stephanie moved back to Akaitcho Territory to learn more about her Inuit roots and spend time with her Northern family. During this time, she married a Dene man whose great-aunt, Sarah Sibbeston, had gifted her father-in-law with a pair of hand knit socks, knit only with her insight as Sarah was fully blind. This accomplishment was an inspiration for Stephanie that has manifested in a career of knitting, spinning, felting and weaving. Stephanie and her husband, Ryan Davis, opened their award-winning business, Knotty by Nature Fibre Arts in 2008. Stephanie has been recognized with Business of the Year by the BC Aboriginal Achievement Award, the Black Press Eco- Entrepreneur of the Year Award, a Premiers Award with the Provincial Government of BC and Diverse and Inclusive Culture Champion in the Public Sector by Workplace Inclusion Awards.

Métis Nation Greater Victoria and the Métis of Canada

Barbara Hulme, founding member of the Métis Nation Greater Victoria
June 2019

"Barb", as she is affectionately known, is a mentor, a knowledge keeper and now, a trusted elder in the Métis community.

Through teaching and mentorship at the University of Victoria, Barb supports Métis students at the First People's House. Her mentorship is part of a much wider, more diverse effort, on Barb's part, to improve the Métis community.

She has also volunteered in her local Métis office as an administrator, historian, citizenship coordinator and genealogy advisor for more than 13 years. Everything Barb does supports, strengthens and nurtures Victoria's Métis community.

Barb and her husband Stan are dedicated to literacy projects including helping with the Victoria Native Friendship Library acquisitions.

Victoria in the Steps of the Transformers: Indigenous and Settler Spaces

Dr. John Lutz, UVic Professor in History.
October 2019

Victoria is a storied place with many layers. For example, few are aware that Xehals, the great transformers of the Coast Salish world stopped here as they "made the world right" – creating parts of Victoria's landscape still visible today.

In this talk UVic historian John Lutz, takes us on a tour of some the places where Indigenous and colonial transformers did their work and explores some of the legacies. John will also speak about the research process for working with Indigenous communities; the responsibility that

comes with the research and the commitments to the community where the research was conducted.

John studies and teaches the history of where he lives in Victoria, British Columbia. John's teaching and research focus on the history of Indigenous/Settler relations and, more broadly, the history of the creation and interaction of different racial groups in the North American Pacific Northwest.

This is the traditional home of the Coast Salish People, whose word for "worthless people" also meant "people who do not know their history." In our world so many people do not have a place they know as "home", and without that link to place it is so easy to take our environment and our neighbours for granted.