



TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION – FACT CHECK

Truth and Reconciliation is a priority for Christ the King Elementary School Council. To help the school community on this journey, Council will focus on the “Truth” component in order to educate ourselves. Each CKES Chronicle will include a fact about the history of residential schools and information generally about First Nations in the Yukon.

If you have questions or suggestions please contact ckescouncil@gmail.com.

We often acknowledge that we “live, work, and play on the traditional territory of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta’an Kwäch’än Council”. For the next few fact checks, we’ll learn more about each of these two First Nations.

Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN)

The Tagish Kwan were the original people who live and occupy the lands that define KDFN Traditional Territory, alongside the headwaters of Chu Níikwän (today, the Yukon River). They have been here for millennia.

Linguistically, the Kwanlin Dün are affiliated with the Southern Tutchone Tribal Council. The Kwanlin Dün include people of Southern Tutchone, Tagish and Tlingit descent.

KDFN ancestors called the waterway between Miles Canyon through to the Whitehorse Rapids, *Kwanlin*, which means “running water through canyon” in Southern Tutchone. Not only was this section of the river an excellent area for fishing, but well worn trails on the banks of the canyon tell of centuries of people travelling overland in search of game.

Kwanlin Dün youth, working with archaeologists, have found stone spear points and scrapers in the area, dating back thousands of years. Recent digs at Annie Lake and Fish Lake, both within minutes of downtown Whitehorse, confirm the existence and continual use of seasonal hunting and fishing camps for more than 5,000 years.

In 1956, the Department of Indian Affairs unilaterally decided there were too many Indian bands in the Yukon Territory and, for administrative purposes, joined six bands into three. This brought about the amalgamation of the Indigenous people between Marsh Lake and Lake Laberge who, for various reasons, had migrated into the larger Whitehorse area. Thus, the Department of Indian Affairs created the Whitehorse Indian Band, known today as the Kwanlin Dün First Nation.

Today, KDFN, one of the largest Yukon First Nations, has established a system of responsible self-government. The transition from an Indian Act government to a Self-Governing First Nation has brought many changes to ensure that KDFN is a government that respects First Nations culture, delivers appropriate programs and services that promote health, wellness and prosperity, and empowers its people.

<https://www.kwanlindun.com/about-the-kwanlin-dun/>