



Ktunaxa (pronounced “k-too-nah-ha”) people have occupied the lands adjacent to the Kootenay and Columbia Rivers and the Arrow Lakes of British Columbia, Canada for more than 10,000 years. The Traditional Territory of the Ktunaxa Nation covers approximately 70,000 square kilometres within the Kootenay region of south-eastern British Columbia and historically included parts of Alberta, Montana, Washington and Idaho. For thousands of years the Ktunaxa people enjoyed the natural bounty of the land, seasonally migrating throughout the Traditional Territory to follow vegetation and hunting cycles. The people obtained all of their food, medicine and material for shelter and clothing from nature – hunting, fishing and gathering throughout the Territory, across the Rocky Mountains and on the Great Plains of both Canada and the United States. European settlement in the late 1800’s, followed by the establishment of Indian Reserves led to the creation of the present Indian Bands.

The Ktunaxa Nation is comprised of members from seven Bands located throughout historic traditional Ktunaxa territory including the five of which are located in BC. Wood Land People of St. Mary’s, Two Lakes People of Columbia Lake, People where the Rock is Standing of Lower Kootenay, People of Flying Head Place of Tobacco plains and in the mid 1800’s a Shuswap family the Kinbasket were allowed to settle on the lands on the Upper Columbia Valley. There are also two Bands located in the United States – Bonners’ Ferry ID and Elmo MT (and surrounding area).

In 1910 the Canadian government funded and constructed the Mission school, presently the main part of the hotel complex. Operated at the time by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the facility was the first comprehensive Indian “Industrial and Residential” school to be built in the Canadian West. The Mission instructed 5000 children from the Okanagan, Shuswap and Blackfoot Nations in addition to the area’s Ktunaxa Nation. The school was closed in 1970 when government policy changed to encourage public education for Indian children. In 1973 the BC Government leased the Mission with the intent of turning it into a facility for psychiatric care. The building was stripped of historic fixtures and artifacts and after spending \$750,000 on renovations, the project was abandoned. The following winter the pipes burst and the building suffered severe damage from internal flooding. For the next twenty years the building remained empty.

To our knowledge the St. Eugene Mission is the only project in Canada where a First Nation decided to turn the icon of an often sad period of its history into a powerful economic engine by restoring an old Indian Residential school into an international destination Resort for future generations to enjoy. The Golf course opened in May 2000, the Casino opened in September 2002 and the hotel opened in January 2003. Today the Ktunaxa Nation Council operates an interpretive centre within the Resort which displays artifacts and details of the history and mythology of their people. The St. Eugene Mission Resort is currently owned and operated by the SEM Resort Limited Partnership, comprised of the Ktunaxa Nation, Samson Cree Nation and the Mnjikaning First Nations. Including the Casino of the Rockies, the Resort employs 250 people of which approximately 25% are from First Nations.

The St. Eugene Mission Resort located between Cranbrook and Kimberley in the Kootenay Rockies British Columbia. The Resort framed by the Canadian Rockies, the Purcell Mountains and the St. Mary River is a spectacular destination for getaways, vacations, conferences and retreats. The Resort includes a full service 4 ½ star hotel with 125 beautifully appointed guest rooms, the 19,000 sq ft Casino of the Rockies, a full fitness centre with pools and the highly acclaimed St. Eugene Mission 18 hole golf course. The four dining outlets offer the best dining in the vicinity ranging from clubhouse BBQ’s in the 19th Hole, delicatessen style in Fred’s Saloon, pub fare in the Fisher Peak lounge and fine dining in the Purcell Grill.



Regards,
The St. Eugene Golf Resort & Casino

