

Aboriginal child's remains being returned by museum

CBC News

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/british-columbia/story/2006/08/16/bc-bones.html>

The remains of an aboriginal child that have been on display at a private museum in the Vancouver Island community of Ladysmith are being returned to the nearby Chemainus First Nation.

The bones and the cedar burial box they're in are believed to be those of a six- to 10-year-old Coast Salish child who died between 100 and 150 years ago.

The Black Nugget Museum has had the remains on display since 1980.

Eric McLay, the archaeologist for local First Nations, says they were appalled when the museum display was reported to them last month.

However, they're pleased the museum has agreed to return the remains without a prolonged legal battle, McLay says.

"The museum owner is quite sensitive to the issue. It's been in his family for over a century. It was collected by his great great grandfather. He has a family connection to that and he's tried to respect, as best as he knows, this individual.

"So, it's probably a case of cultural misunderstanding and misguided enthusiasm for First Nations' culture."

McLay says the remains will be collected this week, and sent to the Royal B.C. Museum for research and documentation before being returned to the Chemainus First Nation for burial.