



## Dresden Update

The U'mista Cultural Centre is undertaking a collaborative exchange with museums in Germany. We are partnering with the Dresden State Art Collections (SKD), and the State Ethnographic Collections of Saxony (SES) for an exchange of exhibitions framed within the concept of gift-giving customs.

For this project we will lend and curate objects from our Potlatch collection to be shown in Dresden in an exhibition titled "The Great Potlatch: Gift-Giving Customs and Economies of Plenty." Treasures from Dresden's art and ethnographic collections will be on display at the U'mista under the title "The Gift in the Centre of Society and Identity." Both exhibitions will take place from March to August 2011.

*(Continued on following page)*



Chief Bill Cranmer shaking hands with Stanislaw Tillich, (centre), Prime Minister of Saxonia and Martin Roth, Director of the SKD (right) during the official signing ceremony.

*Photo courtesy of*

[http://www.ministerpraesident.sachsen.de/img/freistaat/800\\_mp\\_vancouver\\_09.jpg](http://www.ministerpraesident.sachsen.de/img/freistaat/800_mp_vancouver_09.jpg)

## In Memory of Andrea Sanborn

As most of the Museum and local community know, we lost our Executive Director, Andrea Sanborn, this past June. The following article is based on an excerpt from her celebration of life at the Alert Bay Legion June 26th, 2010 and my own personal recollections of Andrea.



Andrea working on Special Projects c. 1995

*Photo and article by Juanita Johnston*

Andrea Ione Sanborn nee Stadnyk was born to Florence and Andrew Stadnyk on June 3rd, 1947. She was named for her father Andrew (Andy) and was given the Indian name Pudłas. Andrea is predeceased by her parents Florence and Andrew Stadnyk and grandparents Julie and Price Bruce, her infant brother *(Continued on page 8)*

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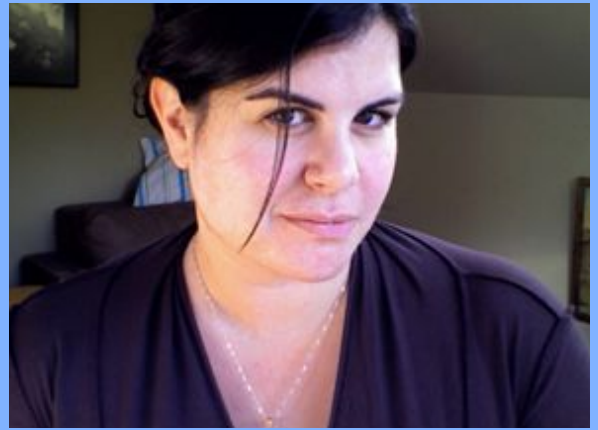
## Introducing...Karen Estrin, Interim Manager

The U'mista Cultural Centre is pleased to introduce to you our Interim Manager Karen Estrin. Karen has been with us since November when she first arrived in Alert Bay, not suspecting what lay in store for her. Just after completing her previous contract with Aboriginal Arts at The Banff Centre and sitting on the grants jury for the Alberta Museums Association, Karen came to Alert Bay on a road trip to visit the U'mista Cultural Centre, a museum she had studied in her Cultural Resource Management coursework during her undergraduate degree in History in Art at the University of Victoria.

While visiting the museum she was speaking to Lillian, who introduced her to Andrea, who grilled her on the spot. After exploring the new database and a long discussion with Andrea, Karen was hired to work with the collections.

Unfortunately, it was soon after this that Andrea fell ill. In Andrea's absence, Karen found herself assuming more administrative tasks and responsibilities, and eventually was asked by Board members to fill the position of Interim Manager.

Karen is originally from Edmonton, and has experience working in arts and heritage through contracts with Alberta Historic Sites, at the Provincial Archives of Alberta and in various small museums and galleries.



*Photograph courtesy Karen Estrin*

This project was initiated through discussions with our late Director Andrea Sanborn and Director of the SES Claus Deimel. Over the past year we have had the pleasure to host directors, curators and staff from the SKD and SES here in Alert Bay. In March, we jointly hosted an official ceremony at Saxony House (the Vancouver Rowing Club) during the 2010 Olympic Games. Chief Bill Cranmer, Chairman of the U'mista Cultural Society Board of Directors, and Stanislaw Tillich, Prime Minister of Saxonia, Germany, signed a treaty of cooperation to commence this project. This exchange between a First Nations museum and cultural centre and a classic European museum will be the first of its kind in the world.



Chief Bill Cranmer shaking hands with Stanislaw Tillich, Prime Minister of Saxonia during a tour of the Museum of Anthropology at UBC before the ceremony.

It will provide greater exposure of our Potlatch Collection to the international community, as well as provide residents and visitors to Alert Bay the opportunity to view treasures for the Saxon court.



## Library Donations...

What's this? U'mista has a library? Yes, we do! Its a research library, which means the titles are not available for loan but our membership is welcome to come in and use the books on site.

Over the past few years, U'mista has received a number of donations for our library. Due to a staffing shortage, none of these items had been catalogued until recently. We would like to thank the following individuals and institutions listed below for their generosity. These titles are now available in our research library.

### 2003

**Igor Krupnik**, Artic Ethnologist

Smithsonian, National Museum of Nature History  
*Gateways: Exploring the Legacy of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, Laurel Kendall and Igor Krupnik, editors 2001

*Constructing Cultures Then and Now. Celebrating Franz Boas and the Jesup North Pacific Expedition*. Laurel Kendall and Igor Krupnik, editors 2003

**Bob Waldon**

*A Guide to Feeding Winter Birds in British Columbia*, Bob Waldon 1992

### 2004

**Hanna Eklund**

*Local Observations on Salmon and Environmental Change in Kwakwaka'wakw Territory*, Hanna Eklund 2004

**Walter Larink**

*Totempfahl und Potlatch*, Jean-Loup Rousselot, Dietmar Muller, Walter Larink 1999

**Irene Salverda**

*Tangled Web of History: Indian's and the Law in Canada's Pacific Coast Fisheries*, Diane Newell 1997

**U'mista Gift Shop**

*The Kwakiutl of Alert Bay 1919 – 1923*, Douglas E. Schoenherr 1975, 2 copies

**William Wasden Jr.**

*Bill Reid and Beyond*, Karen Duffek and Charlotte Townsend-Gault ed.

### 2005

**Neil Arao**

*Appropriating the Sacred and Repatriating Identities: Cultural Appropriation in First Nations Communities*, Neil Arao 2005

**Katie Bunn-Marcuse**

*Walking a Tightrope aboriginal people and their representations*, Ute Lischke and David T. McNab eds.

**Dr. Norman Francis Boas**

*Franz Boas 1858 - 1942 An Illustrated Biography*, Dr. Norman Francis Boas 2004

**U'mista Gift Shop**

*Reclaiming Culture*, Joy Hendry 2005

### 2006

**Robert Storrie, & Jonathan King British Museum**

*Arctic Clothing*, J. C. H. King ed. 2005

*Guide to the British Museum* 2006

*First Peoples, First Contact*, Jonathan King 2001

*Unknown Amazon*, Colin McEwan, Cristiana Barrteto, Eduardo Neves eds. 2001

**Douglas & McIntyre**

*David Suzuki The Autobiography*, David Suzuki 2006

*Manawa Pacific Heartbeat*, Nigel Reading & Gary Wyatt 2006

*Raven Traveling: Two Centuries of Haida Art*, Scott Stedman 2006

*Spirits of the Water*, Steven C. Brown ed. 2000

**George Fischer**

*Haida Gwaii Queen Charlotte Islands Land of Mountains, Mist and Myth*, George Fischer and Andrew Merilees 2000

**Smithsonian, NMAI**

*Listening to our Ancestors*, Robert Joseph ed. 2006

*Living Homes For Cultural Expression*, Karen Coody Cooper and Nicholasa I. Sandoval ed. 2006

*We would also like to thank Luis Netter and Cornelia Bohne for their generous donation of \$300 to the U'mista Cultural Centre. It is through the generosity of our membership that we are able to fulfil our mandate.*

***Gilakas'la.***



## K̄angax̄tola “a place to sew things on”

In ancient times, the Kwakw̄ak̄'wakw wore blankets made of furs. The type of blanket one wore determined ones status.

- *Chiefs, Chieftainesses, Princes and Princesses wore Sea Otter blankets.*
- *Aristocrats of lower rank wore Mountain Goat, Grizzly Bear, Marmot, and Deerskin blankets.*
- *Commoners wore Cedar Bark blankets with fur trim along the front border.*

When the first European traders arrived on Kwakw̄ak̄'wakw shores, they were immediately attracted to the wealth of resources, in particular the fine animal furs that would become the center of a new industry. In 1849, a trading post was established by the Hudson's Bay Company at Beaver Harbour, Fort Rupert.

The company discouraged the Kwakw̄ak̄'wakw from keeping their precious furs for their own use by providing manufactured woolen blankets for trade. This blanket was known as the “Hudson's Bay Blanket”.

The Kwakw̄ak̄'wakw eagerly traded their furs and began weaving ceremonial robes out of yellow cedar bark called k̄ubax̄w.

The nobility wore finely woven blankets called ḡiyax̄t̄'amk̄an, while commoners wore blankets with a coarser weave called ko'pawis.

These yellow cedar blankets had fur trim around the neck border for comfort and warmth. Although the fur became minimal, it continued to identify rank.

The Kwakw̄ak̄'wakw began to decorate the woolen trade blankets, eventually replacing their yellow cedar bark blankets. Today, the type of button blanket a person wears continues to determine rank.

The Kwakw̄ak̄'wakw decorated the new trade blankets with strands of cedar bark and abalone shells. These blankets are called k̄angax̄tola “a place to sew things on”. The sewing of buttons to decorate the blanket began when a Kwakw̄ak̄'wakw man saw an Englishman wearing a buttoned suit. These men were called “Cockney Pearlies” and decorated their clothing with thousands of buttons made from cut out cockle shells. Eventually, the Kwakw̄ak̄'wakw were able to buy pearl shell buttons from China at trading posts and began decorating their blankets with them. These blankets are called k̄ikugwits̄am “having mother-of-pearl”.

Chiefs, Chieftainesses, Princes and Princesses wear button blankets called k̄is̄gamala “having many buttons”. People of lower rank wear blankets called 'namdzux̄sistala “having one row of buttons around the border”.

(Adapted from Daisy Sewid-Smith – 'Maya'niṭ “Robes of Power”)

The U'mista Cultural Society commissioned a button blanket for our collections. The blanket was designed by William Wasden Jr., and made by Lois Beans Matilpi.

The intention was for the design to be representative of all the Kwakw̄ak̄'wakw Tribes and for it to be a blanket that might be worn by all nations within.



Chief Lagiyus Tsitsaṭ'walaga'ma'yi 'namima, 'Namgis, father-in-law of Charles Nowell

Photograph courtesy of RBCM detail of PN254

We would like to acknowledge the hard work and time put in by Lois to complete this blanket for us.

**Blanket Belonging to:** U'mista Cultural Society

**Central Crest:** The Tree of Life with Circles of Life

**Kwakw̄ak̄'wakw Tribe:** All Nations

**Maker:** Nak̄idaya'ogwa Lois Matilpi nee Beans, Mamalilik̄ala

**Artist:** Hiṭamas William Wasden Jr., 'Namgis

**Material:** Red Velvet; Green Melton; Cotton; Cotton & Polyester Thread

**Buttons:** Abalone, Mother of Pearl

**Date:** 2010

**Border Lining Buttons:** One Row.





Tsulniti - Koskimo photographed by Edward Curtis. The North American Indian v.10, The Kwakiutl plate 363

Credit: Northwestern University Library, Edward S. Curtis's "The North American Indian," 2003. <http://digital.library.northwestern.edu/curtis/>

**Top Border Design:** Mountains and coppers.

**Corner Border Design:** "Supernatural Harpoon" representing a spiritual gift bestowed on certain ancestors after vision questing or supernatural power seeking. These harpoons were magic. They could



Bridal Group photographed by Edward Curtis in The North American Indian v.10, The Kwakiutl plate 361.

Credit: Northwestern University Library, Edward S. Curtis's "The North American Indian," 2003. <http://digital.library.northwestern.edu/curtis/>

be pointed at any game and it would fall dead without throwing the harpoon. With these harpoons the owner would become wealthy by giving numerous feasts with the food they obtained. It is a symbol of wealth and supernatural power.

**Side Border Design:** "Mountains" and "Four Petal Flowers". The moun-

tains are a design used by many tribes amongst the Kwakwaka'wakw. They represent the family Chief being like a mountain, great in stature and size for their reputation of wealth that they have distributed through the Potlatch. Sometimes mountains and the resources that they contained were the property of certain chiefs and their families. These prize possessions were often incorporated into the designs of the family regalia to acknowledge this ownership of mountains.



Blanket made by Lois Beans Matilpi (left) for the U'mista Cultural Centre and detail of copper design on top border of the blanket (above).



### Associated Legend:

The Kwakwaka'wakw have many blankets old and new that display trees. As we study old designs, we recognize how the artists represented various species of trees.

The main design on this blanket is a representation of a western red cedar tree or "Tree of Life". Cedar tree bows hang downward appearing to droop. The name "Tree of Life" references the fact that everything the Kwakwaka'wakw needed to sustain life came from the Kwax'tlu "Western Red Cedar". The cedar tree and rituals associated with its dyed-red inner bark called *Iska* "Winter Dances" were the most sacred of Kwakwaka'wakw ceremonies.

We acknowledge the financial Support of the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage Museums Assistance Program.

### Awesome Race

Would you enter a paddle race if the entry fee was by donation; benefiting the local Lions Club, random prize draws included a \$4,000 composite kayak donated by Atlantis, and a \$2,500 native mask there was \$3,500 in prize money for the top three male and female the setting included spectacular scenery dotted with totem poles?

Any self propelled vessel capable of circumnavigating the 12 km around Cormorant Island could enter the 2nd Alert Bay 360 Kayak Eco Paddle event on July 25th 2010.

One hundred and fifteen vessels entered the race and it sure was a challenge since white caps were showing and it was the only time during the three days of Seafest the sun was hiding. Nevertheless the

fastest paddler did it in a record time of just a bit over 51 minutes!

The traditional way of traveling on the ocean could not miss out. Eight people paddled Kodi Nelson's canoe which crossed the finish line within one hour and fifty minutes. The crew came in with their paddles up singing a welcome song that belongs to the Nelson family.

At Grassy Point the paddlers were accompanied along the north side of the island by a whale. Hopefully it will be there again next year to assure our paddlers a safe journey.

The day ended with the 360 Alert Bay Big House Feast with great seafood dishes and a spectacular performance by the Gwa'wina dance group.



Pullers on Kodi Nelson's canoe. L-R Randy Bell, Trevor Isaac (behind Harold), Harold Nelson, Glen ?, Bert Smith, Stephanie Nelson, Paul Friesen, unidentified, Kodi Nelson.

Photograph and article by Irma Verhoeven, 2010



## On the U'mista Book Shelf...

### Learn ... with Northwest coast Native Art

© Native Northwest native elements

Native Northwest published four great young childrens books featuring art work by Beau Dick, Marcus Alfred, Ryan Cranmer, Francis Dick, William Wasden Jr. and other native artists.

*Learn The Colours with Northwest Coast Native Art*

*Learn To Count with Northwest Coast Native Art*

*Learn & Play with First Nations & Native Art*

### Learn the Alphabet with Northwest Coast Native Art

Looking at these books it seems almost natural for them to be available in our traditional language. Since that is not the case, we'll do with the English versions. You will find the beautiful illustrations stimulating for your toddlers to learn about the numbers, letters and colours and discover Native Art in the same effort. They are encouraged to find shapes so they are forced to concentrate on what they are looking at. A great tool to have fun and learn at the same time and a nice gift for your little niece or nephew.

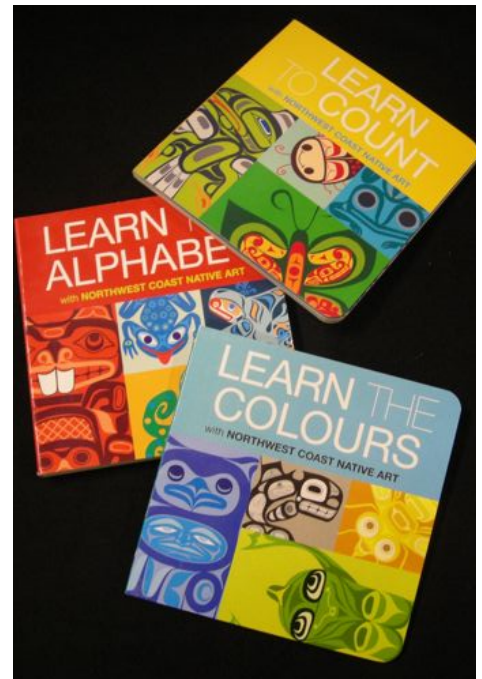


Photo and article by Irma Verhoeven

## Successful Art, Song, and Dance Classes!

Art Classes were held at the U'mista Cultural Centre from the autumn of 2009 to spring of 2010. We looked back to old styles of Kwakwaka'wakw Art by studying photos of early artifacts collected and housed in museums around the world. Famous artists like Bob Harris, Mungo Martin, and Willie Seaweed were studied. No previous Native Art knowledge was needed to join the local public art class. Non-locals were encouraged to view previous presentations and partake online at <http://kwakwakawakw.weebly.com> which can still be viewed. The Salmon Trout-heads that were produced in class have been made into an exhibit and are on display throughout the summer in the first gallery here at U'mista.

Dancing Classes were held in the Big House Gallery, Tuesdays and

Fridays from January 12, 2010 – March 26, 2010. Everyone was welcome to participate. The focus of the class was the Ladies Professional dance. The men practiced singing at the log, learning the words and the beats of the songs while the ladies learned the hand motions.

Everyone who participated was encouraged to learn and share individual family rights and traditions through origin stories, family legends, dances, and the Kwakwala names that were associated. As much a part of our history as the art, song and dance, is the Language – Kwakwala. Throughout both classes, Kwakwala was incorporated as much as possible.

We would like to acknowledge funding from First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council - Aboriginal Arts Development Award.



Drawings from the Art Class exhibit at U'mista until Fall 2010

Photo by U'mista, article by Trevor Isaac

We would also like to thank the people involved making these programs available: William Wasden Jr, Shonna Welsh, Pewi (Dorothy) Alfred, Eli Cranmer, Ernest Alfred, Robert "Baba" Williams, Trevor Isaac and the Elders and Community.



(continued from first page)

Charles, and her brother Mike in 2009. Andrea's heritage was a mix of Ukrainian on her father Andy's side and 'Namgis (Mumsy) and Ma'amtagila (Price Bruce) through her maternal grandparents.

In the early 1990s Andrea was the busy proprietor/cook of "Alice's Restaurant". She had never run a restaurant before, but with her husband Richard and son Rick she dove right in. She was nominated to the U'mista Board of Directors, during what was probably their restaurant's busiest summer ever and she still made every lunch meeting held by the Board of Directors that summer. Having grown up with Andrea's son Rick, I knew her all my life, but my first introduction to work-mode Andrea was when she'd rush into the Board Meetings with the order to, "get this show on the road!" And would it ever. Those meetings were fast, efficient and productive. Three qualities she liked and which epitomized Andrea's work ethic.

When Andrea and Dick decided to sell the restaurant, it left Andrea with free time. The Board of Directors talked her into giving up volunteering as giftshop manager and to come on board as Special Projects Coordinator/Gift Shop Manager. So, in addition to running the gift shop, in itself a full time position, she carved out the time to manage all of our major projects which included the renovations to the old Big House, the rebuilding and reopening of the

Gukwdzi after it was destroyed by an arsonist in 1997, the first phase of the expansion of U'mista, the carving of several new totem poles, for U'mista and a project at the Dolfinarium in Haarderwick, The Netherlands. After moving into the position of Executive Director in 2000, she continued to spearhead all of our major projects and when I left U'mista in 2003, she even took over answering the bulk of information requests that continued to pour in.

It has been said continually that Andrea is irreplaceable. This is true. Its not the same without her humour and razor sharp wit to motivate us. But I think if she could see us now, she wouldn't be too, too disappointed to see how we're coping without her. She taught us well.

Andrea had a reputation as a "tough" boss. I think a lot of people confused that with her being a fair boss. She didn't care *when* you did your work, as long as you *did* your work and projects got completed on schedule.

Andrea had the most amazing stories about her childhood and the truly frightening part is that they were all true! When I was working on the genealogy project (updating and adding corrections) Andrea was browsing through her family tree when she suddenly exclaimed, "That's how we're related to Pete Coon!" and proceeded to tell me the story of how she and Bobby had heard a noise outside their front door while their parents were

out. Being the resourceful child she was, Andrea grabbed her Dad's hammer from his tool box and hid behind the door. Unbeknownst to them, their parents had actually invited Pete over to the house. When he came in the door Andrea hit him over the head with the hammer knocking him out cold. Thinking they had killed the intruder they were worried they'd be in trouble. Thinking on her feet she decided the best course of action, would be to hide the body. So she and Bobby proceeded to drag an unconscious Pete out of the house and into the into the ditch *across* the street. Needless to say when Andy and Florence discovered Pete moaning in the ditch they were horrified, exclaiming, "Oh no. Look what somebody did to poor old Pete.". I'm sure they never learned exactly how Pete was brained or who had jumped him on his way to their house. Pete certainly didn't remember how it had happened.

When I requested a copy of my Wallace/Assu family tree from her a few years ago she promptly wrote me back, "I'm sorry but there is no tree as you were found under a rock. Will send rock." And then she tried to ding me for the shipping of the rock.

Andrea knew what a special place this is, she always gave 150% and expected the same of others, she knew the work we do here is important, not just for us but for future generations...rest in peace Pudtas.





## Kwakwala, where is it going?



*by Pewi Alfred*

For the past three years I have been participating in a Master Apprentice Program with my Grandmother Daisy Sewid-Smith. At first I was very nervous, anxious, but happy that I had this honor of working with such a respectful, knowledgeable woman. My grandmother is a very patient person. We began the immersion program by checking to see how well I knew our language. At first I was very limited, only able to answer her questions in Kwakwala with a “yes” and “no”. We slowly built up my vocabulary through listening, repetition and consistently working on specific parts of grammar. I thank her for all of her time and knowledge.

This program was a great opportunity. Every other week during the three year term we had four elders or resource people come observe and comment on what I learned. We would see whether they could understand me when I was speaking, properly pronouncing the words and phrases in Kwakwala. They would identify if I was speaking in the right context and if I was able

to answer their random questions. The elders and resource people were my grandmother Pauline Alfred, my uncle Tommy Speck, and my aunty Lily Jolliffe and the late Lorraine Hunt. I would also like to thank them for taking their time to help!

At this time I have completed four terms of the immersion program. Learning Kwakwala is very challenging but the best thing that I have ever taken part in. There was so much to internalize with learning our language, but I will hold what I have been taught close to my heart and will also pass on the knowledge to others with kindness and love.

Since I finished the Immersion program I have been thinking about our language and where it is going. This is a very touchy subject for me. I have been working with our language for many years with linguists and elders, and I have attended many schools, workshops, training and university programs in hopes to help save our language.

I feel that it is important that we learn to properly write kwakwala by following the writing system that our people developed with Jay Powell. It is our respected language and writing system that the Elders contributed to and they felt it will help us through our lives. We should all respect and appreciate the time that our beloved elders put towards Kwakwala.

While working with the language there have been many people who have corrected how I pronounce words, and I want to say to everyone that I appreciate and respect your help. I feel that it is important to have the right accent

and pronunciation while speaking Kwakwala. Otherwise we may not express ourselves properly as it might not be the right word, or we might not be understood by other people. We have an accent that comes with the language and I feel that working directly with a speaker is important so that you don't miss any steps.

I have noticed that when Kwakwala is spoken we speak harmoniously. Our language is so beautiful and we should concentrate more on how it is said, and exactly how the speaker has taught us. The message that I am trying to get across is let us all speak our language, and work harder at learning it. We cannot live without Kwakwala and must take it more seriously.

### U'mista Cultural Society ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday,  
September 18th, 2010  
12 - 1 pm  
at  
U'mista Cultural Centre

Nominations for Board of Directors are being accepted. Please provide the name of your nominee if they will not be in attendance at the meeting along with their signed letter of agreement allowing their name to stand. Nominations can be faxed or emailed. Fax: 250.974.5499  
email: [info@umista.ca](mailto:info@umista.ca)



## Become a Member...

Is your Membership up to date? Do you want to become a member or volunteer? Do you know what a membership will give you? Find out more! Contact us at the number or email below.

U'mista Cultural Centre  
PO Box 253  
Alert Bay, BC V0N 1A0  
ph: 250.974.5403 • 1.800.690.8222 • fax: 250.974.5499  
www.umista.ca • email info@umista.ca



## Your Opinion Matters...

Please let us know what you think of our Newsletter. We welcome any suggestions, ideas, and critique!

You are cordially invited to Celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the  
U'mista Cultural Centre  
November 6<sup>th</sup> 2010  
3:00 pm to 5:00 pm  
A retrospective exhibit of Gifts to U'mista.

## HOURS of OPERATION

**EXTENDED Summer Hours** Open Daily 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to **September 12, 2010**

**Winter Hours** Tuesday thru Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### **ADMISSION FEES** (HST included)

Adults \$8.96

Seniors/Students \$7.84

Children under 12 yrs. \$1.12

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

