



Press Release

For Immediate Release

June 19, 2015

Qalipu launches National Aboriginal Day celebration with Mi'kmaq flag raising at City Hall

June 19, 2015 Corner Brook, NL—Qalipu Chief Brendan Sheppard along with special guests the Honourable Keith Russell, Minister of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, Corner Brook City Mayor Charles Pender and representatives from the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, gathered at City Hall today to raise the Mi'kmaq Flag in honour of National Aboriginal Day.

The event opened with a smudging ceremony, something moderator Rob Dicks, Director of Operations at Qalipu First Nation, says is an important tradition. "A smudge is a traditional method of offering up prayer and well wishes by burning sweet grass, sage, tobacco and cedar. We will use this today to smudge our Mi'kmaq flags," said Dicks.

Following the flag raising, Qalipu Chief Brendan Sheppard, extended a warm welcome to special guests and residents in attendance. Sheppard noted that seeing the Mi'kmaq flag flying at City Hall is evidence of how far cultural recognition has come in the Province.

He said, "It is a testament to how far we have come not only in acknowledging that there are indeed Mi'kmaq in this Province, but also to begin to celebrate our history and shared heritage."

Sheppard went on to talk about the many events that will happen in communities across the province and encouraged all, whether Aboriginal or not, to get out and enjoy the special day of celebrations.

Corner Brook Mayor, Charles Pender, was pleased to announce that a full day of celebrations would take place in the city at Margaret Bowater Park.

"What better way to pass the longest day of summer than at our most popular summer gathering spot?" he said. "This Sunday why not come on out to enjoy the variety of activities including a sunrise ceremony, medicine walks, and storytelling, a BBQ and so much more."

In addition to the many scheduled activities, the RNC will also raise the Mi'kmaq flag and be at the Park on Aboriginal Day with the Mounted Unit as a show of community support.

National Aboriginal Day is celebrated annually across Canada on June 21 to acknowledge and celebrate the unique culture and contributions of Canada's first peoples. Visit Qalipu.ca to find a full schedule of events happening across the Province.

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