



# U'mista News



## THE FIRE THAT BURNED OUR HOUSE TO THE GROUND

In the early morning of August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1997 Alert Bay awoke to the news that our Big House was on fire. Many people came from their homes to observe the devastating scene taking place. Ravaging flames engulfed the Big House while many in the community looked on in shock and disbelief. Our volunteer fire department fought the blaze with great skill and courage, while onlookers watched helplessly wiping the tears from their eyes. The world's tallest totem pole, which stood next to the Big House, was unharmed and now stands alone next to an empty lot.

While speculating how it could have happened, word spread that it was not an accident, many wondered who could have done this, who would deliberately set fire to our Big House. The RCMP investigated and a suspect is now in jail and awaiting trial.

Since that fateful day many are trying to overcome the tremendous loss that we as a community share. While that emptiness will remain in our hearts always, the healing must begin.

The community has united, and shares a common goal, to rebuild the Big House. A Big House committee has been formed and the fundraising has begun.

The Spring '95 issue of the U'mista Newsletter dedicated the entire newsletter to the Big House. U'mista's former Newsletter Editor, Yvonne Wilson compiled an abundance of information on the History of the Big House; the Construction of a Traditional Kwakiutl House; The Kwakiutl of Vancouver Island and the 'Na'mima system. Also included in that newsletter was a piece by Peggy Svanvik on Big House Protocol. While gathering information on the Big House, Yvonne found a series of articles, which appeared in the North Island Gazette in 1982 and 1983 about damage conducted by vandals towards the Big House. For the Fall '97 issue of the *U'mista News* we have decided to include the information from the Spring '95 issue, again dedicating this issue to the Big House. With many thanks to Yvonne Wilson and Peggy Svanvik.

*(Please see pages 12-28 for reprinted articles from U'mista News Fall '94 and Spring '95)*



*Big House after fire on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1997. Photograph courtesy U'mista Cultural Centre, no UPN number.*

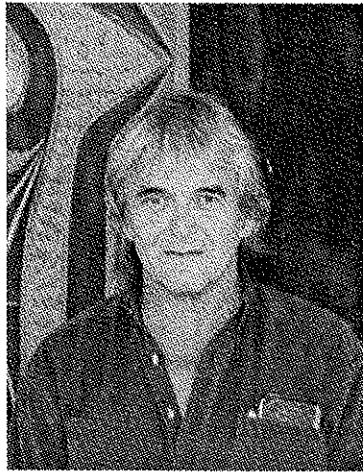
As this issue is featuring the Gukwdzi (Big House) and its importance to the Kwakwaka'wakw Speaking Peoples, I will attempt to put down on paper what the Gukwdzi meant to me. My feelings toward the Gukwdzi and its loss will of course be different than the feelings of the younger generation whose first experiences with our ceremonies were in the Gukwdzi.

My own experience with our ceremonies began when, as a young child, I traveled with my parents to the outlying villages like Tsaxis (Fort Rupert), Kalugwis (Turnour Island) and Gwa'yasdams (Gilford Island) where they would attend Potlatches. These potlatches were held in the late 1940's even before the anti-potlatch law was struck from the Statute Books of Canada in 1951.

As Mungo Martin stated in a taped interview on C.B.C. Radio regarding the Potlatch he held in 1953 when he invited our Chiefs to travel to Victoria to witness the opening of the Gukwdzi at Thunderbird Park, "this was the first time the public has seen our ceremonies since those dark days in 1922, when our Old People were sent to jail for attending a Potlatch because the Federal Government was trying to kill the very structure of our society." This was the first real public Potlatch I had attended and I was able to participate by dancing the Atlakim (Animal Kingdom) along with other young people. I have fond remembrances of the trip to Vancouver from Alert Bay on the Union Steamships and from downtown Vancouver to downtown Victoria on the C.P.R. ships. In retrospect some of these were sharing a state room with Chief Tom Umxid from Fort Rupert, joining my father and some of the other Old Chiefs in conversations that included a lot of joking and laughter, and the Old Chiefs from Kwagu't, 'Namgis, Ławitsis, Kwikwasutinux, Gusgimukw and Ligw'ldaxw Tribes singing in the Gukwdzi at Thunderbird Park and at the outdoor performance at Royal Athletic Park. As I listened to some of the planning discussions held at Mungo Martin's residence, though I did not understand all of it, I realized the seriousness of the Potlatches when at one point there was talk of breaking a Copper. The foregoing are just a little of some very fond memories of my experiences with our culture before the Gukwdzi in Alert Bay and all these memories will be with me until I go to the Gukwdzi in the "Sky."

Like the younger generation some of the most important

## Chairman's Report



*William T. Cranmer  
Chairman of the Board*

events of my life occurred in our Gukwdzi at 'Yalis (Alert Bay). I remember all the Old People from the different Tribes, most of them gone now, who would come and assist in many different ways to make our ceremonies successful. For example the early days when most of the singers at the log were our Old People and how the younger people slowly replaced them as they passed on. Hawilkwala, Uncle Bill is the only one left from that generation. My initiation as a Hamatsa and receiving my Hamatsa name or Hamdzaxt-le as Kwanwatalagalis in our family's Potlatch when my brother Doug d'axwalis or "stood up" to take my father's position as one of the Chiefs of the 'Namgis, received my father's name which is

Pal'nakwala Wakas and raised the pole he had carved for my father's gravesite. Being initiated as one of his Hamatsa by Chief Fred Williams of the Gwawa'enux (Hopetown) with my Hamdzaxt-le which was given at that time as Hamalgis. He honoured me in this way to show the relationship to my father whose mother was from the Kwikwasutinux (Gilford).

Another number of major events for me in the Gukwdzi involved James Charles King. Such as when he passed on to me his name, Wawipigesu T'akwagila and all the treasures that belonged to him from the Haxwamis (Wakeman Sound). My son Tyler was also initiated at the same time as a Hamatsa with his Hamdzaxt-le being Agis. Another memory is making my first speech because Jim King said it was now part of my responsibilities and waxamt'as oam xat'udat' (even if your speech is short), or sitting in the Gukwdzi with him before we laid him to rest. I remember the memorial Potlatch we had for him when our Old People were still with us such as Nunu, Axu, Jack James, Peter Smith, Harry Walkus, JJ Wallas and my mother. Our Old people chose the name Kwaxalanukwame N'amugwis for me which was the name of John Drabble, a Chief of the 'Namgis since I hosted the potlatch from my 'Namgis side of my family. They chose this name because he was a relative of my father and he didn't have any direct descendants.

The memory of the first time I sang the mourning song that I had learned during singing classes at U'mista and which I now sing at all our memorial Potlatches. This song was first sung for my Grandmother A'ba'ya's Grandfather,

*Continued on page 5*

When the Big House was wantonly destroyed we all lost a part of ourselves. It was a symbol of the revival and maintenance of the culture, heritage and language of the Kwakwaka'wakw Speaking Peoples. The old ways were being kept. Privileges and rights, which had not been displayed since the suppression of the Potlatch, were shown. The children and adults gained knowledge and comfort there.

What is most painful about the total destruction of the Big House is not what can be replaced but that which is lost forever. With the passing of the Big House also came the passing of an era. Most of the elders who built the original Big House, carved the poles, taught the old ways and acted as an example to the young people are no longer with us. They were teachers, visionaries and leaders. Their children and grandchildren must build the future on their foundation.

While we can and must mourn the passing of the old Big

## Administrators Report



**Linda Manz**  
*Administrative Director*

House, the community is strong. It has managed to survive the suppression of the potlatch, the illegal confiscation of the potlatch regalia, the residential school system and all other efforts to eradicate the Kwakwaka'wakw Speaking Peoples. While much has been lost there remains a basis to build upon. All the individuals and organizations who are working together to rebuild the Big House show what can be accomplished when we all work towards a common goal. Let us not only rebuild the Big House for future generations but work for the retention and strengthening of the traditional values of the Kwakwaka'wakw. If we all

work together the dreams of the elders will be realized.

In the coming months U'mista will be working towards not only the rebuilding of the Big House but also the cultural survival of the Kwakwaka'wakw.

## Fundraising Success Depends on our Involvement

*By Andrea Sanborn*

At a General Big House meeting on Oct.6'97 in the Council Hall it was decided that a project coordinator was needed for the rebuilding of the Big House. On Oct 16th I was invited to meet with Band Manager, Lawrence Ambers who advised me that Council had authorized him to offer me the position as Big House Project Coordinator. I received the files on Oct.23rd and began to sort them out. I discovered that during this whole time the Claims Adjuster dealing with our claim has been on holidays and was not due back to work until Nov.3rd.

Aside from the introduction to the file I have to say I am honored to be a part of this project. The rebuilding of our Big House is of the utmost importance to our community and without it we are missing a link to our culture and history. That fateful day, August 29, 1997, the day of that horrible fire will be a day I will never forget. A million things ran through my mind but the main question was how were we going to rebuild another one as soon as possible. Our community cannot be without one. I thought about how the elders must feel. Seeing the Big House go up in smoke must have made them remember the time when the Potlatch was prohibited. Would this fire stop the Potlatch in Alert Bay again? No, because we will rebuild it.

A fundraising committee had been struck almost immediately

following the fire and all their efforts to date and planned for the future must be commended. This is a very necessary part of the rebuilding of the Big House and the dedication of the fundraisers is greatly appreciated. We must all remember that their success depends on our involvement. Let's not forget to help them for this very worthwhile cause. Don't wait for them to call. Call and let them know you want to help or better yet, go to their meetings and find out first hand how this can be done. Call Tidi Nelson or Gloria Cranmer to find out when and where the meetings are being held. Don't forget we all use the Big House whether it is to participate in the Potlatches, to learn to sing and dance, to host official ceremonies or just to enjoy being guests in the Big House.

A number of offers to aid us with the rebuilding of the Big House have come from our First Nations friends and relatives, neighbors, forest companies and business associates. We are grateful for these offers to help as we realize it will be very difficult to try to do it alone. But, we cannot forget that it is our Big House and we must work hard to rebuild it with the help of our friends, neighbors and relatives.

*Our next Big House general meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. December 1st. at the Council Hall.*

Hello everyone. For those of you who do not know who I am, my name is Lori Speck and I am from the 'Namgis First Nation. Although I only spent five years of my life in Alert Bay as a child, I consider Alert Bay to be my home. I moved to Vancouver with my family at the age of 9 and have been there ever since. As I grew accustomed to city life I almost forgot my cultural heritage only to be reminded again of who I was when we came home to visit.

In 1986 at the age of 15, I began working at the U.B.C. (University of British Columbia) Museum of Anthropology with the Native Youth Project (N.Y.P.). We gave tours of the Totem Poles housed in the Great Hall of the museum and presentations which included: The uses of the Cedar Tree, The Potlatch - Past and Present and Traditional Indian Fishing, to visiting guests. The N.Y.P. also traveled to many communities along the coast of B.C. sharing our presentations with community members. Upon graduating from high school in 1989, my manager, one of my co-workers and I went to Ottawa for 10 weeks to start up a similar program at the Canadian Museum of Civilization (C.M.C.) in Hull, Quebec.

Through the years that I worked at these museums my pride for our culture continued to grow.

In 1992 I went back to school and completed a two-year theatre program from which I received an Associate of Performing Arts Diploma.

In 1994 I began working at Science World British Columbia in Vancouver, and after 3 fun filled and very educational years I began to get restless and it was time to move on.

I learned many years ago to be proud of who I am, where I'm from, and who my people are. When I moved to the city years

## Cultural Update



**Lori Speck**  
**Cultural Coordinator/  
Newsletter Editor**

ago my brother and I encountered racism in the schools which was something we had not encountered here in Alert Bay. I couldn't understand why my brother and I were so different from the other kids. We didn't carry tomahawks or live in tipis, we didn't scalp people or chase buffalo, as Hollywood movies would portray "Indians". We did however have a rich cultural background with songs and dances. Traditionally we lived in magnificent cedar plank houses and lived off the land and the ocean. Deep down inside I knew who I was and was proud of who I was, I knew I couldn't let those kids and teachers take that away from me. It wasn't until years later that I was able to really express my pride through the Native Youth Project at U.B.C. I was able to talk about my people and my culture to visitors from all over the world. Through programs like the N.Y.P. and Cultural Centres like U'mista I know that we are teaching people who we are and giving them a better

understanding of our culture. I still have so much to learn and by coming home I know that I can begin the learning process.

I have been given the opportunity to work here at the U'mista Cultural Centre, the opportunity to rediscover my culture, through my family, my home and my people, not through schools, books or museums.

I have been working at U'mista now for 4 months and even though I lived in Alert Bay when I was younger I never really knew very many people because I moved away at such a young age. Through my job I have been given the opportunity to meet a lot of people in the community.

I would like to thank everyone for being patient with the late distribution of the U'mista Newsletter as this was a new challenge for me.

*Gilakas'la*

## Culture Shocked

*By Lori Speck*

I was shocked and saddened by the tragedy that consumed the entire community. I remember that morning clearly, as I am sure no one will forget.

I am sickened by the thought of anyone who is so troubled that they would set out to deliberately destroy something that means so much to so many people.

When the Big House burned down it was like losing a member of the family, for everyone from Alert Bay and those who came from elsewhere to take part in a family Potlatch; to witness a marriage ceremony; or to mourn the loss of a loved one. The Big House was a symbol of our rich culture, a culture we came close to losing, but for the pride and determination of our people who fought passionately to hang onto what was so significant to us. The Big House was a place for families to gather from our youth to our elders, a place to honor one another, a place to

*Continued on page 11*

Since the last issue of *U'mista News* we have done a number of personal and institutional loans. In February we loaned four pieces to the Royal British Columbia Museum for the exhibit *Whales: The Enduring Legacy* which is running to February 1, 1998. These pieces will be returned in March 1998. We are also loaning three pieces from the Potlatch Collection to the Vancouver Art Gallery for an upcoming exhibit entitled *Down from the Shimmering Sky*, which is co-curated by Robert Joseph, Peter Macnair and Bruce Greenville. This exhibit will open June 4, 1998 and run to October 12, 1998.

In June the U'mista Cultural Society accepted a mask on loan from the Glenbow Museum in Alberta. The mask is on loan for one year so that it can be replicated by Stan Wamiss and shown at the family's potlatch. Also in June the U'mista Cultural Society bid unsuccessfully for the elaborately beaded blanket once owned by Charles Nowell. The

## Collections Update



**Juanita Pasco**  
**Collections Manager**

Donald Ellis Gallery of Toronto obtained the blanket and we were able to purchase the blanket from Mr. Ellis' Gallery in September. There is some bead loss and the blanket will need a backing sewn on before it can be displayed.

And finally, we are nearly completed cataloguing the Chambers Donation and will be putting as many of the baskets on display as possible. This donation consists of over 70 objects in total and is a welcome addition to our collection. As usual we are still looking for volunteers to assist with the identification of individuals within our photographic collection. If you are available to volunteer please contact me here at the Centre, 974-5403 to set up a date and time.

On October 6th I attended a very successful Big House meeting at the Council Hall. Many people spoke their

hearts and minds regarding the location of the new Big House.

*Gilakas'la.*

*Continued from page 2*

Siwidi, who was a Chief of the Ławit'sis (Turnour Island). The joy of all the Kikadzit-ła (marriages) which I was privileged to participate in and the honor of becoming a master of ceremonies for many of our gatherings along with Kwaxsistala, Adam Dick.

Then there are the visitors to our community such as the Maori, in particular those from the Taharatikitiki canoe who performed their dances and songs then returned to help us celebrate the 10th anniversary of U'mista, and the Ainu who have visited our community more than once to share their songs and dances. Remember, the hosting of the canoes beginning with Bill Reid and the Haida, the many canoes which stopped on their way to Qatuwas gathering at Bella Bella and recently the many canoes on Tribal Journeys heading to Victoria for the North American Indigenous Games.

The early days before the expansion of the Gukwdzi by U'mista. Then, the twice widening of the main building nearly doubling the seating capacity, the earlier expansion of the back part of the building and the feeling of pride we all had when the latest expansion was completed providing us with much needed space, kitchen facilities and washrooms.

**SO YOU SAY WHAT'S THE POINT?**

While the Gukwdzi was very important to the Kwakwaka

Speaking Peoples and the other surrounding tribes, because it allowed us to be with our Old People who taught us our history every time we gathered for our ceremonies, I believe it is the teachings that are most important. They worked very hard to teach us so that our history would not die with them. Some people say that the spirits of our Old People lived in the Gukwdzi but I believe that the spirits of our Old People are with us all. The teachings of our Old People go wherever we go.

A reporter asked me how I felt about the loss of our Gukwdzi shortly after it was destroyed by fire. I told him of the recent loss of my mother, the great sadness that my family experienced and how I chose to deal with the loss of the greatest influence in my life. I continue to deal with that loss by remembering all the teachings and good memories, which I experienced when my mother was still with us. This sadness is still there, and will be, until my family has a memorial potlatch, which is when we let go of the sadness and get on with the task of living. I treat the loss of the Gukwdzi in a similar way by remembering all the great events and teachings of all the Old People who were with us in the Gukwdzi in the past.

I will, as I am sure we all will, bring our experiences and teaching to be part of our new Gukwdzi when we have our opening ceremonies.

*Yu'am*

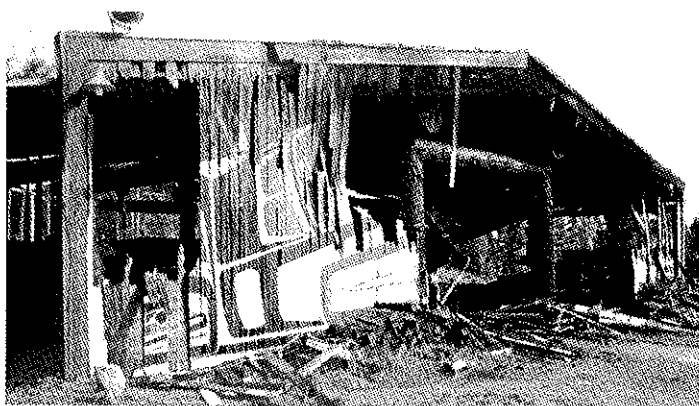
## PRESS RELEASE

The traditional style Big House was built on 'Namgis First Nations land and construction was completed in 1966. Two of the outstanding artists of the area, the late Chief Henry Speck and the late Chief Charlie George, and the Director of Architecture and Engineering, the late Chief James Sewid, were largely responsible for the completion of the Big House Project.

The Big House is central to the Kwakwaka'wakw. During the years of potlatch prohibition, our dances and songs came close to extinction. The determination of our people to build the Big House sparked a new awakening among many, particularly the younger people. For us the Big House symbolizes the very survival of our cultural group.

The Big House is the focal

point of the resurgence of potlatch activity in our cultural area. Although it is located on 'Namgis First Nation land, the Big House is used by people from many other villages for potlatches, primarily because



of its easy access from both north and south. Kwakwaka'wakw travel long distances to come to Alert Bay and participate in their family's potlatches.

As well as being used in the traditional manner, the

Big House serves many other purposes. Part of the curriculum in the Tribal School includes instruction in traditional dancing. The Society makes the Big House available (free of

House. Federal, Provincial, and Aboriginal Memorandums of Agreement are signed there.

Since completion of the addition to the Big House in April 1995, there have been several potlatches, the "North Island Science Extravaganza" and various community functions held in the Big House. As well, our Youth Groups used the Big House to present their traditional lunch and dance program to tourists during the months of July, August and September.

These are just a few of the ways both the native and non-native community utilizes the Big House. All of this is the reason the Big House is so important to our people. Now even more important is the need to rebuild our Big House

charge) to the School to hold fund raising events for their cultural programming. Funerals, weddings and community dinners are held in the building. Visiting dignitaries are hosted by the community in the Big

### The Big House was destroyed by fire on August 29, 1997.

As of the beginning of October of 1997, the U'mista Cultural Society was approached by the 'N,m/fis First Nation to work in conjunction with them to fundraise for and plan for the rebuilding of the Traditional Big House. Andrea Sanborn has been appointed Project Coordinator. Any questions you may have or comments you would like to offer please direct them to her attention at the address which you will find on the back page of this newsletter. Included here is a budget for the rebuilding of our Big House.

|                                                |                    |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Cedar for the main beams and houseposts        | \$322,000          |
| Cedar siding for exterior walls and roof       | 147,500            |
| Framing lumber and sheathing                   | 165,200            |
| Metal roofing                                  | 76,900             |
| Concrete and footings                          | 42,200             |
| Electrical                                     | 57,000             |
| Plumbing                                       | 22,700             |
| Flooring, doors, insulation                    | 52,000             |
| Kitchen appliances, vent hoods, etc.           | 42,000             |
| Contractor's site conditions, engineering fees | 74,900             |
| Design, carving and painting                   | 150,000            |
| Steel connectors bolts and miscellaneous       | 38,500             |
| <b>Total rebuilding budget</b>                 | <b>\$1,190,900</b> |

# A Kwakwaka'wakw Village in the Netherlands

By Andrea Sanborn

It seems like such a long time ago yet it was only June 9th when we all left for the Netherlands for the opening ceremony of the Dolfinarium's Lagoon in Harderwijk.

The Lagoon project was first introduced to us by Joe Wilson in March 1996 and then by his friend, Gerben van Straaten, from the Netherlands. Gerben became known to us as Walas, a name he was given by friends in Duncan, BC. It was June 1996 when we met the owner of the Dolfinarium, Mr. deClercq and his management team upon their arrival in Alert Bay. After discussions between the U'mista Board, a few carvers and Mr. deClercq and his team, an agreement in principle to work together was accepted. Joe Wilson asked that the U'mista help by facilitating the projects research and opening ceremony.

The agreement included a plan to develop a Kwakwaka'wakw village adjacent to the Dolfinarium, a theme park in Harderwijk, the Netherlands. At this point we still didn't comprehend the size of the project. I especially didn't understand the size, as I was just the number cruncher. It wasn't until mid July 1996 when the work actually started.

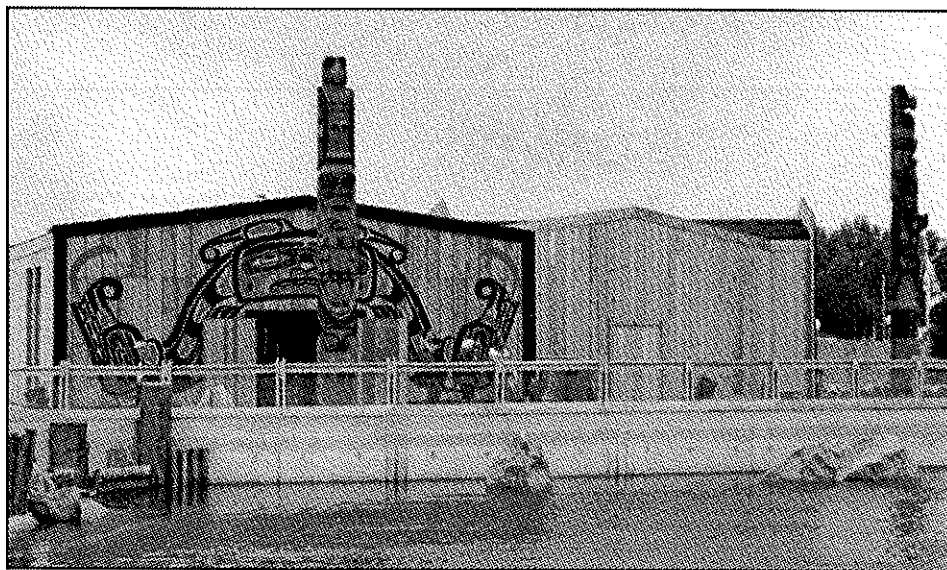
A team of carvers was made up of Bruce Alfred, Stephen Bruce, Vincent Shaughnessy and Joe Wilson. A theme for the planned Village was presented, drawings were developed and the faxing began back and forth across the Atlantic Ocean. Mr. deClercq and his General Manager, Mr. Schonenberg made a selection of some of the sketches along with a storyline for the exhibit they planned. It was still just a bunch a numbers and drawings to me. I was busy planning work schedules, time frames and delivery dates for this STUFF these guys from Harderwijk wanted. It wasn't sinking in to me that this was to be a big project. It started to come to light when I accompanied Stephen and Joe to the mill

to choose and purchase the wood for phase one. As if I could choose the wood! They made the choice while I number crunched with the mill Manager over the price. When all was done at the site and we returned home to arrange for transporting this wood selection from the mill to Alert Bay the size of the project kind of started to sink in. Especially when Lorne Stadnyk said "No, it won't all fit in my pickup. We need a trailer".

There were four phases to this project. Phase one consisted of seven figures from the Legend of the Undersea Kingdom which averaged 8 feet tall. Phase two included a 13 foot Kumugwe figure and two 7 foot Sea Lions. Phase three was one 30-foot totem pole and one 35-foot totem pole. Now the size of the project was starting to come to light when I watched the carvers and Lorne move those logs around. Will Malloff brought his machine, Arnold, to lift the logs and Harry Alfred Jr. assisted Will in trimming the logs for the totems. All the while this was going on the carvers continued carving. Phase four was the Housefronts, three of them, and all to be full size facades. Lorne towed the logs

over for Stevie Beans and his crew to mill for the Housefronts. Pat Hunt and Don Svanvik had joined the carving team when phase three had started. Leonard and Don Alfred were brought on to build shipping crates and stack the milled lumber. Thanks to the Musgamagw Tsawataineuk Tribal Council, we were able to crate and ship the model canoe from behind the U'mista to be part of the exhibit in the Village. We even packed driftwood and cedar chips in with the canoe for the exhibit. As each phase was completed Lorne delivered the pieces to the freighter in Nanaimo. Each time he was amazed that he just handed this STUFF over to the guys in the freight yard with no exchange of paperwork. This made him nervous as I had never met these people he was giving this STUFF to. I just spoke to them on the phone and they seemed like nice guys. The carvers just kept carving to meet the shipping deadlines I was giving them. You should have seen the gym in the Band building when they started carving and painting the Big Housefronts. The

*Continued on page 8*



*Sisiyut House Front - Kwakwaka'wakw Village in Harderwijk, the Netherlands.*

*Continued from page 7*

planks spilled out into the hallway. The boards were everywhere and now it was getting to be a big deal but still manageable in my unfamiliar mind. The carvers were becoming a bit overwhelmed but I just thought it was the deadlines I was making them stick to. The last shipment went out in mid January 1997, six months after the project was started and with the Christmas break in there as well. The carvers had completed the project in time as it turned out they were running behind schedule in Harderwijk in preparing the site for the Village.

In April, Joe and I flew to Harderwijk to check out the site and the situating of the carvings. We wanted everything to be perfect. Well what a shock when we arrived at the site. It was a mud hole and I thought what have we got ourselves in to. What will we tell our people when we returned as this was a part of our culture

deserving respect and care? The carvings were no where to be seen. Remember that I had never met the guys Lorne kept giving this STUFF to. Where was it all now? Well it turned out phase one was in another town being duplicated. The fiberglass pieces would become the underwater pieces and the original Undersea Kingdom pieces would be situated above ground about the Village. Kumugwe and the Sea Lions were in a warehouse and had not been uncrated yet. Phase three was just arriving in Antwerp when we were there and phase four, the Housefronts, were still at sea. And they had been shipped from BC in mid- January. At least it was all accounted for. Most of the pieces that had arrived required some cleaning up. They all had a lot of mould on them after going through the heat and humidity of the Panama Canal. After a busy week spent checking details of the Village, agreeing to help decorate the interior exhibits of the underwater theatre and discussing our participation in the opening ceremony Joe and I returned home. The waiting began for the details of the travel arrangements to be ironed out, the passports to be applied for and a team of participants to be selected for the singing and dancing ceremonies.

A drum log had been ordered almost at the last minute and again we had to call Lorne to pick this up for us and prepare it for use. This drum log and many cases of freight for their Kalwilas had to be shipped to Vancouver ahead of us in preparation to be loaded on the overseas plane. Well, it turned out that the drum log was too long and they had to cut two feet off it to fit it on the plane. The air-freight staff wondered why we were shipping a stump to Harderwijk. Then the word came that all was arranged and we were to board the plane in Port Hardy for Vancouver where we would join up with others already there.

Our travel team consisted of our Elder, Ethel Alfred, Henry Seaweed from Vancouver, Dorothy Hunt from Victoria, our Board Chairman, Chief Bill

Cranmer, Donna Cranmer, Tyler Cranmer, Ron McKinney Jr., DeeDee Peterson, Vincent Shaughnessy, Lisa Speck, Mikael Willie, Audrey Wilson, Joe Wilson, Yvonne Wilson, myself and my husband, Dick Sanborn. Dick and I planned to continue on to England and Scotland for a holiday after the opening ceremonies at the Village. Upon our arrival at the airport in Port Hardy the phone started to ring for me. It was the freight department of the airlines. They were having troubles with the "stump". Upon our arrival in Vancouver, I sent the group on to check in and meet Henry and Dorothy while I dealt with the "stump". I refused to leave it behind. Finally, at the main airport and after signing a bunch of traveler's cheques on the hood of his truck I handed the cheques to the freight man and asked him to send the stump and freight via KLM Airlines as they said they would get the freight to



*Left - Ethel Alfred Dancing during the opening ceremonies for the Dolfinarium in Harderwijk, the Netherlands.*

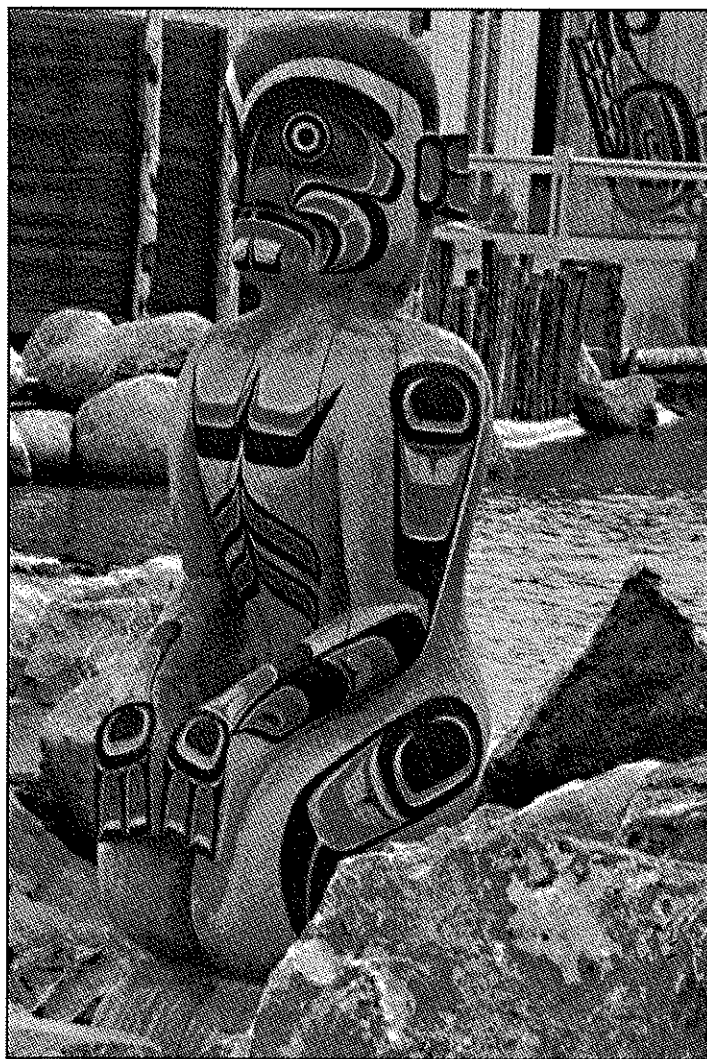


*Ron McKinney Jr. dancing during the opening ceremonies for the Dolfinarium in Harderwijk, the Netherlands.*

*Continued from page 8*

Amsterdam. His name was Brent and he said not to worry he would look after it. It was boarding time and I thought all was O.K. until the check-in clerk decided Henry's passport was not in order and they were refusing to allow him to board. After much haggling and airline management getting involved, I convinced them that I knew Mr. Marcel Louwman, Cultural Agent from the Embassy in The Hague. Luckily enough I had his number and asked them to call him in the morning to meet the plane and help to clear Henry through customs. They still would not guarantee that Henry would clear customs and might be returned to Canada. Boy was he nervous! However, there was no need because no one in Europe questioned his passport. Was he ever an asset to our team as were all the other members. I do not think the Canadian Airlines even bothered to call Marcel Louwman from the Embassy. I forgot to ask him when I saw him in Harderwijk.

At the airport we boarded our bus to take us to the



*Pugwis - from the Undersea Kingdom*

Dolfinarium and the Kwakwaka'wakw village. We were all very tired and worn out from the flight over, but very shortly we were to arrive at our destination. As we headed in to the town of Harderwijk and towards the village site, the park came into view. There it was, big as life, standing there waiting for us. Now it sunk in for me. This was a BIG project. We could see the Big Houses and the totems that were still wrapped in canvas until the unveiling ceremony. It really is a Village and it is a Kwakwaka'wakw Village. What a sense of pride that came over us all. What a sense of relief for me that all the carvings were actually there and standing.

The drum log and the freight arrived, in the nick of time at that. Dick and Vinnie along with Irma, from the Dolfinarium, went out to the airport to clear it through customs but not without a million questions. Again: Why were we bringing a stump? Vinnie did some fine-tuning on the log and we were ready.

Then it was time for the big night, the opening ceremony. Chief Bill Cranmer assisted Mr. deClercq with the opening ceremony. Bill then led the blessing of the site and the dancers through the Village where they ended up at the unveiling of the totems. Bill and Mr. deClercq unveiled the poles. The crowd was overwhelmed, as were we. Mr. and Mrs. Bill Holm and their daughter and grandchildren made it to the opening ceremony as he told me he hoped to. I did not tell the rest of the group about this and they were pleasantly surprised to see them there.

The group performed for the public three times during our stay. Mr. deClercq along with his General Manager, Mr. Schonenberg arranged for the group to visit Amsterdam and Utrecht while in the Netherlands. Walas and Irma were our most competent guides and entertainers. On our last evening in Harderwijk the group performed for the staff at a party hosted by Mr. deClercq. This was the finale to our trip and an enjoyable evening was spent meeting all the staff who worked so hard to help make our visit as pleasant as they could. They were a pleasant group to work with as they were so eager to help and at the same time learn as much as they could about us while we were there. We tried to learn as much about them at the same time. We learned enough to want to return to visit again.

On June 17th Bill, Dick and I flew to London where Bill and I met with Dr. Brian Durrens, Dept. of Ethnography and Mr. Geoffrey House, Head of Public Affairs from the British Museum about a Transformation mask they hold in their collections which has been identified as belonging to the Potlatch Collection. This meeting was coordinated by Mrs. Sylvie Head, Public Affairs Assistant for the office of the Canadian High Commission in London. But, that is another whole story and we will save that for the next issue when we hopefully have more to report about it. Bill joined the group at the airport for the flight home and Dick and I departed for Scotland. It was a great trip.

## A Few Words From Our Summer Students...

Hello my name is Frank Smith. My Band's name is Kwikwasutinux or better known as Gwa'yasdams. It is an island called Gilford where I spent most of my life with my grandfather and grandmother, before going to school.

I worked this summer at the U'mista Cultural Centre in Alert Bay B.C. I have learned about plant life that has been used by our aunts-sisters from way back in time. I have had the opportunity to replant a couple of these plants that were used, like the labradour tea and Lupins.

I think the best thing I liked about my job was my partner William Alfred. He has a way of making me feel good about learning all the plants we found together.

I would like to thank Andrea Sanborn for giving me the opportunity to learn the ways of the old Medicine, which I would have not known if it had not been for this program.

*In Friendship Frank Smith Summer 1997*

Hi, my name is Vanessa Isaac. I am a member of the 'Namgis First Nation from Alert Bay B.C. This was my second year working for U'mista.

U'mista was a good learning experience for me. Before I came to work here, I hardly knew anything about the masks and almost nothing about my culture. The research I did while I was here for the summer opened my eyes to a lot more about my culture. For example, I now understand why we do not show whistles in any of our exhibits. The reason for this is the whistle was not to be shown because in the dance it was used for imitating the voices of the initiating beings. The whistles for the Hamatsa are heard blowing faintly from behind the screen.

One of the things that I did at U'mista was to give tours of the potlatch collection. I would take large groups of people and tell them about the masks. I also gave brief descriptions of our other exhibits in the Centre.

I also enjoyed working in the gift shop. I liked talking to new people everyday. Some of the people were here for days. I helped to change and maintain the displays in the Gift shop. I also took inventory of our books when we needed to reorder more books.

Juanita showed me how to catalogue the library books. I typed memos to fax to the Info Centre for the Community Channel. I also typed the condition report on the masks that Jo Ann Erling had written up.

I would like to thank the tourists for their questions. If they had not asked these questions I would not have given a lot of them any thought.

I would also like to thank Andrea Sanborn and Linda Manz for giving me the opportunity to work at the U'mista Cultural Centre.

*Gilakas'la Vanessa Isaac Summer 1997*

Hi, my name is William Alfred. I'm from Alert Bay and I'm a member of the 'Namgis. I am 16 years old.

This year I was very lucky to get a summer job at U'mista. The people at U'mista are nice. My partner Frank Smith, who I worked with, taught me things I didn't know. We worked well together. We joked around with each other. Frank really has people skills and can make conversation with anyone.

We learned a lot about the different plants that we planted in front of the museum. We went over to Port McNeill to pick up some plants we got some from here as well. One plant that I found very interesting was Nootka Lupine. In the old days, the roots were roasted or pit-cooked and eaten by the Haida, Nuxalk and Kwakwaka'wakw of British Columbia, they were also eaten raw in the spring as a famine food. This plant causes sleepiness and "drunkenness".

*Sincerely William Alfred Summer 1997*

Hello my name is Lisa Speck. I am from the Kwa-wa-aineuk Band of Hegam's whose English name is Hopetown Point on Watson Island. I am very happy that I have been chosen to work here at the U'mista Cultural Centre as a summer student worker. Also, it is a pleasure to work with such great people like Lillian Hunt and Vanessa Isaac. Working here has been a great learning experience, as it has taught me about the hard work that is put into keeping up a museum and a gift shop.

Working here is very interesting. As different tourists walk in the door I get to meet fascinating people. I find it exciting to meet people from Germany and Italy, because just recently I went there.

Also during my work here, I have been doing some research on masks and the stories about the masks. Doing this has taught me a lot about my culture. This research teaches me a lot of things I never knew before. For example, the Crooked Beak of Heaven's Kwakwaka name is Galukwudzuwis. He is a cannibalistic bird mask who is a servant of Baxwbakwalanuksiwe', the Chief Cannibal spirit. The Crooked Beak mask is used in the second part of the Hamat'sa ritual and also in the Atlakim dance. The dancer wears this mask at an upward-reaching angle, slowly moving around the dance floor in a counter-clockwise motion. The rhythm of the music changes four times during this dance. At each change, the dancer squats on the floor and snaps the articulated beak open and shut, then resumes his dance. In the old days this mask wasn't danced by men, women would sit in a chair snapping the beak when the rhythm of the music changed.

Working here has been beneficial for me. I would like to thank Andrea Sanborn and Linda Manz for giving me the opportunity to work here at the museum.

*Gilakas'la Lisa Speck Summer 1997*

# "OUR HEARTS ARE BROKEN"

*Statements gathered by Peggy Svanvik*

When the Big House burned down the entire community was affected; many shed a tear while others were in shock and disbelief, however everyone shared a common feeling of heartbreak. What hurt was the love and hard work that went into building the Big House and watching it being destroyed right in front of our eyes. What hurts even more, is that many of the people who were involved are no longer with us. The Big House was a place where families came together to honor each other living and to honor those who have passed on.

*It's a big sorrow in my heart. I thought of the loving care our people had while building the Big House. It brought us happiness. We got*

*reunited with family. It brought us together. I am really hurt.*

*I am upset. I cried thinking of the people who built the Big House. It brought back so many memories of our loved ones who are no longer with us. When I heard the news, my heart just dropped. I am sad – very, very sad. How could anyone do such a thing?*

*I nearly cried when I saw it in flames. It brought back memories. My brother Jim and I worked on the building of it. We will never forget this building even when they rebuild it. My family got together at the Big House. We have lots of memories. Especially of my late mother.*

*My heart is almost broken. Very bad tragedy for our culture.*

*Very bad, hurt about it. It was a place where we gather to honor our families, especially our children. I*

*used to be so proud to see our children dance and sing at the Big House. I feel numb. What are we going to do? Please let me know about any meeting to be had about the building.*

*I am heartbroken. Very sad and hurt. All the work our old people put into it. It was a place where we gathered to honor each other. It was our pride and joy. Will it be rebuilt?*

*It's very bad. That's where we went to have fun, to honor the memories of our loved ones. I feel very sorry about it. What are we going to do? I hope we will have a meeting about it.*

*It's sad. We all feel bad about it. Having a hard time talking. We feel sorry about the Big House and Princess Diana.*

*I feel terrible. I just cried and cried thinking about our parents' memories. I hope they put the plaques back up.*

*That Big House can never be replaced even when they build another. The memories of those people who built it. It hurts to think of the plaques with the names of the people who worked on it. It hurts to think that someone could do such a terrible thing.*

*What can I say, I am really hurt. How can this happen? I thought about my husband who worked on the Big House for minimal pay because it was important to him. The Big House was the very core of our being. It encompassed every aspect of our being – Body, Mind and Spirit.*

*I can't fully express how I feel. I was so hurt I cried. I have so many memories of family and friends at the Big House. It's hard to see it as it is. I can't go by the Big House now. The building was so unique. Everything was done by hand – no machinery was used – all by hand.*

## Culture Shocked

*Continued from page 4*

dance, to sing and to distribute gifts.

One of the main reasons I came back to Alert Bay was to rediscover my culture, to learn by doing. While in the city I did not stop long enough to come home and remember who I was and who my family and my people were. I learned about my culture through books, professors and museums; but I wanted to learn more, and for me to learn more I had to come home. It brings tears to my eyes knowing that we will never get to dance in that Big House again.

The Big House was the rebirth of our culture; it was built in the 60's after the prohibition of the Potlatch was removed from the Indian Act. I could only imagine the pride felt by our community when the construction of the Big House was completed. What was a dream became a reality only to be deliberately destroyed 30 years later.

The loss of the Big House has brought our community together and our goal is to rebuild, I find consolation in knowing that we will dance in our Big House again.

*Reprinted from U'mista News Fall '94*

# BIG HOUSE...

## Renovations Completed

A lot of time and energy from people in the community went into this project to make it such a success. I would like to take this time to thank the many people and associations who had volunteered their time, energy, materials and funds into this project.

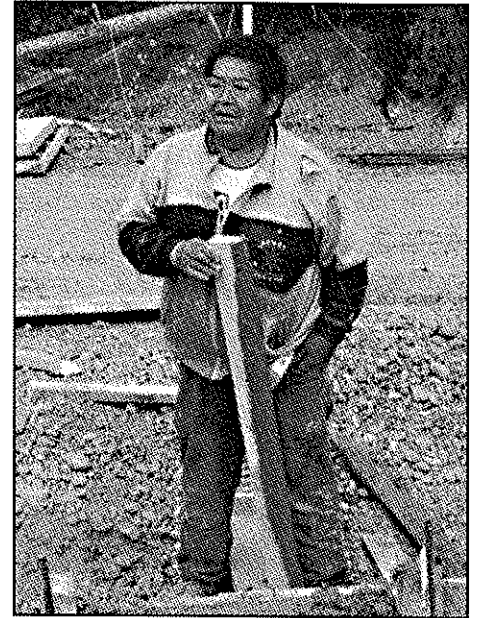
As the project comes to the final stages of completion I had the opportunity to talk to the Big house Renovations crew. The crew shared the same basic feelings in working on this project. Everyone agreed it was alright working on the Big House Project, fun was had by all.

There were some clinches such as the shortage of materials and

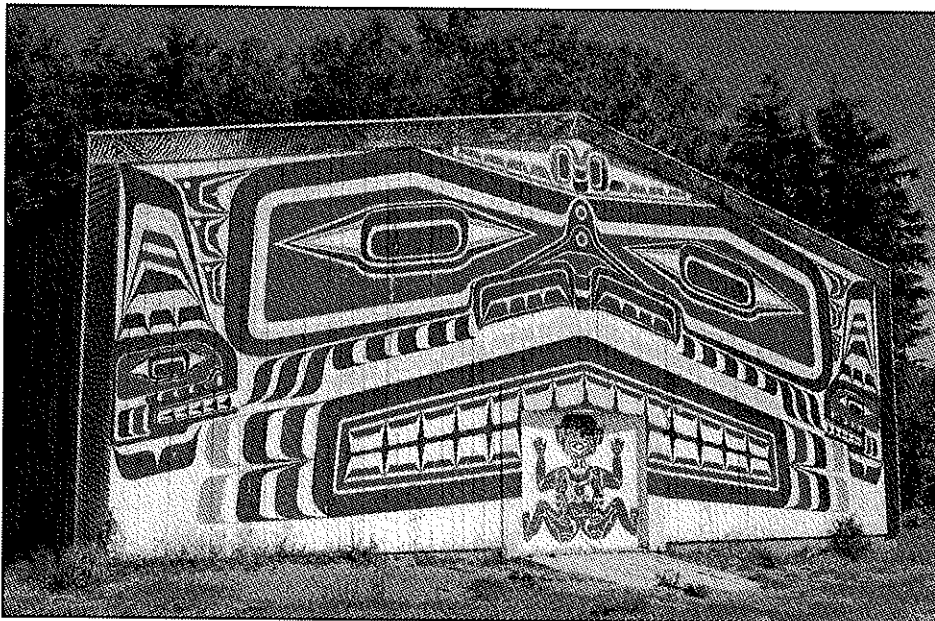
learning to improvise in order to continue their work. But, they managed to complete the project.

The crew were all in a good mood as I walked through admiring the work and improvement of the Big House addition. They were busy cleaning up the saw dust sweeping, dusting and putting away the electrical tools. One hears whistling and joking amongst the crew. There is also a strong sense of pride from each of the crew as they tour you around the Big House addition and show you their workmanship.

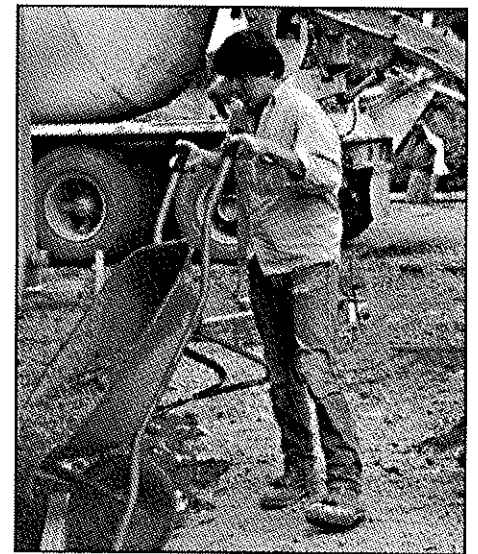
Here are some of the stages of construction the Big House under went.



*Charlie "Chaz" Coon during the Big House Renovations.*



*Big House front as completed.*



*Donny Alfred pouring cement during the Big House Renovations.*

Reprinted from U'mista News Spring '95

# Special Issue On The BIG HOUSE

This issue of the U'mista Newsletter is dedicated to the Big House. In this issue there will be articles on the history of the Big House, the Traditional House and the Na'mima, along with an article on the proper etiquette for the Big House.

In gathering information for these articles on the Traditional Big House I found that there are not too many elders left who know the actual meaning of the Na'mima and the Traditional Big House which we came from and lived in. Although the Big House lifestyle has not been practiced by our people for many of years, it is a part of our culture and it is of great importance, for it tells the history of our families' beginnings.

It has been difficult in gathering information on our present Big House. There

is not much recorded or published on the construction or the opening of the Big House in the early 60's. It has been a challenge to find the facts and it concerns me when we, as a nation, a tribe, a native family, have not taken the time to ask our elders the simple questions — Why, When, Where, and How come? It is these simple questions that are asked and answered that keeps our culture alive. It is so important to learn our history from our elders for they are all we have to learn our cultural ways. So the next time an elder says to you "I have something I want to share with you", PLEASE listen with a loving, caring and patient heart and attentive ears, for one day you will be an elder and our children will come to you for the knowledge of our culture.

Effective January 1, 1885, the Canadian government outlawed the potlatch, and until 1951, the practice was prohibited by federal law. In many areas, potlatching all but disappeared. The Gitksan, Nuuchah-nulth, and particularly the Kwakwaka'wakw peoples, however, resisted this law, and the potlatch continued, although often in secret.

In the words of Southern Kwakwaka'wakw chiefs, recorded at Fort Rupert shortly after the potlatch was banned:

*Do we ask the white man, "Do as the Indian does?" No, we do not. Why then do you ask us, "Do as the white man does?" It is a strict law that bids us dance. It is a strict law that bids us distribute our property among our friends and neighbours. It is a good law. Let the white man observe his law. We shall observe ours.*



Photograph on the left is of 'Yalis (Alert Bay) looking North, H. N. Topley 1894.

Photograph Courtesy of Public Archives of Canada C 22368

Reprinted from U'mista News Spring '95

# History Of The BIG HOUSE IN ALERT BAY

The Big House structure was completed in May of 1966. Although the structure was completed the art work on the house front wasn't completed until May 1967. The original design on the Big House was the artwork of Benjamin (Blackie) Dick. It was reported in the May 24, 1967 issue of the North Island Gazette that a crew worked on the completion of painting the house front design for the Pioneer celebration that was held at the Big House May, 1967. There were Pioneer medallions distributed by Dan Campbell, Minister of Municipal affairs and Social Welfare to such pioneers as Ivey Melvin "Hup" Stauffer, Alert Bay's oldest pioneer.

Also presented to the Kwakiutl Nation for the successful completion of the Big House, was a letter by the Lieutenant - Governor of British Columbia, in a book called Kwakiutl Houses and Totem Poles at Alert Bay, B.C. by, S.W.A. Gunn, M.D. and it reads:

*Chief Sewid and the members of the Kwakiutl nation are to be congratulated for choosing as their centennial project the construction of a Big House at Alert Bay.*

*These dwellings, sometimes fifty to sixty feet in length, were one of the distinctive feature of the West Coast Indians. Many people lived in each house, families being allotted specified sections, closed off by cedar mats from the central area common to all. The Chief's authority and parental discipline ensured a happy communal life.*

*The houses were decorated with Totem Poles and ceremonial entrances, depicting the exploits of their chiefs and the legend of the race.*

*Thus, the children were reminded of the virtues esteemed most highly by their forebears, for the Kwakiutl were, and still are, a proud people.*

*The past hundred years have been a difficult period for the West Coast Indians. Deprived of many of the sources of food and economic survival, exposed to diseases against which they have never built up immunity, and unable to obtain employment in unfamiliar trades, their numbers declined to approximately one third of the original population. Happily in recent years, through their own courage and adaptability, stimulated by a more enlightened understanding by the non-Indians, these conditions are changing.*

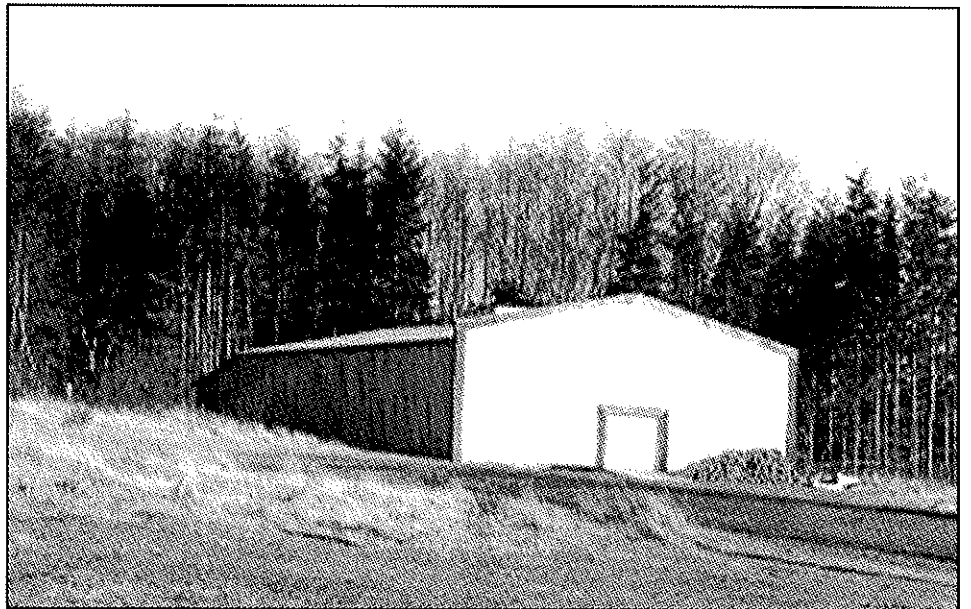
*Now the Indians' population is rapidly increasing. In every village one sees hundreds of healthy, happy children, attending schools and holding their own with the other boys and girls. They*

*realize that an education is necessary if they are to survive in this modern world. While this process of integration is at work there are few who would like to see the passing of this great nation. Therefore, young Indians and non-Indians will applaud past and to inculcate in the younger generation the virtues, such as courage in the face of danger, stoicism under adversity, the value placed on physical fitness, their initiative and, above all, their loyalty to parents and to the band, that their ancestors prized so highly.*

*I am proud that a few years ago these people honoured me by making me one of their chiefs, and I hope that this little book will explain many of their ancient ways of life.*

During the construction of the Big House, the following article was written in the Upper Islander, Progress Edition July 21<sup>st</sup>, 1965.

One of Canada's most unique construction projects is rapidly nearing completion at Alert Bay, B.C. Twelve native Kwawkiutl Indians have carved, painted and erected a full-scale model of an Indian long-house, complete with totems and family carvings.



Big House in Alert Bay during construction, before Benjamin "Blackie" Dick's Sea Monster design was painted on the house front. 1967

Photograph courtesy of 7833-25

*Continued from page 14*

These buildings were at one time the main habitat of B.C. Coastal Indians.

The new 70 feet long by 50 feet wide structure will house an organization setup to manufacture and promote the sale of Indian handicrafts.

Organizers of the scheme say they hope to provide Indians with off-season employment making dugout canoes, totems and other artifacts on a commercial basis.

James Sewid, chief councillor at Alert Bay and one of the proponents of the project, says that enquires of yet-to-be manufactured Indian wares have come in from prospective customers all across North America.

It was about two years ago that Mr. Sewid sat down with representatives from other tribes, mapping out a plan to provide employment for local Indians with special emphasis placed on those with little or no education.

"Many of our people are poorly educated and we are attempting to interest them in the basic Indian crafts as a means of livelihood," Mr. Sewid says.

"It will also give our young people the chance to keep alive the culture of

their people."

Initial meetings were held with the late Simon Beans of Alert Bay, Charles George of Blunden Harbour and Henry Speck of Turnour Island, who is one of B.C.'s best known Indian artist.

Alert Bay was chosen as the site of the longhouse because of its strategic location and the fact that site was available on the ground of the old Anglican residential school.

Another advantage of the Alert Bay location is that it is the home of a present day Indian vocational training school with its student complement of young people.

The idea of the longhouse caught on and soon local forest companies were contributing lumber and individual and other groups donated money for materials.

Through the efforts of the Department of Indian Affairs the job was granted winter works status and in February 1964, 12 men were busily employed getting the heavy job underway.

Logs were towed in from coastal logging operations, one of them large enough to provide three lengths of 33 inch thick beams.

But the winter works money ran out

with the arrival of fishing season the 12 men left the longhouse for the fishing grounds.

Last fall they took up their tools again and although winter works money has again been depleted, Chief Sewid is confident that he can raise enough money to see the project through before the arrival of summer.

Foundation of the building is concrete and has already been laid. At each end of the structure are carved and painted archways about 17 feet high. A huge 70 foot long timber beam runs the full length of the building supporting the roof.

This beam will be carved on the inside to depict the stories of all the tribes.

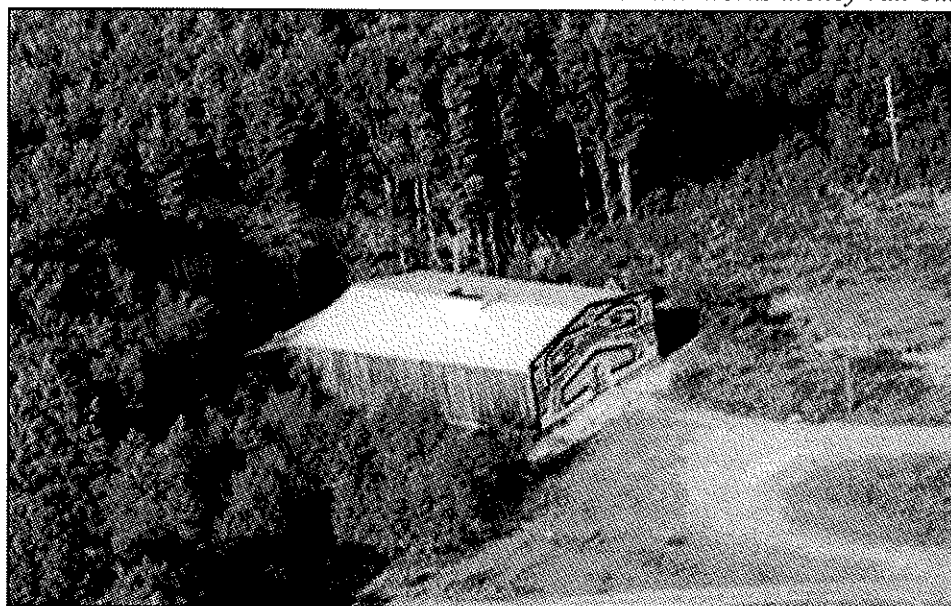
Roof and siding will be as in the old days, the longhouse will be used for all tribal affairs, including ceremonial dances to which the public will be invited.

It will be a definite tourist attraction for the area and Chief Sewid is optimistically looking forward to it being the area's centennial project.

A Kwakiutl dream became a reality in 1963 after careful planning and endless discussions and meetings, Simon Beans, Chief Henry Speck and James Sewid formed a Building Committee. They notified all the chiefs of the tribes in the area at the time. However, the response was not what they had expected and found it to be discouraging at times. They, the Building Committee, did decide to carry out the idea to construct a Big House. It would not be long before they found that the Bands in the area did subsequently joined in helping with the success of the completion of the Big House.

The people who were responsible and credited for the construction of the Big House were as follows:

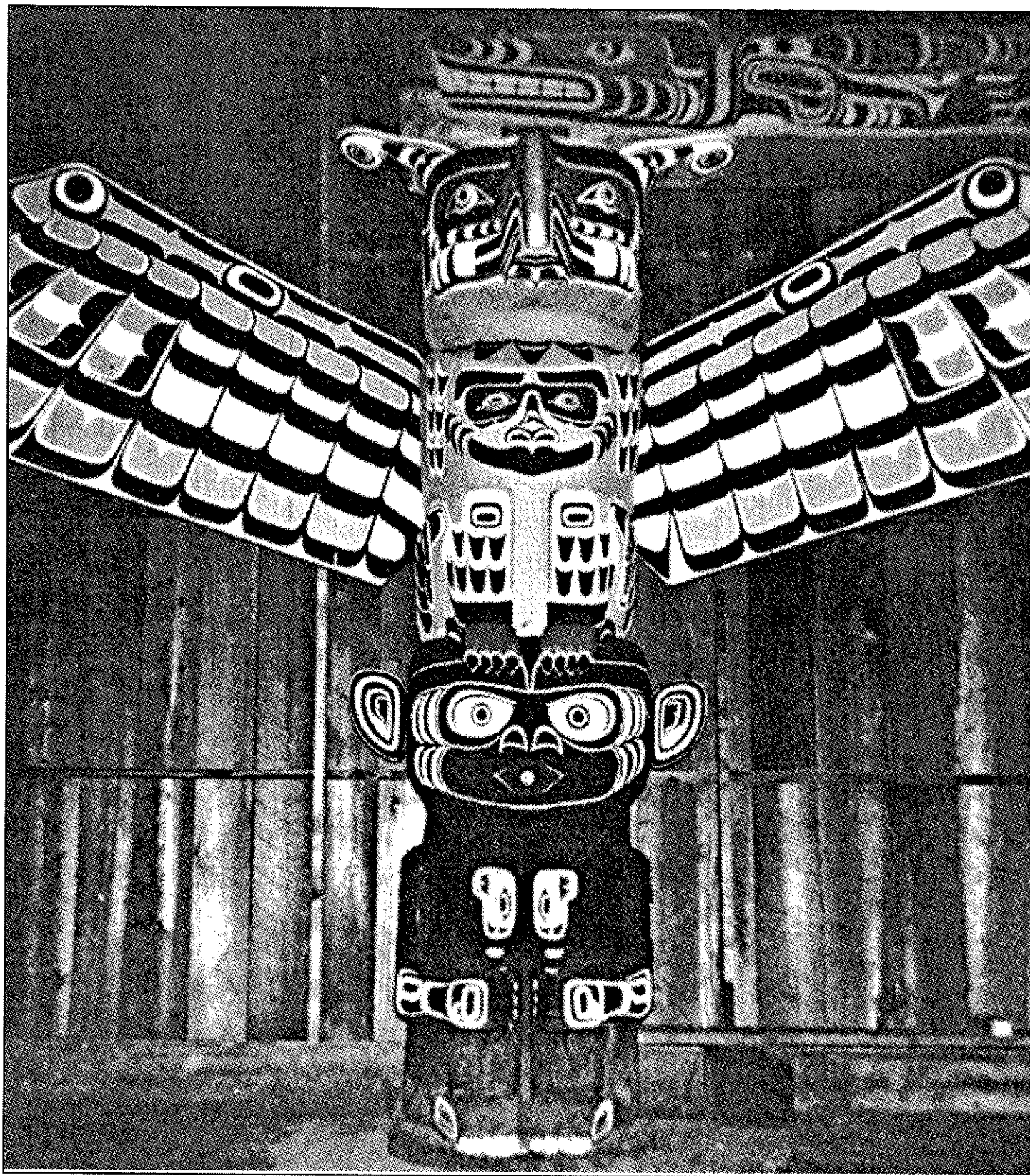
- James Sewid - Architect



*Aerial View of the Big House in Alert Bay, 1969.*

*Photograph courtesy of 7762-33*

*Continued on page 17*



*Thunderbird over Dzunuk'wa - Interior Houseposts of the Big House in Alert Bay. Also shows part of the Sisiyutł cross piece. Photograph Courtesy S.W. Gunn, "Kwakiutl Houses and Totem Poles at Alert Bay, B.C."*

*Continued from page 15*

- Advisor, Building Committee
- Chief Henry Speck - Artistic Advisor, Building Committee
- Charlie George - Carving Advisor, Building Committee
- Simon Beans - Building Committee
- Robert Bell - Concrete Advisor
- George Alfred, Stevie Beans, Jim Dick, David Matilpi, Henry Beans, Dora Cook, Willie Hawkins, Herbert Martin, John Beans, Fred Cook, Tom King, Gideon Whonnock, Simon Beans, Ben Dick, Bill McDougall, Max Whonnock

Mr. James Sewid, Chief Councillor extended a special thanks to the following, who without their assistance the project would not have succeeded: the Indian Affairs Branch, Mr. Clifford Roach, Superintendent of the Kwakiutl Agency; Indian Commissioner J.V. Boyes appropriated funds under the Winter Works project; Mr. Howard Elder contributed the huge beams; Telegraph Mills contributed the logs. Mr. Norman Corker loaned us equipment; St. Michael's School allowed us to use their tractor; and the Alert Bay Board of Trade helped us financially.

Mr Sewid also acknowledged the

men who contributed to the construction of the Big House and praised their great accomplishment of the difficult feat of lifting the huge beams, for this heavy task was done mostly by the traditional method, aided only by a small hydraulic jack. He also thanked many people, who he referred to, as friends too numerous to mention. A particular thanks was expressed to Major-General the Honourable George Randolph Pearkes, V.C., P.C., C.B., D.S.O., M.C., Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia, who officially opened the Big House. Included in this thanks was Dr. Sisvan William A. Gunn, who was an enthusiastic believer in our traditional aspirations and who had written the book *Kwakiutl Houses and Totem Poles at Alert Bay, B.C.*

The first Potlatch held in the Big House located in Alert Bay, was hosted by Mr. and Mrs. James Knox in May 1966. It was the first of many potlatch's to follow in the future. Since that first Potlatch, many families have shared their wealth and held marriages and other many important ceremonies in our Big House. We owe a thank you to the elders who have since, gone home to the creator, for their perseverance and caring enough in the culture to re-establish such an important part of our culture to continue

to relive and create our history.

You would see the peoples names who constructed the Big House proudly displayed on wooden copper plaques at the Big House today. These people shared their knowledge unselfishly to ensure that we as a nation will continue to grow with strength, pride and a self identify as aboriginal First Nation Natives. We can only hope that we have made these people proud with the continuing use of the Big House.

Over the many years, it has become necessary to maintain the Big House and to also renovate and add an extension in width and length to accommodate the amount of people that attend the events at the Big House today. The renovations that have taken place are adequate washroom facilities with wheel chair accessibility, a modern kitchen and with equipment, adequate storage space, new and more seats, as well as new electrical wiring.

Due to the changes in the size of the Big House the design of the house front had to be redesigned to fit the new size of the Big House. The house front design now on the Big house was designed by Doug Cranmer and the crew who painted the design were Bruce Alfred, Harold Alfred, Doug Cranmer and Al West.



*Left - Chief Henry Speck, Artistic Director. Photograph courtesy S.W. Gunn.*



*Right - Chief James Sewid, Director of Architecture and Engineering. Photograph courtesy S.W. Gunn.*

Reprinted from U'mista News Spring '95

# RESPECT AND THE BIG HOUSE

In gathering information for the Big House through the old newspaper clippings at the Alert Bay Public Library and Museum, I came across these articles on the Big House. The first of which appeared in the *North Island Gazette*. July 28, 1982:

## VANDAL DAMAGE TO LONGHOUSE

*Alert Bay - RCMP here are still investigating attempted arson at the Long House on the Nimpkish reserve which was reported to them last Saturday morning.*

*A spokesman for the RCMP said that they received a call at 10:40 am July 24, reporting the incident.*

*He said that several juveniles are suspected of attempting to set the building on fire and doing considerable other damage to the premises.*

*Chairs were piled up together and an attempt was made to burn them, according to the RCMP spokesman.*

*Other damages done to the building were lights broken, damage to music and audio equipment, chairs ripped up, the stove pushed over and a canvas roof ripped down and unsuccessfully set on fire, said police.*

*Total damage to the Long House is undetermined, according to the RCMP.*

*A follow up article in the North Island Gazette July 28, 1982:*

## DELINQUENT KIDS'

## PARENTS MAY PAY

*Alert Bay - Parents of the juveniles who attempted to set the Nimpkish "Big House" on fire last week will probably be asked to pay for damages, said Gloria Cranmer, of the U'mista Cultural Centre.*

*Cranmer said that the exact dollar*

*amount of damage done during the raid of the big house July 23 or 24 is not known.*

*She said that a painted screen which was hung at the rear of the house between two poles was ripped down and burned.*

*She thought that part of the screen might still be salvaged, but it was painted by one of the artists who is no longer alive and could never be replaced.*

*The screen was used as a back drop for dancers.*

*Cranmer said that all the chairs in the house had been piled in the centre where the fire usually is and a plastic gas can was thrown into the pile, but the vandals weren't able to get the fire started.*

*Microphones were smashed and thrown into the pile of chairs as well.*

*Every lightbulb and fluorescent tube in the house was broken too, she said.*

*The big house is not needed until fall, said Cranmer. It is not being used for tourism as it was last year.*

*Cranmer said that she thought the Nimpkish band council would probably ask the parents of the children involved to pay for damages.*

*The last article printed by the Gazette August 11, 1983 on the damage to the Big House:*

## PARENTS WILL PAY

*Alert Bay - Chief of the Nimpkish band, Bill Cranmer, told the Gazette Monday that he didn't think there would be any problem collecting for damages to the Big House from the parents of the kids involved.*

*Cranmer was referring to damages from the attempted arson which occurred around July 24.*

*He said that he sent a letter to the parents*

*stating that they are going to be held responsible for the damages.*

*Estimates of the value for total damage to the Big House are not in yet, said Cranmer. "I think parents realize that they are responsible for their children's actions," said Cranmer.*

*Over the past 13 years there has been no serious damage to the Big House as mentioned in the articles, but there still remains the problem of people who use the area for disposing of their garbage.*

*In an attempt to stop this problem, we have made a plea to the public to stop disposing their garbage at the Big House. The garbage cans have been removed from the Big House and are brought out only during an event. This has not curtailed the problem.*

*When visitors go to our Big House they are faced with the grounds littered with used pampers, papers and other types of garbage scattered everywhere around the building. The first impression is not nice. It also gives an impression that we do not care about the Big House or have any respect for ourselves. I know this is not true, for there are a lot of people who take pride in, and respect what the Big House represent to our culture, it is just the few people who do not think of this and believe that getting rid of their garbage in this irresponsible manner is a bit more important. In respect to our forefathers, elders, and our culture we are asking those who are disposing of their garbage at the Big House to STOP this very unsanitary behavior*

Reprinted from U'mista News Spring '95

# BIG HOUSE PROTOCOL

By Peggy Svanvik

Laws governing behavior at the "Big House," are very strict. All people, including the men, must wear a shawl or blanket, not necessarily a button blanket in the Big House. Once you enter the Big House you must sit down and not move until all proceedings have come to an end, or if there is a coffee or meal break.

If one should misbehave or fall in the Big House our families are obligated to erase the humiliation by promptly giving a potlatch. A fee of money to be handed out to the guest at the Big House is the tradition of today. We are always to respect ourselves, parents and grandparents and mostly our host by minding the rules.

There is to be no eating in the Big House, no chewing gum, pop, chips, candy, etc., It is believed to drive the Hamat'sa wild. No one is supposed to eat before the Hamat'sa for this reason.

The reason for being at the Big House during any celebration is because you are there to witness the dances and names that have been given. The names are important at the Big House for you may not enter a Potlatch until you have been given a name. We should be able to call that person by the name they have been given at the Big House both inside and outside the Big House.

But today, in most cases, we cannot

hear the activities that are taking place during the ceremonies, what we are there to witness, due to the noise and disruption that goes on. The sadness of this is that adults are also participating in being disrespectful to the hosts. We are there to earn our gifts by witnessing and being respectful to the host and the events that are taking place.

It is true that over the years the Potlatch system has undergone many changes, but that does not give us reason to disregard the important values of respect that is so much an important part of our Native Culture.

The advisors for this article were, Myrtle Rufus, Mabel Rufus, Martha Jacobson, Norma Dawson and Gloria Webster. Many thank yous for your invaluable time and knowledge.

*Gilakas'la.*



*Peter Smith's Potlatch in Gilford, circa 1970. Photograph courtesy ?*

*Reprinted from U'mista News Spring '95*

## Construction of a TRADITIONAL KWAKIUTL HOUSE

Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians - Franz Boas

The houses of the Kwakiutl form a square, the sides of which are from 40 to 60 feet long. (Figs. 7 and 8.) The door (D) is generally in the centre of the side nearest the sea, which forms the front of the house. The latter has gable roof, the ridge of which runs from the front to the rear. The walls consist of boards, which are fastened to a framework of poles. The sides of the door are formed by two posts (A) from 6 to 8 inches in diameter and standing about 4 feet apart. Over the door they are connected by a crossbar (B). (Fig. 8) Some times the framework of the door is made of heavy planks. The framework of the house front consist of two or three vertical poles (C), about 3 inches in diameter, on each side of the door. They are from 8 to 10 feet apart. Their length diminishes towards the sides of the house according to the inclination of the roof. These poles are connected by long crossbars (E), which are tied to their outer side with ropes of cedar bark at half the distance between the roof and the ground. The framework of the rear part is similar to that of the front, but that the sides are far stronger, as it has to support the roof. Two heavy posts (F), about 9 inches in diameter, are erected. Their heads are cut out and a beam of the same diameter is laid over them. At the joints it is cut out so as to fit into the heads of the posts. On both sides of the door and in the corresponding part of the rear side, about 3 feet from the wall, inside the house. These uprights are about 2 feet in diameter. On each side of the cross-piece rests a heavy beam (H), which runs from the front to the rear of the house.

Sometimes these beams are supported by additional uprights (U'), which stand near the centre of the house. The rafters (R) are laid over these heavy timbers and the beams forming the tops of the side. They are about 8 inches in diameter. Light poles about 3 inches thick are laid across

the rafters. They rest against the vertical poles (C) in the front and rear of the house. After the heavy framework which supports the central part of the roof is erected, a bank about 3 feet in height is raised all around the outlines of the house, its outer side coinciding with the lines where the walls are to be erected. Long, heavy boards 4 or 5 inches thick are implanted lengthwise along the front of the house, their upper edges standing 2 1/2 or 3 feet above the ground. Then the earth forming the bank is stamped against them, and thus a platform is made running along the front of the house. Later in this is continued all around the house. The framework of the front is the next to be erected. The poles (C) stand in the dirt forming the platform. The upper edges of the front boards which were implanted

into the ground are grooved, and in this groove the boards forming the front wall stand. They are tied or nailed to the crossbar (E) and to the foremost rafter, which is connected with the framework of the front. The next thing to be done is to make the rear wall and the sides. The former exactly corresponding to the front, the door only being wanting. The boards forming the side walls are implanted in the ground, standing vertically, their upper ends being tied to the beam forming the top of the framework. The platform running along the inner sides of the walls are finished by stamping the earth against the side walls. The roof consists of peculiar kind of boards, which run from the gable to the sides of the house. They lap on their edges like Chinese tiles. This arrangement

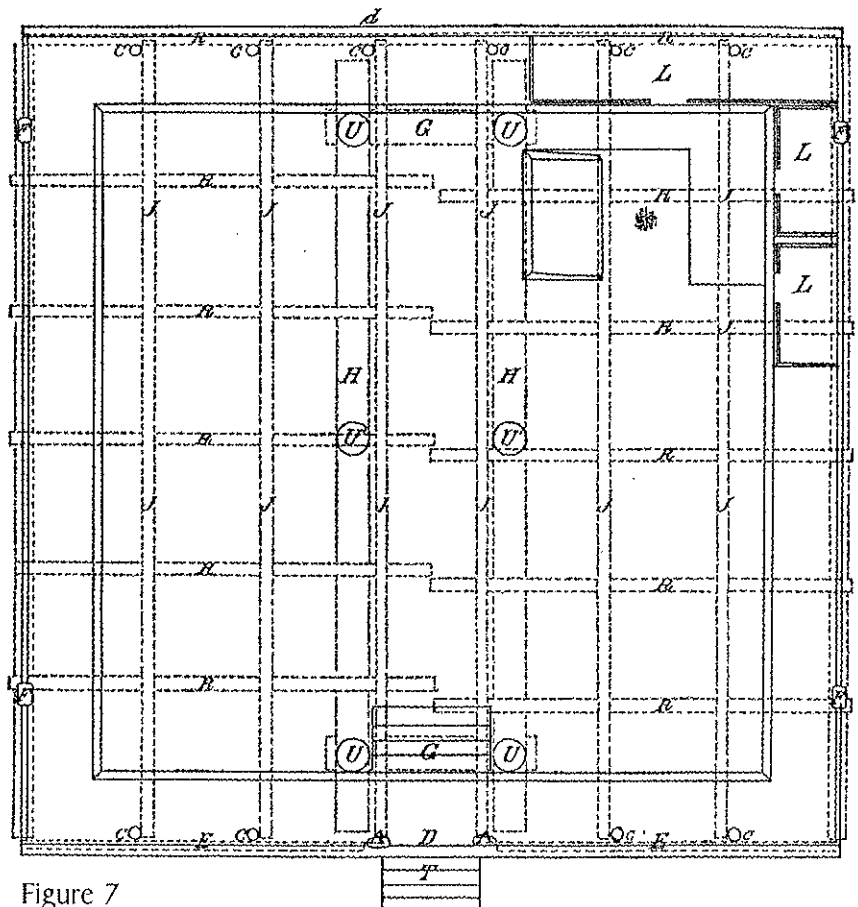
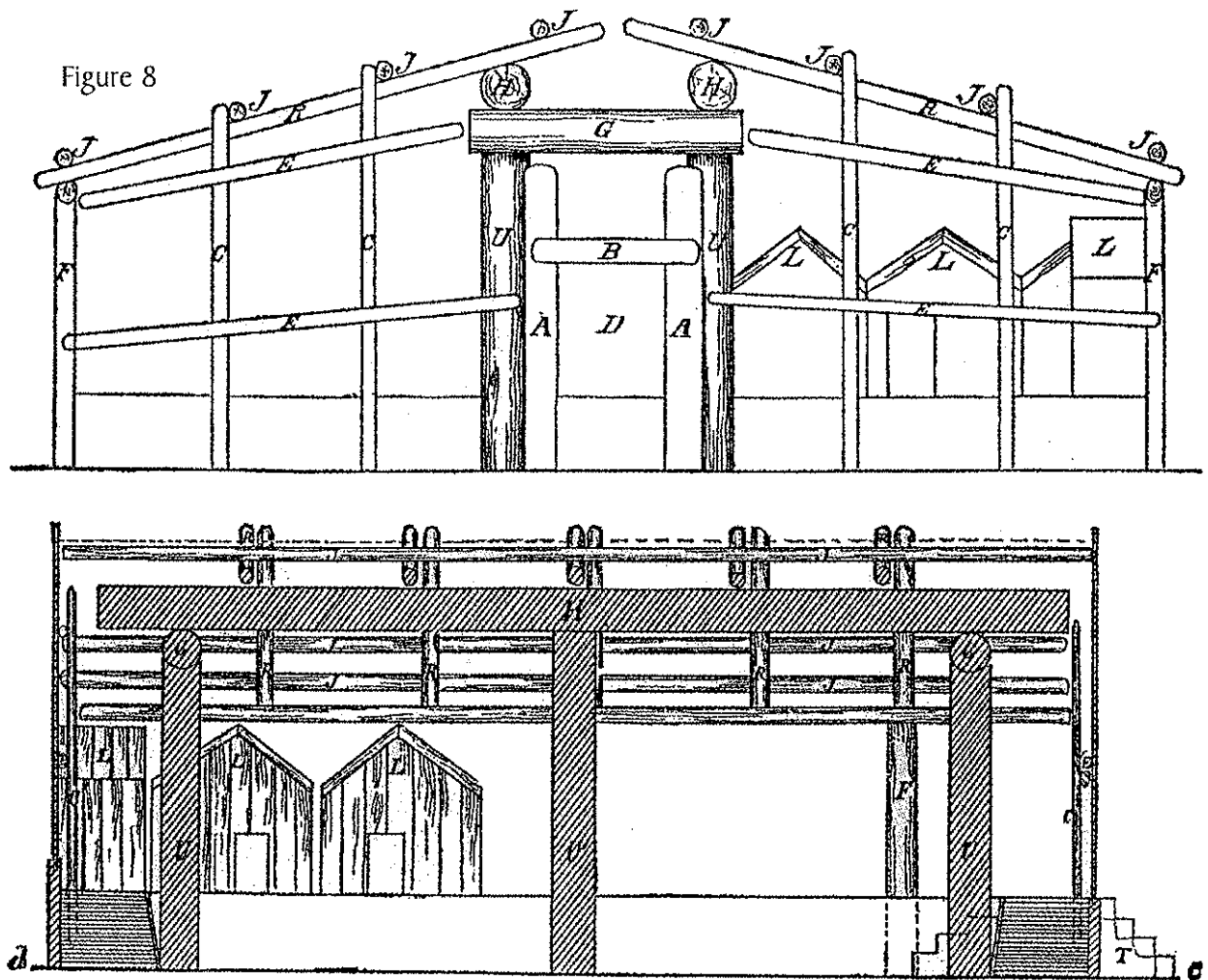
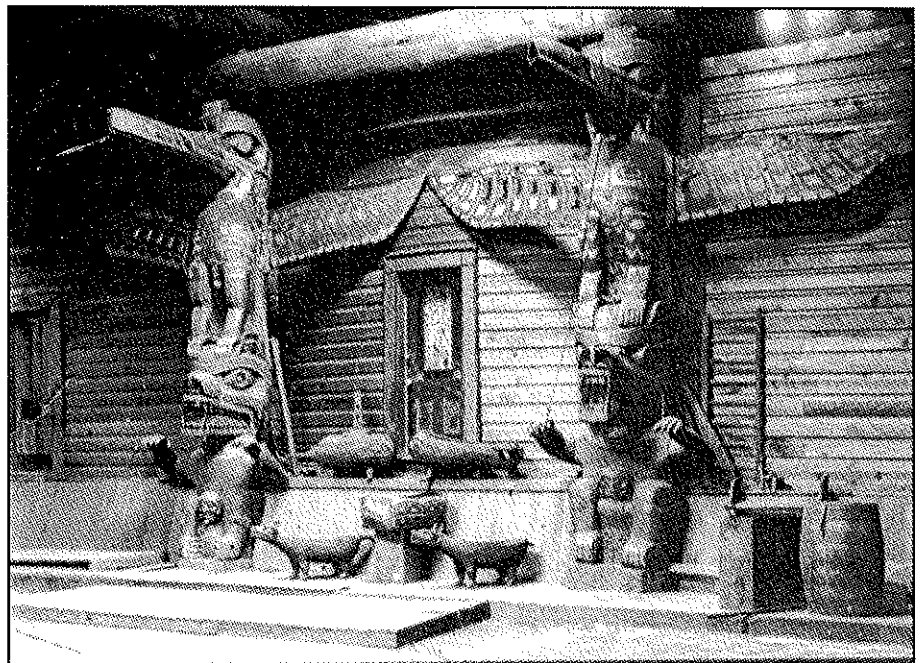


Figure 7



*Continued from previous page*

has the effect that the rain runs from the roof without penetrating onto the house. The house front is generally finished by cutting the boards off along the roof and by finishing them off with a moulding. A few logs are placed in front of the door, forming steps (T) that lead to the platform. Steps of the same kind lead from the platform to the floor of the house. The board forming the inner side of the platform slopes slightly inward. The house has no smoke escape, but several of the boards forming the roof can be pushed aside. During the night these openings are closed, but in the morning one board over every fireplace is pushed aside by a long pole. As it is necessary to look after the roof from time to time, a stationary ladder is leaned against the side of the house. It consists of one half of the trunk of a tree or of a heavy board, into the upper side of which steps are cut.



*Chief Harry Hanuse's Big House - Ligit. Depicted are feast dishes.*

Reprinted from U'mista News Spring '95

# The Kwakiutl of Vancouver Island

Franz Boas - Jesup Expedition VOL.5 Pt.2

## PERMANENT HOUSES

The parts of the house are named right (Fig. 95) according to the positions they have in relation to a person looking in at the door. The rear of the house is called its "forehead." Thus we have the terms *³neqe'waliṭ* - *³naki'waliṭ* "middle forehead of house" for the middle of the rear part (a); *hēt'kotewaliṭ* - *heit'koti'waliṭ* and *gēm'xote'waliṭ* - *gamxoti'waliṭ* respectively for the right (b) and left (c) of the rear part; *hēt'k'loḏene'gwiṭ* - *heṭ'kodanigwiṭ* and *gēm'xodene'gwiṭ* - *gamxodanigwiṭ* for right (d) and left (e) rear corners. The rear part of the sides (f) is called "up

river," the front part (g) of the sides, "down river," and we have *³nelk'loḏo'waliṭ* - *³nal'kodoyaliṭ* and *gwak'loḏo'waliṭ* - *gwak'odoyaliṭ*, "up river and down river middle of house," and more specifically these terms combined with *hēt'k'loḏo'waliṭ* and *gēm'xodo'waliṭ* ("right and left sides"). Right and left sides of the door (h, i) are *hēt'k'lotsaliṭ* - *heṭ'k'otsaliṭ* and *gēm'xotsaliṭ* - *gamxotsaliṭ* respectively. The four fires (j) are called accordingly right and left, front and rear, house fires (for instance, *gēm'xote'waliṭ* *legwiṭ* - *gamxoti'waliṭ* *lagwiṭ* "left-handed rear fire"). The fire in the middle of the

house, which is used at feasts, is called *leqa'waliṭ* - *laka'waliṭ*.

The place of honour is the middle rear of the house, then the right side, next the left, and finally the door-side. The bedrooms (k) which stand on the embankments are arranged accordingly, the owner having the middle room in the rear. It is said that in former times there were no rooms in the rear, which tends to be smoky, but the owner lived on the right-side. In former times the doorway of the bedrooms were as low as a box. They had sliding-doors attached to a rope which passed along the walls of the house to the bedroom, in which the house owner lived. When the rooms were closed, the door was tied to a post in this room.

For novices, hunters, and others who had to be guarded against defilement by chance contact of impure persons, or against any one stepping over their belongings, rooms were erected on a staging in the rear of the house, which was reached by a ladder that was pulled up by the occupant when he was in his room.

Fire-wood is kept between the bedrooms (l) and at the sides of the door. Boxes containing provisions are kept on the side and rear embankment (m). There are also separate sheds (*go'yats!e* - *go'yatsi*) on the embankment, in which personal property is kept. Provisions that must be protected against dampness are kept on a platform of poles which are suspended from rafters (*da'g'ilit* - *da'gilit* or *q!a'lit* - *ka'lit*). Clover-root and cinquefoil-root are kept in deep hole made under the settee near the fire. This hole is about one metre wide and two metres long, and is lined with fern-leaves, on which basket

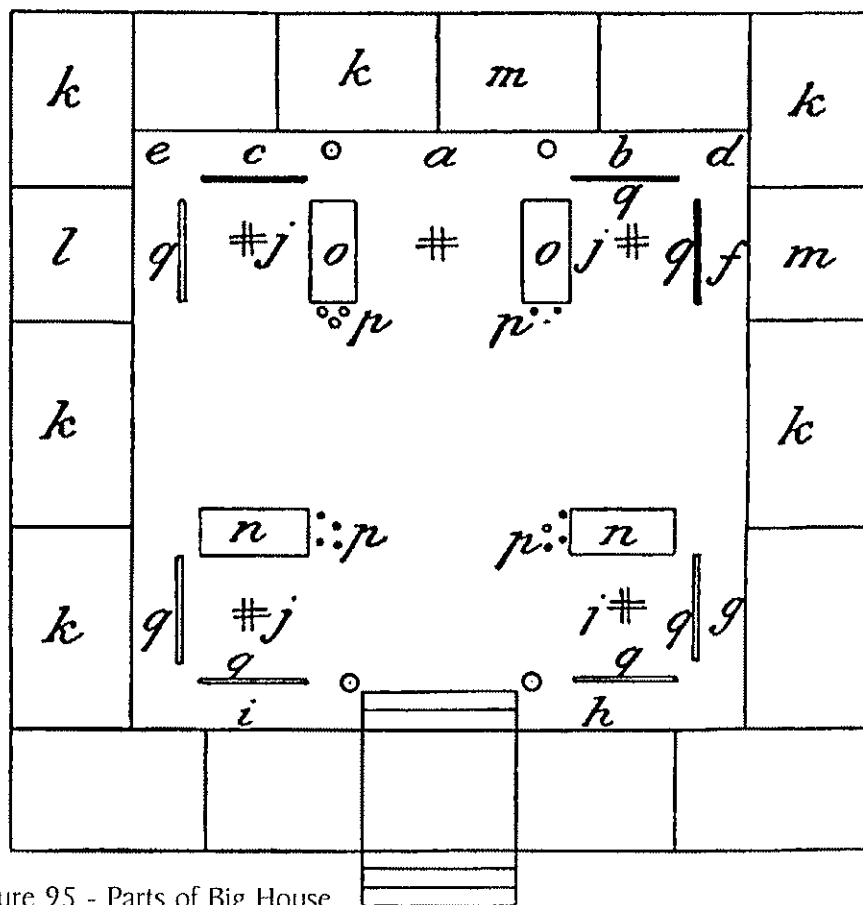
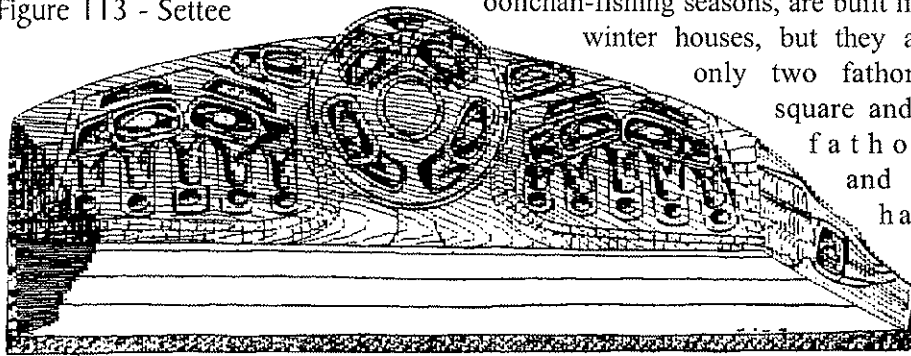


Figure 95 - Parts of Big House

Figure 113 - Settee



containing the clover and cinquefoil-roots are placed.

In the house are kept also the long frames on which berries, salmon-roe, etc., are dried.

There are seats on three sides of the fire. The seat of the housewife is generally in the rear of the front fires (n) and on the medial sides of the rear fires (o). Her cooking utensils (p) stand on the left side of her seat. The other seats (q) are generally so arranged that the medial side of the front fires is open, while the front side of the rear fires is open. The seat for guests is opposite that of the housewife. The seats are either settees (see fig. 113) or planks supported by posts driven into the ground so that they slant slightly backward, and mat-covered planks placed in front of these. The divisions of the house are sometimes shut off by mats hung from horizontal poles which are tied to rough posts that are driven into the floor of the house. During the celebration of festivals all these divisions, the family fires and the family seats are removed.

In olden times houses with many embankments (tso\pyagik - tso\pyagik) were also built. The platforms were covered with planks, and only the fire-place in the middle of the house remained free. These houses must have been quite similar to those of the Haida and other northern tribes.

#### TEMPORARY HOUSES

The houses in Knights Inlet, which

were occupied only during the oolichan-fishing seasons, are built like winter houses, but they are only two fathoms square and a fathom and a half

beams about three metres long. The width of the house is about the same. Then pieces of cedar-bark are placed on the roof, the under row with the sap-side up. The joints of this row are covered with pieces with the sap-side down. Then a fire is built under this shelter and as soon as the cedar-bark becomes hot, it begins to curl, and the upper piece hooks firmly into the turned-up rim of the lower piece. The sides are left open.

Another kind of shelter is built over a similar frame, only with a steeper roof-frame, which is covered with four or five layers of spruce branches.

The shamans of the Koskimo build a shelter with a steep roof made of four or five layers of spruce-branches, like a hunter's shelter. The ground is covered with the same kind of branches, which are so arranged that the tips are at place where the men lie down.

When seal-hunters are overtaken by bad weather, they will turn the canoe upside down and use it as a shelter.

Women who go berrying, and hunters, may also protect themselves by building a lean-to. A number of poles are laid against a low horizontal branch of a tree, and are then covered with matting.



'Naki'walił, "Middle of Forehead of House", Tsaxis, no date. UPN-00044

Reprinted from U'mista News Spring '95

# The 'Na'mima System

*This article is based on the system of the Kwakwaka'wakw Traditional Big House. In order to understand the system here is a brief introduction to the history of the Kwakwaka'wakw. The Kwakwaka'wakw (The Kwakwaka-speaking Tribes), speak the same language, but live in different places and have different names for separate groups. Some of the tribes the Kwakwaka'wakw have disappeared, among them the Awa'et'ala of Knights Inlet, the Nakamgalisala of Hope Island, the Yut'inux, of Cox and Lantz Islands. A few of the groups died out, while some amalgamated with other groups. Some of the villages have been abandoned for years.*

The Kwakwaka'wakw lived in a structure called a Big House. Unlike the Big House that we are familiar with "Today", the houses that our ancestors occupied were a much more important part of their

daily lives other than for shelter. There was a system of divisions that were the ultimate units bound together by strict social obligations. Each Kwakwaka'wakw village group is ranked with status, wealth and privileges. Within each village men of several lineage, or extended families, or 'Na'mima, meaning "Of One Kind" are ranked.

Tribes originated either by the joining of a number of 'Na'mima in one village or by the recognition of separate family lines descended from brothers as separate 'Na'mima, which might live in separate villages. 'Na'mima are not necessarily blood relatives and that the various 'Na'mima of a village in many cases are unrelated, except by later intermarriage. The 'Na'mima was essentially a family or a house community.

The structure of a 'Na'mima is best

understood as consisting of a certain number of positions, the Chief and closely related males, usually brothers, and cousins are ranked, they are called the 'Na'mimot or 'Na'mima fellows" each with a name, a "seat" or "standing place," their number is limited, and they form a ranked nobility. The direct descendants of the ancestors form the nobility, which entitles the ranks and privileges. At the head of the 'Na'mima is the Xa'magami Gi'gamite "head Chiefs" and those of lower rank are addressed, by courtesy, as "chiefs," they are distinguished from the head chiefs and those rank to him, as "lower chiefs" or "new Chiefs." Others that are accepted as members of the 'Na'mima form the common people, called Alkwalil. The wife of the head chief also has a definite position, called Mu'dzit, "Lifting the Blanket in the

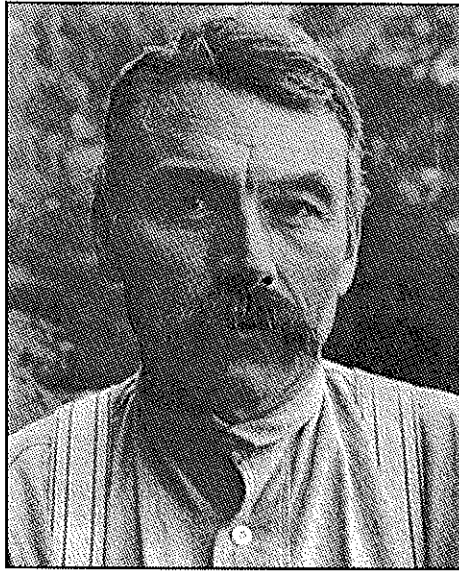


*Hereditary Chiefs of the Kwakwaka'wakw photographed in 1914 during the McKenna McBride Commission's visit to the area.*

*Photograph Courtesy Royal British Columbia Museum PN 12531*

House" which is said to mean that she has to be ready to do so all the time, because he is continually giving feast. Those lower ranked might have been called U'ma "Chief's Wife", with their position in the 'Na'mima.

The Kwakwaka'wakw creation story is that the ancestor of a 'Na'mima appeared at a specific locality by coming down from the sky, out of the sea, or from the underground. Generally in the form of an animal, it would take off its animal mask and become a person. The Thunderbird or his brother Kolus, the Gull, the Killer Whale (Orca), a sea monster, a grizzly bear, and a chief ghost would appear in this role. In a few cases, two such people arrived, and the both would become ancestors. Also there are a few 'Na'mima that do not have the traditional origin, but are said to have come as human beings from distance places. To this group belong the Si'sant'a', at one place, their ancestor is called "Son of the Sun" who travelled to as far north as Bella Bella. These ancestors are called "fathers" or "grandfathers," "root," "chief root," "chief ahead," and the myth is called



*George Hunt.*

*Photograph courtesy AMNH PN 11854*



*Mary Ebbetts Hunt, George Hunt's mother. A Tlingit noblewoman.*

the "home myth." It is also called the "myth at end of world." It is significant that one of the 'Na'mima of the tribes named after their ancestor bears the name "the real ones" such as "the Real Mamalilikala", "the Real Wiki"; and "the Real Sint'a". This suggest that

other 'Na'mima came later.

The list of villages and their subdivisions were recorded by Franz Boas in 1930's with the help of George Hunt in consultation with the knowledgeable people of his time.



*George Hunt, 2nd from left, top row, and Franz Boas far right top row, posing with George Hunt's family.*

*Photograph courtesy of Norman & Doris Boas*



*One man's family. No Date. Photograph Courtesy?*

Reprinted from *U'mista News Spring '95*

## TRADITIONAL BIG HOUSES

Kwakwaka'waka Ethnography By FRANZ BOAS

Edited and Abridged, with an Introduction by Helen Codere

I give here a list of the tribes and their subdivisions.<sup>1</sup>

### TRIBES AND SUBDIVISIONS

1. L!a'sq!enox" - T!a'skinuxw T!at!asikwala (People of the ocean) Klaskino Inlet  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:  
  1. Pe'pawil!enox" - Pa'pawit!inuxw
  2. T!e't!anel!enox" - Te'tanet!inuxw
  3. O'manits!enox" - O'manitsinuxw (People of O'manis, a place on Klaskino Inlet)
2. Gwa'ts!enox" - Gwa'tsinuxw (People of Gwa'tse') Northern entrance to Quatsino Sound  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:  
  1. Xāmanā' (Xa'wana'wa) - Xa'mana' (Xa'wana'wa)
  2. Gwa'ts!enox" - Gwa'tsinuxw
3. G!āp!enox" - Ga'p!inuxw Entrance to Quatsino Sound  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:  
  1. G!āp!enox" - Ga'p!inuxw
  2. Q!o'!enox" - K!o't!inuxw
4. Go'sg!imex" - Gusgimukw (Koskimo)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:  
  1. G'e'xsem - Gi'xsgm (Chiefs)
  2. Na'e'nsx'a - Na'asxa (Dirty Teeth)
  3. G'e'xsems'ana' - Gi'xsgm'ana' (Body of Chiefs)
  4. Tse'tsa'ya - Tse'tsa'ya (Next ranking - Younger Chief)
  5. Wexwa'mis - Waxwa'mis
  6. G!iq!o'!eqwa - G!ik'o'!akwa
  7. Kwa'KwēgemaL'enox" - Kwa'kwakamal'enuxw
5. Naq'e'mg!elisala - Nakam'galisala (Always staying in their country?) Cape Scott  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:  
  1. G'e'xsem - Gi'xsgm (Chiefs)
  2. Na'e'nsx'a - Na'asxa (Dirty Teeth)
6. Yu'L!enox" - Yu't!enuxw (People of Triangle Islands)
7. L!a'Lasiqwala - T!at!asikwala (Those of the ocean)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:  
  1. G!i'g!elgam - Gi'galgam (the First Ones)
  2. La'la'wit!ela - Lala'wit!ala (Always going across)
  3. G'e'xsem - Gi'xsgm (Chiefs)
8. Gwa'sela' - Gwa'sala (Smith Sound)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:  
  1. G!i'g!elgam - Gi'galgam (the First Ones)
  2. Si'senL!e' - Si'sant!a' (The descendants of Se'nL!e' - Sant!a')
  3. Q!o'mk!ut!es - K!o'mkut!as (Rich Side)

9. 'Na'k!wax+da«x - 'Nakwaxda'xw (Semour Inlet)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:  
  1. G'e'xsem - Gi'xsgm (Chiefs)
  2. Si'senL!e' - Si'sant!e' (The descendants of Se'nL!e' - Sant!a')
3. Tsi'tseme't!eqala - Tsi'tsime't!akala (the Tseme'Leqalas - Tsame'!akalas)
4. 'Wa'las - 'Wa'las (the Great One)
5. Te'wit!temlet's - Ta'wit!tamlat's (the Ground Shakers)
6. Kwa'kwēg-ut - Kwa'kwagu't (the Kwa'g-ut - Kwagu't)

### SOUTHERN GROUPS

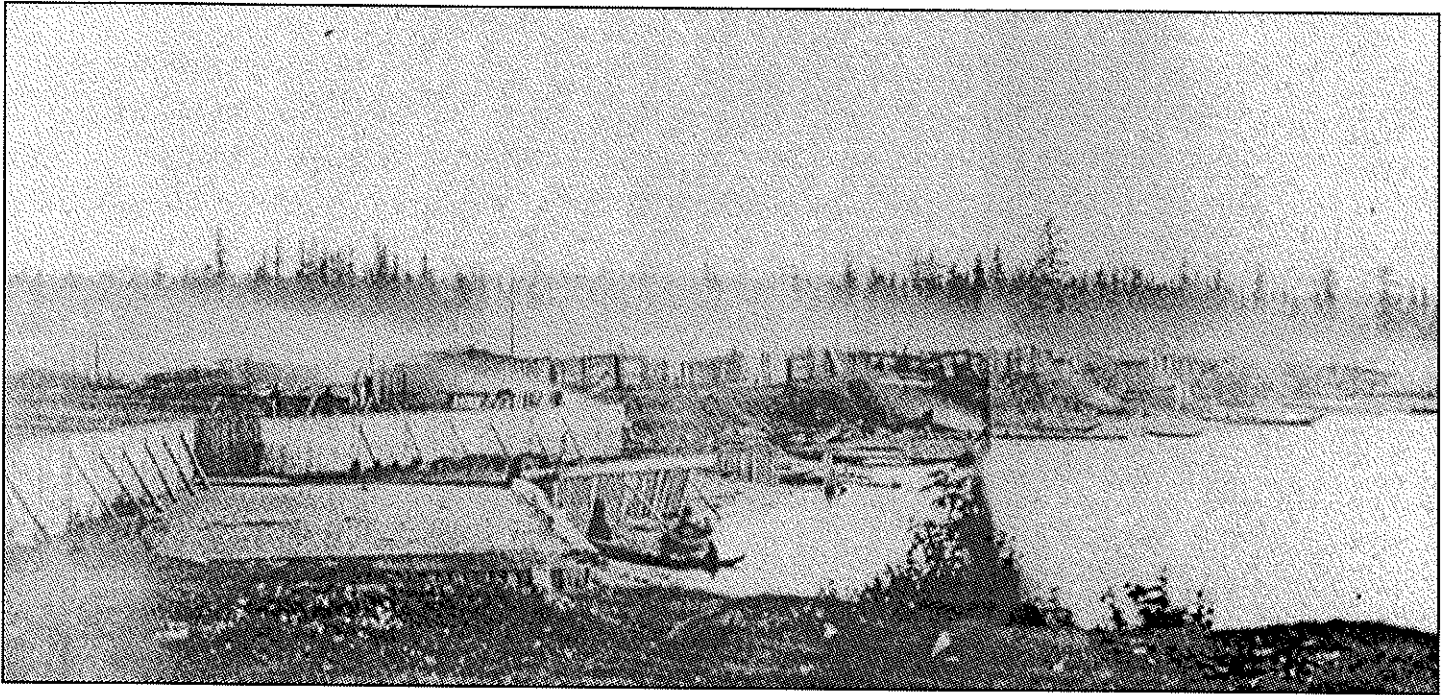
10. Kwa'g-ut - Kwagu't (Fort Rupert, Turnour Island, Call Creek)
- 10a1. Gwe'tela - Gwi'tala or Kwe'xa'Amut - kwi'xa'Amut  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:  
  1. Maa'mtag!ila - Ma'amtag!ila (the Ma'tag!ilas - Ma'tagi'las)
  2. Lo'yala'tawa - Lo'yala'tawa
  3. G'e'xsem - Gi'xsgm (Chiefs)
  4. Kwa'kwēg - Kwakwakwam (the real Kwa'g-ut - Kwagu't)
  5. Se'nL!em - Sant!am (the real Sen!e' - Sant!a')
  6. La'a'elax s'endayus - La'alaxws'andayus
  7. elgwenwe' - Algwanwi' (Speaker's Side)
- 10a2. Ma'dit!be' - Ma'dit!bi' (point of Matag!ila - Matagi'la)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:  
  1. Maa'mtag!ila - Ma'amtagila
  2. G'e'xsem - Gi'xsgm (Chiefs)
  3. Haa'yalik!awe' - Ha'yalikawi' (the Chief Healers)
  4. Unknown
- 10b. Q!o'moya'e - Kumuya'i or Kwe'wa-Kwi'wa (Rich in Middle) or (Murderer)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:  
  1. Kwa'kwēg - Kwakwakwam (the real Kwa'g-ut - Kwagu't)
  2. Ha'anaLenā - Ha'anadt!ina (those shooting passers-by)
  3. Yae'x!agame' - Ya'ixagami'
  4. Haa'yalik!awe' - Ha'yalikawi' (the Chief Healers)
  5. Lā'xsa - Laxsa
  6. G!i'g!elgam (?) - G!igalgam (?)
- 10c. 'Wa'las Kwa'g-ut - 'wa'las Kwagu't or La'qwi'lala - Lakwi'lala (the great Kwag-ut - Kwagu't) or (setting fires here and there)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:  
  1. Dze'ndzēnx!q!ayu - Dzan'dzanxk!ayu (the Dze'n!x!q!ayus - Dzan'xk!ayus)
  2. Wa'weliba'ye - Wa'waliba'yi and He'maxsdo-Hi'maxsdu
  3. G!i'g!elgaem - G!igalgam (the First Ones)
  4. G'e'xsem - Gi'xsgm
- 10d. Q!o'mk!ut!es - K!omk!ut!as or Lo'elq!we'noxu - Lo'alk!wi'noxw (Rich Side) or (Halibut Fishers)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:  
  1. L!e'q!em - D!igam (Real Name)
  2. L!e'Le'ged - D!i'd!agid (Those From Whom Names are Obtained)
11. Mamaleleqala - Mamalilikala (Village Island) the Ma'leleqalas - Malilikalas  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:

1. Te'mttemÂels - Tamtamtals (Ground Shakers)
2. Wi'womasgem - Wi'wumasgam
3. \*Walas - \*Wa'las (the Great One)
4. Ma'maleq!am - Mamalilikam (the real Ma'leleqala - Malilikala)
12. Ła'wits!es - Ławitsis (Cracroft Island - Angry Ones)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:
  1. SisenL!e - Si'sant'te' (SenL!e's - S ant'te)
  2. Nu'nemaseqâlis - Nu'namasakalis (the Old Ones From the Beginning)
  3. Le'Leged - D'ti'dtagid (Those From Whom Names are Obtained)
  4. G'ig-Elgam - Gi'galgam
13. \*Ne'mgis - 'Nangis (Nimpkish - Nimpkish River)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:
  1. Tsle'ts!et'wa'lagame - T'si'ts!et'wa'lagami (the Famous One)
  2. L!a'L!elamin - T'ta't'talamin (the L!a'lamins - T'ta'lamins)
  3. G'ig-Elgam - Gigalgam (the First Ones)
  4. Si'senL!e - Si'sant'ta' (the SE'nL!e's - Sant'ta's)
  5. \*Ne'nelk!enox - 'Ni'nalkinoxw (Up River People)
14. Qwe'x sot!enox<sup>2</sup> - Kwikwasut inux (People of the Other Side - Gilford Island)<sup>2</sup>  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:
  1. Naxnaxwela - Naxnaxwala
  2. Me'mog-ents - Mi'mugants (Salmon Traps)
  3. G'ig-Elgam - Gigalgam (the First Ones)
  4. \*Ne'nelbe - 'Ni'nalbi (Those on the Upper End of the River)
  5. (?)G'e'xsem - Gi'xsam (Chief)
15. DE'na'x-da'x<sup>u</sup> - Da'naxda'xw (Knights Inlet - New Vancouver) (the Sandstone Ones)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:
  1. Q!amq!a'mtalat - Kamkamtalat (the Song Dancer's, descendants of Q!amtalat - Kamtalat)
  2. G'e'xsem - Gi'xsam (Chief)
  3. Q!we'q!waenox<sup>3</sup> - Kwik'kwa'inuxw<sup>3</sup>
  4. Yae'x-agame - Yaxagami
  5. Ple'p!aL!enoxu - Pipat'inuxw
16. A'waiLela - A'wa'et'ala (Knight Inlet - Those Up the Inlet)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:
  1. G'ig-Elgam - Gi'galgam or Awa'wa - Awa'wa (the First Ones)
  2. Ts!o'ts!aena - Tsutsana (Thunderbirds)
  3. K!ek!ae'nox<sup>u</sup> - Kakanuxw
  4. Awa'wa - Awa'wa
17. Dza'wadnox<sup>u</sup> - Dzawada'enux (Knight Inlet - People of Oolichan place)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:
  1. Le'le'wagila - Lil'wagila (Heaven Maker's, Mythical Name of Raven)
  2. G!l!g-egane - Gi'gamani (Chief's)
  3. Wi'ogame - Wi'ogami (Not To Be Looked At)
  4. K!a'k!elak!a - Kakalaka (Those Trying to Strike)
  5. Qeqadilqala - Kikadilikala (the Qa'wadilqalas - Ka'wadilikalas)
  6. G'ig-Elgam - Gi'galgam (the First Ones)
18. Gwa'waenox<sup>u</sup> - Gwa'wa'inuxw (Durey Inlet)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:
  1. G'ig-Elgam<sup>4</sup> - Gi'galgam (the First Ones)<sup>4</sup>
  2. Gwe'gwaenox<sup>u</sup> - Gwi'gwa'inuxw
  3. Gwa'gwaenox<sup>u</sup> - Gwa'gwa'inuxw Kwa'kwaenox - Kwa'kwainox
19. Haxwa'mis - Haxwa'mis (Wakeman Sound)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:
  1. G'ig-Elgam - Gi'galgam (the First Ones)<sup>5</sup>
  2. G'e'xsem - Gi'xsam (Chief)
  3. Ha'yalikawe - Ha'yalikawi (the Greatest Healers)
20. Le'gwi'tda'x<sup>u</sup> - Ligwi'tda'xw (from Knight Inlet to Bute Inlet and on the opposite part of Vancouver Island<sup>6</sup>)
- 20a. Wi'weqe - Wi'wiki (the Wiki's)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:
  1. G'ig-Elgam - Gi'galgam (the First Ones)
  2. G'e'xsem - Gi'xsam (Chief)
  3. Unknown
  4. Wi'weq!aem - Wiwikam (the real Wi'qe's - Wi'ki's)
- 20b. Xa'xamats!es - Xa'xamatsas (Food Kept on Ground a Second Season) Recently, they have adopted the name \*Wa'litsam, \*Walitsam
- 20c. Kwe'xa - Kwi'xa (Murderers)  
Numayma - 'Na'mima:
  1. Wi'weq!am - Wiwikam (the real Wi'qe's - Wi'ki's)
  2. Q!o'moyewe - Kumuyami (Rich in Middle)
  3. Kwe'xa - Kwi'xa (Murderers)
- 20d. Łaa'lewis - Łaalawis
- 20e. Q!o'm'enox<sup>u</sup> - Kum'inuxw

The tribes are groups inhabiting one winter village each and acting on many occasions, as in war or rituals, as units. They are village communities often bearing the name of the locality they inhabit. The common ending -enox<sup>u</sup> of tribal names means "person of a certain place," but also "one whose occupation is" - as our ending "-er" in "helper" and "hatter." The other frequent ending, -x-da'x<sup>u</sup>, is the third person plural for human actions and might be translated by "they are." It corresponds to the analogous endings for tribal names among the Bella Bella and Nootka.

## FOOTNOTES

- 1 The variants given in foot notes were obtained from the informants in 1930.
- 2 In a tale told by a Mamalilikala, one of the Kwik'sut inuxw 'Na'mima is called Wi'wumasgam, another one Kwiksut inuxw, Real Kwiksut inuxw. The latter may be due to the fact that the Kwikwsutinuxw who are very few, live with the Mamalilikala.
- 3 According to another source: 3. is Yaixagami, while the Kwik'ainuxw are given as 'Na'mima 2. of the Haxwa'mis. According to this source 'Na'mima 4. is Kank'ainuxw perhaps identical with 16. 3 K'ak'ainuxw.
- 4 According to another source, the Gigalgam belong to the Dzawada'enux (where they have been added in this table). This source gives as 'Na'mima of the Gwa'wainuxw: 1. Gwa'gwaenox<sup>u</sup> - Gwa'wa'inuxw, 2. Gwe'gweenox<sup>u</sup> - Gwi'gwa'inuxw, 3. G'a'g'exala - Ga'gixala, 4. (Wolf?)
- 5 According to another source, 1. Q!o'mux'se<sup>3</sup> - Ku'muxwsi<sup>1</sup>, 2. Gwe'gwaenox<sup>u</sup> - Gwi'gwa'inuxw, 3. G'ig-Elgam - Gigalgam, 4. Te'mttemtels - Tamtamtals, 5. Ha'yalikawe<sup>3</sup> - Ha'yalikawi
- 6 I have not been able to recheck these with a new information.



*Tsaxis (Fort Rupert) village in 1880.*

*Photograph courtesy Royal British Columbia Museum PN 7301*



*T'sadzis'nukwame (New Vancouver) village in 1900. Photograph courtesy ?*

U'mista Cultural Society  
**Canadian Membership Form**

Do you have Band Membership or can you trace ancestry to a Band member of Kwakwaka'wakw? Yes / No

If yes, give Band Name and Number'

(\*\*If Band Number completed, G.S.T. is not applicable\*\*)

**INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP**

Annual Fee' \$ 15.00

(Add \$1.05 G.S.T. if applicable)

Name' \_\_\_\_\_

Address' \_\_\_\_\_

City' \_\_\_\_\_ Province' \_\_\_\_\_

Country' \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code' \_\_\_\_\_

Res Phone' \_\_\_\_\_ Bus. Phone' \_\_\_\_\_

**FAMILY MEMBERSHIP**

Annual Fee' \$25.00

(Add \$ 1.75 G.S.T. if applicable)

(May include up to two adults and children under 19 years of age.)

Name' (Adult #1) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address' \_\_\_\_\_

City' \_\_\_\_\_ Province' \_\_\_\_\_

Country' \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code' \_\_\_\_\_

Res Phone' \_\_\_\_\_ Bus. Phone' \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Adult #2)' \_\_\_\_\_

Children Names'

Birthdate (YY/MM/DD)

Name' \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Name' \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Name' \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Name' \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Name' \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE ENCLOSE YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE AND MAIL TO'**

U'mista Cultural Centre

P.O. Box 253

Alert Bay, B.C. V0N 1A0

U'mista Cultural Society  
***International Membership Form***

**INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP**

*Annual Fee' \$ 25.00 + \$1.75 (GST) = \$26.75*

*(Payable in Canadian Funds, Cheque or Money Order to the U'mista Cultural Centre)*

Name' \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address' \_\_\_\_\_  
 City' \_\_\_\_\_ Province' \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country' \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code' \_\_\_\_\_  
 Res Phone' \_\_\_\_\_ Bus. Phone' \_\_\_\_\_

**FAMILY MEMBERSHIP**

*Annual Fee' \$35.00 + \$2.45 (GST)= \$37.45*

*May include up to two adults and children up to 19 years of age.*

*(Payable in Canadian Funds, Cheque or Money Order to the U'mista Cultural Centre)*

Name' (Adult #1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing Address' \_\_\_\_\_  
 City' \_\_\_\_\_ Province' \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country' \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code' \_\_\_\_\_  
 Res Phone' \_\_\_\_\_ Bus. Phone' \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Adult #2)' \_\_\_\_\_

| Children Names' | Birthdate (YY/MM/DD)         |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Name' _____     | D.O.B. _____ / _____ / _____ |
| Name' _____     | D.O.B. _____ / _____ / _____ |
| Name' _____     | D.O.B. _____ / _____ / _____ |
| Name' _____     | D.O.B. _____ / _____ / _____ |
| Name' _____     | D.O.B. _____ / _____ / _____ |

**PLEASE ENCLOSE YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE AND MAIL TO'**

U'mista Cultural Centre  
 P.O. Box 253  
 Alert Bay, B.C. V0N 1A0

## U'mista Cultural Society

### *Board of Directors*

#### **Executive'**

William T. Cranmer Chairman

Lawrence Ambers Vice-Chairman

Pearl Hunt Secretary / Treasurer

#### **Board Members'**

Peggy Svanvik

Andrea Cranmer

Christine Joseph

Spruce Wamiss

Richard Dawson

Flora Dawson

Basil Ambers

## The Last Word is Yours!

Do you have any suggestions for future newsletter items?

Or suggestions for activities or events you would like to see at the U'mista Cultural Centre?

Please write to us with your ideas and we will look into it.

Please include your name and your phone number so we can contact you.

Send your suggestions to'

P.O. Box 253

Alert Bay, B.C.

V0N 1A0

Or

E-Mail us at' umista @north.island.net  
Or drop in and see us!

## U'mista Needs You!

Can you spare a few hours to do some volunteer work for U'mista? We will be needing your help for a variety of things at different times. For example, volunteers are needed to'

Help out with the newsletter

Preparing the newsletter for mailing

Help with tours through the centre

Help put up and take down exhibits

Do minor construction projects

Provide transportation for elders to

U'mista activities

Help out with other miscellaneous things that may arise from time to time.

If you are interested, please fill out the form to the right and mail to us or bring it down to the centre, you will be contacted when your services are required.

Yes! I am interested in volunteering my services.

Name' \_\_\_\_\_

Address' \_\_\_\_\_

Phone'(H)' \_\_\_\_\_ (W)' \_\_\_\_\_

I would be willing to help out with'

\_\_\_\_\_

Newsletter

Museum Tours

Minor Construction

Transportation

Exhibit Assistance

Other

Return to'

U'MISTA  
CULTURAL  
CENTRE  
P.O. BOX 253  
ALERT BAY, BC  
VON 1A0

**U'mista Cultural Centre**

**Regular Hours'**

Monday to Friday  
9'00am - 5'00pm

**Extended Summer Hours'**

Saturday, Sundays and Holidays  
9'00am - 6'00pm

P.O. Box 253  
Alert Bay, BC  
Canada V0N 1A0

Phone' 1-250-974-5403  
Fax' 1-250-974-5499  
E-Mail' [umista@island.net](mailto:umista@island.net)

PLU #  
55.00  
\$3.00 each