

Kahtou 0004
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Mission's Xa:ytem Longhouse Gets Grant from Local Philanthropist

(Mission, British Columbia)---Local philanthropist, Erwin Singh Braich, continues his tradition of giving generously to worthy projects in his hometown of Mission. He has committed \$100,000 to the pithouse and longhouse construction projects at Xá:ytem Longhouse Interpretive Centre at Hatzic Rock.

Braich, who has given hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Mission community, states, "It is my privilege to support the ancient and significant Hatzic Rock site. I am fortunate that I can contribute to this project from one of my children's offshore trusts. My consultancy arrangements with this and other trusts demand that I travel extensively around the world and I clearly recognize what a treasure we have in Xá:ytem."

Braich hopes that this donation is just the "tip of the iceberg" of his commitment to help Hatzic Rock develop into a world-class interpretive centre. While critical of governments for failing to capitalize on the tremendous cultural resource offered by Xa:ytem he also felt that it presented an opportunity for governments and local people of means to give back to the community. Given its historical and cultural significance he is confident it will attract people from around the world, put Mission on the international map, and bring much needed tourism dollars into the valley. Braich said, "I was asked to chair this project a few years ago but was entangled in protracted matrimonial litigation and thus had to decline. Furthermore, I am deeply honoured by the title Si:yam meaning "respected leader" that has been bestowed on me by Xá:ytem. I look forward to participating in the next phase which includes building "Erwin S. Braich Hall".

Xa:ytem Longhouse Interpretive Centre is adjacent to an ancient Sto:lo settlement carbon dated to nine thousand years old making it older than the pyramids of Egypt or England's Stonehenge. Xa:ytem is a place chosen by the Sto:lo people to share their cultural knowledge. Guided tours are offered at Xá:ytem. Longhouse Interpretive Centre, 35087 Lougheed Highway. The Centre, one of 30 heritage properties owned by BC Heritage, is open to the public Monday to Friday 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Tour bookings and workshops are offered all year. For further information call (604) 820-9725.

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Braich arranges funding for Xa:ytem concept, model

A Governor General Award (GGA) winning architect has been commissioned to design a master plan concept and model at Xa:ytem with a little help from a local philanthropist.

The model and concept will be used for fundraising purposes for the \$10 million "Spirit of the Ancestors" campaign, initiated to fulfill the vision by the Sto:lo and community to develop a world-class centre at Xa:ytem. Douglas Cardinal, 2001 GGA winner, will design the centre.

Funding for the \$30,000 required for this project has been arranged by Mission's Erwin Singh Braich, through an offshore trust.

"It is exciting to be working with the internationally renowned and respected architect, Douglas Cardinal," said Braich. "Attracting an ar-

chitect of Cardinal's calibre clearly reveals the significance of our vision to showcase this ancient First Nations village site and sacred transformer rock to the world."

Cardinal has undertaken a large variety of projects in his career, including the award-winning St. Mary's Church in Red Deer, the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., Fox Woods Casino for the Pequot First Nations in Connecticut, and the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

"I am excited and honoured to be working on this model and masterplan concept for Xa:ytem," said Cardinal.

"I want to do my best work for the site. I am sure it will inspire me to design a centre that will reveal the richness and depth of 9,000 years of Sto:lo culture, history, archeology and spirituality."

Pie contest at Farmer's Market

The Mission City Framers' Market is holding its annual pie contest Aug. 25 at noon.

Vendors and members of the public are invited to sign up and enter a pie. Entries will be accepted until the day of the event. Pies must be at the market no later than 11 a.m. on Aug. 25. Only fruit pies containing no dairy products and a home-made crust may be entered. Following the tasting of the pies by the judges, slices will be sold to spectators as a fundraiser for the market. The market runs every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. until Sept. 29 at the parking lot behind Pharmasave.

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News

XÁ:YTEM

Cardinal shares vision

Architect of Canadian Museum of Civilization to plan centre

MIA THOMAS
Times Reporter

One of Canada's most distinguished architects is bringing his ideas to Hatzic Rock.

The Xá:ytem Longhouse Interpretive Centre has commissioned Douglas Cardinal to design a master plan concept and model for the site, just east of Mission on the Loughheed Highway.

"He loves this place, and he sees the vision," says Linnea Battel, Xá:ytem director.

She met Cardinal, who won the Governor General's Award for 2001, a few years ago and asked him to be an honorary patron of Xá:ytem.

He agreed and, since then, has visited the site several times.

Cardinal's other projects

include the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull, Que., the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. and the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, N.M.

It's important to have this model and master plan soon because they're starting on the Spirit of the Ancestors campaign, a long-term project that is expected to cost \$10 million.

"If you're going to be fundraising, people need to see what they're going to be paying for," Battel says.

"(Cardinal) offered a few years ago to do this."

The offer was accepted, but world-renowned architects don't come cheap. That was when another benefactor stepped in. Through an offshore trust, Mission resi-

dent Erwin Singh Braich arranged for payment of Cardinal's services.

"With Mr. Braich and Mr. Cardinal, they see the vision that we have here, and they know that it's going to happen and they want to make it happen," says Battel.

The Xá:ytem longhouse, which is in the middle of its own expansion, is next to an ancient Sto:lo settle-

ment that, carbon dated as 9,000 years old, predates the Egyptian Pyramids and England's Stonehenge.

The interpretive centre is used to educate the public about the First Nations people who live in the area.

Battel says they're

already seeing about 15,000 people annually and expect to double that when the longhouse expansion is finished.

When the plan that Cardinal will work on is finally realized, possibly by 2005, Battel says they could "easily attract 100,000."

The fundraising strategy is in the works and Battel expects Cardinal's model to be ready by the fall.

She wants

to see Hatzic Rock as a site that's along the lines of a couple other successful Canadian interpretive centres: Head-

Smashed-In-Buffalo-Jump in Alberta and Saskatchewan's Wanuskewin.

ARTS

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