



Tsitsakalam

Issue Content

Pg 2-Executive Director report

Pg 4-'Namgis Legend night

Pg 6-Language Development

Pg 8-The Potlatch-an insert

Pg 10-Whistles & Elders

Pg11-Gift Shop



House along water front circa 1890

Traditional Language and Culture: Importance grows.....



Andrea Sanborn, Executive Director

Notes from her desk:

Following extensive discussions with the Board, Elders, community members, artists and other members of the Hamatsa society, it was agreed that we should display an exhibit of ceremonial whistles. This was done to ensure that those requiring more research and information about whistles could have access to our collection for study.

As the U'mista is the research and information centre for the Kwakwaka'wakw it is necessary to facilitate the flow of information to those seeking it.

On the evening of November 23, 2006 we were happy to be able to have members of the U'mista, our community and from the UBC Museum of Anthropology join us to open the exhibit coordinated by our Museum Curator Intern William Wasden Jr. The crowd numbered up to 30 people and all viewed the exhibit with interest and enthusiasm. William had Waylon Isaac, Beau Dick, Sean Whonnock and Johnathan Henderson join him in singing a welcome song and then he lead the group to the exhibit for viewing and discussions.

We also introduced the book *The Path of Our*



Singing the Welcome song

Waylon Isaac, Beau Dick, William Wasden Jr.,
Sean Whonnock and Johnathan Henderson

Ancestors that was written by William as well as *One Green Tree* for which the kwak'wala was transcribed by Lorraine Hunt and Pewi Alfred.

William's grandmother Pu'tsa assisted with the verification of kwak'wala and Lorraine Hunt provided transcriptions for kwak'wala and Guy Buchholtzer with the French. First Peoples' Heritage and Language Culture Council in partnership with Trafford Publishing provided the funding for both projects. Thank you to all for their assistance in these projects.

We are well into a stormy weather entry to 2007 but things should change soon. It seems the days are getting longer already. We are busy with the ever present grant deadlines, developing projects for the U'mista that will go until March 31, 2008 and we are coming to completion on others due by March 31, 2007. This is an ongoing process for most not-for-profit

organizations such as ours. We certainly appreciate all the letters of support and the Band Council resolutions we receive. These are always encouraging and motivate us to continue moving forward. Our Board of Directors continues to discuss all matters relevant to the success of our Centre and to the projects we undertake on behalf of U'mista.

One of these projects is the Reciprocal Research Network in partnership with the Musqueam First Nation, the Sto:lo First Nation and the UBC Museum of Anthropology. This project moves forward and we have now hired a Project Coordinator and initiated discussions with the originating institution partners to update them on the stage we are at in the project. As reported previously: "The RRN will facilitate the sharing of information between users and the institutions holding objects associated with the cultural background of those users. It will provide new methods for community and academic researchers to conduct collaborative research projects. It will also bring the ability to undertake research projects currently primarily within the domain of universities, museums and other international institutions, within the grasp of originating communities." We will also be continuing our work with the First Voices project with the First Peoples Heritage and Language Culture Council where we continue to add our Kwak'wala words and phrases to our archiving database.

Pewi Alfred continues the TPR immersion style of language learning classes here daily, Monday to Friday from 4pm to 5pm. She has been invited to various workshops within our territories as the interest grows in other communities wanting to add to their language learning resources.

We are looking forward to a very productive 2007 and we hope you are all part of it. You are more than welcome to come in with your stories about our culture or mail them in. We would love to share them, with your permission in our future issues. Bring in your photos to go along with your story.

Very often we receive requests through phone, post and e-mail about all aspects of our culture. Some from journalists, tourism organizations, school kids and university grad students like this

one shown below. We like to accommodate these requests with a reciprocal request that they forward the acquired information back to U'mista for our data files. Please feel free to contact us here if you wish to respond to the following project.

Research Project on Clam Management!

I am a graduate student from Simon Fraser University conducting a study on clam management. The aim of the project is to document how the Area G clam fishery was managed traditionally and up to the current times under DFO rules.

Among other things, the study will document rules about:

- Who has access to clam beaches;
- How much can be harvested;
- How beaches and stocks are monitored;
- Enforcement; how conflicts are dealt with;
- How management decisions are made:

The research will examine how traditional clam management rules might be adapted to today's clam problems and issues.

If you are or were a clam-digger or are knowledgeable about present or past clam fisheries practices, please contact me at the numbers below, and we will arrange a time to meet. Thank-you!

Robyn Heaslip

604-215-4335 Cell: 250-527-0361

E-mail: rheaslip@sfu.ca

'Namgis Legend Night at the U'mista Cultural Centre

On the first Monday night of every month at 7:00pm we are hosting a legend night where we will be telling our 'Namgis origin stories. We will continue in the future with other various legends. We are moving forward together and learning the history of our nation starting with our first ancestors and their beginnings.

The origin stories of our 'Namgis Nation have been asleep for far too long. It is important to share these stories with our people so that they may pass them on to our next generations.

The teaching of Gwa'nalalis is to give of himself to his people when wished in his defeat by Kaniki'lakw "The Transformer" to become our river; so that he would flow forever and provide for his descendants, for as long as the days shall dawn in the world". To find strength and identity "to know where we are going, we must know where we came from". The intent of these legend nights is to learn our stories and be able to tell them ourselves; as well as learn how to research and be able to process information accurately that will benefit all 'Namgis people, past, present and future.

Mrs. Irene Cook, eldest lady present, wife of our late Hereditary Chief Lalakanx'idi Peter Cook, opened the meeting with a prayer asking our Creator to watch over us and for goodness and positive things to flow from the legends and be brought forth. The legend of the first clan



'Namxialegiyu'

Halibut-Like Sea Monster Mask

Tony Hunt Jr

named Tsitsa'walagama'yi "The Famous Ones" was presented. I placed the 'Namxialegiyu' Halibut-Like Sea Monster Mask belonging to the U'mista in the center of the floor, as this supernatural creature is the beginning of this story.

We covered one legend and I presented all the versions that U'mista holds and presented information and details of this first story version that will be used as a template for this story to be told in the future. Then our people will have a unified and complete origin story

that will be told consistently for future generations. The group was very supportive of this idea and also felt that we would wait until the numbers of 'Namgis people attending increases to make decisions.

Next I read out the chiefly names and potlatch positions of the Tsitsa'walagama'yi clan from George Hunt and Franz Boas' research and another list from Chief Tlalilitla Johnny Clarke's Potlatch Ledger from the Lawitsis Nation.

The evening concluded with a discussion on a cultural vision for our nation. Everyone is in agreement that we want to move forward and work together as our ancestors have since the beginning of time. The name of our tribe and its true translation continues with much discussion.

In the words of the Hereditary Chief Tłakwudłas, Glen Johnson, from another tribe the Haxwa'mis, "The old 'Namgis were a powerful people, they always did everything as one, in the Big House they spoke with one strong voice, when they worked together they did all things as one, it never took long to accomplish anything; that is why they are called 'Namgis the root of the word is 'nam, meaning "one".

There were other cultural matters discussed that we as a nation keep amongst ourselves to avoid the interruption of others. We have been taught not to talk about our intentions and to just do it.

The group decided that everyone will bring one more tribal member to the next meeting; and that the "Namgis Legend Night" will be on the first Monday of every month. Everyone who attended said, "This is a powerful thing that we are doing for our people, we are so glad it has begun".

An example of one of our stories:

One ancestor of the 'Namgis Tribe was sent a message from the Creator in a dream that when the Flood came, the great Halibut-Like Sea Monster 'Namxiyalagiyu "Only One" would rise from



Photo: RBCM

the depths of the ocean to come and take him to a place where he would be protected for the duration of the flood. This man waited on the beach in front of his village at the mouth of the river when it be-

gan to rain and never stopped for a long time...

Everyone is welcome and the discussions after the legends have been presented are very interesting and most importantly, fun. So come and learn about your family's 'Namgis history.

'Namgis / Dłta'ugwa'adaxw

Clans of the Upper and Lower Nimpkish Valley

'Namgis – "Those Who Come from the Sea Monster 'Namxiyalagiyu"

'Namgis – "Those that are One When They Come Together"

Ancient Tribal Name: Dłta'ugwa'adaxw – "Supernatural Power Tribe"

'Ni'nanimima "Clans"

Tsitsał'walagame' "The Famous Ones"

Tłatłalamina "Those Descending from Tłalamina"

Giga'lgam "The First Ones"

Sisantłta'yi "Those Descending from Santłte'"

'Ni'nalk'inuxw "Up-River People"

William Wasden Jr.



Pewi Alfred

Language Curriculum Trainee

This summer 2006, I attended the Total Physical Response (TPR) Beginners' course and Beyond TPR. Beginners TPR is the teaching method for learning a second language. We take baby steps towards fluency, teaching relevant situations to our present lives. Everyday we stand up, sit down, walk, walk fast, slow, run, stop, etc. While learning basic commands about things we do in our daily lives there is no reading, writing or speaking. The students participate if they feel comfortable. I, as the instructor introduce words and demonstrate actions as hands on experience. For example, if you wanted me to learn the word "Fragile" and understand the word "Fragile" so you gave me a box, that had glass in it, how would I know not to throw it, hit it, or set it down gently? Unless it is acted out "This is **fragile**, we set it down gently because it is **fragile**, we don't throw this box because it is **fragile**, it could break because it's **fragile**, take care of it because it is **fragile**. **Fragile** is the target word to hear and to continually be repeated in each sentence or command. We use the target word to internalize and begin to comprehend the materials and understand what to do with the noun or verb. So when a child is young, they slowly say *hi, bye, up, dad, mom*. They are learning the basics at first; they are not expected to write these words yet. They watch what parents say and do and then this is repeated several times. We correct a child in a good way to lessen anxiety and boost their self-esteem. For example, if my son said a word like "**me** go over there" which is obviously incorrect, I would correct him gently to encourage proper speaking. I would say, "I will go over there" and further "Yes Michael, **you** go over there." Then

he will eventually understand that "**me/you/I**" are different words to be learned in the proper context.

I notice that during a potlatch when a chief makes a speech, he says a whole speech in kwak'wala and then he will translate it to English. This takes a lot of time and I wonder if anyone comprehends the speech just said in kwak'wala. Our language will remain lost if we don't do something about it. We must speak kwak'wala in our spiritual house, in our everyday lives and we must keep it strictly immersion if we are going to keep it alive.



Learning Kwak'wala through immersion and games is great fun as Pewi leads class.

The second part of the language learning program is called Beyond TPR which is when you get to the point of being able to read and write. When we are babies, our parents don't give us a letter, and say what is it? We first learn how to talk using short words then eventually start piecing words together. I was so proud of this total immersion school. They have a language nest or a house built with household items, beds, everything that is real to us and they are teaching children ages 0-3yrs., k-1 and up to grade 7. They only speak their traditional language and take their language programs very seriously making it top priority. The teacher brought some children into the class to show us what they learned. They ranged in ages from 3- 8yr olds.

They spoke in their language. I am amazed to know that one individual is attending university this year, and is very successful even though he was immersed in his traditional language until he started public schooling. The instructor proved that this method works by teaching us language, using their method. We played games to help us internalize the words even more. When I returned home, I knew so many more Kwak'wala words. I have implemented the TPR curriculum project and introduced the method to an adult class, some children also attend. I would like to thank Lorraine Hunt for her help with the writing system and verifying kwak'wala words, Audrey Wilson, my Gran Pauline Alfred, Grandpa Pat Alfred, Christine Enick, Norman Glendale, Bill Cranmer, Vera Newman, Pearl Alfred and Fran Hunt for taking the time to teach me a new kwak'wala words.



Audrey Wilson, Kwaxwala'ogwa:
transcribing and translating kwak'wala to
First Voices

Canadian Connections Fair

Arnhem, Netherlands

We were invited back to the Netherlands in February for the 2007 Tourism Fair. Thanks to Walas Media in Amersfoort, Holland for sponsoring and paying for my trip. This gave me the opportunity to visit other places and people to discuss other projects we may partner with in the future. Many visitors to the Fair had already been to the U'mista, many more are planning to visit and some even to move to Canada.



Children of the Netherlands learning about our culture through activities. They are assisted by Odette, a young Dutch student who visited U'mista for her own research in 2005



Hosting U'mista Cultural Centre booth in
the Esubius Church in Arnhem

The Potlatch

Since time beyond recollection, the Kwakwaka'wakw speaking peoples expressed their joy through the potlatch. The word "potlatch" comes from the Chinook trade jargon, formerly used along the coast, meaning "to give". The potlatch ceremony marks important occasions in the lives of the Kwakwaka'wakw: the naming of children, marriage, transferring rights and privileges and mourning the dead. Guests are known as witnesses and are paid for this important responsibility with gifts. The more gifts distributed, the higher the status achieved by the potlatch host. It is a time for pride, a time for showing the dances owned by the Chief hosting the potlatch. The potlatch ceremony is the very foundation for a system of laws which the Kwakwaka'wakw have lived by from time immemorial. The purpose of hosting one is the same today as in the past; naming of children, memorializing the dead, transferring rights and privileges, marriages, raising memorial poles and in 1980, the grand opening of U'mista Cultural Centre. The Potlatch is a gathering which serves to validate these events before witnesses by the giving of gifts or property. A Potlatch is accompanied by one or more feasts and there is a specified order in which these events occur. First is the mourning ceremony where women are invited to sit before the Chiefs to pay tribute to members of their families who have recently passed away or those that have passed before them.

If there is to be a sale or transfer of a copper, it follows here. The transfer or sale of a copper is full of profound meaning and symbolism for those present. A marriage ceremony if one is included would follow here. A great feast is then served. Chiefs, singers, Elders are served first. Feast songs are sung at this time. Then the T'seka (cedar bark ceremony) begins, first cutting a large circle of cedar bark into strips to distribute to each guest to place around their head. Whistles are then heard off-stage to announce the approach of the hamatsa. Other dances will follow the hamatsa in a specific order. At the end of the cedar bark ceremony, the red cedar bark head bands are removed. Chiefs, Elders and guests are fed again. Next, the Tla'sala or Peace Dance begins. Following this performance, a manifestation of a supernatural creature, treasure dance or d'lugwe' enters through the front door. The d'lugwe' can be one of many different dances. The Tla'sala is made up of many dances and the same button blankets as worn in the T'seka. The am'lala or fun dance then begins and all guests are invited to participate. Finally gifts are laid out on the Gukwdzi (ceremonial house) floor to be distributed to all the witnesses present, first to Chiefs then Elders, singers and guests. During this time the Chiefs are invited to speak. In the old times, a potlatch could last for days, weeks even. Today a modern potlatch lasts between 12 to 24 hours (see Jonaitus 1991)

#1. T'lakwa, Coppers

When potlatch materials were seized in 1922, they were appraised by authorities at \$1,495 not including the coppers, for which no compensation was paid. Coppers document the most important events and transactions engaged in during the life of its owner and perhaps his or her descendants as well. Coppers with animal names refer to the crest of the original owner. Others, such as All-Other-Coppers-Are-Ashamed-to-Look-at-it, were named for the economic transactions that involved that particular copper. Following a sale, the goods received were usually potlatched. In the old days, "Breaking" a copper was the most formidable challenge that could be made by an owner to a rival, who then must break one of equal or larger value. A rival who could not respond faced humiliation before the community. Today breaking of coppers is not permitted at all within the ceremonial Big House at Alert Bay,



Photo: RBCM

because it would be considered a hostile act. Values such as the prestige of the family and the proper use of a copper in ceremony have been maintained (See Jonaitis 1991 and Boas 1897). Occasionally, a Chief would break a copper, indicating that he was so wealthy that he could afford to damage such a valuable object. For about 150 years now this practice has been discontinued.

Following the coppers are the masks in order of their importance. The first group, in the centre display, are apt of the the Hama'sa ceremony, which take the form of Huxwhukw and Galukwamł, the mythical or supernatural birds. These are followed by a variety of masks depicting natural and supernatural creatures, among them are the bear, eagle, wolf, Dzunu'kwa and Xwixwi. The final group of masks are those representing treasures of the Tla'sala. Each mask and its accompanying song represents a being which appears in the many legends of the Kwakwaka'wakw.



Photo: RBCM

Whistles and Elders – Photo Exhibit

Greeting Readers! I am William Wasden Jr. writing to inform you about our present exhibit. The art show titled “Keepers of Tradition – Formlines of Time” has come to an end. We had a great time putting the display together with our curator Barb Cranmer. It was a team effort by all participating artists and was truly the spirit of our village working together to create something positive. I was proud to be a part of the show.

We are presently displaying the “Whistles Exhibit” to show some examples in our collection. We acknowledge the sacredness of whistles and horns in our culture and understand that they were hidden in earlier times. It has been said that whistles were so sacred that people who were not members of the societies to which the whistles belonged were never allowed to see them.



John Rowell, Wally Brant view whistle display

We have interviewed many Elders and representatives from the families that the whistles stored at U'mista come from. With their guidance and approval, we have brought some variations of Kwakwaka'wakw sacred whistles

to be displayed to educate most importantly our people, about the paraphernalia that imitate the sounds of the spirits that give power to our ceremonies.



Waylon, mom April, dad Eugene Isaac viewing Elder photo display. Ed Dawson in background

“We are returning to the ancient ways of our Ancestors and are finding out that many aspects of our culture are asleep; by showing these sacred instruments at our cultural centre, we will awaken another part of our spirituality”. William Wasden Jr. *Waxawidi*



Janet Wasden, Putsa and William enjoying Elders Photo Exhibit by photographer Sharon Grainger



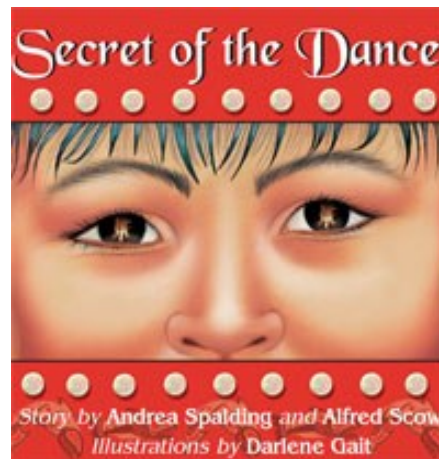
Lillian Hunt

Gift Shop Services

As the beginning of this new year develops I am yet again reminded how fast time flies! Especially when you have a lot to accomplish. I am very proud to be given the opportunity to become a part of the team here at U'mista and my responsibilities have grown with the position description. I am now responsible for membership services and some of our members have contacted me directly already! Thank you for your continued support to U'mista and please keep me informed of your requests or inquiries. If you have received this newsletter in the mail then you have obviously updated your membership. We will be contacting any outdated existing memberships from our database. Encouraging new membership is another process and this is usually accomplished in person in our Giftshop. Another method we utilize is networking and marketing at events, local, national and international. Our most popular method is "word of mouth" utilized by you, existing members or visitors to U'mista Cultural Centre. Gilakas'la.

Please note: we will be making our newsletter available on-line so please e-mail your e-address to: lhunt@umista.ca to receive your electronic copy of Tsitsakalam.

New on the U'mista Bookshelf



"Many years ago, when the world and I were younger, my family defied the government." In 1935, a nine-year-old boy's family held a forbidden Potlatch in faraway Kingcome Inlet, Wat'l'kina slipped from his bed to bear witness. In the Big House, masked figures danced by firelight to the beat of the drum.

Aboriginal elder Alfred Scow and award-winning author Andrea Spalding collaborate to tell the story, to tell the secret of the dance. Judge Alfred Scow, elder of the Kwakwaka'wakw Nation, is a member of the Order of Canada. Now retired, Judge Scow and his wife live on Pender Island and in Vancouver.

Reviews: Globe and Mail—Sep 9, 06 "Powerful aboriginal images and symbols incorporated into this fictionalized account of a signal event in the life of Alfred Scow...told in simple but evocative prose."

Booklist—Oct 1, 06 The child's view of brave adults in secret rebellion will even attract children somewhat older than the target audience..."

Horn Book—Nov 1, 06 "an innocent perspective on a powerful act of defiance...Gait's large-scale acrylic paintings reinforce the religious dimension, infusing magic realism into the landscape and story."

Special Annual Events @ U'mista 2007

March 26th	Grandparents Day
June 21st	Aboriginal Day
November 1st	27th U'mista Anniversary

Events in our community:

May 11th–13th	Sports Day
June 15th–17th	Soccer Tournament
July 20th–22nd	Sea and Music Festival
December 1st	Craft Bazaar

U'mista Volunteer Corner

Please contact the U'mista staff to volunteer your expertise in any of the following areas:

- Newsletter: photos, articles, folding and labeling, mailing
- U'mista activities: language, special events, workshops
- Transportation for elders and children to attend special events

Cultural knowledge: language, legends, regalia, history, dance, crafts

If you're interested in volunteering, please contact us:

Phone: 250-974-5403 **Fax:** 250-974-5499 **E-mail:** lhunt@umista.ca

Regular Hours: Monday–Friday 9:00am–5:00pm

Extended Summer Hours: Seven days weekly—May 26 to September 30, 2007

Admissions:

Adults \$ 5.30 • Seniors and Students \$ 4.24 • Children under 12 years \$1.06 • GST included.

Group rates apply for groups of 15 persons or more, please call for an appointment.