

#GoC and Tkemlúps te Secwépemc mark the national historic significance of the Former Kamloops Indian Residential School @ParksCanada @Tkemlups #CDNHistory #HSMBC

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TAKING CARE: We recognize our efforts to show solidarity with Indigenous peoples and honour Survivors and families may become a painful reminder to those who have suffered hardships through generations of government policies that have been harmful to Indigenous peoples. A National Residential School Crisis Line is available to provide support to former residential school students where you can access emotional crisis referral services.

Please call the Crisis Line at 1-866-925-4419 if you or someone you know is triggered while reading this. We encourage all those who need some support to reach out and know that support is always there for you through the Hope for Wellness Help Line at 1-855-242-3310 (toll-free) or the online chat at hopeforwellness.ca, open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

You can also find information on how to obtain other health supports from the Government of Canada [website](#).

News Release

For Immediate Release

Survivors of the Former Kamloops Indian Residential School, Tkemlúps te Secwépemc and the Government of Canada mark the national historic significance of the Kamloops Indian Residential School

Located on the north bank of the South Thompson River at the foot of Sqeq7é7em (Mounts Peter and Paul), the former Kamloops Indian Residential School opened in 1890 as the Kamloops Industrial School and closed in 1978.

February 12, 2025

Secwepemcúlecw (Kamloops, BC)

Parks Canada

Today, Tkemlúps te Secwépemc and the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, announced the designation of the Former Kamloops Indian Residential School as a national historic site under Parks Canada's National Program of Historical Commemoration.

The Former Kamloops Indian Residential School is located on Kamloops Indian Reserve #1 of Tkemlúps te Secwépemc. This building was nominated for designation by Tkemlúps te Secwépemc, and a collaborative process was undertaken between Parks Canada and the First Nation to identify the historical importance of this former school. Run by the Roman Catholic congregations of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and the Sisters of St. Ann, the Kamloops Indian Residential School was the largest institution in a system designed to carry out what the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada described as cultural genocide. Many, including Pope Francis and the Canadian House of Commons, have referred to it as genocide. The traumas experienced by Survivors have had profound, lifelong, and intergenerational consequences that continue today.



TKEMLÚPS
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Among the students who attended the Kamloops Indian Residential School were children between the ages of four and 18 from over 108 communities and at least 38 Indigenous nations from across British Columbia and beyond, including the Secwépemc, Stó:lō, St'át'imc, Nłeʔkepmxc, and Syilx. Forcibly removed from their homes, these children experienced physical, emotional, spiritual and sexual abuse, forced labour, malnutrition, inadequate and overcrowded living conditions, poor healthcare, and high rates of infectious diseases and death.

Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc members chose to preserve several of its buildings to commemorate and teach about the impacts of residential schools on children and families and to serve as a place for teaching Secwépemc language and culture as an act of reclamation.

The school was part of a system of residential schools instituted by governments for Indigenous Peoples, working with Christian churches in the 19th and 20th centuries. As part of the government policy of forced assimilation, these institutions separated Indigenous children from their families and communities in order to eradicate their cultures, spiritualities, languages, and traditions. Born of colonial policies in Canadian history, the residential school system is a tragedy that has adversely affected generations of Indigenous peoples, with lasting repercussions on First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, cultures, economies, traditional knowledge and ways of life, languages, family structures and ties to the land. The Government of Canada is committed to raising the voices of Indigenous peoples to ensure this history is never forgotten.

The Government of Canada, through the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and Parks Canada, recognizes significant persons, places, and events that have shaped our country as one way of helping Canadians connect with their past. By sharing these stories, we hope to foster understanding and reflection on the diverse histories, cultures, legacies, and realities of Canada's past and present.

Quotes

"The commemoration and designation of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School to a site of national historic significance reflects how arrangements made collaboratively will benefit all people, indigenous and non-indigenous. It will serve as a place that will contribute to greater understanding of Secwépemc history and traditional knowledge. The designation symbolizes hope and the vision of our ancestors for a prosperous future for our children, and those not yet born. We collectively know all too well the often-impoverished view of reciprocal obligations and how it has dominated our people. Today, at Tk'emlúps we take great pride in this path we walk together to commemorate that real collective history. Proud and honored to be in my ancestor's vision of Clexléxqen or Petit Louis (1828-1915), who advocated for schooling that would benefit the Secwépemc people, together we will educate and share for a prosperous future with pride, the designation is a confirmation of our shared commitment and the hope for change."

Kúkpi7 Rosanne Casimir

"Today's designation acknowledges the harms suffered by the Survivors of the Former Kamloops Indian Residential School who fought so long and so tirelessly to have their stories heard. Their strength and grace in retelling their stories ensures that we can learn from them and enables us to advance the journey of truth-telling, reconciliation, and healing. The designation of the Former Kamloops Indian Residential School as a site of national historic significance will serve as a testament and memorial to the children who were forced to live there and who died there. The legacy of their stories will resonate throughout future generations."

The Honourable Steven Guilbeault



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Quick Facts

- The former Kamloops residential school is one of the few remaining residential school sites in Canada with a large group of original buildings and landscapes. It bears witness in physical form to the experiences of generations of children who lived and died there, as well as to the broader history of the residential school system in all its phases.
- T'k'emlúps te Secwépemc renamed the former residential school site the Chief Louis Centre in honour of the visionary leader, also known as Clexléxqen or Petit Louis (1828-1915), who advocated for schooling that would benefit the Secwépemc people.
- The designation process under Parks Canada's National Program of Historical Commemoration is largely driven by public nominations. To date, more than 2,260 designations have been made nationwide. To nominate a person, place or historic event in your community, please visit the Parks Canada website for more information: <https://parks.canada.ca/culture/designation/proposer-nominate>.
- Created in 1919, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada advises the Minister of Environment and Climate Change regarding the national significance of persons, places, and events that have marked Canada's history. Together with Parks Canada, the Board ensures that subjects of national historic significance are recognized under Parks Canada's National Program of Historical Commemoration and that these important stories are shared with Canadians.
- Parks Canada is committed to working with Canadians in our efforts to tell broader, more inclusive stories in the places that it manages. In support of this goal, the *Framework for History and Commemoration* outlines a new, comprehensive, and engaging approach to sharing Canada's history through diverse perspectives, including shedding light on tragic and difficult periods of Canada's past.

Related Documents

Backgrounder: Former Kamloops Indian Residential School

Related Links

- [Parks Canada website](#)
- [National Historic Designations](#)
- [Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada](#)
- [T'k'emlúps te Secwépemc](#)

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Former Kamloops Indian Residential School, T̓kemplúps te Secwépemc, British Columbia, circa 1930
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