

## ?aqam- Cranbrook, B.C. – June 23rd, 2021

On May 28th, 2021 it was announced that the remains of 215 Indigenous children had been found at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School. That news has brought back painful memories for our community and has elicited many questions from our citizens and the public regarding potential work in and around the St. Eugene Mission cemetery and ?aqam community.

At the request of our elders, we conducted ground-penetrating radar on a portion of our cemetery in 2020. This work was undertaken to ensure future preservation of ancestral remains, a pillar within our Community Strategic Plan, ka kniłwi·tiyała.

We will conduct further work this summer and continue to build a comprehensive record that will shape our community connection and preservation. We ask for privacy and patience as we undertake this important work to honour our ancestors.

The ?aq́am community has completed and will continue to complete this important work along side our Elder's and Knowledge holders. "We as the community of ?aq́am stand by our brothers and sisters in Kamloops and across the country, and we will continue to do the work of healing for our communities now and into the future" Nasu?kin Joe Pierre.

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