



2019 SICCC ē-micimināyakik Gathering
Museums, Cultural Centres, Archives, Interpretive Centres & Libraries
Panel 1
Sean Young & Evelyn V. Siegfried

Title: Ancestors Long Ago: Repatriation and the Protection of Cultural Heritage

Presenters: Sean Young & Evelyn V. Siegfried

Biography: Gid yahk'ii (Sean Young) is a member of the Haida Nation from the Gaag'yals Kii'Gawaay, Raven clan of K'uuna Lnagaay (Skedans). Currently, he is the Manager & Curator of Collections and Archaeology at Saahlinda Naay Saving Things House (Haida Gwaii Museum) at Kay Lnagaay. Also, he is an educated and trained Archaeologist. He completed five years of college at Malaspina University-College (now Vancouver Island University) as an Anthropology Major/History Minor. He has worked as a professional consulting archaeologist in the field on Haida Gwaii since 1997. Also, he is an instructor and guest lecturer for the Haida Gwaii Higher Education Societies Natural Resource Management semester. Since 2004, he has worked for the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program as a cultural ambassador and caretaker living in ancient Haida village and cultural sites for up to three months every summer which are located within Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve Haida Heritage Site.

Biography: Evelyn V. Siegfried is a member of Bigstone Cree Nation in Alberta. She has been working at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum since 2006, first on the Repatriation Policy and then as the Curator of the Aboriginal Studies Program, beginning in 2008. She manages the Ethnology Collection and the Archaeological Collection for the province.

Abstract: Sean Young will talk about the importance of the curation and appropriate handling of our Haida cultural objects, how there are different ways of handling the cultural objects (traditional vs. professional) and how the knowledge of those objects is still held within our clans, Elders and families and how this information differs from other professional museum staff. He will use two examples in his discussion: First, will be a dog fish burial pole plaque from K'uuna Lnagaay which was repatriated back to Haida Gwaii in the mid 1970's; and second, will be a burial box, also from K'uuna Lnagaay, which is on loan from the American Museum of Natural History. He will talk about how our nation and museum are focusing on the repatriation of cultural objects, especially certain objects that are not present and missing within our museum exhibits but are found all over the world.

Evelyn Siegfried will talk about the Royal Saskatchewan Museum (RSM) and their small collection of sacred and ceremonial pieces that are the cultural patrimony of Indigenous peoples in what is now known as Saskatchewan. Of the 205 pieces, 60% are from the Treaty 4 area and about 10% are from the Treaty 6 area. 17% are of unknown origins and the remainder are from other treaty areas and the USA. From 2004 to 2011, the RSM developed and then launched a policy to repatriate the collection to the Indigenous communities. Thus far, no repatriation has taken place but it is important that the museum addressed this request of Elders and a process is in place and ready for action when that first step to repatriate is taken.

Learning Objectives: Participants will:

- Learn about two personal encounters with regards to repatriation of sacred items and cultural objects along with the cultural and linguistic aspects that need to be considered.