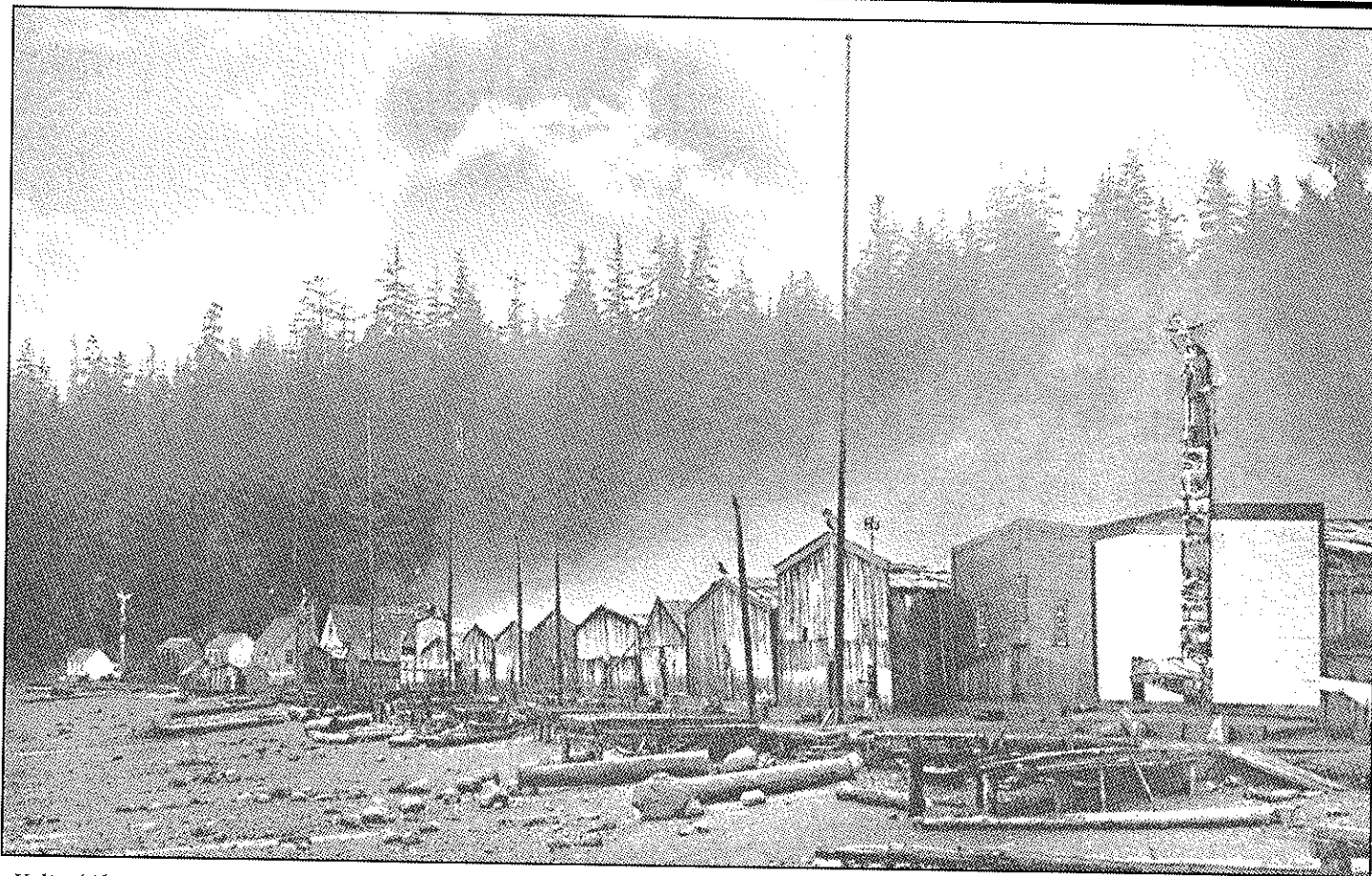




# U'mista News



*'Yalis (Alert Bay) looking north. Date unknown. Photo Credit National Archives of Canada PN # 22368*

# Beyond 2000

## What Does Our Future Hold?

Gilakas'la 'Nahnamyut,  
'Ninamukw! Greetings Relatives,  
and Friends!

Since our last newsletter another Annual General Meeting has come and gone. Our Board of Directors now consists of Lawrence Ambers (Vice-chair), Stanley Hunt (Secretary/Treasurer), Peggy Svanvik, Christine Joseph, James Glendale, Basil Ambers, Spruce Wamiss, Richard Dawson, Flora Dawson and myself.

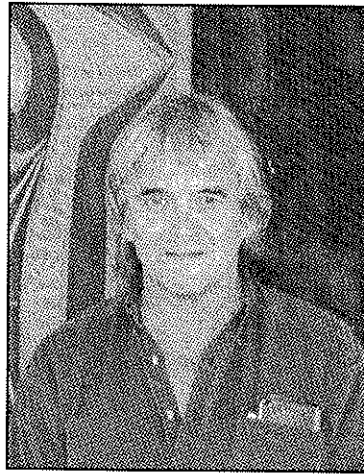
A major decision by your Board was to start construction of Phase I of our expansion. Along with the upgrade of the existing Centre which included upgrades to our environmental systems and the replacement of the majority of our existing roof, the expansion will double our Giftshop and working areas. I am sure Phase I of the expansion will be another fine example of architecture and craftsmanship.

This project has also provided badly needed employment for our membership. Your staff have again shown their dedication by continuing to operate under very difficult conditions during construction. Gilakas'la! The expected completion date is January 31, 1999 and this will be a time for celebration.

U'mista has successfully negotiated an agreement with Sonja Tanner-Kaplash & Associates to start work on the initiative to develop a national policy for the protection of the Treasures that belong to the First Peoples of Canada. As reported in the last newsletter, this is a joint project with the First Peoples' Cultural Foundation and the Confederacy of Cultural Education Centers. The work will take approximately a year and a half to complete with the draft policy then being presented to government. We expect the Assembly of First Nations will be supportive of this initiative.

The review of our Specific Claim on the "Potlatch Prohibition" by the Federal government is apparently nearly complete. We should be receiving an official reply shortly. An important component of this claim is the ongoing work for the return of the rest of what is now referred

## Chairman's Report



*William T. Cranmer  
Chairman of the Board*

to as the "Potlatch Collection" which was removed illegally from our people in 1922. The National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian, is close to completing their research for presentation to their Board of Directors. This will allow the Board to make the decision to approve the repatriation of the remaining pieces in their collection that we have identified so far. This decision should be made at their next meeting early in the New Year, 2000. Juanita Pasco, our Collections Manager, and our good friend Peter Macnair, Malidi, were responsible for identifying the pieces and documenting our research.

Peter also was responsible for discovering two masks that may be part of the "Potlatch Collection" at the Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia. He is presently researching their histories and we hope to add them to the "Potlatch Collection" soon.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, because I am the elected Chief of the 'Nangis First Nation, I am also involved in a number of areas of interest that overlap with my role as Chairman of the Board of the U'mista Cultural Society. For example, I continue in my capacity as British Columbia's representative on the Assembly of First Nations' "Chiefs Committee on Languages." This committee is working towards Federal legislation to protect Aboriginal languages across Canada. The draft legislation is near completion and the plans for moving it through the system are being refined.

Another involvement I have is the First Peoples' Cultural Foundation. The F.P.C.F. held their Annual General Meeting in Victoria last month. Their advisory committee, which represents all tribal groups in B.C., appointed the Council of the F.P.C.F. As a result, I was appointed Chair of the Foundation for the next two years. An important agenda item at the A.G.M. was a dinner to welcome the "Friends of Aboriginal Languages." These "Friends" will help the F.P.C.F. raise funds through the pri-

*Continued on page 5*

As we look forward to the new millennium and its challenges, we must look back to all the people who made U'mista a reality. It is impossible to personally thank everyone who contributed to make U'mista what it is today. So many contributed in so many different ways.

For example: In the last few years, recording the elders' knowledge has been one of U'mista's main goals. While we have not had the money, time and people to record as much as we would have liked, without each and every elder who contributed

their time and knowledge so much would have disappeared already. In the New Year, one of my hopes is that each and every member of the community will try to record the knowledge that you, your parents, grandparents or other family members might have. The new millennium will be much less if the traditional knowledge of the Kwak'wala Speaking Peoples disappears. If there is anyway we can help you record this knowledge, please contact us.

## Administrators Report



*Linda Manz*  
*Administrative Director*

Another example of the past contributing to the new is something I overheard the other day. A grandmother, mother and grandchild got into the cab. The grandchild is just learning to talk. Grandma was discussing how quickly he was learning and stated that "and he talks Indian too." She was proud that her grandchild was learning to "talk Indian" and she has every right to be very, very proud. Her grandchild will be talking Kwak'wala in the year 2000. Every Kwak'wala word she teaches her grandchild will

help keep the language alive. Without her and others like her Kwak'wala will cease to be a living language. Her contribution is immeasurable and that is just one of many.

All that U'mista has become is because of everyone who has contributed in the past. Too often we forget to say thank you. **Gilakas'la!** Thank you!!

May everyone have a great Christmas and a Happy New Year. ✨



Logo  
by Joe Wilson

## PRESS RELEASE

### CULTURAL REPATRIATION AND PROTECTION PROJECT

For many First Nations people, the concept of Aboriginal rights includes the right to exercise control over cultural

property – objects which have historical, traditional or spiritual importance. Initial requests to repatriate potlatch materials to B.C. communities were first made in the 1960's, and since then, efforts have been made by many First Nations to have materials returned.

Now, a national Cultural Repatriation & Protection Research Project to support the return and protection of these significant materials has been initiated by the U'mista Cultural Society, supported by the First Peoples Cultural Foundation,

the First Nations Confederacy of Cultural and Education Centres, with financial assistance from the Department of Canadian Heritage, Museums Assistance Program.

A highly experienced consulting team began work in November 1999; project completion is anticipated by June 2001. Among the expected results are the development of policies to prevent the inappropriate removal of significant materials and objects, and to provide support for their return to First Nations Communities.

For further information call:  
Sonja Tanner-Kaplash, Consultant  
(250) 658-1002  
skaplash@uvic.ca

It has been a hectic few months, especially with the construction all around us. The fall season was busy with pocket cruiser boats, especially in September. As the tour guide some days I would have four tours in a row. I find it so important to educate others about our culture. There are so many who still do not know about what our people went through with the church and government interfering with our culture those many years ago. Yes, it is a part of our history and it will always be a part of our history. And we are not the only people who have a history of persecution. There are many, too many to count who have been persecuted because of who they are, because of the color of their skin, because of their beliefs, and those wars of racism and discrimination are still taking place to this day. This is why I feel

it is so important to tell our story to others, to educate and to stop the prejudice mind-set of so many people. If more people were educated and open-minded and accept the different cultures, religions, beliefs and the many colors of the universal population then maybe we won't continue to destroy each other, for power and control.

However, I have this to say, it concerns me greatly when others take advantage of our culture for their own personal gain. I am not sure how many of our membership are aware of a family known as the "Lelooska's". The "Lelooska's" live in Ariel, Washington, fifty miles northeast of Portland Ore. Lelooska is the name given to Don Smith by the Nez Percé. Lelooska and the rest of his family, his mother, sister, brothers and nephew and nieces have immersed themselves into the Northwest Coast Culture. In his book "Lelooska" Randolph Falk describes the family as "...a unique Indian family of Cherokee descent, crossing tribal boundaries to research, create, and develop the art and culture of the Northwest Coast...maintaining a strong sense of pride in their Indianess, they are able to identify not only with the dramatic art of the Northwest, but the Northwest Coast people as well." They have definitely crossed the tribal boundary.

Lelooska, along with the support of his family developed a program to "educate" and "enlighten" others of the culture of the "Kwakiutl" people. They live on a com-

## Cultural Update



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

pound where they have built "Kwakiutl" style big houses and where they have dance performances for the public. Lelooska and his family have taken their artistic abilities and used them to their own advantage to gain recognition and even credit towards the salvation of our once dying culture. In the 1960's when our own people were overcoming years of Potlatch prohibition, Lelooska was adopted by Chief James Sewid who "at this potlatch initiated the adoption process which eventually allowed all the members of the Lelooska family to become a part of the Kwa-gu-leth Band. Affiliation with the Kwa-gu-leth tribe, led to the sharing of knowledge and skills

that has seen the Lelooska's make important contributions to the ongoing effort of preserving Northwest Coast Indian Art" (quote from film "Lelooska - Myths, Masks, Magic). Each member of the family received a Kwakiutl name and then they took complete advantage of the honor bestowed upon them by James Sewid by using our culture to build an empire for themselves. I have no doubt that James Sewid was impressed by the work of Lelooska, but was James Sewid ever aware of what the family was doing in Ariel, Washington? Their program is complete with songs and dances, which they apparently received the rights to perform and display when James Sewid adopted them into his family. This performance was video taped by an amateur and the videotape was brought to our attention here at the U'mista a few months ago. The staff of the U'mista along with one of our students, Tyler Cranmer, sat down and watched this video and we were horrified by the events, which unfolded before our eyes. The performance in this video, which is presented in front of audiences by the "Lelooska's" is embarrassing and in my own opinion, making a complete mockery of our culture. This family is sending their audiences away with the wrong idea of what our culture means to our people. Tyler Cranmer grew up learning the songs and dances belonging to his people, and when I asked him how it made him feel when he was watching the video he

*Continued on page 7*

**Chairman's Report***Continued from page 2*

vate sector to assist in our work to save Aboriginal Languages. David Suzuki is one of the individuals who have agreed to be a member of the "Friends of Aboriginal Languages."

Since the last newsletter, I was honored to be recognized by the BC Arts Council for the work that I have done at U'mista over the years. Later, when the CBC radio interviewed me, I said that I accepted the award on behalf of all the people who have made U'mista the success that it is today and I'm sure would continue to make it a success in the future.

In conclusion I wish each and every one of you all the best in the coming year. ✨

## Collections Update

We are currently in the midst of another phase of our expansion project and its rather crazy around here. But, nonetheless we have managed to accomplish quite a bit considering the state of our office.

In October Lars Krutak, Repatriation Researcher, of the National Museum of the American Indian Smithsonian Institute (NMAI) contacted me regarding the status of the repatriation of the remainder of the potlatch collection at the NMAI. Mr. Krutak expects to submit his report to the Board of Trustees in June 2000. His research confirms our results. Mr. Peter Macnair conducted our research. Peter's findings were submitted in July of 1998. So, things are moving

slowly but at least they are moving.

During the fall I also sourced out a place to redo the ramp display, after nearly 20 years the exhibit was looking very old. We reprint-

ed and block mounted the exact same legends. The photographs are also going to be redone and block mounted as well. As soon as construction is completed the ramp display will be reinstalled.

I hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season. Gilakas'la ✨



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

# U'mista Enters A New Millenium

By Andrea Sanborn

Well this is the last bit of news for the year 1999. A new millennium is racing towards us and are we ready?

The Board of Directors, the Executive Director and the staff here at the U'mista have all been in discussions regarding the upgrades and especially the building expansion and the Board of Directors made the decision to go ahead with the project. We will enter the next century with a new and improved facility that, hopefully, will be complete by the end of January, 2000. The decision to move forward with the expansion project was not made lightly. We received a grant from the Community Economic Initiatives Adjustment (CEAI) Program for \$250,000.00 and attached to the conditions was that we proceed with construction

within 90 days. Although the grant is much appreciated it only makes up 38% of the total budget for the project. We have not received a response from the Province about our request for funding for \$200,000.00. Although the U'mista has money set aside for this expansion, things will be very tight fiscally unless we receive the funding from the Province. We have sent our proposal to other agencies but still await their replies. However, if we did not accept the grant from CEAI when it was offered, we believe our chances would be next to nil on any subsequent application. We will be having ongoing fund raising events to boost our budget and we appeal to you for your help. To end budgets on a happy note, Canfor, Woss Division has come through

*Continued on page 6*

**U'mista Enters A New Millenium***Continued from page 5*

for Alert Bay again. They are supplying all the raw cedar required for the expansion project and this will take care of the exterior siding, the structural roof timbers/rafters and new columns and cross-beams for the new entrance. For this significant contribution I would like to thank Wayne Green, General Manager, Woss Division and Darryl Rouleau and Rob Shambrook for all their help in coordinating the delivery of the logs to the various mill sites. We appreciate all that Canfor is doing for us at the U'mista and all that was done for the Big House.

The U'mista is a very important facility for Alert Bay and area. Not only is the Centre an important Information and Resource Centre both locally and internationally, but it is also a very important icon economically. Without the Centre in Alert Bay, the draw for tourists would be decreased immensely. It is for these reasons that we ask for your help with fund raising to complete the expansion project. Please call if you wish to help in some way, no offer is too small. If you wish to make a donation to the project please send it to the address as shown in this newsletter.

For those of you that have been down to see firsthand our construction zone, you will probably be amazed that we do plan on having a Christmas sale. Yes, it is business as best as we can but we will be here. Due to the lack of space, our sale may not be as you expect it but the prices and items will make up for this.

Another new Millenium project that we are working on is a pictorial exhibit of the Big House project. Photographer, Sharon Grainger from

Lummi Island graciously offered her services to document with photography the rebuilding of the Big House and the opening ceremonies. Most of you probably saw her around on one of her many trips to Alert Bay and maybe even became one of her targets. Upon each visit her lens captured more than the Big House. Sharon photographed Elders, Artists and children as well. Sharon is now processing the film and producing a number of photographs for the exhibit that we hope to present in early March, 2000. For those of you that missed Sharon's wonderful slide show maybe we can convince her to present it again at the opening of the Big House pictorial exhibit. We will have all of Sharon's slides at the U'mista and as funds become available we will complete a Big House photo album for public viewing. This is a project to watch for.

Barb Cranmer is also busy completing her video documentary of the Big House project. I think it goes without saying that the finished product will be well worth waiting for. Barb's previous productions, *Laxwesa Wa: Strength of the River*, *Mungo Martin: A Slender Thread* and *'Qátuwas: People Gathering Together* are all proven hits as is her most recent, *T'kina: The Rendering of Wealth*. Barb has a unique flair for capturing the life and soul of each project on video. Being a local girl with her roots deep in the Kwakwaka'wakw culture, Barb puts her heart into each documentary. Congratulations to Barb on all her productions and we all look forward to many more.

We are still working towards a completed and improved website for the Giftshop. Construction has slowed this project somewhat. As we move our receivers around the roofing job we

lose our reception or it becomes too unstable. I think this will be a project that will be completed after the construction is complete. We will keep you posted on this.

With our new and expanded Giftshop we will be developing a lot of our products in house and better able to offer you new merchandise items with local designs. Juanita has become a whiz at graphic designing and I know you will be pleasantly impressed or should I say wildly impressed. If you are thinking about some design projects for yourself, come in and see Juanita to discuss them. She has designed both of our CD inserts and just finished designing a coloring book and is working on new postcard designs for us for the next season. Like I said: She's hot.

Well, that's my last bit of news for this century and I do look forward to reporting in the next one. ✨

*Yesterday is  
History,  
Tomorrow is a  
Mystery,  
Today is a Gift,  
That's why it's Called  
the Present!  
Life is not a Dress  
Rehearsal,  
Live and Savor Every  
Moment!  
Please Don't Drink &  
Drive!  
Have a Safe and  
Happy Holiday  
Season!*

## Cultural Update

*Continued from page 4*

said "It made me feel disgusted, I had a gross feeling inside my body while I was watching it" Tyler walked out before the video was even finished.

Another video, this one produced in 1996 by the Central Washington University called "*Lelooska – Myths, Masks, Magic*" written by Dr. Darwin Goodey and produced by Chris Smart, is another asinine display of human ignorance towards the Kwakwaka'wakw people and culture. The narrator is Wesley Van Tassel who probably has no idea that we are no longer recognized as the Kwagiulth people, and continuously refers to our people as the "*Kwa-gu-leth*". If James Sewid was so respected by this family then why did they fail to spell his name correctly in the credits of this film? This video focuses on the family's artistic abilities from their carving or "whittling" skills to the dances and songs they perform for their audiences. This video is seen in two parts, the second half focuses on Lelooska himself attempting to tell the story's of our ancestors, he is dressed in full regalia; a button blanket, a cedar neck ring and head band, he is holding a talking stick and even has a large silver ring hanging from his nose. He tries unsuccessfully to retell the legends of our people, the stories are long and drawn out and poorly related, at some points it was even felt that he may have been making it up. The producer ends the first part of the film with this quote "*Through the Leslooska family, the ancient mythology, art and culture of the Pacific Northwest Coast Indians live on*". They couldn't be farther from the truth, the "Lelooska's" have no clue about the "ancient mythology, art and culture of the Pacific Northwest Coast Indians". They are living in a fantasy world, they are totally delusional about our culture.

The performance this family presents consist of dances which they "aquired" from Jimmy Sewid when he adopted them, "*adoption into the Sewid family gave Lelooska the right to use crests, dances, and songs of several lineages*" (quote from film, *Lelooska - Myths, Masks, Magic*). One mask they made and use is supposed to depict *Numas*, who is the ancestor of my family. The *Numas* they show in their performance is a comical character with a big head, large bushy eyebrows, mustache and beard and a head of thick white hair. *Numas* at times during the performance falls asleep and snores and then he awakens from his sleep, the audience is laughing as though this old man is a clown.

Leslooska, the "Chief" who introduces and emcees the program, imitates the speeches made by the chiefs at a potlatch, but in English. Every once in a while he may bel- low a Kwak'wala word. His songs are not real songs but a fabricated version or chant of what our songs sound like. It appears he does not know the words nor the beat and is just making them up. The dancers appear in their button blankets and aprons, or cedar bark, dancing behind the masks, which they've created themselves in their workshops. Two of the characters they display during their performance, *Full Moon* and *Half Moon* have a dispute in which the two characters use high-pitched squeaky instruments to ensue their dispute, during which Lelooska translates to the audience, this charade continues with a "dance contest" to settle their dispute, all the while these two continuously squabbling with those irritating squeaky devices. Their dances are disrespectful and are a disgrace to our potlatches of the early days and today.

Another quote from the film "*Lelooska – Myths, Masks, Magic*" which I find disconcerting is this, "*Lelooska has devoted his life to re-educating people in the ways of ancient Indian heritage and has become a leading influence in keeping their traditions alive*". Don Smith "Lelooska" has since passed away, but he is still being honored and his family is still carrying on with their program.

It saddens me that these people are infringing upon our rich culture and using it for their own benefit. What is even more disturbing is that the family has made claim to an important part of the history and culture of our people and they don't think that it may be unethical and offensive to our people, the Kwakwaka'wakw who are still existent today, and who have overcome the hardships and the continuous attempts at wiping out our language and culture.

How do we stop this theft of our culture, our history and our pride to these people? How do we educate an ignorant people who make a mockery out of our culture?

If they truly honored and respected Jimmy Sewid they would stop what they are doing and perhaps really take the time to learn what our culture is all about. But is it too late? Is the damage already done?

When I first started thinking about writing something regarding Lelooska, I figured I had better learn about the man James Sewid. I must admit I had not yet read his autobiography "*Guests Never Leave Hungry*". I proceeded

*Continued on page 14*

# Time-line of Historical Events



'Yalis (Alert Bay) looking North. Date Unknown. At the far left of the photograph is the Anglican Church. UCC Photograph-UPN # 00429

*This time-line consists of historical events, which has had an affect on Aboriginal Peoples in Canada dating from 1763 – 1999, this time-line also focuses on the historical events, which have had a direct affect on the Kwakwaka'wakw people since contact on the Northwest Coast. Included are the events surrounding the development of Cormorant Island and the community of Alert Bay, as it was being settled by those of non-Aboriginal descent, as well as missionaries and government agents (those who had a major impact on the lives of the Kwakwaka'wakw and the Indigenous people in Canada, the United States and South America).*

\*Many of the historical dates and context were found at the following website addresses:

[http://vaughan.fac.unbc.ca/bc\\_aboriginal/timeline.html](http://vaughan.fac.unbc.ca/bc_aboriginal/timeline.html)  
 (Time-line on some historic, social, and political events of Aboriginal Groups in British Columbia)  
<http://www.aaf.gov.bc.ca/aaf/history/history.htm>  
 (Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Province of British Columbia – Historical References)  
<http://www.alertbay.com>

*Continued on page 9*



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**Time-line of Historical Events**


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*Continued from page 8*

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- 1763** The Royal Proclamation of 1763 by King George III recognizes aboriginal people as “nations or tribes” and acknowledges that they continue to possess traditional territories until they are “ceded to or purchased by” the Crown.
- 1778** Captain Cook lands on the coast of British Columbia.
- 1792** 300 years after Christopher Columbus “discovers” America, Captain George Vancouver anchors at the mouth of the Nimpkish River.
- 1846** Cormorant Island named for the H.M.S. Cormorant.
- 1849** Vancouver Island is established as a British Colony. The British Crown gives trading rights to the Hudson Bay Co. and placed it in charge of immigration and settlement.
- 1850-1854** Governor James Douglas signs 14 treaties on Vancouver Island. The Douglas Treaties cover approximately 358 square miles of land around Victoria, Saanich, Sooke, Nanaimo and Port Hardy. Natives are paid in blankets and promised the rights to hunt on unsettled lands and to carry on fisheries “as formerly”.
- 1851** James Douglas appointed governor of the Vancouver Island Colony, while retaining his Hudson’s Bay Co. position.
- 1858 (circa)** Alert Bay named for the H.M.S. Alert, the first steam vessel to call at Alert Bay.
- 1858** The mainland becomes the Colony of British Columbia. James Douglas appointed governor of the new colony. He resigns his Hudson’s Bay Co. position.
- 1862** A devastating small pox epidemic kills approximately one of every three Aboriginal people in British Columbia.
- 1864** Joseph Trutch heads [aboriginal] Policy and states: “The Indians have really no right to the lands they claim, nor are they of any actual value or utility to them, and I cannot see why they should...retain these lands to the prejudice of the general interest of the colony.”
- 1867** British North American Act (BNA) creates Canada, giving jurisdiction of lands and resources to the provinces. The Federal government becomes responsible for [Aboriginal] People.
- 1868** The New Canadian Parliament passes an “Act for Gradual Civilization of Indian Peoples.” Under this policy, the Indian Act becomes a key legislative tool for assimilation. There are three major functions under the Indian Act intended to assimilate Aboriginal People.
1. Creation of vastly reduced “Reserve” lands which do not reflect the traditional tribal territories of the Aboriginal Nations.
  2. Creation of puppet “Band Councils” which replace and undermine the authority of traditional tribal governments.
- Defining who is an “Indian” under the Indian Act
- 1870** Explorers and entrepreneurs Spencer and Huson establish a small salmon saltry in Alert Bay.
- 1871** The Colony of British Columbia becomes a province within the Canadian Confederation.
- 1876** Indian Act is established. The Act focused on three main areas: Land, Membership, and Local Government. It consolidates all previous Indian legislation; defines Indian status; and gives the Superintendent General administrative powers of Indian affairs.
- 1877** Mission established at Fort Rupert by Reverend Alfred James Hall.
- 1878** Spencer and Huson persuade Hall to relocate to Alert Bay. Mission house and school for Native boys and girls is built. Removing Native children from home and family for education and “civilization” has begun.
- 1880’s** European population surpasses Aboriginal population — many Aboriginal people have died from contact with

*Continued on page 10*

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## Time-line of Historical Events

*Continued from page 9*

European diseases.

**1881** Construction of a store and cannery in Alert Bay.

**1884-85** The Canadian government first attempt to outlaw the potlatch, which is the major social, economic and political institution of the coastal peoples. However the law was undefined and "laughed out of court on the first occasion it was used".

**1886-87** Sawmill is established in Alert Bay, settlement is growing and showing signs of "progress". The sawmill would "serve to teach the Indians a new trade, supply lumber to build houses, and to build a new school for Indian boys.

**1889** The Federal Fisheries Act is passed, prohibiting [Aboriginal] people from selling fish or owning fishing licenses. [Aboriginals] who work for fish companies are paid five cents a fish, while white fisherman are paid ten cents a fish.

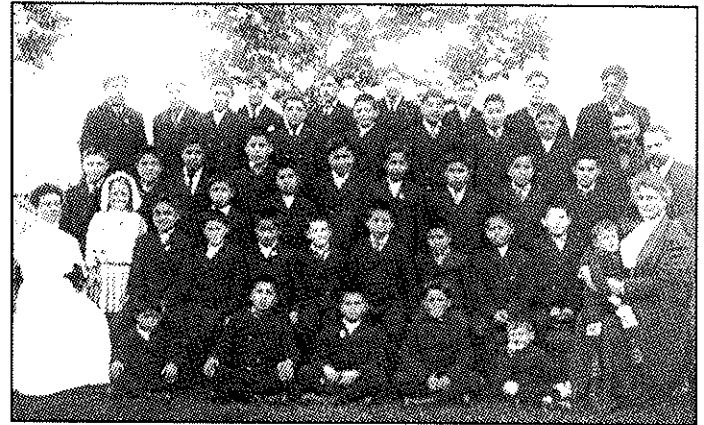
**1890** Indian Agency relocates from Fort Rupert to Alert Bay.

**1890** First provincial police constable stationed in the community of Alert Bay.

**1892** The Alert Bay Anglican Church holds it's first service on Christmas day of this year. Services conducted in both English and Kwakwala.

**1893** Assimilation of [Aboriginal] People of Canada is continued through the Residential School System. The superintendent of [Aboriginal] Affairs makes it clear that it is the intention of the Federal Government to destroy [Aboriginal] language and lifeways. "...in boarding or industrial schools the pupils are removed for a long period from the leading of this uncivilized life and receive constant care and attention. It is therefore in the interests of the aboriginal people that these institutions should be kept in an efficient state as it is in their success that the solution of the aboriginal problem lies"

**1894** W.A. Corker, a lay missionary becomes principal of newly constructed residential industrial school for boys in Alert Bay.



*Group of Indian Boys attending Residential School, Alert Bay, B.C. Photo Courtesy RBCM PN # 2308*

**1895** The federal government rectified the original potlatch law by overriding the original amendment with a detailed description of the prohibited activities.

**1897** William. M. Halliday comes to Alert Bay.

**1902** B.C. Packers purchases cannery (in Alert Bay) from its previous owners.

**1906** William Halliday begins working as the Indian Agent in Alert Bay.



*William Halliday's House, Alert Bay, B.C. UCC Photo*

**1909** St. Georges Hospital opens in Alert Bay.

*Continued on page 11*

## Time-line of Historical Events

*Continued from page 10*

**1913** The McKenna-McBride Commission is established to address the question of Indian Reserves.

**1914** One in three able-bodied [Aboriginal] Canadian men of age enlist in First World War. Approximately 4,000 [Aboriginal] men went overseas to fight in European battlefields. At least 300 [Aboriginal] men lost their lives in the WWI.

**1915** [Aboriginal] groups of British Columbia form Allied Tribes of BC to pursue Aboriginal Rights.

**1916** McKenna-McBride Royal Commission report intended to "provide a final adjustment of all matters related to Indian Affairs in the province," recommends changing and redistributing reserve lands. The Commission did propose the enlargement of some reserves but also advised that much valuable land be cut from others.

**1918** The Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs instructs Indian Agents to prosecute potlatch participants to the fullest extent of the law.

**1920** Bill 13: British Columbia Indian Lands Settlement Act is passed by the federal government and implements the McKenna-McBride recommendations. Allows reductions or "cut-offs" of reserves without consent of aboriginal people, contrary to provisions of the Indian Act.

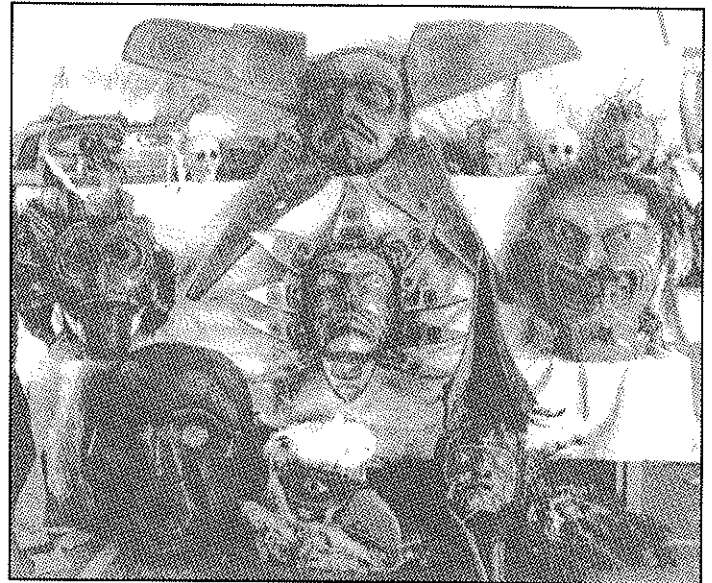
Ditchburn-Clark team is setup to review the Report of the Royal Commission. The review is completed in 1923 and finds inaccuracies regarding acreages and descriptions.

**1921** Largest recorded "illegal" secret potlatch hosted by Chief Dan Cranmer held at Village Island.

**1921** The Judicial committee of the Privy Council, the highest court of Canada, rules that Aboriginal title is a pre-existing right that "must be presumed to have continued unless the contrary is established".

**1922** Of those who participated in Dan Cranmer's potlatch, 45 people are arrested. R.C.M.P Sergeant Angermann proposes that all potlatch materials from the Kwawkwalth

Agency be 'voluntarily' surrendered 'in good faith'. Some Bands cooperate but many also refuse; Angermann seizes over 600 objects, which are sent to the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Ont. and the National Museum of Man in Ottawa, Ont. (now the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull, Quebec). Some fifty individuals serve prison sentences.



*Masks confiscated in 1922 by William Halliday and Sargeant Angermann. Photo Courtesy RBCM PN# 12209*

**1923** Natives allowed commercial saltwater fishing licenses.

**1923** St. Georges Hospital in Alert Bay is destroyed by fire.

**1925** A new building replaces the old St. Georges Hospital.

**1927** Parliament appoints a special joint committee of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada to respond to the Allied Indian Tribes of British Columbia. The joint committee decided unanimously that their claim to Indian title in B.C. was "without merit".

**1927** Parliament amends the Indian Act to make it illegal to "receive, obtain, solicit or requests from any Indian any payment or contribution for the purpose of raising a fund or providing money for the prosecution of any claim" without the consent of the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs.

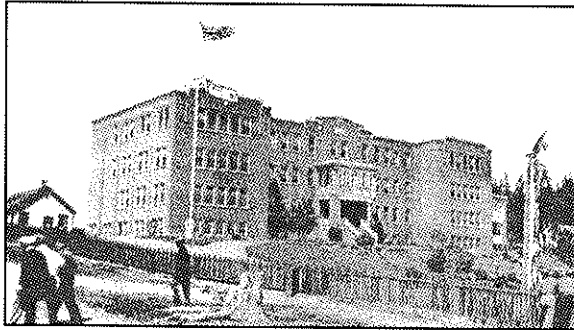
*Continued on page 12*

## Time-line of Historical Events

*Continued from page 11*

**1929** Aboriginal population in B.C. less than 30,000, its lowest point since European contact.

**1929** St. Michaels Residential School opens in Alert Bay.



*St. Michaels Residential School.*

*Photo Credit B.C. Archives D-7008*

**1931** Native Brotherhood of B.C. is formed and secretly keeps Land Question discussions alive.

**1938** British Columbia Order-in-Council 1036 gives final conveyance of title to Indian reserves in British Columbia to the federal government.

**1939** Aboriginal men and woman enlist for military service with Canada in World War II.

**1947** Aboriginal people are allowed to vote in a Provincial election.

**1951** The law against the potlatch and fund-raising (to pursue aboriginal rights and land title) are dropped by the Canadian Government.

**1960** Aboriginal People are allowed to vote in a Federal Election.

**1963** The Nimpkish Band ('Namgis First Nation) passes a motion to build a Community House (Big House) in Alert Bay, the first since the law against the Potlatch was lifted in 1951.

**1966** The Big House is completed and officially opened in Alert Bay. This house was built to preserve the arts and crafts of the Kwak'wala speaking people.

**1966** The Federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) is formed.

**1969** B.C. Association of Non-Status Indians (BCANSI) is formed.

**1969** The Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) is formed to proceed with a land claim on behalf of all B.C. status Indians.

**1969** Jean Cretien and Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau put together the White Paper policy, which proposes to repeal the Indian Act and amends the Canadian constitution to eliminate all references to Aboriginal People. Because of organized [Aboriginal] resistance, Trudeau is forced to shelve the White Paper and consult with [Aboriginal] people about their rights.

**1974** The U'mista Cultural Society was incorporated under the British Columbia Societies Act on March 22nd of this year. The mandate of the U'mista Cultural Society is to ensure the survival of all aspects of the cultural heritage of the Kwakwaka'wakw.

**1975** St. Michael's Residential School in Alert Bay is now closed and building turned over to the 'Namgis First Nation.

**1976** The Federal Government adopts a "comprehensive land claims policy." Under the Comprehensive policy, only six land claims could be negotiated in Canada at any one time, and only one per province.

**1980** The U'mista Cultural Centre is constructed in Alert Bay and opens in November of this year. The Potlatch Collection, which is the centre's permanent collection, exhibits the return of the Potlatch regalia confiscated in 1922.

**1980** The assembly of First Nations in Ottawa issues a Declaration of The First Nations.

**1981** The Federal Government issues a restatement of its "White Paper" policy of the late 1960's and early 1970's in a booklet entitled "In All Fairness".

*Continued on page 13*

## Time-line of Historical Events

*Continued from page 12*

**1982** The Canadian Constitution, section 35, recognizes and affirms existing Aboriginal and Treaty rights, but leaves question of unextinguished title open for courts to decide.

**1985** Important changes were made to Canada's Indian Act on June 28th of this year, when Parliament passed Bill C-31, an Act to Amend the Indian Act. Bill C-31 brought the Act into line with the provisions to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

**1987** The Native Affairs Secretariat was created by the Government of British Columbia.

**1988** The Native Affairs Secretariat becomes Ministry of Native Affairs.

**1990** The British Columbia Government agrees to negotiate land claims.

**1990** The Supreme Court of Canada rules (*Sparrow v. The Queen*) that section 35 of the Constitution Act provides "a strong measure of protection" for Aboriginal rights. The Court further rules that aboriginal and treaty rights are capable of evolving over time and must be interpreted in a generous and liberal manner. The Court also rules that governments may regulate existing aboriginal management of resources and that after conservation goals are met, Aboriginal people must be given priority to fish for food over other user groups.

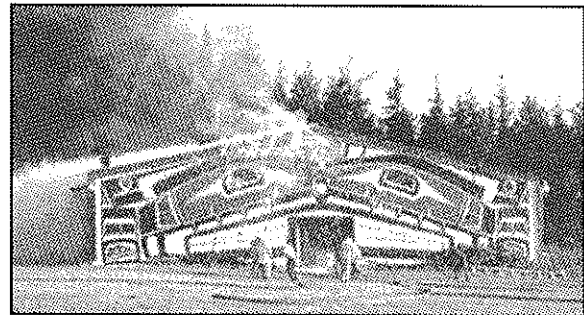
**1993** A United Nations Human Rights Commission Report condemned Justice McEachern's 1991 ruling against the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en claim of ownership of 57,000 sq km in traditional territories near Hazelton as well as right to self-government and compensation for lost land resources. McEachern states in a 400 page "Reasons for Judgement" that the Wet'suwet'en and Gitksan Chiefs had a romantic view of the past, and the life of the people, prior to European arrival, was "nasty, brutish and short." They ruled McEachern as having an "ethnocentric" bias. The U.N. Report on Aboriginal treaty rights said the B.C. judge's ruling was proof that "deeply rooted Western ethnocentric criteria are still widely shared in present-day judiciary reasoning." The report's author, a U.N. Human Rights investigator, said in an interview with the Globe

and Mail newspaper that the McEachern decision was "unfortunate," "one-sided" and based upon a misunderstanding of aboriginal culture.

**1993** The 31- member Treaty Negotiation Advisory Committee (TNAC) is formed to provide government with advice from the third-party perspective.

**1993** The BC Treaty Commission produces the six-stage treaty negotiation process.

**1997** In August of this year the Big House in Alert Bay is destroyed by fire. Julio Castro-Andino a refugee from El Salvador is charged with arson. The destruction of the Big House was like a death in the community.



*Photo of Alert Bay Big House as it is being consumed by a deliberate fire, August 29th, 1997. UCC Photo*

**1997** Supreme Court of Canada renders new *Delgamuukw* decision on December 11th of this year, overturning McEachern's decision. Judge Antonio Lamer affirms that Aboriginal title exists and includes exclusive right to the land, including sub-surface minerals (oil and gas) rights. The decision also orders a new trial. This is not only a major victory for Aboriginal people of Canada, but also around the world.

**1998** Julio Castro-Andino has been found guilty of arson of the fire which destroyed the Big House in Alert Bay. He is sentenced on June 5th of this year to two years less a day (not including time served).

**1999** The 'Nangis First Nation hosts the opening ceremonies for the new Gukwdzi (Big House) in Alert Bay. The new building, the largest on the coast opened its doors on May 28th and 29th of this year, the Gukwdzi is named I'Tusto and means 'To rise again'. Chiefs and many others representing the different Kwakwaka'wakw Nations and delegates from other First Nations as well as government representatives attend the opening ceremonies. It was estimated over 3000 people attended this event. ✨

**Cultural Update***Continued from page 7*

to capture the events of Jimmy's life and put the story in our newsletter. A condensed version of James Sewid's life story from the time he was born until the 1960's when the Big House was built in Alert Bay begins on this page in this newsletter.

"*Guests Never Leave Hungry*" documents Jimmy Sewid's life, his birth, marriage, children, loss of family and friends and the struggles Jimmy faces as a man of "progression". Jimmy is torn between the past and present; he was born during the potlatch prohibition period and knew that in order to survive he will have to move ahead with the ever changing world. Yet he regretted the governments grasp on his people and fought for democracy. At times he was resented just for being who he was, an outspoken man with a strong sense of confidence and self-possession, however I'm sure he was also a highly respected man of the community.

We are about to enter into a new millennium (which someone told me doesn't actually start until the year 2001) however we'll start early. I think we have so much to be proud of, with everything our people have fought for, the right to our language and culture, the right to social equality and the right to have pride in who we are and who our ancestors are. Over the last one hundred years humanity has seen so many changes, and with our own resistance to government rule over the last century and with our strength and our pride. It is my hope that when I have children of my own one day that they will not have to go through what their ancestors before them did. I will teach them to be courageous and proud and have the strength to stand up for what they believe in.

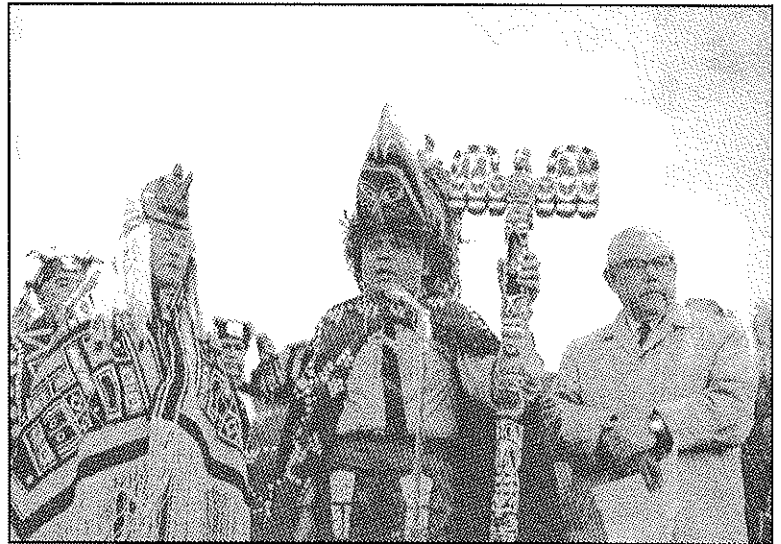
It is my hope that the world can work together for a better future for our children, and as this may sound cliché, let us hope for and work towards world peace in the new millennium. ✱

**Have a Safe and  
Happy Holiday Season!  
AND  
PLEASE DON'T DRINK AND  
DRIVE!**

# A Leader & Innovator

## The Life and Times of Jimmy Sewid

Chief James Aul Sewid  
December 31, 1913 - May 18, 1988



*'Yalis- 'Namgis Graveyard, August 1974. Chief James Sewid (middle) making a speech at Mungo Martin's Memorial Pole Raising. On the left is Tom Hunt and on the right is Bill Scow. Photo Courtesy Royal British Columbia Museum PN #7966*

*The following information about the life of James "Jimmy" Sewid comes from the book "Guests Never Leave Hungry, The Autobiography of James Sewid, a Kwakiwilt Indian" Edited by James P. Spradley. This book was published in 1969 by Yale University Press.*

*I have taken many interesting, important and even tragic events in James Sewid's life from this book and condensed it into this article for our newsletter.*

*I never knew Jimmy Sewid, but I am sure that many of our local members did. I am writing from a stranger's point of view, although I wish I could have personally interviewed him.*

*Continued on page 15*

## A Leader & Innovator

*Continued from page 14*

*From reading this book I could see Jimmy Sewid, although self-described as uneducated, was highly educated by life. He was caught between two worlds and two cultures. He was intent on moving forward with the rest of the world, yet he did not forget the past and the history of his people. He knew his people had been treated unjustly in many ways beginning many years before he was even born.*

*By the time he was born the potlatch had already been outlawed for 29 years. Yet many were still potlatching and Jimmy was involved as a youngster. He also experienced the old custom of arranged marriages, he was only thirteen when he married. He remembers lying to the minister of the church about his age when the minister opposed the upcoming marriage because he felt Jimmy was too young. Jimmy lied because he did not want to disappoint his parents.*

*Jimmy was a man of "progress" and sought the improvement of living conditions for his people in their remote Indian village even though many did not agree with him; they were perhaps too afraid to advance with the rest of the world, which was quickly developing around them. Jimmy wanted to be a part of that development. He was young and like many young people he wanted to fit in with the ever-changing world he was living in, he was not going to stand back to wait and see what happened, he was going to be there ready to take on whatever task or job or position that he was challenged with to help his people advance.*

*Jimmy was a Christian man and a law-abiding citizen but he disagreed with many of the injustices including the liquor law, when Natives were not allowed to buy liquor or go to the beer parlor. Although he had the occasional drink, in his heart he was opposed to alcohol abuse but despite what he believed in, he knew it was wrong and unfair to prohibit Natives to go into the beer parlour.*

*Jimmy was a hard worker, he was a fisherman and a logger, and successful entrepreneur he was in partnership with his uncle Robby Bell and together they owned 3 seine boats and with Simon Beans the three also started a small sawmill together which they later extended into a boat repair shop.*

*Jimmy joined the Native Brotherhood and he was the first elected Chief Councillor for the Nimpkish Band, which he served for several 2 year terms over the years.*

*In 1963 with the support of the community and government Jimmy formed a building committee and began planning the construction of the community house, which would become the central gathering place for all Kwakwaka'wakw people. It was the place where Jimmy felt his people could preserve their culture, he also started the Kwak'wala Arts and Crafts Organization, in a letter to all the Chiefs and Councillors of the "Kwawkewlth" Nation he stated "...the aim of this group is to revive the Arts and Crafts as well as the dances of our people."*

Chief James Aul Sewid was born December 31, 1913 in Alert Bay, B.C. to Emma and James Sewid. His mother was from the Mamalilikulla tribe and his father was from the Kwiksutainuk tribe. Tragedy struck just months before Jimmy was born when his father was killed in a logging accident. Jimmy's father was an important man and was preparing for the potlatch he would have when his baby was 10 months old.

Jimmy's uncle was chosen to stand by Jimmy as he grew up to take all the names and positions he inherited from his father. When Jimmy was 10 months old his uncle had a big potlatch held in his favor, at this potlatch Jimmy received his everyday names and chiefs names.

Jimmy spent the first few years of his life with his mother at Village Island but throughout his young life he also lived in Alert Bay, Turnour Island, the Nimpkish River and Knight's Inlet. His mother remarried but lost her second husband to a heart attack when Jimmy was still very young. The other children teased Jimmy about not having a father, although he felt bad he would return home without fighting with the other children. At the time he was a young boy, the potlatch law was in effect, but many of the people including Jimmy's family continued to comply with the strict potlatch rule. Jimmy learned from his family the importance of not fighting, he was told, "If you fight with the other kids then it is going to cost us money and we will have to give a potlatch".

His maternal grandparents Mary and Jim Bell

*Continued on page 16*

## A Leader & Innovator

*Continued from page 15*

cared for Jimmy much of the time, and as the first-born son he was destined to become chief. He was treated with great respect but Jimmy felt he should not be given special treatment and was intent on being treated as equally as others. When his uncle Robby, who was close in age to Jimmy and more like his brother, was sent to the Anglican residential school in Alert Bay, Jimmy wanted to go too but he was not allowed because the 'place was no good'.

Jimmy's paternal grandmother Lucy Sewid wanted him to get an education. Later Jimmy moved to Alert Bay to live with his grandmother and go to school. However, his education would often extend into the evenings when some of the old people would visit, they talked about his family history and taught him how to be a leader of his people.

His grandmother was a very religious woman who would take Jimmy to church with her and together they would pray and read the bible. He learned from his grandmother the importance of being respectful and faithful to his elders, to obey them and also look out for them and help them when they needed a hand.

In December of 1927 when Jimmy was only 13 years old he was married in the Anglican Church, to Flora Alfred, daughter of Moses and Agnes Alfred. The marriage was arranged, as was the custom in those days. Those of noble families are arranged to marry one another. A dowry would be given from the bride's family to the groom. The groom would receive songs, dances, names and positions, which he can then pass on to his own children. Jimmy and his wife Flora had their first child in 1929, a baby girl, Jimmy was just 15.

After his second child was born Jimmy was asked by his grandfather to dance at his potlatch. He was asked to dance the highest dance, which was given to the oldest son or grandson, this was the Hamat'sa. Jimmy was worried about doing this because he had a family now and at that time the potlatch was still illegal. But because it was so important to his family and he was the rightful owner of the dance, and because his own son was not old enough, Jimmy had to do it.

The older "retired" Hamat'sa dancers would teach the new initiates how to go through the ceremony

to become Hamats'as. Jimmy learned the new songs and the dance. It was important for the dancer to do the dance just right and not trip or fall. The older men would watch the young initiate and if he made a mistake they would stop him and make him start all over again.

The day before the potlatch started Jimmy went into seclusion, wearing only hemlock branches around his body he would "disappear into the woods and go and seek the supernatural power of the Cannibal Spirit". He stayed in the woods for 10 days.

Although he was to stay in the woods throughout his seclusion, Jimmy and other initiates would stay out there all day but would sneak back into their homes at night, wake up early and sneak back out before anyone even noticed. Although he was fed, food was minimal so he would become thin by fasting. He would often make slight appearances in his village but then run back into the woods wearing only the hemlock branches. While out in the woods the young initiates would become wild, the Hamat'sa dance ceremony was to tame the young wild man and bring him back to civilization.

The night Jimmy returned he entered the house from the roof, after a few short appearances the dancer finally enters the house for a short period and disappears again, the master of ceremonies explains to the guests that the initiate is not yet ready to show himself, as he is still in his most wild state. He sends everyone home and asks them to return again the next day.

The next day Jimmy appears again, he dances for a while and then disappears, not ready yet to come back.

The third and fourth night the young initiate dances for a couple of hours, while he dances, attendants pacify the wild young man and he becomes progressively tame.

All the masks, songs and dances, which Jimmy received from his ancestors, are shown on those nights. One must be respected to receive the right to do the Hamat'sa dance, Jimmy received the right to dance the Hamat'sa any time he wanted and can take part in any ceremonies when another young man was being initiated as a Hamat'sa.

Jimmy would bring his children to visit his grandmother Lucy in Alert Bay, and she would tell him "Whenever you talk to your children, talk gently and

*Continued on page 17*



## A Leader & Innovator

*Continued from page 16*

never talk rough. If you talk rough to them they are going to be like that. You have to be very gentle and show them your love and kindness. That is all they need." Lucy died in 1932.

One year later while in Alert Bay his son, his second child died from spinal meningitis when he was only one and a half years old. This was a very sad and dark time for Jimmy and his wife. One month later their daughter Louisa was born.

When Jimmy was in his early 20's he became skipper on the 'Annandale' and was skipper for four years. He was a hard worker and expected his crew to work just as hard.

Over the years Jimmy worked successfully as a fisherman and as a logger, and although Flora did most of the work Jimmy also helped his wife raise their growing family.

At one time Jimmy wanted to move the little house that he lived in with his family from the beach to the bluff where most of the houses were in Village Island, in the process of moving the house, the cable broke sending the house down the bluff and smashing it to pieces. Jimmy then decided he was going to build a bigger better house with modern equipment, electricity, running water and a toilet on the inside. When the house was complete it still was not completely modernized. With the help of others, Jimmy purchased a small light plant with a small five-horsepower engine and a five-kilowatt generator. After working hard to get it fixed up and wiring the homes of the shareholders and putting up streetlights, it was time to test it, when they turned on the switch all the houses and streetlights lit up. He also did a lot for the people in Village Island, he built houses, helped those who were fixing their boats and would bring people to Alert Bay when he went to get groceries once a week. He presented to others in the village the idea of building a wharf, everyone helped with the project. When it was completed everyone made full use of the wharf, especially those visiting the village that now had a place to tie their boats up.

Jimmy and his Uncle Robby put a down payment on the "Frank A.M." and within a couple of years the seine boat was paid off and by 1944 they purchased

a 47' seiner called the "Adele M." which was the sister ship to the "Frank A.M."

Jimmy believed in progress and he wanted to improve the village he lived in. While some felt as he did, those who opposed still believed in the old ways, they felt Jimmy was trying to change the way of life for his people, when he just wanted to keep with the times. He was frustrated and felt it was time to leave Village Island. He moved to Alert Bay.

Alert Bay was divided into three sections: The Nimpkish Reserve, the Industrial Reserve (Reserve land set aside for those who are not Nimpkish) and the "unincorporated" village at the other end where all the businesses were and also where the white people lived.

Soon after he moved to Alert Bay the Indian Agent informed Jimmy that the government in Ottawa wanted those living on the Industrial Reserve to amalgamate with the Nimpkish Band. Jimmy was strongly opposed. But after almost a year of continually refusing the idea, Jimmy found he and the others really had no choice, living conditions would be made better for the people if they amalgamated with the Nimpkish. The Indian Agent told him that they would build a road on the reserve and a new day school and put in a water system.

Jimmy told the Nimpkish people that they would amalgamate with them on one condition, "That is if this reserve is wide open to others who want to come and live here. If you just open the doors for all the other people who want to come and join this band." It was agreed upon and they amalgamated.

Although Jimmy had inherited positions in the Kwiksutainuk and Mamalilikulla tribes, he was now legally a member of the Nimpkish Band.

In 1950 Jimmy was elected Chief of the Nimpkish people, and in November of the same year his wife Flora gave birth to twin baby girls.

Jimmy worked hard for the people but also found it to be a challenging position. Some people felt it was not right for him to be their leader because he was not originally Nimpkish.

Jimmy was given the opportunity not only to purchase another seine boat but also to design and supervise the construction of it too. He named this one "Twin Sisters" after his twin girls.

*Continued on page 18*

## A Leader & Innovator

*Continued from page 17*

When his two-year term as Chief councillor for the Nimpkish Band was up, Jimmy made the decision not to run again, although he did continue to work hard within the community.

In 1954 he was recognized for his hard work and commitment and both Jimmy Sewid and Bill Scow (President of the Native Brotherhood) were presented with Coronation medals and certificates, *"By command of her gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth, I have been asked to present to you this medal to be worn in commemoration of Her Majesty's Coronation last June. You have been chosen as an outstanding example among your people. Not only by your own industry and service to your people but by your private and family life and church life, you have shown yourself to be a leader of men. It is in recognition of this that I am also empowered by Her Majesty to pin this medal on you."*

In February of 1955 Jimmy was elected as one of the councillors for the Nimpkish Band and in the same year was also elected as vice-president for the Kwakiutl Agency of the Native Brotherhood. The Native Brotherhood was established to help the Indian people of British Columbia, it was *"the answer to the Indian problems in British Columbia"*.

Jimmy was also one of the subjects in a film made by the National Film Board of Canada called *No Longer Vanishing* the film documented Native people from all over Canada in their line of work, or business to show that the Indians have not disappeared and that in fact many were succeeding despite what many expected would become of the Indian. It was believed that once assimilated the Indian would simply integrate into the White society.

In 1957 Jimmy was elected Chief councillor of the Nimpkish Band again. During this time one of the issues he dealt with concerned the Nimpkish Burial Grounds, which was located on the "White End". When the government made the north end of Alert Bay into reserve land, the Nimpkish Burial Grounds was at the other end of the island, where the Municipality of Alert Bay had been established. The Municipality of Alert Bay wanted to widen the road where the burial grounds were, they asked the council if they could move the fence back

six feet, but the Municipality was informed that the road had been pushed back already. If they widened the road any more then the road would cover some of the graves.

In 1959 Jimmy was re-elected as Chief councillor. In the same year Jimmy was asked to get some of the people together to dance for Queen Elizabeth. She was to visit Nanaimo in July of that year. When the time came there were many tribes and dancers and Mungo Martin was carving a totem pole. When Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip approached Jimmy and the dancers, Jimmy in full regalia said, *"Your Majesty: We welcome you and his Royal Highness to Vancouver Island and on behalf of the Indian people we bestow upon you the name, Arohmutl, which means 'Respected by all, Mother of all People.'"* They then danced for her.

In July of 1960 the government finally gave Indian people the right to vote in federal elections, but yet were still not allowed to bring liquor into their own homes on reserve. Although we had won the right to vote we were still unequal in many other ways.

In March 1961 Jimmy became a licensed lay reader in the Anglican Church, he had the authority to baptize a dying child if there was no minister around, conduct funerals and take part in Sunday morning service. In the same year, Jimmy was again re-elected as Chief councillor.

Chief Tom Dawson presented Jimmy with a talking stick made especially for him by Benny Dick of Kingcome, on the talking stick are crests representing both Jimmy's father's and mother's side. *"The first crest at the bottom is Tsunuqua who was a giantess. This is the crest of the Temltemlels clan from your mother's side. Temltemlels was the first man of that clan and he had the supernatural power to turn into the Tsunuqua. The second crest is Tselkamai which means 'owner of the cedar bark dances.' He was also a great man with many supernatural powers. The next one is the double-headed serpent Sisiutl, and I have put it on this talking stick because it represents the strength of the Kwakiutl people. The next one is the Cedar Man. In the early days when the people heard the flood was coming, he went inside of a big hollow cedar log and after the flood he came out. The next one is Yakatnalas which means 'The Whale' and comes to you from your father's side. The next one is Qolus and that is the same as Odzistales which means 'he is so big*

*Continued on page 19*

## A Leader & Innovator

*Continued from page 18*

*that he can hardly move around.' You have that name through your grandfather, Aul Sewid."*

Jimmy accepted the talking stick with these words *"I thank you from the bottom of my heart because this will give me more strength in what I am doing. I will treasure this wonderful gift especially because I know that some people like your self have been quietly standing by me in all that I have been trying to do for our people."*

The honor of receiving this gift from his uncle Tom Dawson prompted Jimmy to have a "do" of his own to announce that he had received this beautiful gift, also to announce and give names to his grandchildren. Over two hundred people attended. Because there was no Big House yet, the event was held in the council hall. In the end gifts and money were given as in a potlatch. Jimmy thanked everyone for coming and stated that this "do" could not be compared to the potlatches of the old days, but that he brought everyone together to acknowledge the gift he received from his uncle.

In 1963 when his term was up as Chief councillor, Jimmy was re-elected again. At this time there were over 600 members of the Nimpkish Band. That year Jimmy's eldest daughter was elected to council and was the first woman to be elected to council for their village.

There was still a concern for the youth on the island. The people of Alert Bay and the Nimpkish Band established the Cormorant Island Youth Guidance Committee, Jimmy was co-chairman of that committee. It was this committee that was responsible for reducing crime amongst the youth in both communities.

After thinking about it for many years and finally discussing it with Henry Speck, Jimmy brought to council the idea of building a community Big House. It was passed by council, a building committee was formed and money was found to employ workers. Jimmy was in charge of the architecture and Henry Speck was the Artistic Director. Plans were made and discussed, the four house posts and two cross beams were to be carved with not just Nimpkish crests but the "most outstanding crests from several of the different tribes". Charlie George was to supervise the carving of the house posts and cross beams.

It was important to preserve the art and culture of the people, which had been close to extinction, the community house was being built for the performances of our Native dances and also for those who wished to use the space as a workshop for their art and craft. An organization was formed called the "Kwak'wala Arts and Crafts Organization". The organization was there to encourage those who knew about arts and crafts and to teach them to the youth. Jimmy was elected chairman of the board for the organization and Henry Speck was voted vice-chairman. In June of 1965 Chief James Knox held the first potlatch in that house when it was completed. The house was not going to be officially opened until 1966 (the centennial of British Columbia).

In 1965 Jimmy ran and was elected again for his sixth term as Chief councillor. At this time, Jimmy and his council discussed bringing Alcohol Anonymous to Alert Bay out of concern that there was no help available for those who wanted to quit drinking. Many wanted help and had admitted it. In that year they also ran out of water and a new well had to be drilled, the water from that well was soon being used by the whole island.

One of the fights with the government that Jimmy had been involved with was about the foreshore (the land between the road and the water). In 1934 the government wanted to pave the road along the waterfront of Alert Bay also extending it onto reserve land, but when they did this the Nimpkish people lost all rights to the foreshore, the government had claimed the land for their own.

When some of the people who lived in houses on the foreshore received letters from the government threatening that they were going to be kicked out of their homes because they were old and had been condemned, Jimmy fought back and on June 18, 1966 the government returned the foreshore to the Nimpkish people. On the same day the community Big House was officially opened.

*This is where I end my story of James Aul Sewid as this was the last major event written in his book "Guests Never Leave Hungry" Edited by James P. Spradley.*

*James Sewid was a born leader, he lived his life as a leader. James Aul Sewid died on May 18th, 1988, there is no doubt in my mind he lived his life to the fullest. ✨*

# KWAKWALA ALPHABET

<b>KWAKWALA ALPHABET</b>						<b>a</b> abals  apple
<b>a</b> amlam  toy	<b>b</b> busi  cat	<b>d</b> digwayu  pile driver	<b>dt</b> dtos  tree	<b>dz</b> dzamba  jeans	<b>e</b> egas  girl's friend	
<b>g</b> gala  grizzly bear	<b>gw</b> gwasu  pig	<b>g</b> giwas  deer	<b>gw</b> gwa'yam  whale	<b>h</b> hamumu  butterfly	<b>i</b> ikt'sara  abalone shell	
<b>k</b> kat'sanak  spoon	<b>kw</b> kwikw  eagle	<b>k</b> kawayu  knife	<b>kw</b> kwasta  cup	<b>k</b> ku'lugwayu  arrow	<b>kw</b> kwakwani  crane	
<b>k</b> kuimis  crab	<b>kw</b> kwagayu  flashlight	<b>l</b> lagu  strawberry	<b>t</b> takwis  bow	<b>m</b> max'inux  black fish	<b>n</b> nagat'si  pail	
<b>o</b> yola (As in oar)  wind	<b>p</b> pa'is  flounder	<b>p</b> patla  plane	<b>s</b> siwayu  paddle	<b>t</b> taminas  squirrel	<b>t</b> tutu  star	
<b>ts</b> tsela'yu  canoe bailer	<b>ts</b> tsawi  beaver	<b>th</b> thalamt  hat	<b>th</b> thakwa  copper	<b>u</b> u'ligan  wolf	<b>w</b> watsa  watch	
<b>x</b> xisiwe'  wolf headdress	<b>xw</b> xwakwana  canoe	<b>x</b> xagam  comb	<b>xw</b> xwalgwam  dogfish	<b>y</b> yadan  rattle	<b>'</b> watsi (stop sign)  dog	

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. Canada V0N 1A0

### U'mista Cultural Society

#### Board of Directors

**Executive:**

William T. Cranmer	Chairman
Lawrence Ambers	Vice-Chairman
Stan Hunt	Secretary / Treasurer

**Board Members:**

Peggy Svanvik  
 James Glendale  
 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@island.net](mailto:umista@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         | Transportation     |
| Museum Tours       | Exhibit Assistance |
| Minor Construction | Other              |

Return to:

U'MISTA  
CULTURAL  
CENTRE  
P.O. BOX 253  
ALERT BAY, BC  
V0N 1A0

**U'mista Cultural Centre**

**Regular Hours:**

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

Closed Weekends and Holidays

**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)  
Website: [www.umista.org](http://www.umista.org)

PLU #

55.00

\$3.00each

Fall/Winter 1999