



**NUYUMBALEES CULTURAL
CENTRE
The Museum at Cape Mudge**



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**NUYUMBALEES CULTURAL CENTRE, WE WAI KAI NATION AND BC FERRIES
INSTALL WELCOME POLES AT QUATHIASKI COVE**

VICTORIA – BC Ferries is proud to support the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre’s BC | Canada 150 initiative, We Wai Kai Nation and the Quadra Island community through the installation of three Welcome Poles at Quathiaski Cove terminal. The three poles were installed May 9.

This project, initiated by the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre as a BC | Canada 150 project, is titled “Gelakasla Lilkwilatle,” which translates to “Welcome Everyone”. The Welcome Poles are symbolic of the rich “Welcoming Traditions” of the We Wai Kai people. The wood for the poles was donated by Western Forest Products. They were carved on Quadra Island by We Wai Kai Nation’s Bradley Assu, a BC Ferries employee who works as a Mate on the Powell River Queen, and Ted McKellar, a long-time resident of Quadra Island.

On June 1, the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre and We Wai Kai Nation held a Blessing Ceremony at Quathiaski Cove terminal in honour of the new Welcome Poles. BC Ferries is proud to support this project, which represents B.C.’s rich coastal culture and heritage, and the Quadra Island community.

The poles range in height from 2.6 to 3.1 metres. They stand facing seaward to welcome residents and visitors to Quadra Island. The pole with its arms out is greeting people to the community and the other two, with hands over stomach, welcome the people to feast. The construction to install the poles occurred from mid-April to early May. BC Ferries thanks customers for their patience as the poles were installed.

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Quotes, photos and artist bios attached.

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“Our path of Reconciliation isn’t just for today or tomorrow, it is our journey to continued relationship building through initiatives such as these.”

– Chief Brian Assu, We Wai Kai

“I’m really proud to continue the tradition of the We Wai Kai people to give back to the community through this initiative. I would like to thank Ted McKellar for his support not only for the various totem pole projects, but also for his helping hands in and around the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre.”

– Bradley Assu, carver, We Wai Kai

“On behalf of the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre Board of Directors we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the We Wai Kai First Nation and BC Ferries for their assistance in bringing our BC|Canada 150 “Gelakasla Lilkwilatle” Legacy project to fruition. Its intent will provide a long-lasting journey and future memories of continued joint ventures, as well as sharing our rich traditions and culture of all peoples of the BC Coast. Gelakasla!”

– Lisa Anwar, President, Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre

Photos



The three Welcome Poles being carved and then transported to Quathliasi Cove terminal, with carvers Bradley Assu and Ted McKellar.



The three Welcome Poles at Quathiaski Cove terminal on Quadra Island.

Bradley Assu

Bradley was born, raised and resides in the Village of Cape Mudge on Quadra Island. Here, he raised his two daughters Tyanaa and Shanyaa. Brad, a member of the We Wai Kai Nation, and his fiancée Margot devote considerable time and effort to supporting the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre, with Brad being the resident artist at the Centre's carving shed. He continues the tradition of giving back to the community, demonstrated by his father, the late Chief Donald Assu and his grandfather, the late Chief Harry Assu. When not at work as a mate on BC Ferries, Brad can often be found in the carving shed working on current projects.

Bradley was bestowed the traditional names "Q^wəmgillaḡamēy" from his paternal Assu family, and "Naṯnamuḡəllas" from his maternal Sewid family. Brad is a descendant of his maternal grandfather, Chief James Sewid and his paternal grandfather, Chief Harry Assu. He is the maternal great grandson of Granny Axu, (Agnes Alfred) and the paternal great grandson of Chief Billy Assu.

Born the youngest of three older brothers, Chief Brian Assu, Patrick and Michael, Bradley was raised by parents Donald and Louisa Assu. His love and inspiration for the art of his people developed as he keenly observed the different art projects of his Aunt, Dora Cook Sewid. After he graduated from Shawnigan Lake School in 1983 he attended and graduated from Art School at Langara College.

Ted McKellar

Ted McKellar and his wife Kerry have been long time residents on Quadra Island. While building a home on Quadra Island, Ted met Brad as he was crossing on the ferry. Brad asked Ted if he was interested in working on a restoration project for the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre located in

the Cape Mudge Village. There were three Welcome Poles to restore. At the start of the project, Brad was working on them alone until one day Ted stopped by to the carving shed to see what he was working on. That project was finished in July 1, 2014.

Since then, Ted and Brad have been working on different pole projects ranging from a 10-foot pole, which was auctioned off as a fundraiser for the Centre, as well two 20 foot house poles. Currently they have finished the three Welcome Poles for the Quathiaski Cove installation.