

Standing on the Edge of Yesterday:
A Dilemma of Oral Knowledge Survival in a West Coast Family

by

Allis Pakki Chipps-Sawyer
B.A. York University, 1981
M.A. York University, 1987 (Pending)

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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University of Victoria

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ABSTRACT

The Nitinaht language and traditional knowledge that was usually transmitted from the older to the younger family members is on the verge of being lost forever. As a member of a Nitinaht family, I have concentrated on finding the Elders in our family, who are spread all over Vancouver Island, in an attempt to try to find a way to preserve this invaluable knowledge and to pass it on to future generations.

This information was recorded and will be presented through interactive multimedia, which allows for the transmission of oral information such as stories, photographs, interviews, family trees, history, language and anecdotes. Since modern technology and traditional knowledge seem at the opposite ends of the spectrum, the research also looked into the acceptability of this method of transmission.

Much traditional knowledge is confidential, and thus is not part of the written dissertation; however, much information is included without disrespect for our beliefs as

ideas for future research. The written documentation includes a history of our family, discussion of the beauty and uniqueness of the Diitidaht (Nitinaht) language, a narration of our last Puku'u basket weaver, and a description of the "Family First" interactive multimedia program.

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assistance and support as well. They were always there for me when I ran into complications or had questions.

Dedication and Frontispiece

I wish to dedicate this dissertation to Gillette Chipps and my whole family.

I was born in Denmark, with a Greenland Inuit (3/4) father and a Danish mother but I was raised by my grandparents. I spent my summers running naked and wild with other naked and wild children and I learned how to catch crabs with just a piece of string and shrimp with a dishtowel; how to sit and watch nature around me and to love exploring; how to move pain out of my body, and how to relax my body, from my grandparents.

When I was ten, my mother arrived with her new husband and they brought me with them to Canada where I started a totally different life in a world I did not understand. The day I turned sixteen, I left home and lived with a Cree family because they had become my surrogate family through some difficult years. I have a wonderful brother in Denmark, with whom I communicate by e-mail regularly but have seen only once in 37 years (when our mother was dying in 2000) and I have a lot of family I really don't know there as well. I have been at Beecher Bay First Nation since 1974 and have been a band member since 1977. Gillette Chipps was the father I never had and he taught me tirelessly till he died in 1986. Sarah Chipps, was my Mom and friend till she died in 2005. For the last eight years of her life, she lived with Henry Chipps and I, slowly succumbing to Alzheimer's Disease. This is my family and they are my whole life. I wish to thank all my family at Kyuquot, Nitinaht, Neah Bay, Lower Elwah, Tofino and Beecher Bay for helping me so much and for being my family – My whole world!.

Chapter 1: Introduction

As a mostly self-taught student of interactive multimedia programs, a writer, an artist, an educator, a linguist, and a status member of a First Nations community (Beecher Bay First Nation, Vancouver Island), I have long believed that interactive multimedia has the potential to combine many forms of knowledge and can be used in the preservation of traditional knowledge that is on the verge of being lost. For teaching our indigenous languages when they are not spoken at home, programs can be developed through this venue that are closer to the traditional ways of teaching than books and paper.

Rationale

Years ago, when I was studying linguistics in the Native Indian Language Diploma program at the University of Victoria, I taped a lot of interviews with Gillette Chipps who was born around 1901 at Tlo'uws (Clo'oose). After Gillette Chipps died in 1986, Henry Chipps and I made copies of these tapes for our family so the knowledge would remain with all of us. Although these tapes are very valuable to the family, it would have been wonderful if the information had been preserved in a way that allowed us to watch and learn from him.

Even though I am not a fluent speaker, I have been around the Diitidaht language for over 30 years: listening to stories, listening to conversations, creating lessons, and both speaking and interpreting some of the language for family members. I have been the keeper of many family trees and names for Beecher Bay, and I have collected much of the known information about our Band's history whenever that has been needed. I have, over the years, developed an understanding of the language and some of our Tupaatii

(Family traditional and hereditary knowledge) that is different from that of other researchers. Perhaps this is because the understanding comes from living the language, the world view and the culture as opposed to studying the language from outside.

Some time ago, I asked my family if they wished me to do some specific research for my dissertation, and they thought about that for a long time. Finally I showed them my latest research proposal, which outlined a study of several different First Nations in order to create a First Nation Studies Multimedia Program for use in schools. Everyone thought it was a very nice proposal, but finally they mentioned that they had hoped I would carry on the research on the Diitidaht language I began with late Gillette Chipps. Late uncle John Thomas and aunt Flora (Joseph) Charles had worked upon recording the Diitidaht language as well.

Years ago, I had prepared a very large dictionary of Diitidaht and had given it to the family by presenting it to Gillette Chipps and Sarah Chipps-Sawyer, the heads of the family. At this point in the conversation, about 17 years later, my nephew, Douglas Sawyer brought the dictionary out. Doug had saved it when Gillette Chipps died in 1985, and when Sarah Chipps-Sawyer had moved out of their house. I was amazed that it had been kept for all these years because I had neither heard of it nor seen it since I gave it to the family. I believe that in Doug's giving me the book there was an additional directive to continue the work I had begun in the seventies.

I mentioned that I was not in the Linguistics Department and couldn't change from Curriculum and Instruction, in the Faculty of Education. I thought this would be a problem but it was quickly decided that I could create a program that would teach the language. Again I thought this would be a problem, but when we discussed what was

needed, it soon became apparent that by “teaching the language”, the songs, hereditary knowledge, names, and skills were included. I could see no problem with this and wrote another proposal. This time I thought there would be no problems at all, and, of course, I was wrong again. All of this information that I proposed to document was, for the most part, confidential; how could it be presented in a public document such as a dissertation? After much thought, I realized that what the family wanted was extremely important research, that I could not present that information itself in the dissertation, but that I could write about some knowledge, and I could write about how I gathered the information. Now all the problems were solved! Wrong!

I created a questionnaire and consent form to see what the family members thought about them, so one summer, I travelled around to various communities where family members lived and showed them my carefully thought out questionnaire and the consent form required by our university’s Research Ethics Review process, so I could get some feedback. I must tell you right away that I am quite shy and feel very intrusive when I try to bring or impose something “foreign” on my family, so presenting them with these papers took a lot of nerve and I really felt like crawling into a hole while they looked it over. That feeling remained at every house I visited, and to confuse me even further, their reaction, each time, was to look at it with a rather critical expression, look at me and talk with me about family, while putting the papers down as if they had never seen them. I puzzled over this for quite a while after I returned home feeling totally defeated. After a couple of weeks, I suddenly realized that everyone I’d given a questionnaire and consent form to HAD told me their opinion. Family members had faced a choice of seeing me as an outside researcher (which they put aside) or as family

(and we spoke of family, as family does). I understood now, but I had no idea how to meet the Ethics Review's guidelines while, at the same time honouring my family's way of doing things. I knew that I would not go against family wishes, and realized that I needed to approach this whole project as a member of the family and with OUR ethics about learning and teaching. I presented the ethics committee with my dilemma and, after many emails and letters, I was called in to discuss this dilemma with Dr. J. Storch, Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee for the University of Victoria, who shortly thereafter granted me the right to carry out my research according to our traditional ethics. I was well aware that, had I been turned down, all my desire and work to get my Ph.D. would be wasted; would come to nothing.

It is important to remember what a First Nations Family is, and how incredibly spread out we are. My family exists in virtually every Band on Vancouver Island, but most specifically in Beecher Bay, Sooke, Pacheenaht, Nitinaht and Kyuquot. In addition, our family extends to Neah Bay in Washington. Originally, villages were composed of family members, and usually neighbouring villages were all related. Families spread through marriage, but generally family and First Nation Community was the same thing. Since the establishment of reserves, however, people from different families were gathered on single reserves and at the same time, a single family was assigned to different reserves and often given unrelated names. This has been the cause of endless problems in governance and the passing on of hereditary knowledge. To add to the confusion, traditionally inherited grounds (burial, fishing, berry gathering, hunting, whaling, seafood gathering, bathing, etc.) were not included in the reserve lands, forcing people to stay within one community instead of maintaining and visiting the hereditary grounds. Many

of these grounds are now on private property and are therefore inaccessible to us. The present struggle for land management by many Bands is an attempt to get back at least some of the hereditary grounds – but again, *which* family’s hereditary grounds? This too is awkward since we can really only look at lands near the reserves to which we have been assigned. Many hereditary grounds of the First Nations families of Vancouver Island were across the Straits of Juan de Fuca, or on Mainland British Columbia.

My Committee had some concerns about the feasibility of my earlier proposal (Creating an interactive multimedia First Nations Studies course requiring research with several different Nations): whether I would get permission to work in the proposed communities; whether the communities were accepting of the use of modern technology; and whether there would be enough Native language content. The committee felt, rightly so, that my proposal was much too huge to complete. The latest changes to the proposal, for the project I have called “Family First”, made me very happy because I felt that all of the stated concerns were now addressed.

Purpose

There were four distinct areas that I planned to research for the “Family First” program:

- 1) To gather the information given by members of our family to University professors, museum researchers, and archivists over the years, and which was lost to us. However, after a lot of wasted time trying to reach some of the researchers, I decided that this was something I could work on, with my family, at a later date.
- 2) To find relatives who hold valuable information about our language and hereditary family knowledge, to link these relatives for information sharing, and

to make records of our language, songs, dances, names, community relationships and environmental relationships, from the few Elders who still speak Diitidaht (Nitinaht) or still have knowledge in these areas.

- 3) To create ways of teaching our language and culture through interactive multimedia, along with our hereditary knowledge, or Tupaatii, for use by everyone in the family, and, if the family wished, in Band operated schools or perhaps even some public schools where our students attend. The family welcomes the use of multimedia for this purpose. They (Kathy Chipps and Ike Campbell, personal communication, 2003) specifically said, “We’ve seen what has been done so far [in other venues]; stick men and useless information” and that they wanted something more creative and better able to help the language and knowledge survive, and
- 4) To return copies of all the information found to all of the family; to attempt to obtain feedback from family members regarding the multimedia program as it was developed, to plan for later changes and to record notes for the dissertation.

My research was actually two-fold. First, creating a means of transmitting the hereditary knowledge through the “Family First” program and second, creating the dissertation that could serve as a model for use by other researchers or First Nations persons from which to carry out similar research. The first would eventually culminate in the development of a multimedia computer program for use by family members only. The second component would result in a manuscript consisting of seven chapters. This research was an extension of the visions of members of our family and it became my vision. I know that the information I have gathered and shared has already uplifted our

spirits.

Participants

Since 2003, several Beecher Bay students and I visited relatives in many west coast locations. In Washington State, we visited several family members at Neah Bay including Elizabeth Smith and Theresa Sawyer, as well as spending a couple of days at the museum to copy the family trees of anyone related to the Sawyers, gathered by Erna Gunther in the early 1930s. At Elwah, we visited Kenny Charles and spent nearly two weeks with him. Kenny provided family trees, cultural knowledge, and we spent a fair amount of time helping with the summer canoe journeys whose participants arrived while we were there. Back in British Columbia, we visited Kyuquot, Ucluelet, Hot Springs Cove, Nitinaht, Port Alberni and Campbell River. At Kyuquot, where we spent much of four summers, we helped Nan Hilda Hansen prepare her salmon for the smokehouse. She allowed us to photograph her smokehouse and the way she cut and prepared the fish. We spent much time with our cousins, Patsy Nicolaye, Agnes Oscar, and Sarah Short, helping and learning. At Ucluelet we spent time camping outside the house of my sister, Kathy Chipps and her husband, Ike Campbell (from Ahousaht), and they took us to Hot Springs Cove. At Nitinaht, we visited Richard Patterson who was married to a late sister, Hazel Chipps, and Patrick Patterson, their youngest son who was attending their language program in the school at Nitinaht. Hazel had gathered many tapes and documents from the Archives regarding Dad, Gillette Chipps. We also visited Francis Edgar, Joshua Edgar, and Stan Edgar, learning more about Charlie Chipps, Mary Chipps and Gillette Chipps and about basket weaving material gathering and preparation. In Port Alberni, we visited the museum and found several important photographs. We also visited Richard

Patterson and Hazel Chipps' daughter, Sarah Patterson, who is married to Chief Robert Dennis. From them we gathered many important documents from the pelagic sealing days and the First Nations schooners. In Campbell River, we visited our cousin, Bill Oscar, who provided us with some tapes. Back at Beecher Bay, I had my own tapes of Dad, and Mom lived with us for eight years until she died from Alzheimer's Disease, and during the clearer moments, we spoke a lot about the past. I also learned much of our family's later history from Henry Chipps, who was born at Kyuquot but moved to Beecher Bay with his family at a young age.

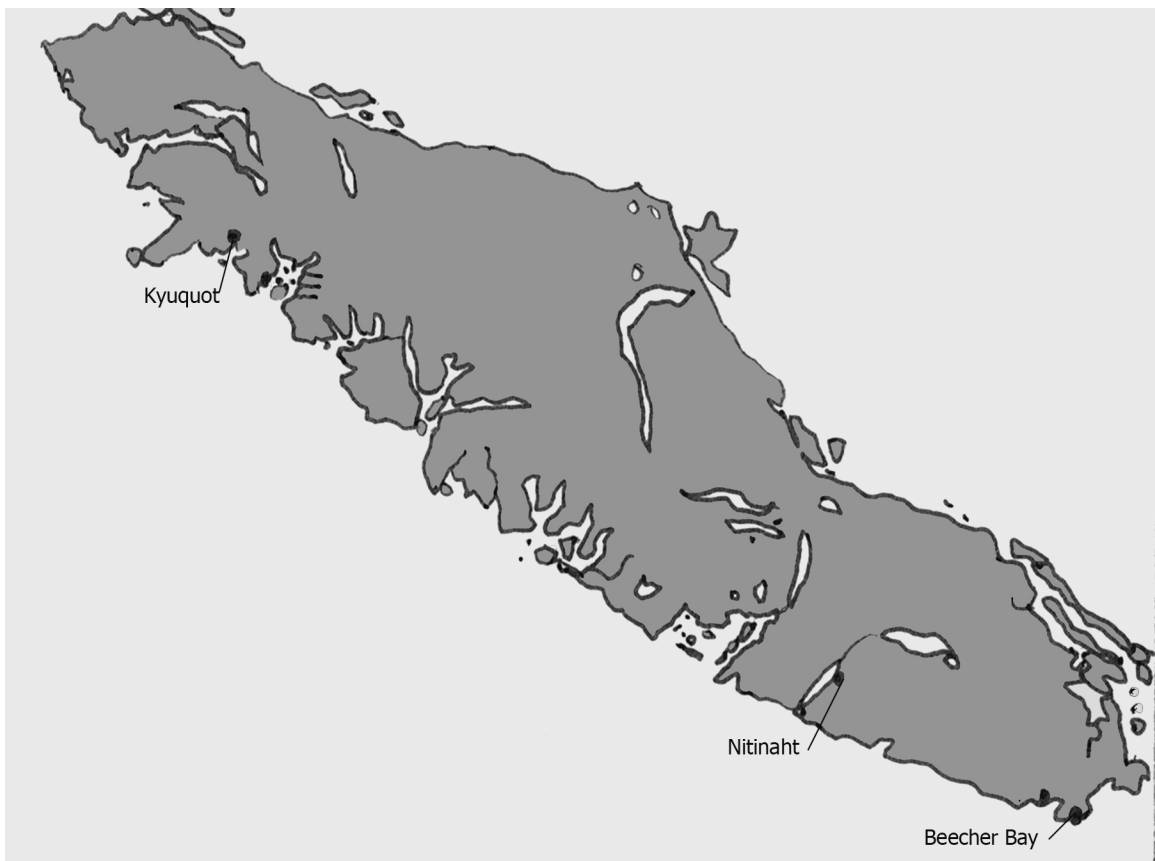


Figure 1 Vancouver Island showing the location of the primary First Nations visited

The student participants from Beecher Bay who travelled and learned with me were: Rose and Allen Charles (2003), Cody Mobey-Chipps and Melissa Thorne (2004

and 2005) and the highschool students who worked on the Quarantine Lake restoration (2005 -- 2007) were: Harvey, Danny, Jeffrey and Gabriel Charles, Charlette Armstrong and Melissa Thorne.

Methodology

I had to approach ways of gathering the above information according to our own traditions. Basically, I was a student in search of teachers, and traditionally, that meant I had to move in with relatives and help them with the chores and it was up to them what they would teach me, when they would teach me, and if they would teach me anything at all. Therefore, when I travelled out to stay with relatives in hopes of learning what I needed to learn, control was mostly out of my hands.

Over the following three years (2003 – 2006), I spent my summers visiting primarily Nitinaht and Kyuquot, helping the Elders there, and learning. The first year, I expected to stay with the Elders, but the housing shortage on reserves and the resulting overcrowding made that really awkward. Family will always find room for anyone who needs it, but it was a hardship on them. The following two years, I brought along a little tent and slept there, but spent my days with family and Elders. I was always accompanied by two or three youth (between the ages of 8 and 15) from Beecher Bay, and each had his or her own tent and camping gear as well. I had no funding for these trips, so I had to combine work with students and my own work. This worked wonderfully because I feel that the young students learned so much from the Elders and discovered new relatives and new skills everywhere we went.

I found that it would be important to write my dissertation differently than my knowledge-gathering for the simple reason that the two do not contain the same

information. For this reason, I decided that it was important to first write about our Family history, as a background for the dissertation. Following this, I wanted to write about our language, also as background. I was fortunate enough that one Elder allowed me to video tape the story of her life, and as the last basket-maker in our family, it gave a deeper, more personal feeling of what life was like for, not only the Elder, but for many First Nations women at that time. As an important part of this dissertation, I felt that the difference in university ethics and our traditional ethics needed to be discussed as well. Perhaps, this could lead to more important changes in the multicultural world of researching. In Chapter 3, I discuss the plan of the “Family First” program and my hopes for it, as well as a deliberation on the use of multimedia in First Nations for the purpose of teaching traditional knowledge in Chapter 2.

The creation of the “Family First” program will continue after the dissertation is complete and will most likely be an ongoing project for the rest of my life. I do not believe I followed a specific pattern already established by academic methodological approaches because I followed the methodologies provided to me by the directives of my family, and I did not work in isolation from the family’s scrutiny. I followed the traditional method of watching, listening and trying until I got it right. Family members told me quickly enough, usually with merely a look, when I was wasting my time with details and when I was missing some important details. All the members of my family determined the research, the directions, and the outcomes. The dissertation is my description of this journey to attempt to recover our language and traditional knowledge.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) discusses ‘insider research’:

Insider research has to be as ethical and respectful, as reflexive and critical, as

outsider research. It also needs to be humble. It needs to be humble because the researcher belongs to the community as a member with a different set of roles and relationships, status and position. (p. 138)

In differentiating between method and methodology, Smith (1999) writes,

I draw on Sandra Harding's very simple distinction between methodology and method, that is, 'A research methodology is a theory and analysis of how research does or should proceed ... A research method is a technique for (or way of proceeding in) gathering evidence.' (p. 143)

Steinhauer (2002) has the following to say about Indigenous research methodology: "One fact seems most certain, and that is that Indigenous researchers must engage in their work with both passion and compassion, for their obligations are horrendous" (p. 8). Steinhauer goes on to say,

As I went through Weber-Pillwax's (1999) list, I realized that conducting research using an indigenous research methodology would not be as simple as it originally sounded. It means that the researcher must know the cultural protocols, values, and beliefs of the Indigenous group with which they are studying. And as Weber-Pillwax says, 'A researcher must make sure that the three R's - Respect, Reciprocity, and Relationality are guiding the research.' (Personal communication). (p. 2)

Although I studied methodology prior to my research, my relationship to what I had previously read on that topic began to change as I learned from the Elders. It seemed

that none-of the methodologies fit any more. The more I worked with the Elders, the more I felt I had to rethink my methodologies. Among the Indigenous methodologies, I found Cora Weber-Pillwax's (2002) characterization and I have used several of her quotes because I am very impressed with what she says and I can relate to her words.

The research methods have to mesh with the community and serve the community. Any research that I do must not destroy or in any way negatively implicate or compromise my own personal integrity as a person, as a human being. This integrity is based on how I contextualize myself in the planet, with the rest of all living systems and things. (p. 168)

I was very happy to read these words because this, too, became clear as a crucial part of my research and process. Because I am a family member, I must keep my, and my family's integrity intact. I did not work only with people within houses; I spent much time in the bush learning about our important plants, animals and locations.

If my work as an Indigenous scholar cannot or does not lead to action, it is useless to me or anyone else. I cannot be involved in research and scholarly discourse unless I know that such work will lead to some change *out there* in that community, in my community. (Weber-Pillwax, 2002p. 169)

The main areas of action I aimed for focused on improved communication between family members regardless of distance, sharing of information in order to increase the collective knowledge among more family members, and attempting to hopefully encourage others to take similar actions or future actions that are needed. In addition, much that was taught to me was done so in trust and I was aware that I must

honour that trust; "Trust is crucial to this method, and the researcher must have a deep sense of responsibility to uphold that trust in every way" (Weber-Pillwax, 2002 p. 170). I needed to spend as much time as possible in the communities with family members in order to understand where I was. This is not to understand the location, but to understand the relationship to relatives and other community members within the different communities. I needed to understand exactly where my feet were. "Being there for enough time was necessary for the learning to be integrated into my being. Perhaps it is like writing *bread* on a piece of paper and then eating the paper instead of eating the bread" (Weber-Pillwax, 2002 p. 173).

I have great hopes that my research will lead to important and positive changes that will bring back the traditional ways of teaching the Tupaati, even if it is long-distance, or by giving our children the opportunity to spend much more time with the family Elders. "Today we recognize that Indigenous research holds the capacity to break the silence and bring forth the powerful songs of long-imprisoned voices using their own language" (Weber-Pillwax, 2002 p. 174).

My methodology followed the theory I developed after visiting family members and telling them what I hoped to do, listening to the spoken and unspoken opinions, and deciding that I could best carry out research in the traditional way of student and Elder, allowing the Elders of our family to decide what to teach me and even how to proceed with my research (keeping much of the research separate from my dissertation in respect of confidentiality).

My methods were,

1. To help the Elders around the house and elsewhere,

2. To avoid being a burden to anyone in the family,
3. To listen carefully and remember what I was told, and
4. To record what I had learned at a time when that would not interfere with what I was learning.

Smith (1999) goes on to describe a number of indigenous projects, or processes, that are relevant and overlap in this research. One such methodology is “Sharing” (p. 160), the sharing of knowledge between Indigenous peoples. Although my work consists primarily of sharing within a family, it still involves the kind of sharing that contains views of knowledge being of collective benefit and knowledge being a form of resistance. The resistance in this case, is a resistance to the end of our language and hereditary knowledge. Another Indigenous process suggested by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) is of “Creating”. She describes this as follows:

The project of creating is about transcending the basic survival mode through using a resource or capability which every indigenous community has retained throughout colonization – the ability to create and be creative. The project of creating is not just about the artistic endeavours of individuals but about the spirit of creating which indigenous communities have exercised over thousands of years. Imagination enables people to rise above their own circumstances, to dream new visions and to hold on to old ones. It fosters inventions and discoveries, facilitates simple improvements to people’s lives and uplifts our spirits. (p.158)

Another Indigenous process described by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) is one of “Protecting” because it is “concerned with protecting peoples, communities, languages, customs and beliefs, art and ideas, natural resources and the things indigenous peoples

produce” (p.158). Part of the work I did to help my family, with the help of six high school students from the Beecher Bay First Nation and one University of Victoria student, Erin Ward, was to successfully restore our Quarantine Lake (located on the Beecher Bay First Nation) which had been seriously polluted with Chlorine resulting in the destruction of all plants and animals. We planted new native plants, especially plants that were traditionally used for food, for technology and for medicinal purposes. The dream here was to restore the lake naturally so that eventually, we can return the salmon. We believe that by bringing back the lake and the salmon, everyone at Beecher Bay will realize that if we can bring back the salmon, we can bring traditional knowledge, us, back as well. Of course, my research is also aimed at protecting our language, customs, stories, pictures and beliefs.

My research, since it is the transmission of our Tupaati between generations, also involves Smith’s (1999) “Naming” process (p. 157). An important part of hereditary property and knowledge is the world we live in and the traditional and hereditary names of places and people. In addition, the indigenous processes of “Returning” (p. 155), “Revitalizing” (p. 147), and “Restoring” (p.154) are also a large part of my research. We can give a lot of names to types of methodology in an attempt to classify them - to put them into a box for future reference - but really, my research and dissertation reflects a combination of a number of defined methodologies, or processes.

The traditional ways of passing on our Tupaati are processes, or a methodology, because there are a number of defined methods of passing on the knowledge in ways that will be remembered. This method is what has been broken down and my goal has been to find a way to bring it back or ‘repair’ it. Tupaati is not, in itself, a method; it is the

knowledge and the objects that belong to a family, but there are ancient protocols that guide the process of passing on Tupaati.

I feel that in any research, it is important to spend time with the people one is doing research “with” and learning from these people what research they would like to see, how they prefer it to be done, and what respectful ways are important, before even designing the research. If someone is doing research with any culture, it is, in my opinion, crucial that this research is done “for” those people and not “to” them, regardless of whether the researcher is an ‘insider’ or ‘outsider’. I also believe that it is crucial to recognize that when we go into a community or home, we are those who don’t know; those we are doing research with are the ones who do know. This methodology has been in existence for as long as indigenous peoples have, and, in our language it is called Tupaati, or hereditary knowledge.

Tupaati

Tupaati is the knowledge of the songs of a family, the names of people and the history of the people with those names; it is the knowledge of the arts and skills of our ancestors; the knowledge of the hereditary grounds for yearly harvesting rounds, and it is the hereditary knowledge of belonging – it is replanting or deepening the roots of our present family in the history/lands of heredity. Tupaati also includes all the objects, generally of spiritual importance, that belong to the songs, dances, and heredity.

Tupaati was taught to every child in a family and traveled to other families through marriage and adoption from birth. Although this process has, to a large extent, been disrupted and disturbed nearly to the point of extinction, there is still a chance to bring back the teachings of the Tupaati. It is not just the language, but the language is the

container of the concepts and the knowledge. Therefore, if Tupaati is to be brought back, so must the language in order to place the information or knowledge in the proper containers.

Reciprocity

Ethically (traditionally), I needed to bring presents to the Elders and relatives I visited. This is the way of showing respect and appreciation and did not coerce anyone to give information. As I was directed to meet others in the family, I arrived at their doors with presents. The presents might have been rejected and I might have been left standing on the steps. The presents were accepted and I was invited in for a meal, and as long as I entered and accepted the meal, the proper respect had been shown and received. At this point, and only at this point, could we begin to discuss what I was working on, and why I needed their help. It was entirely up to the Elders I visited whether they wished to participate. In the past, when I have visited with family, there has always been an eagerness to bring out photographs of relatives, of the old villages, and any other treasures that are being held for the future. Although it sometimes took years, as with the old photographs from Kyuquot, the Elders have been extremely wonderful and helpful.

Use of the Knowledge Gathered

The knowledge, teachings, I was given; the knowledge the family wanted me to concentrate on, the way it was recorded, preserved, analyzed and disseminated was, and is, really up to the family. The primary work of my dissertation research was the processes, the problems and encouragements encountered and the end results of the work. I have permission to share the language information with anyone else who needs to know

the language and to include it in my dissertation. However, much information is private and closely guarded (names, personal spirit songs, genealogy, family designs, and stories) and this cannot be made available in the dissertation or the publicly available interactive program unless permission is granted in future to freely include any of this information.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) best describes the importance of sharing research:

Sharing is the responsibility of research. The technical term for this is the dissemination of results, usually very boring to non-researchers, very technical and very cold. For indigenous researchers sharing is about demystifying knowledge and information and speaking in plain terms to the community.

Community gatherings provide a very daunting forum in which to speak about research. Oral presentations conform to cultural protocols and expectations. (p. 161)

In this case, the community consists of a large family extending over several First Nations communities, and sometimes also involving other families in those communities.

Once, in Nitinaht, I was showing some of the information I'd gathered for the family trees, and two other families wanted me to do their family trees. Of course, by the time I had finished, we discovered that we were related.

I am hoping that this dissertation will help other researchers when they are studying First Nations, or other cultures, in finding the best possible means of doing their research in the way those being studied want to see it done. I believe that doing research with one's own family has a totally different set of ethics and problems one does not encounter when studying people who are not relatives. I have had to do much soul-searching - where, as a family member, I would have one reaction but where, as a

researcher, or scholar, I could not allow myself that simple reaction. When working with family, one hears many stories – more like rumours - about other family members. This was particularly difficult when the story was negative about someone I know, respect, and love. Normally, I would have disagreed with them, but in this case, I listened and took notes, curdling inside, quietly. I checked these stories out with everyone else, and of course, there were many stories, some of which I liked, some I didn't; however, I could not say a word. I had to try to be unbiased. That information does not necessarily belong in the dissertation, but for the “Family First” program, it is imperative that the information and stories are all gathered and, stored, if not told. It is part of our history; part of our knowledge of our family and ancestors. I guess the difference lies in the immersion in the knowledge when one is related, as opposed to being a temporary visitor from somewhere else.

For my dissertation, I felt it was important to present certain information that was not deemed confidential or that was agreed upon to become public knowledge and that might help others understand a little about the family: what life was like, our history and our language. It was also important to share the ideas behind the “Family First” program as well as some of the concerns about the “Family First” program.

I hope that this document will help others with ideas for research that needs to be done; however, most of all, I hope that this dissertation will help other First Nations students who wish to research within their own communities and families. I hope it will provide new ideas, new strengths, and new approaches to help others preserve and revive their traditional knowledge in a way that can continue to teach, as authentically as possible, so that when we fall over the edge of yesterday, we find a bridge to tomorrow.

Overview of Each Chapter

Chapter 2: Benefits and Difficulties of Using Modern Technology to Save Old

Knowledge

In this chapter the reader is introduced to some of the ideas and concerns about the use of modern technologies such as interactive multimedia, audio, and video recordings both for teaching and for preserving traditional knowledge. This chapter also includes an overview of theories about First Nations' ways of knowing and learning required to support the use of modern technology for the production of our interactive multimedia program, "Family First".

Chapter 3: "Family First" – a Proprietary Program

Although, for reasons of respect of tradition, the actual family information cannot be included in the dissertation, the description of the "Family First" interactive multimedia program is given in this chapter. The various commercial graphics, database, and text programs used to create various parts of the "Family First" program are provided. The outline of the "screens" or pages used in the actual program, as well as the types of information that would be included in "Family First" are described. This also includes explanations of these types of information and why they are so important.

Chapter 4: The Beauty of a West Coast Language

The Nitinaht language is on the verge of extinction, with only few fluent speakers left and those speakers are only the elderly. This chapter discusses how beautiful and unique the language is and explores alternatives for the restoration of the language.

Chapter 5: Our Last Puk'u'u Weaver

We have one weaver of the delicate “grass” (Slough Sedge) baskets left in the family. This is her life story as well as some background information on the puk'u'u baskets, or decorative baskets. These baskets were originally thought to be used to protect special objects from breakage in the house and on journeys. I have included maps of the First Nations and their reserves referred to in this chapter.

Chapter 6: History of a West Coast Family

It is not always easy to piece together a family history for First Nations families because of the many different people and artifacts involved in these records; relatives, archives, history books, photographs, stories, census materials, death certificates, and many other sources all produce small pieces, as the pieces in a quilt, and sewing it together may leave gaps. Metaphorically, the quilt, with some confidential pieces missing and some pieces that are not certain, is laid out in this chapter.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The conclusion ties the pieces of this dissertation together and presents the reader with a picture of where we can go from here, with regard to preserving traditional knowledge with respect and honour.

Supporting Literature

There are some really interesting connections to be made in the areas of First Nations' worldview, learning styles, experiential learning, and the new technology of interactive multimedia. However, there are concerns among many First Nations

communities, First Nations researchers and scholars, and other minority culture researchers and scholars about the methods of some researchers from majority cultures (Battiste, 1998; Castellano, 2000; Kirkness, V., 1998; Reyhner, 1996; Smith, 1999; Trask, 1989; Wilson, S., 2001). At least some, if not all, teachers and school systems appear to be confused regarding the purpose of the First Nations content; the role First Nations content plays in schools, and the inability to provide accurate, relevant, and meaningful views of First Nations peoples, especially local First Nations communities (Barsh et al., 1996; Wheeler, 2001).

Oral history is a valuable resource and ought not be discounted because it is not written down. Oral history is the only Indigenous history available for pre-contact eras and contains important worldviews and perspectives (Fallat & Moore, 2001; Tafoya, 1989; Weber-Pillwax, 2002).

Many feel that more accurate, deeper and ongoing inclusion of knowledge from First Nations' cultures and sciences would greatly improve First Nations student participation and would provide more acceptance and tolerance of difference, thereby helping to eradicate a lot of the racism, prejudice, and violence within the majority culture toward First Nations peoples (Barsh et al., 1996; Haukoos, 1995; Kawagley, 1995; Snively, 1990).

First Nations peoples traditionally learned through playing, watching, listening, and practicing, depending upon the skills to be learned, based on the First Nations' worldviews or ways of knowing (Deloria, V. , 1991a; Kawagley, 1995; Medicine, 1975; Netting, 1986). Within the school setting, First Nations students have had many learning styles attributed to them them (Carpenter, 1998; Kirby, 1984; More, 1984; Stellern,

Collins, Gutierrez, & Patterson, 1986; Vitale, 1982). For the most part, all of these learning styles match the teaching styles of multimedia.

The non-linear functionality of multimedia lends itself to the many different learning styles of students (Chou, 1997; Chrisjohn, 1986; Grabowski, 1991; Grignon, 1993; Kerka, 1998; Small & Ferreira, 1994) and lends itself as well to experiential learning (Davies & Crowther, 1995; Marold, 2002; Rieber, 1996; Turkle, 1984) as well as learning through play (Blanchard & Cheska, 1985; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Rieber, 1996; Singer, 1995).

The aural, visual, non-linear, and self-guided exploration made possible through multimedia in education has allowed us to enter a new age where we can move away from our reliance on the peculiar, and linear, abstraction of written expression (Bergland, 1994; Cotton & Oliver, 1993; Marold, 2002). Although there is still much debate on the best ways to implement and use multimedia within education (Hannafin, 1997; Jones, 1997; Okey, 1995; Rieber, 1996), there are still problems in the areas of teacher knowledge and availability of equipment within many schools (Bergland, 1994; Kinnaman, 1994; Merrill, 2002; Recesso, 2002; Tiene & Luft, 2002).

There have been some astounding increases in retention and statewide test scores where integrated multimedia technology has been implemented to teach language, math, science, and literature (Bergland, 1994; DeGroot, 1994; Eng, 1995; Laybourne, 1994; Lohr, 1994).

Progress, through the use of multimedia, has been made in teaching about and preserving First Nations' culture (Allen et al., 2002; Wilson, J., 1992b). Due to the aural and visual capability of Multimedia it is extremely useful in the teaching and recording of

First Nations languages (Wilson, J., 1992b), and writing (Hymer, 1988; Sower, 1990).

Now that multimedia is becoming easier to create and is more reasonably priced, I expect a great increase in these efforts. There are a great number of First Nations websites already accessible over the World Wide Web through which anyone with access can learn a vast amount of information about First Nations' culture, history and language. For example:

- Alaska Native Knowledge Network (Alaska Native Knowledge Network),
- Bill's Aboriginal Links (Bill's Aboriginal Links),
- Native American Indian Resources (Native American Resources)
- First Nations Periodicals (First Nations Periodicals)
- Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (Ontario Institute of Studies in Education)

As time progresses, more resources about First Nations and their knowledge become available and it becomes not so much a question of finding the information but of carefully discerning the most accurate and credible sources of information.

Chapter 2: The Benefits and Difficulties of Using Interactive Multimedia, a new technology to preserve old knowledge

I felt it was important, for the purposes of my dissertation, to look carefully at the many, varying opinions and information about the use of interactive multimedia for the purpose of teaching. This chapter looks at these opinions about Interactive multimedia as a teaching tool, as well as First Nations' ways of learning. It was important to establish that such a new technology would be acceptable for the preservation and teaching of traditional knowledge.

In order to create the teaching program, called "Family First", using traditional knowledge it was important to have a good background in the theories about First Nations learning and the acceptance of new technology to the First Nations members of our family.

When I first began my Ph.D. program, there was hesitancy, and even disapproval, from some members of the community to which I belong as well as from other First Nations persons from the University community, with regard to the use of computers and modern technology to preserve traditional culture. Much has changed since the year 2000; since the advent of radio, television, and even satellite stations that belong to First Nations. One clear example is the Aboriginal People's Television Network (APTN), which has programming in some First Nations and Innu languages and cultural programs.

Television has played a large role in changing the young First Nations people since first becoming available on reserves. In some cases, this has been a long time, but

in others, such as Beecher Bay First Nation, only 40 kilometers from Victoria, it has only been since the advent of satellite television reception; about 20 years. Prior to this, we could receive only Bellingham by antenna, not Victoria. Unfortunately, and I don't understand the reason for this, today, in many First Nations homes, the television is on 24 hours a day all week long.

With the coming of satellite television, there has been an incredible change in the young. No longer is there as much participation in the community and when one enters a home, often the television is the focus of the younger (and sometimes older) family members. Up at Nitinaht, I tried shifting the channel to APTN, but when the teens arrived, the station was instantly changed to a music channel. There is often a strong identification among the young with Rap music and its references to oppression and prejudice, even though the cultures and roots are quite different. With the adoption of the opinions of much Rap music, there has been a strong influence from the other opinions, such as the role of women as "ho's", gang mentality, and crime. This is unfortunate as this identity with a foreign worldview has moved many young people far from their First Nations identity. Perhaps this is because the pride in their traditional culture is more distant for, and less available to, them.

Years ago, I conducted a small research project with teens from the community to which I belong, and wrote a paper about the results. I was asking the youth who their hero was, and the majority of the discussion centered around what a hero was. In the end, I was thrilled that my expectation of a Rap Performer as their hero proved to be wrong; their heroes turned out to be Elders and the respect was the primary reason, not just the respect they felt for the Elders, but also the respect shown to them by the Elders (Chippis,

Pakki, 1999).

Many First Nations families now have digital cameras or cell phones with cameras and video recorders. The use of this technology has escalated, along with its acceptance, since the time of beginning my dissertation. Every year, for example, the traditional canoe races among most of the West Coast First Nations are recorded by participants and brought home to their communities through these media.

As much as it has changed, there are still important issues about computer-based learning and the use of interactive multimedia.

Computer-Based Learning

Experiential learning through the use of computers can be a much deeper form of learning, but it requires some important features in the software design for the user.

While there are many who claim it to be superior, there are yet others who do not.

When Turkle's research brought her to school age children whose first experience with computers transformed their learning, she looked to the earlier research of Dewey, Montessori, and even Piaget who first championed "think and do" or "hands-on-learning". When she called computers "the second self" she relied on Lévi-Strauss' "tinkerers and planners". She concludes that computers change the human spirit and become almost a second identity within our minds. (Marold, 2002, p. 115)

In another quote from Marold (2002): "Students enjoyed learning this way [by computer], and felt they earned better grades because of the technology-laden environment" (p. 113). "Electronic tutelage refers to the use of computers to learn new

concepts, rather than using the human teacher-learner interaction” (p. 114). Marold goes on to add, “The delivery of education by use of computers as a complement, or even a substitute for, the human tutor is the essence of electronic tutelage. The move from oral to print-dependent noesis was evolutionary. Electronic tutelage is an electronic way of knowing” (p. 113).

According to Wikipedia¹, the meaning of noesis is: “In phenomenology, noesis is an act of consciousness. Thinking, loving, hating, imagining are all verbs applying to what minds do. One would never call ‘loving’ a belief, because it is something you do, not something you merely hold to be true”.

On the other hand, in an article in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Oppenheimer (1997) states, “There is no evidence that most uses of computers significantly improve teaching and learning...” and claims that computers threaten to diminish the reading, writing and self-expression skills of students while at the same time crushing their imaginations and stunting their capacity for socialization.

Both opinions are most likely quite true, depending upon which computer-based learning systems or programs are being looked at, and depending upon the outcomes seen by the author. It is imperative, however, that educators do not favour one method to the exclusion of another, unless it has been found to be more meaningful and useful to all the students who may use it. Too often, educators’ preferences dictate a method with no real concern or options for the needs of each student. The onus ought to be on learning.

As with any great swing from one side to another, it may take a while to achieve a

¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noesis>

middle road; to find a balance between both sides.

Experiential Learning

It would be difficult to make a blanket statement that computers are a superior delivery mechanism for experiential learning. It could well be that the old way of truly experiencing first-hand what one is learning is far superior to even computers. Within the field of education, there are often time, money, and other administrative constraints that make this type of learning difficult. It may be better, for example, to learn Japanese by moving to Japan for a year, but it may not always be possible.

In this sense, the experiential learning that can be attained through computer-based multimedia may be the most feasible potential delivery mechanism. The computer can, through the use of good design and planning, graphics and full-motion video, animation and sound, simulate the experiential learning process of the real experience. For this reason, computer-based experiential learning is far more suitable where there are time and financial constraints. Davies and Crowther (Davies & Crowther, 1995) write, "Multimedia technology offers the opportunity to simulate reality and therefore can facilitate experiential learning. Through video and sound, a real-life scenario can be conveyed and then the interactive and non-linear access capabilities of multimedia can enable the student to explore the situation as if for real" (p. 4). Davies and Crowther go on to state, "There are limitations, however, insofar as the complexity of a real life situation can never be replicated with total accuracy. Care must be taken to ensure the package is not unrealistic, and the social implications must also be considered. Students may become proficient in interacting with a computer, but less able to interact with real people" (p. 4). Davies and Crowther mention the relationship between multimedia

technology and experiential learning: “Related to active learning is the notion that students learn well by doing for themselves. This has been described as experiential learning and is one of the four key elements in Kolb’s learning cycle. This cycle consists of planning, experiencing, reflecting and theorizing” (p. 4). Again, the success of the multimedia program within any educational setting is very much dependent upon the teacher’s following the four key elements in Kolb’s learning cycle before implementing a program into the course. Not only does multimedia provide flexibility for students’ use, but it also provides flexibility for the teacher.

It is often not possible for teachers to try out programs in order to choose the best one for his/her needs. One of the favourite pastimes when teachers and principals visit the Beecher Bay Tribal Learning Centre is to have the students run some of the many programs we have available there, but the educators like it even better when they get a chance to play with the programs themselves.

Electronic tutelage is above all participatory; learning is not successful unless the learner is actively engaged in the process „If learning is individual and self-paced, the group discovery that characterizes the ideal classroom situation is lost. There is a loss of the powerful collaborative aspect of group learning. (Marold, 2002 p. 118)

It depends, then, not only on the computer or the programming; success with experiential learning also depends upon the individual who is learning and on the instructor. It may not be necessary for learning to be both individual and self-paced; it may be possible for the learning to be both individual and guided at the same time. This depends upon the circumstances and the desired outcomes. Not all learning is done in a

group environment, and not all experiential learning has to be individual. With the many changes taking place in the world of electronic media, it is now possible to share experiences through “virtual reality”, but this probably won’t take place within the ordinary school setting for some time. It is also possible to view a program over the Internet, through a television set, and interactively through a network. There are many alternatives and many more to come. It is, to a large extent, up to the teacher/instructor to explore and determine what will be best suited for the desired outcome. In addition, at present, due to financial constraints, not all schools can afford to have enough computers and the latest programming technology available to all students.

There is much to be considered beyond mere simulation, however. There is the importance of capturing the learner’s interest and enjoyment in order for true learning to take place. Rieber (1996) suggests that,

Enjoyment results when an activity meets one or more of the following eight components:

1. Challenge is optimized;
2. Attention is completely absorbed in the activity;
3. The activity has clear goals;
4. The activity provides clear and consistent feedback as to whether one is reaching the goals;
5. The activity is so absorbing that it frees the individual, at least

temporarily, from other worries and frustrations;

6. The individual feels completely in control of the activity;

7. All feelings of self-consciousness disappear; and

8. Time is transformed during the activity (e.g. hours pass without

noticing). (p. 10)

In experiential learning, then, it is important for the learner to become totally immersed in the experience, to be challenged but not overwhelmed by the experience, and to feel completely at ease and in control. Considering the many differences in learners, and things to learn, it will be a difficult task to create a program that will captivate each learner equally. It is possible now, with layering, programming with different levels of challenge, to make various types of controls available to the user to suit their learning style. As this educational software and hardware creation progresses, new ways to reach and captivate learners equally, yet individually, will most likely emerge.

Rieber (1996) goes on to state that “Extensive research on play with children and adults in anthropology, psychology, and education indicates that play is an important mediator for learning and socialization throughout life (Blanchard & Cheska, 1985; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990)” (p. 2). Rieber adds, “Careful blending of their attributes offers promise in guiding the design of interactive learning environments where structure and motivation are optimized without subverting personal discovery, exploration, and ownership of knowledge ... learning environments that encourage people to play” (p. 3).

Rieber also says,

According to Glickman, the benefits of play are long-term – enabling intellectual and social growth over many years (see also Singer, 1995). If, on the other hand, one is primarily interested in short-term gains on performance tests of narrow objectives, such as standardized achievement tests, the value of play becomes less evident. (p. 6)

The National University of Singapore (NUS) website states in its Centre for Development of Teaching and Learning page (2002) “Ideally the goal is not simply to do old things better but to bring about a transformed and improved learning experience for students. Well-known benefits of multimedia courseware are as indicated below.

With Respect to the learner:

1. Engagement of multiple sensory modes,
2. Flexible access to content, allowing students to be freed from a
linear learning sequence,
3. Support for multiple learning styles,
4. Support for self-paced learning,
5. Greater student responsibility for and control over personal
learning and development, and
6. Creation of an effective and enjoyable learning experience. (p. 1)

Bergland (1994) provides some astounding facts in the following quotations:

The educational power of this medium is undeniable. Research done for IBM indicates that people remember about 20 percent of the information they read, about 40 percent of information they hear, and about 80 percent of the information with which they interact (DeGroot, 1994). (p. 4)

“The Hueneme School District in Oxnard, CA developed programs where students used integrated multimedia technology to learn language, math, science and literature. In just 10 years, Hueneme leaped from the 40th percentile to the 92nd percentile in statewide test scores (Laybourne, 1994)” (p. 4). “Unit tests administered to the students reveal that students are more focused when using the technology than they are in traditional classrooms (Eng, 1995)” (p. 4). Perhaps the most important finding by Bergland (1994) on this topic was: “Educators believe the technology equalizes the diverse backgrounds of students and report that the mini-school students are excited to learn (Lohr, 1994)” (p. 5).

In 1988, I worked with some three-year olds from the Beecher Bay Reserve on an ancient word-recognition computer program (it would flash a picture and the student would select the word they thought went with the picture). The little ones loved this program and came up often. Although I did not write a paper on the results, I do remember them clearly. When using the same approach on paper, I received wild guesses, blank looks or shy smiles and an average “hit” between 2-3/10 overall for all students. With the computer program, there was never any hesitation, wild guesses, blank looks or shy smiles but they did get a “hit” of 7/10 overall. Two students in particular

were followed as they went through school to graduation age (they attended the Learning Centre). One student was constantly being told (by parents and teachers) how intelligent he was, while the other was always made to feel unintelligent (by his parents and teachers). The two students followed this pattern throughout the elementary grades, one being “mouthy” and always right, the other being withdrawn and always expecting to be wrong. As they reached high school, an amazing transformation occurred. The “smart” student discovered that he couldn’t live up to the expectations, crumbled under the pressure, and dropped out of school. The “unsmart” student had no expectations placed on him, and therefore no pressure, and became the second person ever to graduate (2002) from Beecher Bay (the first being Henry Chipps in 1971).

I guess I’m covering a lot of ground here, but from watching and working with these two students from the age of three to the age of 18, I’ve been fortunate enough to witness a whole series of events that affected two students who both scored the same in word recognition at the age of three. There is a lot at play in the success of students; however, it should be noted that when it came to an interactive situation, each student responded in the same way and scored the same way. Neither student was shy, withdrawn, nor superior to the other. Only in the multimedia setting were they ever equal in accomplishment and attitude.

With the present government in British Columbia, a dilemma now arises. The government is encouraging the use of computers and knowledge of them, while pushing school rating for future funding through more standardized achievement testing. This could well mean that computer use and knowledge will be for short-term gains rather than experiential learning, and this in turn could mean that however superior experiential

learning may be, it will be difficult if not impossible to bring it into the schools here.

Benefit to First Nations students

First Nation Cultures are oral cultures, with children traditionally learning through play, watching and listening, and then by trying and practicing, depending upon the skills to be learned. In addition, for a number of reasons, the shift to written media has not taken place smoothly and in many cases has not really taken place at all. There tends also to be a distrust of the written media, since much written material misrepresents First Nations Peoples, misrepresents history, and misrepresents any agreements made between the First Nations and non-First Nations peoples (Allen et al., 2002). A reverse distrust of oral knowledge appears to exist among literary cultures. There are sayings among literal societies such as “a promise is meant to be broken” but this saying doesn’t, and couldn’t, exist among oral societies.

There have been many definitions of learning style differences through research with ethnic groups and quite a few of these include First Nations peoples. These differences include: global/analytic (More, 1984); impulsive/reflective (Messer, 1976); verbal/nonverbal and field dependent/field independent (Witkin et al., 1977); simultaneous/sequential processing (Kirby, 1984); concrete/abstract and spatial/mechanical (Bowd, 1971); linear/non-linear (Rhodes, 1988); right-hemisphere dominant/left-hemisphere dominant (Chrisjohn, 1986; Ross, 1982; Stellern et al., 1986; Vitale, 1982; Webb, 1983), and visual/auditory (More, 1987).

Altogether, the theories appear to see First Nations student learning styles as global, non-linear, holistic, simultaneous, non-verbal, field-independent, concrete, right-hemisphere dominant, visual, spatial and mechanical. Assuming there is some basis for

these theories, it would fit in beautifully with experiential learning, especially through interactive multimedia, which is defined as non-linear and visual (Carpenter, 1998). The combination of sound, pictures, text and animation offered in multimedia is important as it represents a move away from written and abstract modes of expression (Bergland, 1994).

One cannot simply look at learning styles and multimedia; one must also look at teaching styles, learning environments, and the ways in which the multimedia is used. There are many factors that affect First Nations success within the school system, and a reliance upon learning styles or experiential learning alone would probably be a mistake.

Rather than looking at learning styles, it is far more important to look at such things as conflicts in worldviews, lack of understanding and appreciation by teachers and peers of cultural differences; even the linear and calendar-based structure of the school year may conflict with the different non-calendar-based structure of First Nations students' years, or annual cycles. Although the annual cycle, or annual round, of First Nations life has, in many cases, been rendered less nomadic in some communities, or more sedentary in others, the annual round still exists and still takes priority in community life. A good source of information on Straits Salishan of Saanich yearly round is available over the internet including a video recording of Earle Claxton discussing the use of seaweeds, is available as well as a book called, "The Saanich Year" (Claxton, 1993). It might be useful to begin to study priorities within First Nations communities, and finding some way to respectfully accommodate these priorities.

This means that the school that relies primarily upon writing and reading is often not effective in teaching First Nations students. With the advent of simulation and

experiential learning, there could be a greater compatibility between the First Nations learner and the learning process due to the more familiar (even though computerized) teaching and learning methods.

From personal experience throughout 23 years of teaching, with written media and with computers, there does appear to be a definite preference for the more experiential style of learning among the First Nations students I taught. In some cases, courses were taught with reading and writing only and the results were generally poor. There was a noticeable lack of interest and a reluctance to participate. On the other hand, when reading and writing were minimized (to the essential) and combined with ‘hands-on’ learning, the interest and involvement of the students grew enormously, regardless of the difficulty of the material being learned. This was not using computers. When students were using computers as part of the learning experience, whether the programs were self-paced or not, there was also an eagerness to participate and a lack of anxiety over the new learning environment.

Through my work with many students over the years, I would say that many First Nations students have experiences in the school system that can frighten them away from trying. In my job, I spend a lot of time and effort trying to undo “blocks” developed in school so the students can progress in their learning.

One area where very large learning “blocks” develop is in reading out loud. Many of the students are very uncertain when reading and some nearly panic if expected to read out loud. For years now, we have had reading circles with all age groups, where we all sit around a table and each person has a turn reading out loud. Each student may read as little as nothing and up to a paragraph before passing the book to the next person. To

begin with, several students will pass the book right away, but as they hear others reading as well, worse or better than they, with nobody laughing, they soon begin to participate. There is no teacher or peer pressure to read, only their desire to try it.

I feel that a lot of damage is done with looks, snickering, impatience, and other signals common in a non-First Nations school-setting. Since one of the theories is that one learning style among First Nations students is non-verbal, thereby meaning that looks, facial expressions, “body language”, and silence are an important part of communication, the environment in which the students learn can have a huge effect. One example of this (and again, this is personal experience) is when I teach students that are “becoming Dancers” (learning traditional ways by living in the “Long or Big or Smoke house” and being taught by the Elders for weeks or even months during the winter season) they are not allowed to talk. They come to the learning centre and I teach them and get adequate responses from them without a word, a look, a nod, or a shake of the head, from the students. In order to teach (and learn), I need to be able to “read” the students from small signs of anxiety, sighs and moans, calm, or a change in body or head position. My point is this: when non-verbal communication is such an integral part of a student’s world, being exposed to the non-verbal (and verbal) communication common in non-First Nations schools, the student is often extremely sensitive and is often hurt.

Another factor is the lack of understanding by teachers of the ways of First Nations culture. Teachers often rely on eye contact, but when a First Nations student wishes to be respectful, they avoid eye contact because eye contact among First Nations peoples is regarded as a form of aggression. This is often misinterpreted by the teacher, who becomes more adamant about eye-contact, and the student responds by even more

frantically trying to avoid eye-contact. I have seen this situation escalate to near-disaster.

I have a theory I call pre-conditioned response – response learned so early in life that it will kick in even if a person is informed ahead of time what to expect. I have done exercises with teachers who were told in advance that the person at the other end of the phone line would not give the usual little signals the teachers were pre-conditioned to expect. They thought there would be no problem at all; however, in every instance it wasn't very long before an involuntary query such as “are you still there?” crept in, and not much longer before a total feeling of insecurity set in. This training exercise was held through York University at an Elliott Lake retreat.

The reason I mention this is that when students (observed at the Beecher Bay Tribal Learning Centre) are working at the computer, they are not in a threatened position. They are not vulnerable. The computer gives no looks, no body language; it responds the same way regardless of the student's ethnic background. For this reason, in addition to all the other reasons, it is an amazing tool for education for persons of many cultures.

Differences and similarities between traditional teaching methods and interactive multimedia

How teaching and learning took place among Indigenous societies in North America differs from community to community, but there are some general similarities that appear to be fairly consistent.

Before I go any further, though, I would like to quote Beatrice Medicine, a much-mourned Sioux professor of Anthropology from the Standing Rock reservation in South Dakota (1975):

Increasingly, it should be apparent that it is impossible to speak of THE American Indian. Therefore, a holistic view of “Indian education” is an impossibility. More significantly, a caveat exists that no one person – either native or anthropologist – is able to speak authoritatively for native Americans relying on their expertise about “my people”. (p. 284)

It is generally accepted that each First Nations group had their own traditional forms of education and that these methods relied on aural and visual sources as well as imagery (Hampton, 1993; More, 1987; Tafoya, 1989).

In order to discuss First Nations’ traditional teaching methods, it is important to look at the concept of worldview. The reason for this is simply that I believe worldview is what determines what is taught, and even how something is taught. In many ways, worldview is closely related to the values of a community. Worldview is changeable as the needs of a community changes. Cochran (2001) explains,

Indigenous communities and people see the world from a different perspective, known as the native worldview. That worldview seeks harmony and integration with all life, including the spiritual, natural and human domains. ... Native peoples’ constructed technology was mediated by nature. ... Their traditional education processes were carefully constructed around mythology, history, the observation of natural processes and animals’ and plants’ styles of survival and obtaining food and use of natural materials to make their tools and implements, all of which was made understandable through thoughtful stories and illustrative examples. (p. 1)

Cochran later adds, “Anywhere I travel now, I can look at a tree, a plant or a root and understand what its meaning is, its purpose, and how we use it, ... That vast amount of information came not only from my mother, but from all the people who came before her” (p. 2). Due to the nature of Native teaching methods, and the age of it, that which was learned was passed on, generation after generation. With each generation there was new knowledge, but this did not change the teachings, it added to it - “updated” it, and retained the history of it. Van Hamme (1995) says,

Some of these [indigenous] educational processes were quite structured such as vision quests and other ceremonies, ritualized stories, oral histories, and formal instruction. Others were more informal processes characterized by observation and imitation of daily activities geared toward teaching children the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for survival in a subsistence economy organized around kinship relations. (p. 1)

There are many definitions of worldview but I will list only a few. A worldview consists of principles to enable people to make sense of their world (Berger et al., 1974; Deloria, V. , 1993), it is a cognitive map providing coping devices (Netting, 1986) and a means of seeking harmony and integration with all life (Burger, 1990; Knudtson & Suzuki, 1992). In addition, every language and dialect has its own worldview (Kawagley, 1995).

An Elder advised me, when my daughter was born in 1978, to place her in a cradleboard. The reason given for this was that a baby needs to concentrate on thinking about what they see and hear in their new world before beginning to interact with this world. The same advice was given to my daughter when her first son was born in 1996,

and recently, when her second son was born. We are all given that advice when a baby is born. This, for the Beecher Bay community, is the beginning of a person's education.

The child's role in adulthood was determined early in the child's life and the appropriate teacher would be chosen with whom the child would be an apprentice (Kirkness et al., 1992 p. 7).

These Native American religious values cover a range of human experiential and social activities embedded in oral narratives, ritual practices, and cosmological understandings. It seems apparent that the introduction of indigenous thought traditions into the ecological dialogue would be of vital importance in relation to the degraded state of regional environments around the globe. (Grim, 1993 p. 52)

Perhaps, on the surface, paradoxically, native social cohesion is seen to rest on individualism. The community respects individual differences within the bounds of cultural norms, and takes advantage of the various talents among its members – a leader's political skill, a hunter's knowledge of animals, a storyteller's ways with words, a businessman's financial ability. Young learners, too, are accepted as individuals and are not expected to progress all in the same direction at the same time nor to meet set standards of achievement. They are expected to attend to adult activities around them according to their own motivations, or to approach teachers and elders themselves, before direct instruction is given. (Stairs, 1993)

“Family First” as a teaching tool

The reason why I have included anything at all about multi-media based curriculum and the school system when the “Family First” program is intended, at this point, to be a proprietary program for family use only, is that I foresee that, at some point, the family may wish to expand use of the “Family First” program to use in schools attended by family members. At such a time, confidential information will most likely be available only with a password, but the other non-confidential information would be available to the rest of the class. Since this is not a decision I can make, all I can do is foresee the potential for public use and plan for it.

Moving around within “Family First” and listening to Elders show and teach, will be a small step toward the traditional teaching methods. This program is not intended to replace Elders teaching the young within traditional communities, but rather to supplement the knowledge of the Elders in the absence of these teachings, and to hopefully create links between the Elders in our family and those younger; to open the opportunity of communication where there is little. Soon, unless there are changes, this information will be lost forever with the exception of what has previously been collected.

If “Family First” was to be used in schools, it may be used in the First Nations Studies courses but there are problems within the existing First Nations studies courses (and I can’t speak of them all, only the ones I have seen and I am supposing may be the case elsewhere). One problem is that the teacher is often non-native. This means that although the materials may often be appropriate to some extent, the teacher is unable to select the materials or present them from a First Nations way of thinking. Another problem is the assumption by some teachers that any First Nations student is an authority on all First Nations cultures, asking these students for confirmation. This not only makes

the aboriginal student uncomfortable, being singled out like that, but it can also make the student appear falsely unknowledgeable to the teacher and the other students.

The worldviews differ quite a bit, which is the key to the difference between this proposed multimedia curriculum and the existing curriculum. The approach to the information is from an entirely different worldview, and students are introduced to this difference time and again throughout the program.

The instructional techniques fostered the total immersion of the mind and the body into the learning process. Dramatically-told stories, legends and myths kindled the learner's imagination. In addition, the stories were repeated to encourage a lasting imprint on the learner's mind. Finally, the learner had to develop listening skills; as a result of the oral tradition, listening became an art. (Marashio, 1982 p. 7)

I don't think it is a matter of whether the interactive "Family First" is more or less effective than traditional methods, because it is really just a matter of presenting the material from the traditional worldview, orally and visually. In no way can "Family First" compete with the traditional way of teaching within a community, and it is not intended to replace this, merely compensate when these teachings are not available. "Family First" is intended to bring knowledge out of some communities and into other communities, and perhaps into classrooms which do not have, or make, the resources available to bring Elders from local First Nations' communities into the classroom. In addition to this, when Elders are asked to come into a classroom from a nearby First Nation community, it is still very "teacher driven". The teacher often asks an Elder to come in and speak on a specific topic or to teach a skill within a totally foreign time frame and setting.

It is up to this generation of educational leaders to tap that valuable resource (Elders' knowledge), because each day, fewer and fewer Elders whose knowledge goes back at least two generations are left to teach us what we need to know. When they are gone, their valuable knowledge goes with them. It's like losing a whole library and its archives. (Kirkness, V. J., 1998 p. 13)

This is another very important aspect of such an interactive program as "Family First"; it is a way to save the teachings of the Elders in a way that can be used to educate youth holistically within and outside the community and even to help new Elders develop the knowledge and to pass it on personally.

I hope that relevant games can be built into "Family First", virtual reality or simulated settings to enhance student understanding, at the advice of the Elders who contribute to each part of the program. Although the repetitiveness inherent in the traditional teaching methods may not be built in, it still exists because students can continue to repeat any section until they feel confident in their skills. This repetitiveness is useful in learning language, songs, family trees and even traditional knowledge. The Elders, who contribute most of the teachings and knowledge, will be invaluable in helping to design the teaching and practice games as well as in analyzing where and how the most beneficial learning will take place in such games or practices.

One strong point for the program is its ability to bring Elders, along with their environment - plants, animals, village, people, and knowledge - right into the home or classroom. It allows the Elders to teach with their own words and actions according to their own ways, with the understanding that someday, some of their students may not all be family. It will hopefully clarify the similarities and the differences between the First

Nations and non-Native communities. It is very desirable that this understanding comes naturally and perhaps on a deeper level than could ever be hoped for with texts or videos alone.

Effectiveness of “Family First”

“Family First” is intended solely for our family, but may, at some point, also be for non-Native students and teachers usually within non-traditional settings. For this reason, I believe it may be more important to look into effectiveness within the realm of existing problems within the schools’ First Nations content use. There are many facets to this, both legislative and prescribed, and the question ought perhaps to be whether “Family First”, if used in a public setting, may help the First Nations content inclusion in the curriculum be more or less effective.

There are several aspects to consider, and I have broken them down for clarity. In a study by Barsh (1996), some of these aspects were covered in interviews with teachers of Native content, Native liaison workers, Native teacher-aides, and school administrators in Lethbridge area schools.

Barsh’s study (1996) found that the majority of teachers felt the purpose of Native content to be to instill tolerance and understanding in non-Native students; nearly as many felt it was to improve Native pupils’ self-esteem, and fewer teachers felt that gaining new knowledge was the purpose of Native content.

If the content is designed in order to instill tolerance and understanding in non-Native students, several opinions need to be looked at. One opinion is that it may be difficult for non-Native persons to understand Native culture. Grim (1993) writes, “How can contemporary non-Native Americans, who have lost touch so long ago with affective

relations to a living, personified land, even begin to understand the significance of the Native American attitudes toward local environments” (p. 42).

I honestly don't feel this is as impossible as Grim makes it sound. I have taken classes of non-First Nations students out to the forests. At the beginning, the unaware breaking of plants – pulling flowers off stems, pulling branches and leaves from trees, hitting plants with fallen branches and kicking of plants. At the end of the walk, each student has become the guardian of at least one plant and the care with which they treat all the plants around them was an amazing change to observe in such a short time. I believe that the introduction of First Nations knowledge ought to begin early, not in grade twelve. In addition, I believe that ethnobotany, or the traditional use of plants, ought to be taught regularly starting in the early grades. I believe one of the biggest problems faced by First Nations students is the overwhelming belief among non-First Nations school employees and students that if a First Nations student is wearing modern clothes, that student is assimilated. This is not the case at all. It ought not be necessary to wear traditional clothing to prove one is First Nation – that lies far deeper than the clothing. Attempts to incorporate the odd “Native awareness day” into the school year may impresses students and staff for the day, but from what I have experienced, the impression does not last even one day past that day. There needs to be more emphasis on present-day First Nations, especially local First Nations, and not just on the “historical” (and assumed vanished) peoples.

There is a real need to bring information about First Nations cultures in its holistic form into schools. Witt (1998) states that, “The value of sharing among people of Native groups is usually referred to in the past tense, but ... these traits are still present” (p.

262).

Van Hamme (1995) has some suggestions for educational strategies that effectively build on the cultural strengths of American Indian children. These include:

- (1) the use of teaching methods and curriculum that are congruent with individual and cultural learning and communication styles,
- (2) the direct integration of American Indian cultural concepts and curricular areas designed for competence in the larger society,
- (3) teaching about American Indian cultural achievements and historical contributions to the overall culture of this country, and
- (4) inclusion of materials relating to the participation and contributions of American Indians to both the tribal and larger societies in the contemporary world. (p. 4)

It is crucial to present all students with First Nations people as human beings whose cultures still exist and the fact that much modern advancement has been through First Nations traditional knowledge. Other opinions are that we can bring understanding of Native culture into the classroom or bring the students out of the classroom. It is important to start getting out of the classroom for First Nations learning or of bringing it into the classroom (Leith & Sientz, 1984; Pepper & Henry, 1986; Snively, 1990; Whyte, 1986). Although it is not always possible to arrange field trips into the wilderness, it is quite possible to encourage students, parents and local First Nations to create a “Native garden” at the schools. Other similar projects can similarly involve the communities in

valuable shared experiences at the school grounds; projects such as building a traditional canoe, carving a totem pole, creating a First Nations cook book and learning to prepare the foods; film and documentary projects, and projects where students research their own cultures and spend time comparing them at their own level and over an extended period of time. Another exciting project is to work with the students and First Nations communities to create a map of the traditional territories along with the geographical names, village names, what the areas were used for (without pushing for any information that does not seem forthcoming) and, on a sheet of acetate, creating another map that fits over but does not cover the underlying map. This map would be of the present geographical names, villages, houses, and what the areas are used for, including present reserves, giving everyone a more timeless view of their world.

In a computer project with Native and non-Native students, Wilson (Wilson, J., 1992a, 1992b) writes, "...the non-Native students benefited from gaining a knowledge of local Native culture that they had previously lacked. They began to develop a genuine curiosity and interest in Carrier culture. It is hoped that they acquired not only knowledge, but also a deeper understanding of the Native people with whom they lived, worked, and attended school" (p. 17).

If building Native student self-esteem is the purpose of the First Nations content in schools, other considerations are important. Although these quotes are from a study on treatment centres for First Nations youth, they are quite applicable to schools.

One would have to define the cultural basis in order to find out what the clients were missing and what they were unable to adapt to, before some content thought to derive from Native culture is merely added in the hope that the whole program

thereby would satisfy the needs of the Native clients and be accepted by them.

One would also have to be clear about which concepts to base an analysis of a program. (Witt, 1998 p. 261) ... High Pine (1973) emphasizes that culture and the old ways (life ways) are for Native people the means for their survival, their resistance to assimilation, and their way to understand the white world. By understanding it, they can participate in the world. Native people can only understand the alien, non-Native culture when they can look at it from their own. Native culture is the reference point for understanding the other world around them. (Witt, 1998 p. 268)

In Wilson's article on the Native computer project, he tells us that, Native students were cast in the role of content experts, a new and positive experience for them. To spend 12 years attending classes in a school system that largely ignores the Native student's history, language, and culture must be a negative experience for these students. (Wilson, J., 1992b p. 7)

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples made a number of important recommendations that don't yet – nearly ten years later - seem to have been implemented as intended.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples follows the same argument of Native culture being the reference point for Native youths. The commissioners conclude that an education of Native children must 'develop children and youth as Aboriginal citizens, linguistically and culturally competent to assume the responsibilities of their nations ... Youth that emerge from school must be grounded in a strong, positive Aboriginal identity', (Government of Canada,

1996, p. 5, Education), and the recommendation to establish ‘a curriculum that instills a proud Aboriginal identity and competence as an Aboriginal person’ (Government of Canada, 1996, Education, 3.5) points out how important culture and identity are for human development. (Witt, 1998 p. 268)

When looking at First Nations content for the purpose of knowledge, there are many important considerations for teachers.

If schools are to do justice to Native students they must not represent a culture that ignores and denigrates the indigenous culture. Oral traditions must be respected and viewed by the teacher as a distinctive intellectual tradition, not simply as myth and legends. If the traditional beliefs, values, and ideas that have been taught to the children by their parents and grandparents are not important in the school curriculum, the message is obvious. Hence a textbook approach with emphasis on the scientifically accepted concepts only will not work. Textbooks make fine resources for the teacher, but no textbook can comprise a viable science program for culturally different students. (Snively, 1990 p. 56)

Whereas other minority groups are tolerated and defined as modern people despite their cultural differences, this is still widely denied to Native people. They are still told that their culture is something that belongs in the past and that the differences between them and the mainstream culture is that Native people are hunters and gatherers living in the Stone Age, and mainstream society is modern: the logical development of the ancient hunter-and-gatherer society. (Witt, 1998 p. 269)

“In this area it is important for the teacher to find out what is going on in the Indian community, to seek help from Native teacher aides, and to encourage students to seek counsel from Native Elders” (Snively, 1990 p. 57). Van Hamme (1995) writes, “If the school system is to support and respect a child’s culture, it is necessary that there be an understanding of the world in which the child actually lives” (p. 4).

An important part of the method in this research (cognitive differences) is to identify the naturally occurring activities and associated cognitive skills for given cultural or subcultural groups. The problem for the educator is to think of ways in which skills so identified can be transferred to the school setting. This may involve thinking of how cognitive processes can be freed from specific content and transferred to new content. (Sanday, 1975 p. 181)

Barsh’s study also inquires about the quality of materials available to teachers of First Nations content. Barsh (1996) stated that most teachers interviewed were critical of the materials available for use in schools, complaining that the materials are out-of-date, do not address the contemporary issues of conflict, and that Native materials were simply lacking in quantity and variety. Some surveys of social studies textbooks used in schools are not very encouraging. O’Neill (1987) writes,

Indeed, the Indian continues to be portrayed in extreme, simplistic, stereotypical roles. On one hand, for example, individuals are seen as noble, peaceful, friendly, and helpful, and yet, on the other as warlike, always attacking, fighting and raiding each other or the European. ... Thus the evidence, as based on published sources, is overwhelmingly conclusive. The status of the North American Indian

in most history and social studies textbooks has not substantially improved in the last 20 years. (p. 4)

To a large extent, text books are purchased by the schools from publishing houses who specialize in school texts. This is, I believe, mostly due to the regularly distributed flyers and catalogues schools receive from these publishers.

Today, Canadian teachers enjoy a greater choice among texts and other learning resources. This is a significant change because it may reduce the commonality of learning experiences that students receive and, at the same time, reduce the influence of a prescribed curriculum. In this regard, the influence of publishing houses can be considerable, especially in the way they promote – or ignore – bodies of instructional theory. (Fleming, Lindsay, Chasteneuf, & Touenant, 1993 p. 27)

Computers are quite important for precisely the reasons referred to in the above quote. Computers can very effectively reduce the influence of a prescribed curriculum by allowing students to experience learning through visual and auditory stimulation of the imagination.

Unfortunately, exactly because publishers of educational materials are now being asked to produce specific publications for use in schools, and because these publishers cannot afford to think locally, the material produced for text books tends to be quite broad in scope. We do need more local content in the schools, especially with regard to First Nations and the environment.

Barsh noted that, “Elders, when invited to classrooms, are typically used in

marginal ways, e.g., making fry-bread, doing beadwork, telling a story. This may carry the implied message that Native people lack their own scholars, sciences, leaders and teachers” (1996 p. 3). This implied message is a very serious problem in the school system. Others have written about this problem. “The design must be in the hands of local people, the ‘Native intellectuals’ as they are called by Fanon (1967). The Elders in the community are in that group” (Witt, 1998 p. 271).

If we sincerely believe that our traditions are important to us, we have no other recourse but to go to the Elders. I firmly believe that we must know the past in order to understand the present so we can plan, wisely, for the future. (Kirkness, V. J., 1998 p. 13)

Battiste (1998) writes, “In almost all of these provinces, these curricula are developed away from Aboriginal communities, without Aboriginal input, and written in English. In effect, the curricula serve as another colonial instrument to deprive Aboriginal communities of their knowledge, languages, and cultures” (p. 16). Battiste adds, “Aboriginal scholars and educators are beginning to think about how to decolonize Canadian education. They have begun to make the seemingly impossible dream of equality of Aboriginal languages and knowledges a flourishing educational reality and a hallmark of the next century” (p. 17).

I really enjoyed reading Trask’s (1989) refreshingly outspoken opinions about Native “experts”,

When push comes to shove, anthropologists and archaeologists say what they really think: they are the experts on Native culture; they have superior knowledge

of it; Natives, by comparison, are uninformed and untrained, and should not, therefore, have control over their sites and culture. (p. 165)

Trask adds, "... we do not make our own history, we merely watch as others concoct a history for us" (p. 162).

In the early 1990s, a tri-band history project (Beecher Bay, Sooke, and Pacheenaht) funded by the Provincial Ministry of Education for use by the Sooke School District (#62) was started. The project had full support from the Sooke School District superintendent, Fred Pye, and when completed, the first copy was printed and filled boxes at the School Board Offices. Unfortunately, Fred Pye retired that year and the boxes of texts somehow all disappeared. There is one copy in their resource library, but the three years of hard work by many members of the three First Nations were wasted. This was not the biggest problem; the biggest problem, of course, was that First Nations Studies continued to use non-local history. This was a serious attempt to provide local First Nations' information into the local schools for the benefit of First Nations students and all the other students. No similar project has since been initiated within the district.

At a conference in Vancouver in 2006, I met with a group of First Nations educators from across Canada to discuss how we can help to introduce more local First Nations history and knowledge into the schools and the consensus was that we needed to start our own publishing house that not only sent out flyers to all the schools, but also supported First Nations in creating their own books and multimedia. This is something I would very much like to be involved with after I complete my studies.

The problem facing many First Nations communities is not so much what the problem with the Educational system is, as how to change it. "Perception of

schools as social systems and institutions predominates as a general tendency.

Therefore, these Lakota educators are knowledgeable about teacher cliques, institutions, and the need for restructuring the educational system. The crux of the problem lies in curricula development. (Medicine, 1975 p. 290)

In Barsh's study (1996), he looked at Teachers' own knowledge. Apparently many of the teachers interviewed "First learned about Alberta's Indians when they were assigned to teach social studies units that included Native content" (p. 4). In my own experience both in the Sooke School District and in London, Ontario, none of the First Nations Studies teachers in the public school system were Native. A few had lived in the vicinity of First Nations communities, or had worked in schools with high concentrations of First Nations students. Strangely, even though there are First Nations teachers within the school districts I have worked with, these teachers are not chosen to teach Native Studies or Native content subjects. Battiste (1998) writes, "Aboriginal communities continue to suffer the effects of colonization and imperialistic policies that erode the base of Indigenous knowledge necessary for the healing and development of Aboriginal peoples" (p. 16). Battiste goes on to state that, "Despite the constitutional reform in Canadian society, Aboriginal languages and knowledge are not yet flourishing in the educational system. ... Underlying this neglect is the belief that Aboriginal languages and knowledge do not belong in the education systems" (p. 17).

Beatrice Medicine (1975) quotes an unnamed Lakota Elder who made an extremely important observation,

One of the most liberal educational philosophies that we have, and it should be rightfully pursued – is that what is taught at home must also be taught in the

classroom, and what is being taught in the classroom must be taught at home. It shouldn't be that when an Indian child comes from a home stepping into a classroom that it would be a different world – another world, and that he has to change himself, adjust himself to those situations and once he steps into his own home he would have to be another person – what his learning activities are should not change from one setting to another. That is the educational goal we are promoting. (p. 286)

In light of the recommendations and opinions stated by so many people, I believe it would be safe to say that “Family First” has the potential to be more effective in teaching some First Nations content in the schools since it will be providing a way for a First Nations family to teach about their worldview, their culture, and their wisdom in the schools. It has the potential to teach the teachers and the students on a totally different level than any text book, video, or movie.

Present Limitations in the use of Modern Technologies

There are virtually no limitations to the potential of modern technology and it expands and grows every day; however, there are some limitations which, at the moment, affect some First Nations.

- First of all, high-speed Internet and Broadband are still not available in all First Nations communities, and, unfortunately, Beecher Bay, Nitinaht and Kyuquot are examples of First Nations without the required technological equipment to access the potential of private networks, web site development,

and interactive on-line learning.²

- The second limiting factor is that many homes do not have computers or, if they do, they are often dated and unable to handle the size and requirements of the most modern technology.
- The third factor is personal. I do not particularly trust the transmission of confidential information or teachings such as “Family First” over the Internet regardless of how private it may claim to be. For public knowledge, there is no problem. I had a couple of experiences that have caused me to be leery of the internet and I will recount them here.

During the Oka crisis, many First Nations discovered that wiretaps had been placed on their telephones, especially if they were involved in the “ancient” technology of the Bulletin Board System (BBS), a non-commercial but effective precursor to the commercial world of Internet, or the World Wide Web. There was actually considerable First Nations communication occurring during those days, including the brilliant but secret shuttling of internal Oka messages to the rest of Canada. I was one of those Bulletin Board Service providers, or a SysOp, and our phones were wiretapped. A friend, who works for Systems Canada, asked why large packages bearing my name were repeatedly crossing his desk. We were actually quite aware of the wiretap, and would jokingly sit down by our computer to have long monologues with the “tap dancers”, as we had named them, thanking the government for finally listening to us. We knew they

² For a connectivity map you can visit the somewhat outdated

<http://fntc.info/files/ConnectivityMapPicture19Aug2005.pdf>

were there because a couple of times we'd actually heard them speaking when we picked up our phone, and too often, we had to ask them to hang up so we could use our phone.

On one occasion, I'd been speaking with another SysOp, and after I hung up, I needed to use the phone again. When I picked up the receiver, I could hear his wife upstairs in the kitchen asking him if he wanted coffee, and his reply from his computer room in the basement, as clearly as if I had been in his house. I contacted him by another means, and asked him to check whether all his phones were hung up; and they were. A couple of months earlier, we had received a warning from a First Nation in the prairies telling of their experiences with the wire taps, so we were aware of the signs and the incredible "hearing" range that technology had.

The second experience was an innocent email, years later, to a friend. Someone I had worked for had gone to jail (unrelated to the job) and I had heard on the radio that his ex-girlfriend and her boyfriend had been murdered, and as the person I was communicating with also knew those concerned, I wrote that it was fortunate for our ex-employer that he was in jail so he wouldn't be blamed. The next day, a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police arrived on my doorstep with a copy of the email asking me for more information about my ex-employer and about the message.

Although I don't believe our information has any bearing on the security of Canada, I do not consider the Internet secure for privacy or confidentiality.

Modern Technology of the Early 21st Century

Wikipedia, one of my favourite technological developments, has created an amazing encyclopedia built entirely on daily contributions by anyone with knowledge to share. To ensure that the information on Wikipedia is as correct and as updated as

possible, anyone with access can edit and add to an entry.³

Wikipedia's article on multimedia breaks the topic into two categories: Linear and non-linear. "Linear active content progresses without any navigation control for the viewer such as a cinema presentation. Non-linear content offers user interactivity to control progress as used with a computer game or used in self-paced computer-based training" (Wikipedia, 2007d)

Multimedia presentations may now be viewed projected onto a screen, played through a media player, or transmitted and can be live or recorded through analog or digital electronic media technology and the presentations may be either streamed (loading constantly while playing) or downloaded to the user's computer or DVD recorder. There are now public sites for the broadcasting of personal media, one of the most popular sites being YouTube.⁴

The application of modern technology to education has grown rapidly. New programs have been developed that allow students (and educators) to experience real-life simulated situations and edutainment, the merging of education and entertainment. The acceptance of such programs is growing daily. Virtual reality is when a person wears special computer-imaging goggles and is wired to the computer in order to sensually be completely somewhere else and their "real-world" movements being carried into the virtual reality world. This is no longer just a game-playing technique, now there is a growing industry creating virtual reality to help professionals learn, practice and perform

³ Wikipedia can be accessed at <http://en.wikipedia.org>

⁴ YouTube can be accessed at <http://youtube.com>

complex or distant techniques.

The future of the “Family First” Program

I am excited about the potential of the new technology that is available and how First Nations are adopting the technology when it comes to their community. When I first began my dissertation, it was a fairly new and controversial concept to use modern technology for the protection and teaching of tradition and traditional knowledge. Now, when I am completing my dissertation, there is a much more widespread acceptance of the teaching and restoration potential of the modern technology.

When I attended a conference, at which the First Nations Technology Council of British Columbia (FNTC) was present, I had (and still have) a vision of a private visual network in each First Nation and with modern computers in each home. The network consisted of a visual map with each home, each business, and the Band Office represented visually on a map. The network would also include emergency services access, government services access, as well as access to other First Nations’ networks, and thereby providing access to relatives. With built in or add-on “web-cams” it will be possible for those communicating to see each other during the conversation. One day, this will be possible and available to every First Nation and remote community and I sincerely hope to be a part of this change. I can visualize the day when our young can easily speak with Elders regardless of their location.

As early as 1985, I had the vision of a communications network and applied for a grant from Innovations Canada to create such a network between First Nations communities while I was a Master of Arts student at York University. Although the grant was approved, the grant and the proposal became the property of York University and the

project changed considerably and, despite being funded for a second year, was unsuccessful and several First Nations groups refused to take part. I ended up not being involved with the project at all. That is now irrelevant, other than that I still have that dream. I still believe that such a network will be a wonderful transition to both the new and the old; for communication as well as for community educational endeavours.

However, I also believe that the need for the transmission and gathering of confidential family traditional knowledge has to take place so it is not lost. When community programs are started for singing and dancing, stories, traditional knowledge and education, much family knowledge is not included because of the confidentiality. For this reason, I still believe that the need for family-specific program development is important. At some point, when security issues can be dealt with and when the technology is available, it would be wonderful to create a website with both public knowledge readily accessible and private knowledge accessible through the use of passwords and even encryption. The public knowledge could be community-based whereas the private knowledge would be family-based.

Although I am presently using fairly “antique” commercial programs for the development of the “Family First” program, it is important to create a solid and useful program that fits into the existing technology (or lack of it) within the communities in which our family live while preparing future editions for newer, acceptable, technology formats.

There is a popular commercial program called Second Life⁵ that allows people to

⁵ www.secondlife.com

create their own lives, environment and commerce in a simulated make-believe world. I visited it, wandered around feeling more and more lost in a world of “no trespassing” and stalkers, until I found a few large trees in an empty area and I imagine that, months later, in that world, I am still sitting there, under that tree. What I would love to see some day is another program, “Indigenous Life”, where non-indigenous people can come and live in the indigenous world and learn skills, languages and history while indigenous people can come and learn about their own culture, each others’ cultures, in addition to working together to create the world and teachings for others to learn. This would be a simulated atlas of the planet earth, with the traditional boundaries, place names and cultures and members of these cultures would be the creators and benefactors as well as the recipients of any profits.

The beauty of the direction the World Wide Web is going in lies in the shift of the control, or as Dr. Don Bergland would rightfully call it, the Gatekeepers, to where anyone can participate in virtually anything and where public demand controls developers.

Through open Application Programming Interfaces, or API’s, “users can add functionality to existing services or use the data from websites as part of other services” (Cych, 2007 p. 33). The fact is that anyone can become a developer of programs or services such as websites, widgets⁶, wikis⁷, businesses⁸, blogs⁹, television programs¹⁰,

⁶ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Widget

⁷ www.wiki.org/

⁸ www.ebay.ca

⁹ www.blogger.com

¹⁰ http://www.masternewmedia.org/video_internet_television/online-television-web-20/online-tv-video-channel-Mobuzz-tv-reviewed-20070703.htm

live web-cam sites¹¹, YouTube¹² entertainment and documentaries, specially marked shows, or mashups, about specific locations on google earth¹³ is the miracle of the Internet. Through the incredible shift from a “gatekeeper” controlled world, we find ourselves in a web-based world where the users become the controllers, often collectively, within an architecture of participation. “It is not so much ‘emerging technology’ as ‘emerging humanity’ in the sense that it is about connecting and socializing the use of computing, and making it more personal” (Bryant, 2007 p. 9).

Becta reports on some of the implications for education, “The IT (Information Technology) function can no longer act as the high priest of all technology, especially when technology is so pervasive and many IT ‘users’ (including students) are more knowledgeable than the people telling them what they can and cannot do. The age of complete control of network security is in the past, and in return, people using IT need to bear some of the support load themselves” (Bryant, 2007 p. 15).

This new world within the web is just waiting for Indigenous peoples of the world to take education and the traditional teachings as well as the modern innovations into our own hands because in this new world, we can in many ways bring back our old world, if we choose to, collectively. The public will decide whether the effort is appreciated, not the gatekeepers.

Teachings similar to “Family First” can easily grow in such an environment and can be as private as FaceBook¹⁴ or as open as public chat rooms.

¹¹ www.earthcam.com

¹² www.youtube.com

¹³ earth.google.com

¹⁴ www.facebook.com

Chapter 3: A Proprietary Program

Introduction

I call this a proprietary program because it belongs to our family completely. It is not a public program because the knowledge the program teaches is confidential and has been confidential through endless generations.

One of the main reasons why our family, amongst too many others, is losing our hereditary knowledge is because our family is too fragmented. As our Elders disappear, the young no longer receive even the basic knowledge that used to be taught every day either through example, story, lectures, or life. This has resulted in our younger generations not knowing even who they are related to, or how; what designs belong to the family; our songs and dances; our names or our hereditary rights. Our Elders and younger family members seldom have a chance to learn from each other because, in our family, too many of our Elders are gone and those who still have the knowledge are at the north end of Vancouver Island while many of us are at the south end of the Island.

Of course, there are many other reasons for this loss of communication and loss of teachings; however, it would still be possible to carry on some teachings, before it is too late, if it were not for the distance and loss of local family Elders.

George Clutesi, our Uncle, said the following about changes in our kinship:

In the old Indian Act, there was a law which forbade an Indian to live on a neighbouring tribe's reserve if his name was not on that band's book, on pain of a penalty or a jail term. It did not matter about the man's former ties with that tribe.

This law alone was most effective in creating a rift between the peoples who were

so closely knit together but a generation ago. It engendered misunderstanding, distrust and rank jealousy. It was laws like these that were instrumental in pulling down and degrading a once-proud race. (1967, p. 165)

Unfortunately, because the Elders who still have knowledge to pass on are getting older and many are suffering from Alzheimer's Disease, it is only a matter of time, if their knowledge is not passed on, before much vast and crucial knowledge is lost forever. For this reason, I think it is not only important to find a way for the Elders to teach the younger people everything they know, it is also important to try to capture as much knowledge and as many skills as possible on video with audio and in photographs and written records. We are truly standing on the edge of yesterday in our family.

Children are no longer able to move in, or travel the land, with other relatives to spend all their time learning because, by law, they have to go to school, they have to do homework, and they are constantly being told that their home teachings are not appropriate. This starts as soon as they begin school at the earliest age, and I've found that this eats away at their recognition of traditional teachings as valid. The teachers don't mean to discredit our culture; they just keep reminding the children that their cultural behaviours and customs are not appropriate in school; "We don't do that here!" or "That is not the proper way to behave". At home, the older children look after the younger children but when they try to protect the younger children at school, they are told off. Kawagley, a Yupiaq Elder, expresses this concern when he writes,

By not teaching the Yupiaq youngsters their own language and way of doing things, the classroom teachers are telling them that their language, knowledge and skills are of little importance... they are expected to learn through a language other

than their own, to learn values that are in conflict with their own, and to learn a "better" way of seeing and doing things. (1999, p. 9)

Traditionally, no Elders would ask young persons to come and learn from them. This was just not done and this is still the case. Unfortunately, now the young are not chosen to learn specific skills at birth, nor are they encouraged to go and learn these skills. The Elders sit and work away with their skills and carry around their knowledge, silently eager for someone to come and learn from them while the young go about their lives. Often there may be an unspoken desire to learn from the Elders, but the young often do not know how to bridge the gap.

For this reason, I thought it might be useful to gather as much information from the Elders as possible and prepare a computer program for anyone in our family to use. It will never take the place of Elders teaching the young, but it is as close as I can get today. This may be our last chance.

When I first began to look for Elders from our family to teach me, I was shocked to discover that there were very few left who could teach. During the past four years of working with Elders in our family, we have lost six of the eleven I found, including the last three family Elders on Beecher Bay reserve and three at Nitinaht, leaving only two at Nitinaht and three at Kyuquot. There are also Elders at Neah Bay, but I could not afford to go there for very long. I did, however, gather almost 2,000 pages of our family trees recorded by Erna Gunther around 1930.

I do not wish our children to have to base their future knowledge on information gathered by non-family, non-native papers and articles. This is not due to prejudice, but because much of our hereditary information is considered private to the family and has

not been taught to people outside the family. The only true experts on our history and hereditary information are the Elders. Another reason why it is difficult to base our family information on previously gathered information is that, generally, research has been done on the basis of community rather than on family. Available community information does not include a family's private information, at least not since the old, family village structure was destroyed.

I went to the Elders in the traditional way; as a willing student helping the Elders. I washed floors, did dishes, cooked, helped to clean fish and hang them in the smoke house, helped to gather plants, gave rides to and from other locations, and helped to preserve family designs. In the process of helping, the Elders decided when and what to teach me. As time progressed, I learned more and was given more family knowledge. Traditionally, if someone in the family is taught something, they are automatically considered the keepers and teachers of that information.

Because I could not, and would not, dictate what I was taught, I was not able to gather all the information I had hoped to, but learned much more than I had ever hoped to in many other areas. Through patience and proving that I was sharing all the gathered information with the whole family, it still took four years before I was allowed to see and to photograph old family photographs kept in two old cookie cans. That was extremely important because we have lost so much through fires, and this collection of photographs were all the combined photos of the family at Kyuquot and if there had ever been a fire in that house, they would all have been lost. Now they will be distributed to everyone in the family.

As I found tapes of word lists, old family songs, copies of old documents,

gathered and drew family trees, and copied old photographs, additional copies were made and given to all the family members. This is important because previously, only the keepers of that information knew of its existence. By distributing this information, I not only proved that I was good to my word, but I made a lot of people very happy. I remember, after giving DVD's, that could be played on a TV with a regular DVD player, with all the collected songs to members of our family, walking through Kyuquot and hearing those songs playing through windows and seeing teary but happy faces. This work IS important! I only wish I could have gathered more, and fortunately, it does not end here.

Part 1: Traditional Teachings

How teaching and learning took place among Indigenous Societies in North America differs from community to community, but there are some general similarities that appear to be fairly consistent.

Perhaps the most important commonality has been the teaching and learning of people's place within their world. The teachings have evolved over thousands of years, passed down word for word, adding, generation after generation, more and more information about living within the environment in balance. The practice of watching and listening to learn was carried on throughout a person's life and benefited the entire community (family). Knowledge about plants and animals; practices that were healthy or not healthy for the overall balance; information about the skies, waters, land, and the spirits with which all are endowed, was learned and passed on.

It is through direct interaction with the environment that the Yupiaq people learn.

What they learn is mediated by their cultural cognitive map. The map consists of those ‘truths’ that have been proven over a long period of time. As the Yupiaq people interact with nature, they carefully observe to find pattern or order where there might otherwise appear to be chaos. The Yupiaq people’s empirical knowledge of their environment has to be general and specific at the same time. ... This knowledge is passed down from generation to generation by example, by showing, and by telling with stories to reinforce the importance of knowing about the varying conditions. ... Thus their conduct of life changes with nature. They pass on the truths to the next generation, knowing full well changes in interpretation will occur, but that certain of their values, such as caring, sharing, cooperation, harmony and interconnectedness with the created whole of their environment, will continue. This then validates and gives dignity to their existence. ... They were awed by the creative process. They studied, they connected, and nature became their metaphysic. It gave them empirical knowledge. Products of nature extended to them ideas for developing their technology. The spider web provided the idea for the net; the snowshoe hare’s feet and tracks, their snowshoes; the mouse’s chamber lined with grass, their houses; the moon’s phases, their calendar; the Big Dipper and the North Star, their timepiece at night; wind directions, their indicators of weather; flint and slate, their cutlery. (Kawagley, 1999, p. 17)

Some people were “books”, keepers and teachers of information. These “book” people were called upon to clarify such things as songs, heredity, names, oral history, and to be present at witnessing ceremonies. Sometimes their information was given to

children in the form of story telling. Healers would be called in to help someone or to “clean” a person or home. At some point in a child’s life, from birth in some cases to when a child showed an interest or talent, or if it was a hereditary role for children in a family, the child would usually live with the “book” person and learn by hearing the book day after day, and eventually begin to repeat the book, word for word, gesture for gesture, song for song, and so on, from memory, until they had become a perfect copy of the original “book”.

For more skills oriented learning, play was encouraged that taught various required skills: games of hitting moving objects, emotional control, physical endurance, and such.

For everyday skills such as hunting, berry picking, weaving, carving, food preparation, most often an aunt or uncle would take on this teaching. In most communities, parents were not the primary teachers. Students would accompany an aunt or uncle, sometimes even moving in with them for a time. Older children were often raised by the grandparents and were taught by them.

Reprimands were most often given in the form of a “lecture”, advice, often through stories told by the elders, sometimes for hours on end, to ensure that the lesson was learned. This was oral teaching, and perhaps the closest to “school teaching” that occurred. At other times, the stories would be told to teach proper behaviour and thinking in relation to the people’s whole world; their environment and everything within it. In the case where there were extreme needs for reprimands, public joking or teasing was often used, in a loving way; however, if the problems persisted, it might lead to shunning of the person until dangerous or harmful behaviour changed. The latter is rare, and generally

temporary. Because people were not seen as being above other beings or the environment, but as an integral part of a whole, these stories conveyed very important social, ecological and environmental lessons.

Primarily, lessons were taught by allowing the students to watch until they felt ready to try. When the students were ready to try, they would be given the required materials and they would watch and work. Upon completion, the elder would look at and complement the work, point out a few things that could be improved if necessary (seldom used), and the watching and working would continue until the student had perfected the required skills. If a student just didn't have an interest or lacked the ability or skill, another skill would be introduced.

For ceremonial skills, the children attended and copied whenever they could. They learned oratory skills from listening to the speakers; they learned drumming, singing and dancing by listening and copying. At a relatively early age, children were invited to participate in ceremonies. Adults were very adept at watching for signs of skill and preparedness of the young. The watching and learning was not one sided. During the winter ceremony season, the children (from infancy) attend and hear the drums and singing; watch the dancing, and learn. As they grow within this setting, they practice fervently. Even now, when they arrive at the Beecher Bay Tribal Learning Centre, many of them still carry the dances and songs in their heads, and will continue to practice when they get there, no matter how young they are. They will simulate whole ceremonies, practicing their oration skills, dancing, singing and drumming, to the enjoyment of all. This is serious business, however. These young people are 'doing their homework'; they are practicing and perfecting what they have seen and heard in a safe environment, and

getting ready for the day when it is their turn as young adults, to take part in the ceremonies.

In the First Nations Societies, there was, and is, an incredible tolerance and acceptance of difference. Difference is not seen as a handicap or as a problem, it is just worked around, and the benefits this difference can create are quickly found and honoured. Among some young, most likely through the loss of their own identity as First Nations people, this tolerance is, sadly, disappearing.

Part 2: The “Family First” Program

This “Family First” program is intended to contain many aspects of our family’s hereditary knowledge, language, history, family trees, songs, plant knowledge, important skills such as basket weaving, stories, anecdotes about some family members as remembered by other family members, hereditary names and naming practices, and even food preparation. The need for this program arose when I realized so many of the Elders were disappearing with their knowledge, and when I realized the descendants of these Elders were suffering because of the loss of information that had not been handed down (or listened to) and there was no apparent way to connect the few remaining Elders with the young in order for traditional information being passed on. The program is intended for use by the family first, and because much of the information is confidential, it will not, at this point be made public; however, in future, family members may decide to make the program publicly available to some degree. The program is not yet completed as I have had to concentrate on my dissertation.

Creating the Program

The “Family First” program itself will most likely consist of a series of DVD’s because it is much too large to fit on a single DVD. Originally, I had thought of “Family First” all being on a single CD or DVD, and able to run as a single program; however, that will be impossible when I consider the great number of photographs, maps, stories, video recordings, audio recordings, and databases that make up the program. Of course, technology is changing daily, and soon we may find a recordable format capable of holding massive information in program format (as opposed to data storage).

Format

The format will most likely consist of a primary DVD with a main page from which the user can select a topic, and, as needed, will be directed to insert another DVD to view and interact with the specific information. My daughter , Weyla, suggested that when we are ready to give the program to our family, the DVD’s could be encased in a small carved box so it will be beautiful to keep out and on display. I love that idea!

Commercial Computer Programs used to create “Family First”

As I have been working on “Family First”, there have been constant and expensive updates to a lot of the software – updates that are very important and that allow even better interactivity and flexibility.

The primary commercial program that runs and links everything is a program called Director by Macromedia (now owned by Adobe). In this program, I can combine all the audio, video, databases, graphics, and the basic program interface – that part the user sees when using the program. Learning how to use this program and how to learn all the new changes that occurred over the years has not been easy as it is very complex. I

have been able to stay current with the upgrades, as this was a priority.

The database that holds all the family tree information and all the copies of documents is called FileMaker, and it too, has gone through a number of upgrades that I have not been able to afford to update as of yet.

Adobe also has a program called Acrobat, which creates PDF documents from regular Microsoft Office Word documents. These files take up less space and are not as likely to become corrupted over time. This program also allows the accurate printing of documents and even distribution and viewing over the Internet.

There are a number of other commercial programs that play a smaller role in the overall program: Adobe's Flash, Bridge, Contribute, Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign and Microsoft's Office Word, Powerpoint, and Excel are all very important programs, central to the creation of the individual pieces that will be included in the Director Program.

Interaction between programs

Basically, in order to create "Family First", I needed a good computer and the appropriate commercial programs. That was expensive. Next, I needed to plan and outline all the pieces that will go into it. This means that I need to know which piece of information will need to be created with each commercial program and where in the hierarchy of "Family First" it will fit in.

As I complete each component, I can mark it off and I generally give it a code name that I can easily call upon in Director. Once everything is created and I have created a flowchart of all the types of files and all the file names, I can then begin to program them into Director. Because I hope to continue to add information, I also have

to ensure that the program is set up to allow the addition of files and information as it becomes available in the future. This too needs to be programmed into Director and room has to be made in the flow chart for these additions.

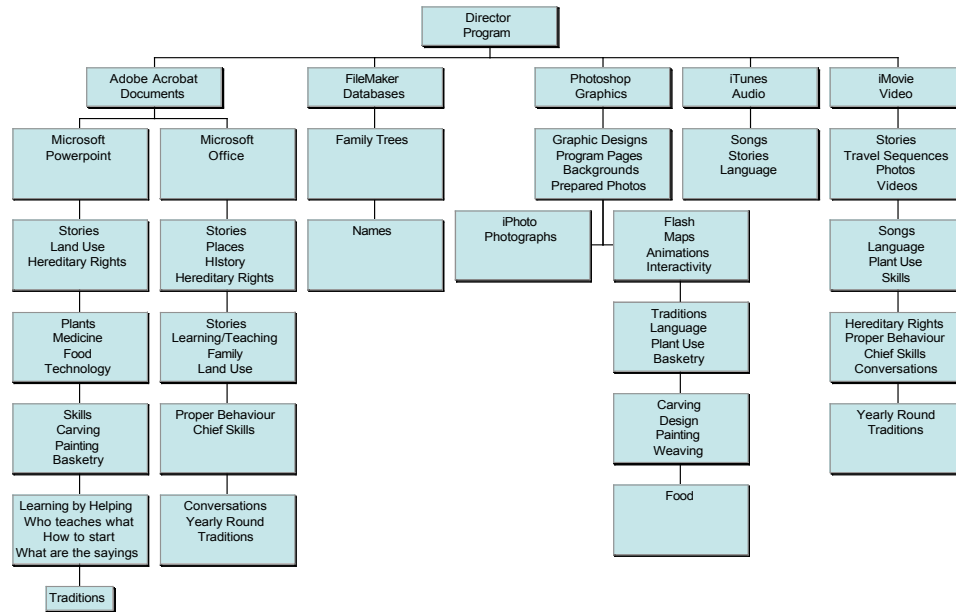


Figure 2 Commercial Program and File Types Flow Chart

For the simple reason that information has been gathered over a long period of time, the information is in different formats. Where I can, I make adjustments to more modern formats, but I can't always. Therefore, although I may copy old taped songs into iTunes or SoundEdit16 on a computer, and turn these into mp3 audio, I cannot create a video of the person singing. In the late 1970's, when I was studying linguistics for my BA, I made about 16 tapes with Dad (Gillette Chipps). I did not have video equipment available and Dad is no longer with us.

Some of the information is from older interviews I did many years ago, and again, it is either just typed out or in audio format. As much as I'd love to bring the people back and have this on video for the whole family to see, I cannot.



Figure 3 The access pages and how they link together

In the flowchart [Fig. 2] on the preceding page, you may notice that some topics repeat under the different programs. This is exactly because I have stories on paper, on audio, or on video and need different programs to present them. Flash, as a graphics and animation program, allows me to combine audio from a tape with illustrations or video clips or photos in order to present them more effectively. Powerpoint, as a text and graphic tool, can present the written word with illustrations, video, and/or photographs but without any actual interaction; however, there are at times compatibility problems but, fortunately, these are presently being corrected by the Adobe Corporation.

Part 3: Components of the program

Within the program, it is necessary to have linking pages – pages giving directions and choices. These have been designed, but may change with the making of “Family First”. At this time, these are the linking pages I have designed.

Main Page (Where you start):

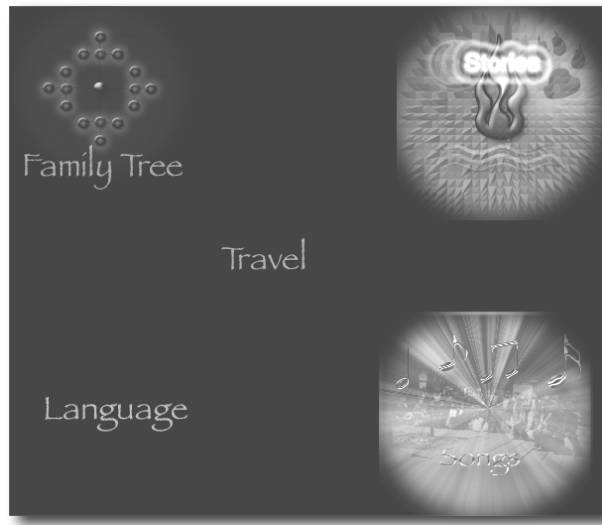


Figure 4 As yet incomplete Main Page

From the Main Page you can select to learn about language, songs, family tree or stories. Another option, travel, is merely video footage of actually travelling between the communities: Beecher Bay, Nitinaht, and Kyuquot. These have been speeded up to make it almost like time travel. With the travel option, you select the village you wish to go to – you travel there visually, and once there, see the village and will have the option of wandering around the village or visiting people and learning what each person who has taken part in “Family First” is teaching or showing. Although not everything is available in this option, it is a more interactive format. Once that becomes “old”, one can select the specific information one wishes to learn and see everything within that topic and select an option.

Family Tree Page:

With over 2,000 pages of family trees, including census lists for different years and for the different communities, this will be a very large database and it will most

likely be added to constantly. This is where the databases within “Family First” will shine! These can be updated constantly and easily to the program. I will add an email connection to this, so if someone can’t find a relative in the family tree, they can let me know – along with any information they have, allowing me to update the database right away.

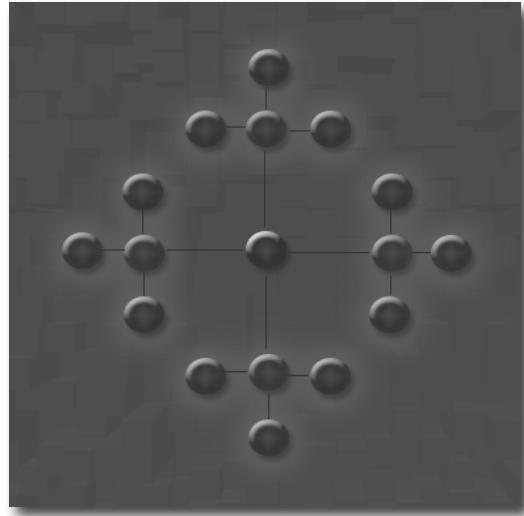


Figure 5 Family Tree Page

Although I have a lot of family trees and census materials, it has been very difficult to create definite links between people in all cases. There were a number of basic problems I encountered.

The same original First Nations names were used generation after generation so it can be difficult to know which person exactly is referred to if there are no accurate dates. Then, when the non-native names began to be applied and entered into the census, there was seldom a clear link made between the previously used Native name and the new non-native names given. The names that were given were quite haphazard because the general question appears to have been, “What is your father’s name?” As it was most likely asked in English, a number of people stated the name of the preacher on their reserve because

the term “father” was often used for this person. Others might give their father’s native name or nickname, and that became their last name. Because families were not given the opportunity to choose a last name to use for everyone in the family, brothers and sisters ended up with different surnames and unrelated people ended up with the same last names. At times, the Indian Agents who assigned the names just made something up. Dad says that the name Chipps was given because his Dad was whittling a piece of wood while standing in line and the Agent decided to name him for the wood chips that fell off. At the same time, in the same way, Leo Sawyer, Mom’s Dad, was also standing in line carving, and the Indian Agent at this location decided to call him Sawyer.

Another problem lies in the kinship system used by First Nations in this area. Cousins were considered brothers and sisters, so references made by Dad to Frank Nytom as his brother, confused us for a time because the way family trees are made today, cousins are cousins and siblings are siblings. Linking grandparents, too, is a problem because by the time one is three generations away from grandparents, the huge number of cousins, brothers and sisters they have, all become grandparents as well. This means, for example, if a man and woman get married, all their brothers and sisters, and all their combined cousins, become aunts and uncles to all their combined children. The children of all the aunts and uncles and the parents are all regarded as siblings and are referred to as such. The children of all these siblings will all be cousins, and thereby siblings as well. Thus, in trying to create a family tree, the typical lines between parents and children are not an accurate description of the family relationships, and when researching, it can become a nightmare to try to clearly and accurately represent the family.

Additional problems arise when reading references to certain people in books.

Because people moved around every year, the same people may appear to be different people. An example is the treaty signers for the Hudson's Bay Treaties, the Point No Point Treaty and the Neah Bay Treaty. The same names, often spelled differently, appear time and time again. No clear account of exactly where the people's winter village was recorded, so they all appear as members of the village(s) to which the treaties apply. Chances are very high that these are the same people, in the different locations at the time of signing and invited to the signing ceremonies. It meant nothing to the First Nations groups to which winter village a person belonged because if he was related, he had every right to be in this location.

The traditional preference for brothers in one family to marry sisters from a different family as well as the custom adoption practiced where a childless couple were given a child from another couple in the immediate family makes it difficult to always ascertain the correct family lines. I ran into many situations where I made a family tree from the information I was given, gave it to the family to check out and was told how this person was actually the child of a sister who died, and decisions about whether to include this information became an issue. Some families wanted the complete information recorded while others did not. The census takers also had a terrible habit of not asking for or providing the maiden names of women, and in many cases, a woman is merely recorded as Mrs. Followed by the husband's name. Children, especially daughters, were often listed just as boy or girl, with no name. This makes it difficult to accurately track the families. When using the census materials to try to track families through time, especially when working with a census with the Native names and into a later census with the non-native names, the only clue is often the woman's name. However, the

common use of the same first name for women (for example biblical names such as Sarah, Mary, Agnes) can even make that difficult.

I did a lot of genealogy research for the Te'mexw Treaty Association and produced five volumes of genealogical information based on census materials and genealogical interviews with families on Vancouver Island.

One good factor in this census, however, is the use of Native names as last names. This was soon to be lost as other names were arbitrarily and seemingly randomly assigned to many families, so it is helpful in tracing many of the native names of ancestors as long as the family can identify their ancestors. (Chipps, P., 1998a, p. ii)

In some cases, relationships can be really difficult to be certain of. The names would lead one to think they are the same persons or closely related or ancestors of later generations; however, the research is further complicated by Vancouver Island families often rejecting any links to Washington State, even though, prior to contact, the straits were regarded as little more than a street in a village, with the villages continuing on both sides. Apparently the later designation of First Nations as "American" or "Canadian" has had a great impact on the acknowledgement of relationships. After some thought, I believe it may be linked more to the assumption that any relative in the States may be considered a slave because, in some cases, people were stolen by the "American" First Nations and were considered slaves. The fact that we have at least two families with every marriage, the mothers and the fathers, and the preference of the Washington men for marrying women from Vancouver Island needs to be considered as a more likely occurrence, it does not change the stigma many people felt when asked if they might be

related or of the same families that show up in the Canadian census materials.

One example is with the record on Niatum, an Elwah Subchief. His name appears as Niatum, Nitatum, Niata and Nitam through the years and may be related to the Nytom, Nitom, Nightom, Knightom, etc. from Nititnah. Another link could be the case of Leo Dexter, son of Dexter (Niatum). In 1889, at the age of 10, Leo went to live with Jacob Jones and his wife, Jennie Jones (in Pacheenaht). He was recorded as a stepson. Then in 1900, Leo Dexter is recorded as leaving for Vancouver Island, at the age of 11, with Thomas Charles, age 27... As I said, this research has raised many questions, and more work needs to be done to try to answer many questions. (Chipps, Pakki, 1998b, p. 1)

In this research, conducted over many months, I was excited with the possibility that Niatom might be related to the Nytoms of Nitinaht. It is always said that they came from Pacheedaht (Port Renfrew) and in other stories, that they came from the States. Leo Dexter was interesting as well because he may be the mysterious Leo Sam or Leo Sawyer of Beecher Bay who was Agnes Chipps' husband and Mom's father. The fact that the early residents (after 1881) were Tom, Gus, Henry Charles and Leo Sawyer combined with the fact that Leo Dexter had a brother named Henry and one named Tom in earlier census materials, made me wonder. Leo Sawyer was Chief at Beecher Bay at the time when Agnes Chipps married him, and we've found his name on several early Band documents; however, the suggestion has not met with favourable responses for the reasons given above.

Stories Page:

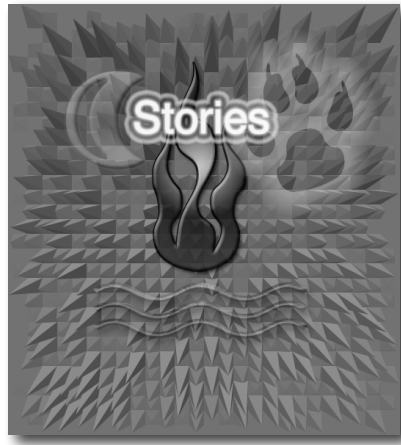


Figure 6 Stories Page

Within this page, one will be able to select the stories by the type of story, who is telling the story, or what kind of story it is (Word, video, Flash, or Powerpoint). The stories will include informal anecdotes about family members, memories of places and how the family relates to them; history, hereditary rights, learning and teaching stories that have been passed on for generations and generally include Raven and many other traditional characters; family stories, as well as how land was used and which lands we had hereditary rights to.

I have gathered a number of stories, but because they, like much of our family Tupaatii, are confidential, they cannot be reproduced in the dissertation. Fortunately, our Uncle George Clutesi wrote several books with stories, so they can be referenced as examples.

In addition, Uncle George Clutesi wrote eloquently of story tellers and orators and their training:

The mastery of public-speaking was essential to reach the public in teaching, in

storytelling and in frequent reviews of existing laws, histories and tenets of each tribe. This created men and women philosophers, teachers of high repute in many regions who may be likened to professors and doctors much like in western society. (Clutesi, 1990, p. 135)

It may well be possible to create animated stories through the addition of animated graphics and/or slideshows to provide a visual component for the stories that are only written and/or spoken. This would create a more captivating way to enjoy the stories. E-books of the individual stories could even be created that can be enjoyed online or downloaded, including graphics, video and audio, to enable listening to the stories on an iPod or iPhone.



Figure 7 Songs Page

Songs Page:

Songs are a very important part of our family's tradition, as in other West Coast families. Songs were sometimes created by special song-writers who were "hired" to

write a song for a special event or a mask. There are many types of songs and they are all important; however, most of our family's songs have either been lost or appropriated by less closely related persons who have changed them to make them their own. I do not mind that, as long as the new "owners" keep the history straight about the songs. Too often, though, they claim the song was given to them, and although everyone knows that is not true, it doesn't go beyond hurt feelings and sadness. I have two sets of songs, one set sung by Gillette Chipps, the other by another who has claimed they were given to him. When we listen to the two sets of songs, we can hear the changes and we know the other person does not have the history of the songs, or they would not have been changed.

One song, in which Gillette Chipps cries near the end, is the family history song – part of our Tupaatii. It is a sad song, for Dad's life was sad, as has our family's history been. We are not alone. However, Dad still managed always to try to find something good in everything and to find any excuse to laugh. The history song always makes me cry too.

There are dinner songs, sung when a family gave a dinner. The Royal British Columbia Museum recorded this song, and thank goodness they did! One young person in our family can still sing this song, but it is important that others can sing their songs as well. Everyone learned their family songs through hearing them over and over but this is no longer possible. Through the program, anyone who has "Family First" can listen and sing, listen and sing, try it over and over until they know the song. Eventually, I hope we have a family who can sing our songs together – again.

There are songs that belong to masks and masks that belong to songs, but the masks are gone now. We went to the Museum of Civilization, and they were very nice to

us and tried in every way possible to help us find our old masks, rattles, talking sticks, totem poles, and whatever might exist. We were led through huge, hangar-like rooms with West Coast artifacts (I hate calling them artifacts) everywhere; room after room; overwhelming. We found a number of items that we recognized, but unfortunately, the records showed that these articles were collected by Edward Sapir, a linguist. In every possible family artifact reference we looked at that might belong to our family, there was often a short anecdote about the item, and a very generalized location, but even though Mr. Sapir ought to have known who carved it and where he found it or collected it from, he did not record any of that information. I felt that if he knew a story to go with the item, he would surely know who carved it and where he had collected it. The collection took place and was participated in by many researchers who found themselves on the West Coast when the Potlatch was outlawed (1884). The collecting was fairly rapid, and seldom did items end up where the carvers' families were told they had been taken. Without any proof, it remains, at this time, extremely difficult to attempt to repatriate masks or any other historical items of value to our family, or many other families. Some collectors were more thoughtful and included the origin of the item properly, leading to the potential for repatriation, as may have been the case for Alert Bay. We did find some proper references in the Museum of Civilization's database for the Northwest Coast, by Franz Boas, showing the origin of the "artifact", and even the family name to which the mask had belonged. I am going to assume that Mr. Sapir was very astute and aware that, perhaps, the ban against potlatches might someday be lifted and that there would then be attempts at repatriation, because otherwise he just didn't think that information was important enough to record. As a linguist and ethnographer, one would have expected

him to realize the importance of accurate and detailed records.

There were welcome songs, for the arrival of visitors, one of which I use to give me strength, quietly and to myself. I will teach it to my grandchildren and my children, but I need to learn it even better myself. I have sung it as I first heard it, and after singing it for over thirty years, I finally heard Dad's version of it, and realized that I was not singing it properly. Welcome songs are very important and were sung whenever friendly visitors were arriving. There were also welcome poles that went with the songs. These too, we have lost.

The songs least likely to be recorded anywhere, and which must then come from the memory of others, are the personal spirit songs; the song belonging to a person and the spirit that protected and guided them. They are heard at Potlatches, and they are sung in private otherwise, but they are not allowed to be recorded. There have been some exceptions. Ida Jones, when she was quite ill, sang Dad's song when we visited her. It was quite unexpected and it made Mom cry. We were recording our visit and recorded the song. That was now many years ago.

To quote Helma Swan, a relative from Neah Bay,

A song, dukuu, is something that's very important to my people. If you own a song, it means you are an important person: it tells everybody where you're from, who your parents were, who your grandparents and great-grandparents were. In the old days a song used to mean something more than this, but we were never really told about those other meanings. Anyhow, in those days only the chiefs owned songs. Now, since the chiefs are all gone, their families own their songs. We're having a lot of trouble with this now. Everybody's fighting for a song so

they can get in there and be an important person; but many people don't know anymore who the songs or the names really belong to. They're just guessing at them – at the songs and names – and saying they have rights to them, when they really don't. (Goodman, Ward, & Holm, 2003, p. 127)

There were many different types of songs. The “t'abaa” can be a funny song, a love song or a lonesome song, and the singer can smile while singing this song. It is the only song when one is allowed to smile while singing. The tup'at'uwas (based on the word, tupatii) song is one's spirit song, and it must not be performed in public unless it is at a Potlatch. A person would have a mask, a dance cape, and other gear that also has the tup'at'uwas and this belongs with the song. We have Dinner Songs, and I was fortunate find a recording of Dad singing ours as well. There are Whaling Songs, as well as animal songs, such as Grizzly Bear and Wolf songs.

Songs were passed down to close descendants only, but some people, such as Dad, Gillette Chipps, created songs for other people and they had to pay for them. Sometimes songs were lent to someone, but it had to be an important person, but these songs had to be returned to the family when the original owner died. A man named Jimmy Chester, in Nitinaht, sings Dad's songs publicly and claims he was given the right to sing them, but he did not return the songs or stop singing them when Dad died in 1986. I have recordings of both Jimmy singing our songs and Dad singing the same songs, and Jimmy does not sing them properly, he changes them. This is one of the reasons why gathering our songs, with Dad singing them, was so important to our family; through these recordings, we retain our history of the songs and the rights to the songs, as well as the standing of our family as a hereditary chief's family. However, we are not allowed to

fight over our songs or hereditary rights because it is believed that it will all sort itself out in time.

George Clutesi also had some insight to share when he wrote about songs.

Singing was also pursued with sincerity. Not all songs composed were used.

Comparatively few songs reached a level of acceptance and popularity. Good song-makers or composers were few and far between. Those that accomplished this and whose songs were heard in far-flung areas along the coastal region became known as the "Songmakers". (Clutesi, 1990, p. 135)

The Names Page

Each family has a number of names that belong to the family and that continue to be used. Basically, any direct ancestor's name that you can show a strong family tie to belongs to your family; however, in the giving of names, there is usually a ceremony and witnesses are present to record the information or to speak for others who may feel that the name is not the family's to give. Names are quite important because they are like the rebirth of the person who previously had that name.

When a name is given, it is because a person has characteristics reminding the family of an ancestor with that name. When a person is no longer, their name is not used until a someone new is given that name.

I was given the name Tlaachaht, "someone to cling to in a storm" while my cousin had the same name and we shared it. Should we be at any ceremony where our name was spoken, we would both have had to stand. When my cousin passed away, I was not allowed to use our name for one year, and I was given another name, which was also held by my cousin but which we had not shared, to use in the interim. The reason why I

could use that name was that we had never shared that name during her life. The new name I was given the right to use was ChiimaatuukH, “someone who speaks properly”. Both of these names previously belonged to Annie Nytom, who married Charlie Chipps, the father of Gillette Chipps. Imagine my surprise, and my aunt’s daughter’s surprise, when we recently heard Premier Gordon Campbell stand up at the signing of the recent Maa-nulth treaty in Victoria, and announce that he had been given the same name I have, (ChiimaatuukH) by a relative in Ahousaht! I rather resent that, but I can live with it because it makes me laugh every time I think of the Premier proudly announcing to the world that he has a woman’s name. There is nothing sexist in the names being men’s or women’s names, because one must remember that the person lives on in the one with that name, so I can’t help wondering how Annie Nytom feels living in Premier Campbells’ body! I also wonder how, exactly, the Premier is living up to his name in order to honour the person he was named after. For myself, and the name I was given, I often wonder whether I was given the name because I speak properly, or in hopes that I will remember to speak properly, eventually. By proper speaking, it is not that one speaks the language perfectly, but to speak properly means that one speaks in a respectful and honourable way. I certainly don’t always do that, but bearing the name often reminds me that I need to hold my tongue, at times, and think before I speak.

In the “Family First” program, information about naming and the importance of giving names properly and then respecting the name is important to include. In addition, any history I have been able to gather, or will gather in the future, needs to be included along with the list of names that belong to our family because it is important that we don’t, as is happening, use fewer and fewer of our names because they are not

remembered. It is also important that the proper pronunciation, history and meaning of the name be given to the new name-bearer, because it helps that person live up to and be proud of the name and the history he or she is carrying on.

The Language Page

In the language section, it is important to remember the oral nature of our languages. I am still not certain whether to use one of the many linguistic forms of the language or to rely strictly on oral, but most likely I will combine the two. Future research will include the recording of Elders speaking, and where possible, letting their actions and repetition provide clues to the meaning. The use of individual words, as can be done with Indo-European languages, along with their part of speech, is not as relevant in the learning of a Native language because of the polysynthetic nature of the languages. The sentences would start out as simple groups of related topics. A dictionary option to look up the meaning of the words would be available, but would not be translated on the same screen, as it is important to learn the sounds and forms of usage rather than a dictionary list. I hope that at some point, a network connecting Elders and those learning can be created, allowing for communication between those teachers and students.

Plants and Plant Use Page

Ethnobotany, which I gratefully learned much about from Dr. Nancy J. Turner, as well as the traditional way to gather plants for medicine, which I learned from Gillette and Sarah Chipps, is a very important part of our knowledge that needs to be passed on. In the future, I hope to gather our names for the plants that were/are traditionally important. If I can't find this information through relatives, I am grateful that Nancy Turner (1983)

gathered that information with my uncle/cousin John Thomas at Nitinaht before his passing.

The knowledge of plant use is not as simple as providing a list of plants and their traditional use. There are different levels of knowledge, and this allows for a structuring of this part of the program. There is the general information that acquaints students with the appearance of the plants, their environment, their names and what the names mean, as well as their general use.

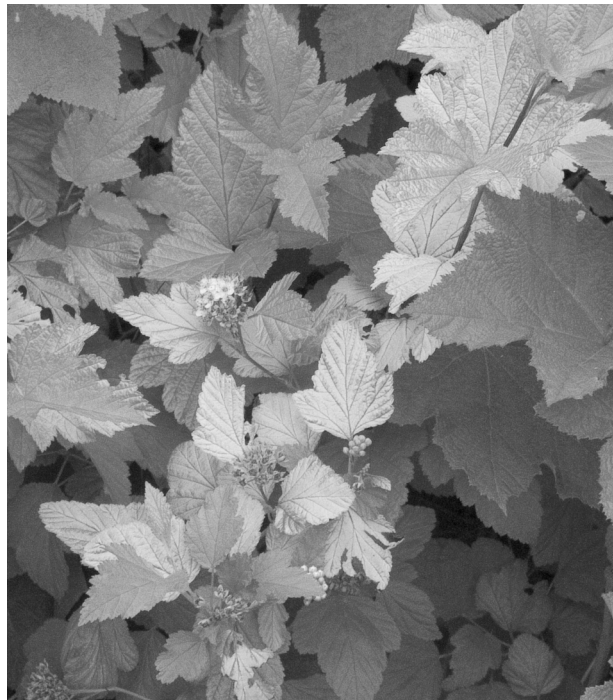


Figure 8 The important medicine plant known as Ninebark.

Learning about medicine plants requires a lengthy “apprenticeship” with a medicine person, and would not be possible to duplicate on a program; however, it would be the decision of the medicine persons how much of the knowledge would be on the program. It is hoped that the medicine plant knowledge would help to connect Elders and

students for this apprenticeship. Because much of this knowledge was lost to our family with the loss of Gillette and Sarah Chipps, both medicine people, students may need to be linked to more distantly related persons with the knowledge.

A medicine person can be male or female; however, their duties tend to be different and they tend to work with persons of the same gender as they are. When my mother died, we had a woman medicine person assist us with the funeral and the later burning of my mother's favourite belongings and food. We always send much food, a plate loaded with the very best, to each person we remember, and extra plates for others who may be present. The medicine woman also has the job of helping those left behind deal with emotional stress and anger. There are a number of taboos, things we may not do and things we must do in order to protect not only ourselves, but also the lost relative and others. When a male relative is lost, a male medicine person helps the family in much the same way. In addition to the ceremonial tasks medicine people perform, they are also available to help anyone suffering from any disorder, physical or psychological, or both.

In his book, *Stand Tall My Son*, George Clutesi wrote the following about women and land ownership,

It is noteworthy that the West Coast Indians placed a high esteem on the female members of their tribes. There were women who exercised powers towards the administration of her own tribe. Indeed, there were women who held territorial jurisdiction over lands. For example, the great camas meadows were owned and controlled by women. Camas bulbs were considered as one of the great delicacies on their menu; leas that produced reeds and rushes to make soft under-mattresses; swamps that harboured the grass to make the now-famed West Coast Indian

baskets; the grove of young cedar trees where fresh cedar bark was harvested in the spring of each year to manufacture clothing, hats, mats, and work-baskets for their daily requirements, as well as costumes for ceremonial dances: these lands belonged to certain women of each tribe. (Clutesi, 1990, p. 144)

It is my hope that a student (or hopefully more) will become interested in pursuing this occupation and that this program will help to facilitate the necessary communication to make this happen.

One of the biggest threats of teaching the medicinal use of plants without all the knowledge necessary or the proper understanding of the proper use of the plants (spiritual as well as the recipe) is that it can be very tempting, when faced with a relative who is sick, to try to doctor them. This can lead to the accidental poisoning of not only the patient but also of the “healer”. The same can be said for food preparation. For example, I received a present of a jar of homemade Native tea from a non-Native acquaintance. I was shocked to notice that it contained dried leaves of the Native Trailing Wild Blackberry, *Rubus ursinus*. I’d learned that these leaves could become poisonous if stored, but should be picked whenever the tea was to be made. I told the acquaintance that she ought to be careful when making teas from Native plants and to ensure that she knew exactly how to prepare it. Dr. Nancy Turner explained that: “It is only the wilting leaves that are poisonous; either fresh or fully dried leaves of this plant are okay, to my knowledge” (Nancy Turner, personal communication, June 21, 2007). However, it is imperative that the information and knowledge in its entirety is passed on to younger generations. There are medicines and practices not available from non-native medical sources much needed by our relatives, and others.

The Skills Page

The various traditional skills can be very difficult to find sources for. We have very little information about the family designs, but it is important to know these in order to carve, paint, or do basketry and weaving. Henry Chipps and I went to the Museum of Civilization in Hull, Quebec, and walked through the large storage facilities. These rooms contain an incredible number of traditional materials and items: canoes, totem poles of every type, clothing, talking sticks, masks, utensils and tools, boxes, and house posts. Unfortunately, although we found several objects that appeared to have our family designs, the collectors had not, in even one instance, left the information necessary to prove that it belonged to our villages, let alone our family. Perhaps in future, with a careful examination of the items at the museum(s), it will be possible to differentiate between designs enough to link them to families and, thus, return the designs to the families.

I was fortunate to be allowed to sew, draw, and photograph the family designs from basketry when I reproduced the old, tattered and disintegrating sacking the original designs had been sewn on decades ago by our auntie, Mary Anne Oscar. These will be available to the family, along with clear visual records of the gathering, curing and preparing of basket grass (actually a sedge) and three-corner grass (a sedge relative) as well as the weaving process. I have photographs as well as video clips showing both Sarah Short and Lucy Gillette (the Queen of the Chiclisets) weaving baskets and their tools. Although this will never take the place of being taught by our Elders, it might link the weavers with potential students/apprentices and, at worst, provide a method of learning with persistence. I have been trying to find old photographs of carvings, such as

masks, totem poles, and walking sticks belonging to the family, but so far, I've found only a few. I have photographed the masks, poles and walking sticks I've found at family homes, with permission, and we've (Henry Chipps and I) found three totem poles and two walking sticks Dad had sold. One pole we were able to bring back to our family, the other items, I at least photographed.

The Royal British Columbia Museum invited Band members from various local reserves to come down to a special display of the traditional and archaeological items collected from our communities. Again, there was seldom any information about the person the items had belonged to at the time of collection, but we were allowed to photograph the items, which we painstakingly did. This may help to teach about the fishing gear, masks, spears, arrows, ropes, amulets, and all the other designs from our ancestors and opens a small window to learning to recreate these items. I am hoping that the program, as it teaches, will capture the interest of the students and encourage them to learn more and to become part of the solution to the problem of our enormous losses.

The drying of salmon is another interesting area to learn about because each family, actually each household, had their own distinct way of cutting, preparing, and drying salmon. Fortunately, through helping various Elders dry salmon, I was able to learn and record the different methods. Even the ways a smokehouse is set up, how the poles and sticks were prepared and placed, the way the fire(s) are built, the fuel used, and the placement of the salmon for drying differs from house to house, village to village. An interesting study in the future might be to record this more closely, and possibly being able to trace relationships through the similarities of salmon drying methods.

I have learned much about cedar bark gathering, and, in the case of yellow cedar

bark, I may have learned more than I wanted to. At the same time, cedar poisoning does occur as well as allergies, even among persons of full First Nation ancestry, and that knowledge is also important to teach about. Dad always said that we must never burn yellow cedar wood, but he forgot to mention that we should not expose ourselves too much to the fresh sap, so my experience of a toxic reaction to Yellow Cedar can now be added to our knowledge and can be passed on.

The next project is to learn to dig, to split, to prepare and to use cedar and spruce roots for basketry as well as the weaving methods, and to capture it on videotape and in photographs. Another important project for the future is the preparation of rope and strings from cedar withes, fireweed, kelp, and stinging nettle. Fortunately, the basic program can be created with the information I have gathered to date, and additions to the program can be created in future to provide more advanced knowledge for those students who want to learn more. The creation of the network that will link the members of villages as well as members of families is in the future, unfortunately, but is coming closer as the government provides the funding for setting up these networks to various First Nations.

Hereditary Rights

Leadership Skills

A hereditary chief and his/her siblings were trained from an early age to become good leaders. By leaders, I do not mean the military style of leadership where the leader dictates to those below him or her. A leader was taught to carry the knowledge and hereditary rights as well as humility. A leader is someone who is a good provider, almost as a parent. Wisdom and knowledge is required to be a hereditary chief or to even be in

the chief's family.

The traditional governance was not like democracy as practiced in Canada where there are still a small group of people making decisions for the multitude. A hereditary chief had to listen to the family and decisions were made by consensus rather than by a majority. If a chief made unwise decisions not supported by the family, he or she stood a good chance of being chief only of himself/herself as family members moved away to other family houses in a declaration of non-confidence.

This is important to teach the young, who have learned much from the media and have only known the government imposed elective system, exactly what a hereditary chief had to learn and the proper behaviour expected for that position.

George Clutesi said the following about the teaching of chief skills to the young,

Heirs to kings and chieftains were schooled and tutored from childhood on to become leaders and councillors for the time when they would succeed their fathers and elders ... A speaker or a mentor is not born. He or she is a product of much training, much schooling. Native Indians realized this and began teaching their young early. (Clutesi, 1967 p. 151)

Conversations

Conversations are important as they are often educational. Often, memories of past events or people come into conversations. Through video recordings of conversations with Elders, these conversations can be presented in such a way that the discourse is with those learning. Once networking becomes available, those learning can continue these conversations with the same Elder or any other family member.

In the beginning, boys and girls were allowed to listen to their elders way of every day talk and, in time, participate in the conversations. This created a sense of belonging and thus a genuine feeling of self-esteem and confidence. Moreover, children were, unbeknown to them, maneuvered into taking active parts in conversations by their elders. (Clutesi, 1967 p. 151)

We have many such conversations on audio or videotapes with a number of Elders, many of whom are no longer with us. These conversations are crucial in keeping the knowledge alive and to help the young remember their Elders.

It is important not to sell out tradition and respect for ease of technology. One area in which this arises is the tradition of not viewing photographs of someone who has left us until their picture is shown at a memorial. This may be a period of one year or up to four years or more. Once photographs of relatives are programmed into “Family First”, the option to tastefully cover and uncover any photograph needs to be available to the user. Traditionally, the photographs of those who have left us are covered, not removed, and I need to build in the controls to provide the respect our family deserves.

Part 4: Why the program is not public

Because much of the knowledge, or tupatii, is private to families, it has been important that I honour this tradition in creating this program and also in creating this dissertation. As Susan Lazzar Johnson says, “When the Europeans first came, the bureaucracy – Indian agents, took all our culture – our masks and our drums... So we stopped telling everyone” (Johannesson, 1990 p. 36). The program cannot be public unless the family, at some time decides this. It is not a decision I can make. The

confidentiality of our information also means that the information in the program cannot become public knowledge through the dissertation. For a while, I found this confusing. I had originally thought of creating a program that could be used in schools, but as I realized just how close our own family was to losing all of our important information that teaches us who we are and I decided it was far more important to attempt to gather our family teachings for our family. If ever the knowledge became less endangered, efforts could be made to share some or all of the information, at the discretion of the family. Possibly the most difficult decision I had to make once I had decided to change the focus of the dissertation was to try to figure out how to write my dissertation without the family confidential information and what to put into it. I was very fortunate that the members of my dissertation committee were understanding and helpful once I explained the dilemma.

Part 5: Limitations of Research

There were some, perhaps many, limitations in the research I did. One was, of course, the time limit. For every year I visited and helped the Elders, the more I was taught. Basically, if I continue to visit the Elders for as long as I live and they live, I may get close to my goal. Because I did not have any sizable grants, I had to work full time while working on my dissertation. This limited the time I could spend travelling around and the amount of time I could spend with the Elders. For this reason, the visits took place during the summer holidays, when the Band helped by hiring me to take a couple of students along on my visits to our family over a period of four years.

The financial limitations were very much a problem for me because not only did I need to pay my bills, I had to cover the cost of travel, equipment for videotaping and audio taping, CD's, food, and the voluntary payments I slipped to the Elders (for my food

and lodging) to help them out. In addition, I needed the quite expensive programs so I could learn to use them in order to create the family program as well as the computers to work on. The first was a desktop computer, but it wasn't long before I realized that I needed to bring a computer with me, and I needed to purchase a laptop computer for my research trips. Now, these computers are getting quite old but I still cannot afford to upgrade them.

A combination of time and financial limitations also affected the number of communities I could visit and how often. I did go to Elwah and Neah Bay in Washington State once, during 2003, but could not afford to return there.

There were limitations due to the need to prove that I was not doing the “wrong” kind of research. Many of our First Nations have not had the best experience with researchers, and it was important that I prove that I was a family member with our own rules first and foremost in my mind and heart. I do not personally mind this limitation, because I understand it, but with the time limits set by both Indian Affairs and the University, I had to find a balance and a cut-off point. For a long time, I thought the program had to be completed before I could write my dissertation. Fortunately, my committee members helped me understand that since the program could not be part of my dissertation, it did not need to be completed and I should start writing.

Part 6: Ongoing Work

In the future, I hope to complete the first part of the program and deliver it to everyone in the family, at least on Vancouver Island and in Neah Bay. Then I hope to be able to add to it as more information is gathered. I hope to establish the networks required to enable family members to teach each other and to communicate freely, regardless of

distance.

I hope to continue to work with Ethnobotany and to keep learning and teaching more about our use of plants to our family and others. I am already doing this, and enjoy it very much. I believe that only by teaching others about our history and our environment, will they understand us and help us protect nature. I also hope to study the plant dyes and to try to bring the use of this knowledge back to our family.

I have written much about our traditions and have used relatively few literary references because this chapter concerns our family, and not that many people who know our family traditions have written books or articles. I owe most of what I have learned to family members who were both wise and knowledgeable, but it has been learned over many years and repeatedly, so it is difficult to put a date on it. Primarily, I have learned from Gillette Chipps (Dad) and Sarah Chipps/Sawyer (Mom), but I have also learned from virtually every other family member, some quite distantly related, from many communities, including the Beecher Bay First Nation, where I live.



Figure 9 Family, print by Pakki Chipps

Chapter 4: The Beauty of a West Coast Language

The Nitinaht Language

The Nitinaht language, as is the case for all First Nations languages, is beautiful in so many ways, at least to its speakers. The Northwest Coast indigenous languages are extremely complex and each of the language families is as different as, for example, Chinese and English. Being ancient oral languages, each one holds the keys, or indexes, to the way we view the world and how we translate our surroundings. Yet, these languages are dying, vestiges in an increasingly globalized world. Much research has been done, and much material has been collected by linguists and other researchers, religious representatives, and explorers, but these are seldom used to resurrect the vanishing First Nations languages.

Although there is much documentation regarding the resurrection of languages, all giving encouraging advice, there are still problems that do not seem to be addressed. One of the problems we are faced with regarding language restoration, is the imposition of non-Native concepts and solutions. Perhaps we need to try to look at the survival of First Nations languages from other perspectives. Hopefully we will find a way to stand on the edge of yesterday, not with fear of the final loss of yesterday, but with all the knowledge of yesterday in our hearts, facing tomorrow fearlessly. I will develop this idea further in this chapter about the Nitinaht language.

In order to write the sounds of Diitidaht, I have used the phonetic symbols found on the Diitidaht keyboard provided free on the Language Geek Web site (Language Geek, n.d.). These keyboards are used to set certain keys to the symbols required for

writing First Nations languages. Please see Appendix A for a list of the phonetic symbols used in this paper.

Nitinaht, or more correctly, Diitidaht, is a Southern Nuu-chah-nulth language belonging to the Wakashan language family. Diitidaht is most closely related to the Makah language of Neah Bay in Washington State. The language is polysynthetic which does not mean it is super artificial; that is just what they call languages that have long complex word-sentences made up of many morphemes, or specific word-pieces.

For example:

t'a-	A line with something attached at one end
t'aad	Encircle
t'aadib	Necklace, pendant type
t'aadil	Wearing a necklace
t'aat'aawasi	Star (could be shooting star's pattern)
t'abaaX	Sing while busy
t'abalshλ	Blink or wink (new action)
t'ablāt'abl	Blinking (shape of eye when winking)
t'abuq ^w 'aa	Tie rope/kelp together (line with knot at end)
t'abuuk ^w	Kingfisher
t'apshiλ	Dive (person)
t'at'adk ^w ub	Bracelet (only the kind with dangling object)
t'at'paw'ad	Ant (pinched around the middle with a belt)

t'ayuu'sib Anchor

t'ayuu Anchored

One of the reasons I love Diitidaht so much is because of the pictures I see in the words. Words are not just memorized lists, but, as I mentioned, are based on roots that have a shape – so the words have visual shapes, as in the previous example. Another example incorporates something introduced, namely the cat. Try to see the pictures in this list of words:

piishqshiλ To wink

piishpish Cat

piishpiishpish Cats

piipiishpishak'k^w Looks like a cat

Cats wink, and when the person who first saw a cat created the word for this new creature, they based the name on the characteristic of cats to wink, or to sit with slitted eyes. The reduplication indicates more than one cat, or for something that looks like a cat, and it is also very picturesque, to me at any rate. Another example of ingenious word creation when confronted by something new is:

ciiqciiq To speak

qiicqiic To write

The word for “to speak” was merely turned around. The word for pen or pencil is qiicey'k, or “writing tool”.

Another thing I love about Nitinaht is that it doesn't differentiate between genders in general use. The suffix for he, she, or it, is usually (-'a). It is usually only when men or women do something in a different way that gender is shown. For example:

dabqaλ and dabkshγibł are both words for being physically tired, but the first is for a male and the second for a female.

Other examples are:

t'iishγuuqλ and iisanuu	Needing to urinate
shabaγiiqλ and iway'iiλγiiqλ	Needing to defecate
t'aq ^w aλ and t'aaqu'k	Earnest, serious
yaaqaλ and yaaqsuuqλ	Sad

In each case the male version is first and the female version second.

There are an incredible number of examples, and someday, perhaps a whole book will be written showing the relationship between the shape and words and the ingenious - not simple or primitive - way the language works.

Some words have roots of “good/sweet” or “bad/improper” and therefore contain behavioural direction:

Good, sweet:	cha-
chabas	Sweet
chabat	Chief
chabacaas	Right (ie. Hand)
chachabaXa	It is right; it is correct
chachabaXiyaap	Praised
chachabaX	Suitable
chaabacqayeedk	Facing the right way
chabuł	Be able to; can (see yubuł)

Good, proper:	λul-
λułaał	Clean
λu'uuws	Good/Safe place to land (Place name Clo-oose)
λulλuułika	Careful; neat (this reduplication shows an ongoing trait)
λułsuuk	Pretty
λułaaXuk	Handsome
λuułak ^w ch	All dressed up; clean clothes on

Bad/improper:	yub-
Yubuł	Unable to; can't
Yubuł ^w ułq ^w e	Get revenge
Yuuyubsa 'I'aa'ek	Insulting

The Handbook of North American Indians, volume 7, (1990) concisely describes the Wakashan language family in the following:

Wakashan is a family consisting of two subgroups, Kwakiutlan and Nootkan, each consisting of three languages: Haisla, Heiltsuk, and Kwakiutl in the first, and Nootka, Nitinaht, and Makah in the second. Wakashan languages are polysynthetic; incorporated are verbal subjects and objects, tense-aspect-mode markers, and lexical suffixes (about 300) designating familiar objects of the natural environment such as body parts, terrain features, cultural artifacts, and many more abstract notions. Reduplication is extensive, and some reduplicative elements precede word bases. Nearly all other affixes are suffixes. Morphological combinations show considerable irregularity and complex morphophonemic

alternations, indicating a very old system. (Suttles, 1990 p. 39)

I thought it safest to describe the Wakashan language family with this quote because it is very succinct and descriptive. Northern and Southern Wakashan are not mutually intelligible, but there are some words that, with the understanding of regular shifts in sounds from a Proto-Wakashan foundation, can still be shown as similar:

English	Kwakwala	Nootkan	Diitidaht	Makah
Squirrel	te-mi-na-s	c'i-m-t'u	c'i-ni-pu	c'i-bi-ta-wi
Food	he-m'a-'i	ha-'um	ha-'ub	ha-'ub-a
Cedar bark	c'a-qe-m-s	c'a-q-m-is	c'a-qa-b-s	c'a-qa-bi-s

(In Diitidaht and Makah, m = b, and n = d)

Although these are only a few examples (Sawyer, 1982), they do illustrate that the languages are related. The fact that words are related is relevant if you are trying to develop curricular materials using standardized morphology. Although the differences are far greater between Northern and Southern Wakashan, there may be enough similarities between the languages within each of the two subgroups. I compared 100 words from *Our World – Our Ways: T'at'aaqsqapa Cultural Dictionary* (Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council, 1991) which lists words from twelve Nootkan languages:

1. diitiid'aa'tX Diitidaht
2. c'ishaa'ath Sheshaht
3. t'uk^w'aa'ath Toquaht
4. hishk^w'ii'ath Hesquiat
5. muwach'ath Mowachaht

6. qaay'uuk ^w 'ath	Kyuquot
7. ʔaaḥuus'ath	Ahousaht
8. ʔa'uuk ^{wi} 'ath	Tla.o.qui.aht
9. ḥuupach'as'ath	Opetchesaht
10. yuuḥu'ih'ath	Ucluelet
11. iihatis'ath	Ehattisaht
12. nuchaaḥ'ath	Nuchatllaht (p. 2)

(where ḥ is made farther back in the throat than regular h)

Of these 100 words (100 words x 11 languages = 1,100 words less 25 with no word given, resulting in a total of 1,075 words compared), I found that 888 (83%) were equal (allowing for some sounds that differ predictably, such as “n, m” in Northern Nuuchah-nulth languages usually appearing as “d, b” respectively in Diitinaht and Makah); 100 (9%) were similar, and 87 (8%) were completely different. This would mean that these languages would potentially be similar enough to create curricular materials for, if a writing system were devised that allowed for variance of sound. Unfortunately, for this to be effective, it would be really important not to standardize the writing system, allowing for the dialectical differences.

At some time, when the research is not going to interfere with the revival of the Diitidaht language, it would be very important, in my opinion, to sit down with all existing speakers and discover the tiny differences in speech that arise. I have heard, countless times over the years, reference to whether someone is saying a word correctly or not. I don't believe it is a matter of correct or incorrect; Gillette Chipps, told me a long

time ago that when the Eldest son started a new village, a small difference in sound in the language was given to the new village, to identify it. Therefore, each difference indicates a different original village of the speakers.

With the documentation of the differences in speech, and discovering the ancestral line, we can quite possibly re-establish which village each family lived at and the difference in speech they “owned”. With so many villages (families) being moved to a single residential reserve, it is becoming very difficult, at times, to remember where one’s family lived. There are documents around, but they are not always accurate. Sometimes whole families are left out of the documentation, even though everyone knows that a certain family lived in a certain village. In too many First Nations communities, this very important information is being lost as time passes. Future researchers, especially researchers from the communities and families, might be able to learn much about original villages from small differences in speaking. These small differences may turn out to be very large repositories of information thought lost or forgotten.

Language, Culture, and Worldview

There are ways in which language can influence understandings and knowledge acquisitions. Benjamin Lee Whorf and Edward Sapir (1921) hypothesized in the first half of the 20th century, that a person’s understanding of the world is shaped by his or her native language. On the other hand, perhaps a person’s language is shaped by an understanding of their world, or how they see the world. For languages of peoples who view the world in a more linear fashion, and as separate parts rather than as a whole, the language and grammar, the thoughts and ideas inherent in the language tend also to be

linear. Among peoples who see the world in a more holistic way, where everything is interrelated, the language also appears to function in this way. It may be a moot point much akin to the old “Who came first, the chicken or the egg” adage. Perhaps everyone saw the world in a similar way when language began; perhaps the linear thinking appeared later due to a drastic change in lifestyle or belief. Perhaps writing systems, or lack of them, influenced how language developed, branching off in a new direction. It is definitely an interesting point to consider.

Prior to writing systems and the printing press, and in oral cultures, learning and teaching were, what I would call non-linear. This is not because writing occurs in lines on a page, but because when you learn from a textbook with little chance to explore or consider all the factors that have an effect upon that studied, one often learns to think along the line provided by the book. The difference in learning orally is that there is also a visual and emotional component. There is an interaction between the teller, or teacher, and the listener, or learner. Even something as simple as an Elder telling a story; there are not only words, there are gestures, facial expressions, body language, significant pauses, there is intonation and loud or soft speech to accentuate the listener’s imagination. There is a far higher chance of the listener “seeing” the story and making connections to their own experiences, than I believe there is in reading a book.

Another example, not entirely fictional, would be the linear explanation that some eagles were poisoned, perhaps in a newspaper article. This article will most likely speak about the location of the dead eagles and perhaps the person who found them and questions regarding the possible motives behind poisoning eagles. In a non-linear experience, where one stood and looked at the location where the eagle died, one might

create a whole story about how the farmer, on whose land the “eagle tree” stood, was worried about the mouse and rat population because the rodents were getting into his feed stores. This cost the farmer money he could ill afford. The farmer purchased some poison and places it carefully near the feed store so the cattle, and other domestic animals - perhaps even his own children or grandchildren – won’t be poisoned. Poison usually doesn’t kill immediately, especially “Warfarin”, a common rat poison. (personal experience). The eagle has a nest with two young, and the parent eagles take turns hunting to feed the young, and the mice and rats of the farmyard are the primary source of food at this time. The end result is that the eagles unwittingly feed poisoned food to their young and the whole family of eagles dies. I have written more regarding linear and non-linear learning methods in chapter 2 on the benefits and difficulties of using interactive multimedia.

That there exists a difference in worldview, and that the difference is contained, or stored, within language appears to be pretty much accepted. Battiste (1998) wrote,

Languages are the means of communication for the full range of human experiences and critical to the survival of the culture and political integrity of any people. Aboriginal languages provide a direct and powerful means of understanding the legacy of tribal knowledge. They provide the deep and lasting cognitive bonds that affect all aspects of Aboriginal life. Through sharing a language, Aboriginal people create a shared belief of how the world works and what constitutes proper action. The sharing of these common ideals creates a collective cognitive experience for tribal societies that is understood as tribal epistemology. (p. 3)

Battiste, in the same article, goes on to say, “Aboriginal languages are the repository of vital instructions, lessons, and guidance given to our Elders in visions, dreams, and in life experience” (p. 3). Battiste quotes Eli Taylor, a Sioux elder, “Our Native language embodies a value system about how we ought to live and relate to each other ... Now, if you destroy our languages you not only break down these relationships, but you also destroy other aspects of our Indian way of life and culture” (p. 3).

Battiste (1998) states that, “Linguistic competence is a requisite for the renewal and respect of Aboriginal knowledge and humanity. Aboriginal people cannot rely on colonial languages and thought defined in provincial curricula to shape our realities” (p. 10).

On the other hand, Steinhauer (2002) writes an interesting account about how her teacher, Lionell Kinunwa,

Introduced to us this notion of cellular knowledge. I was excited by this notion. The excitement has remained with me, and I have become convinced that Indigenous people have cellular memory embedded in their molecular structure and that this knowledge is what guides our people to this day. (p. 184)

Personally, I believe this to be true. I believe this when I look at nature, where I see cellular knowledge at work all the time. When I watch a bird build a complicated nest, even though it has spent time living in the nest at birth, there is far more knowledge of that bird’s “tribal” way of building the nest than was ever taught to it. One might argue that because it grew up in its “traditional” nest, it knew what materials to use but then consider the Cuckoo bird, whose egg is laid in a “foreign” nest, raised by a “foreign” parent, but still grows up to be a Cuckoo bird, laying its eggs in other birds’ nests. When

I see baby turtles, tadpoles, any creature that is not raised by its parents, and see how it just knows how to be a turtle or a tadpole, and what to do to survive, then I, too, know that there is a memory, a knowledge, born into the tiny being; a knowledge that guides that being towards survival. Any being born either without the knowledge or heedless of the knowledge does not generally pass on this trait to another generation, ensuring that the knowledge continues. Although people may be born with cellular knowledge of who they are and how to live, I don't believe this is entirely the case with language. I don't believe there is any instance where a baby, adopted by people of another culture, grew up speaking any other language than the one taught by the people of the adoptive culture. I also believe that when you take children out of one culture, even for a few hours a day, as in a provincial school, and teach that child that everything he or she knows is incorrect, that child will be incredibly confused unless that child has a strong foundation in his or her own language and culture. I believe that if you take a child out of his or her culture for extended periods and punish that child for using his or her own language, songs, or relying on their cultural knowledge, that child will not only be confused and lost, that child will continue to be confused and lost for the rest of his or her life and will pass on the confusion to future generations, perhaps even on a cellular level. People in this state are able to survive, as opposed to most animals, and pass the confusion on, creating a strange world where, although they survive, they don't survive well unless a significant life-changing event occurs.

I feel that books and written words teach us to lose this knowledge, and the capacity for exact remembering. The impression we are given when we go to school is that paper and books are a superior method of recording the "truth", yet we know that

history has been falsified and made one-sided; we see it in every social studies book used in the school system today.

Oral history, on the other hand, tends to be treated as myth not bound to truth, yet in actual fact, oral history is not allowed to be changed when a new person learns it. We are given the impression that literacy is a superior way of communicating and of working, of remembering, yet brilliant people may be at a total loss if they lose a little slip of paper. All the same, I believe that when we succumb to this way of working we lose so many ways of knowing that Indigenous peoples all over the world know about. This way of knowing is contained in our language, and is, I believe a major reason why our worldviews differ; our relationship with the plants and the environment; why we consider everything to have a spirit and deserving of respect. Battiste (1998) writes, “The course of self-determination is a call for acknowledgement of the illegitimacy of Eurocentric thought in defining Aboriginal knowledge and people, and the recovery of Aboriginality in local ecologies and languages” (p. 10).

According to Dan Wildcat, in an interview (1998), “One of the dominant themes is that the measure of civilization is the extent to which we can control, dominate, manipulate the natural world. From an Indigenous perspective, from the Native worldview, that’s not a reasonable way to approach your interaction within the natural world” (p. 1). There are words used all around me when I leave the reservation that I really have a lot of difficulty with. I feel that the designation of people according to which world they live in extremely Eurocentric. The first world, I would assume to be Europe, but it is only the first world to the Europeans. The second world, I would assume to be North America, after its “discovery”, even though I don’t hear a reference to a

second world. The third world appears to mean non-Europeans in non-European worlds, and fourth worlds to be non-Europeans in “the second” world. These terms are used publicly and with little thought of the implications of their use. Even the Europeans know that Europe wasn’t the first “world”; their anthropologists have told them so. There are so many words used without thought to how it makes others feel, or how it teaches the young to feel or think. Words such as “Western philosophy” or “Western politics” and so on, do not feel right to me either. I hear them all the time, even at the University, yet I know that Western philosophy is the Aboriginal people’s philosophies; Western politics are Aboriginal people’s governance systems – we are the Western people. When these terms are used, it is really only neo-European philosophy, or perhaps, Colonial philosophy and politics. Battiste (1992) states,

Eurocentrism is not like a prejudice from which informed people can elevate themselves. In schools and universities, traditional academic studies support and reinforce the Eurocentric contexts and consequences, ignoring Indigenous worldviews, knowledge and thought, while claiming to have superior grounding in Eurocentric history, literature, and philosophy. (p. 8)

Ronald W. Langacker (1968) stated that, “... a child cannot invent a language from scratch” (p. 16). I have heard, though, that there have been suggestions that twins may actually develop their own language at a very early age (Bryan, 1998; Donelson, 1977; Wikipedia, 2007a). Langacker goes on to say, “There are a number of cases on record of children who grew up in the wilderness in isolation from human society, in some instances raised by wolves as extra cubs. None of them had invented any kind of language when found” (p. 16). If this is the case, then language requires other speakers

to be present in order for language to develop. Langacker does not mention whether the children that were raised with wolves had specific utterances or sounds that appeared to have certain meanings.

More than likely, all languages have some words that arose from the sound of something (onomatopoeic) such as the word for a whippoorwill, or a chickadee, in English, or the word xwiishxwiish in Diitidaht for the blue jay. Most, if not all, languages have words borrowed from other languages, such as house and king, in English from Scandinavian, and lapliit (the priest) or liplash (the board) in Diitidaht from French. Therefore, not every word has an in situ cultural origin and not all words carry worldview. It is in the way words are used together; the way words are put together to form a complete thought, as well as the types of words within a language that forms worldview. For this reason, word lists, of which there are many, and dictionaries, are not enough in themselves to restore a language; they are primarily of interest to people who study the language. The word lists do not, in themselves, contain enough information to revitalize a dying language, or enough to rebuild a language that is dead. Whole sentences, whole paragraphs, whole dialogues, in context, is what carries the worldview as is the way it is taught – the inflections, the gestures, the facial expressions and body language is crucial to the revival and restoration of any language. Anything that is important to a culture is more likely to have a specific term and anything that is not, is less likely to. For example, in European languages (perhaps all) there is a custom that requires people to greet each other and to part with yet another set of words in response, even in casual settings. Not to do so would be considered rude in those cultures. In Diitidaht, and many other First Nations languages, this is often superfluous in casual

settings because it is not considered discourteous to omit greetings and parting words, and in addition, it is basically considered redundant, as it is rather obvious that someone is arriving or leaving (Gillette Chipps, personal communication 1975-1985). Along the same line, the sentences, “I love you” or “I hate you” do not really exist in many First Nations languages (although some have developed them later), since those emotions should be obvious, and the need to state the obvious is not required. Where these words do exist, they are not always used in the same manner as they tend to be used in English. The word “love”, in particular, in English use, is an incredibly complex word. Someone may say it to another because they are not certain that the other person loves them and feels the need to be reassured that he or she does. Even if that person responds by saying, “I love you too”, or something along that line, neither person may be certain or convinced. This is definitely where we begin to get into worldview differences.

In English there are many words for houses, primarily based on the condition, structure, or status inherent in the type of house. Words such as: bungalow, cottage, shed, hovel, shack, mansion, manor, villa, farmhouse, castle, etc. define what appears to be important to distinguish about the house. There are fewer words for house in Diitidaht, but these are often based on the house’s type of location. Thus, we have ba’as (house on level ground), ba’is (house on sand), and ba’aw (house on rocky shore). It may be assumed that, in Diitidaht, when referring to a house, it is important to distinguish upon what the house was built rather than the type or size of the house.

There is another aspect to First Nations languages and that is how the words are created, put together, and used. As mentioned briefly before, among many, if not all, First Nations people, the root of a word (the basic block of meaning) is usually based upon

either a shape or a movement in that shape. Therefore, words are based on how what was seen was interpreted on the basis of shape or shape of movement. There is no distinction within the root of whether it is a thing, a concept, or a movement. This fits in very well with First Nations' worldview, where everything is related. As more information is added to the root, a clearer picture is formed.

Indigenous languages offer not just a communication tool for unlocking knowledge; they offer a process of orientation that removes us from rigid noun-centred reality and offers an unfolding paradigmatic process for restoration and healing. It reflects a reality of transformation and change in its holistic representation and processes that stress interaction, reciprocity, respect and non-interference. (Battiste, 1998 p. 11)

There are many factors that are considered extremely important to add to the picture for correctness, but these are based on stating important facts within the culture. In First Nations languages, these pieces of information vary quite a lot; even where and when you add these pieces is different from language to language. The piecing together of very short informative pieces to create a complete picture and thus forming a longer word is, to my knowledge, universal among First Nations languages.

For example, in Diitidaht it can be important to add information to a word that tells the listener(s) whether the shape or motion is ongoing, repetitive but not usual, or like something, but not quite. It is also important to let the other person know whether this is firsthand information, or repeated information. It can be important to add information about the location in time or space, and who is involved. Whether it is a noun or a verb comes out in context and is not given the distinctive markers common in

English.

Gillette Chipps, an Elder, often stated that Diitidaht was an easy language to learn, and found it rather surprising when non-Native peoples could not grasp the way the language worked. He, on the other hand, spoke English, along with seven other West Coast languages. An uncle who was helping a linguistics professor, many years ago now, was astounded when the professor angrily yelled, “Why can’t you people ever say anything the same way twice?” The professor was gathering linguistic information, and was reviewing the previously gathered list. Apparently, what this professor was, as yet, unaware of, is that if something is repeated that was previously told, that must be marked on the word, thus changing it. Another factor that can cause this reaction is that the picture can be changed a little, from time to time, due to the flexible nature of the language, and in accordance to the way the speaker sees the picture or relates to it at that time. I remember, a long time ago, taking Sarah Sawyer up to visit with Effie, her best friend at Nitinaht. They would sit there speaking a mile a minute and laughing over something one had said. I understood some of it, but not the jokes. Mom (Sarah Sawyer) explained later that they would play with words and try to come up with a new creative way to say things, or they would take a word from another dialect and place it in the dialect they were speaking, creating a hilarious change.

In Diitidaht, there is a root (da-) for seeing, hearing, and smelling. It can be best deciphered as sensing or perceiving, the part of the body that does the sensing is not relevant; however, what shape one is perceiving is relevant. In these examples, you can see how cleverly words are created, such as the word for glasses.

dachaaʔibts

I read (past tense)

dachaalsibs	I need to read
dacha' aalhʒaa' as	I will read
dachaals	I am reading
da' daachee' s	Come to visit (see)
dachiit	To look at a body
dachaabl	To look at a ball (round thing)
dachaa' dɬ	To look at a straight object
de' ew'iλ	To hear
da' apɬ	To smell something
daadaa' ak' aalk ^w	Moonwatchers
dadaachey' sawub	Window
dadaachey' akλsib	Glasses (literally to need window tools)

According to Jacobson (1999) for the Makah language, he uses the following examples for seeing and hearing:

dachshiλ	to look (at)
daasa	to see, watch
da' aa	to hear
da' aa' uX	to listen to (p. 56)

Although perhaps not regarded as a scholarly work, Peter Hoeg, speaking as the character Smilla, explains the differences of world views inherent in different cultures and languages:

Sinik is not a distance, not a number of days or hours. It is both a spatial and a temporal phenomenon, a concept which describes the union of space and motion and time which is taken for granted by Inuits but cannot be captured by ordinary speech in any European language ...The European measurement of distance, the standard meter in Paris, is quite different. It is a concept for reshapers, for those whose primary view of the world is that it must be transformed. Engineers, military strategists, prophets. (p.336)

In counting, as well, a different suffix is added according to the shape of what one is counting,

buu	Four
buuqabl	Four round things
buupey'ł	Four long things
buuy'ıl	Four fathoms

In Nitinaht, the moonwatchers' job was to look at the moon every night at a specific time, and mark on a log where the moon was. In the morning, the moon watchers would meet with everyone and their account of the moon would help to decide the activities for the day and the planning for the near future. (Gillette Chipps, personal communication, 1975 – 1985). For this reason, I believe, the moon's phases are carefully named,

biłabl	Full moon (full round)
hii' dłachłdaa'k	New moon
hii' dłachłchawaa't	One finger's width attached
hii' dłachł'ałaa't	Two fingers' widths attached

hii' d'lachλ qakac'a't Three fingers' widths attached

hii' d'lachλ buu'at Four fingers' widths attached

'a'apXtapał Half moon

Uncle John Thomas and Thom Hess (Thomas & Hess, 1981) write about a number of differences between English and other European languages and Nitinaht,

1. All Nitinaht word classes freely occur as predicators without special derivational devices to transfer a root or stem from one class to another. The following two sentences provide a glimpse of how, in Nitinaht, the same word can function, now in a manner reminiscent of an English verb, now more like an adjective or noun:

'iiX-'a ch'apc'-aq The canoe is big,

ch'apac'-a 'iiX-aq The big thing is a canoe (p. iv)

2. One of the most unusual features of Nitinaht and the other Southern Wakashan languages is the absence of a grammatical means for distinguishing subject from object in normal sentences,

casiiksa ch'iik'^wa'alaq piishpishaq

chases dog-the cat-the

casiiksa piishpishaq ch'iik'^wa'alaq

chases cat-the dog-the (p. iv)

3. Nitinaht has over four hundred suffixes which convey a very broad range

of concepts, not only abstract grammatical and temporal notions as in European languages, but also a host of concrete ideas.

ha'uk^ws buwch'aq I'm eating the venison

buwach'kiss I'm eating venison (p. v)

Suffixes denote location, shape, moods, action (whether the action is a momentary, habitual, ongoing, or repeating), whether one is speaking as a witness or on hearsay, whether the listener has been told before,

Uncle John Thomas and Thom Hess go on to explain how a student's world view changes when learning Nitinaht in the following paragraph:

Therefore, as the English-speaking student gradually learns Nitinaht, (s)he acquires a new and markedly different means of viewing the world. Acquiring this new perspective is one of the most intriguing aspects of learning a language that belongs to a radically different cultural setting. (p. vii)

These are examples of worldview differences that can exist across languages. The picture one sees when viewing the world around oneself, and tries to explain the view.

For teachers, the most significant differences between English and the Indian and Inuit languages are to be found in their ways of conceptualizing, preserving, and transmitting knowledge. Until very recently, the native languages have developed entirely in the oral mode. Speakers hold in their individual and collective memories everything that they know and believe about their world and their experiences in it. (Leavitt, 1993 p. 5)

Ki-ke-in (Ron Hamilton) wrote as part of the introduction, *Give Me My Mother's Tongue, Please!* (Barkley Sound Dialect Working Group, 2004), "This is very sad for those of us who care about and love our language. Our beautiful language arose on this coast of ours over thousands of years. And now our Mother tongue is at risk of disappearing from this coast, which is less and less ours" (p. 2). Ki-ke-in speaks of a story about the Weeping Woman, which is told every evening over a complete lunar cycle.

Predictably, this story of ours is at turns scary, mysterious, interesting, even funny. Less obviously, it also contains lessons about our geography, history, political relations, and language. The children, who loved this story and asked for it to be told and retold countless times, learned the proper pronunciations for the names of all the villages where their families had roots and ongoing family ties. (p. 3)

And regarding the Nitinaht language, the story says,

Yet further down the coast, Kwiikwistupsup meets a man who is eating steamed tl'usaasht. That man has a small herring bone stuck in the back of his throat and speaks in a raspy voice. Today, that man's Niitiinaa-at-H descendants are still known for their distinctive rasp in their accent, which others find so different and difficult to learn. (p. 5)

Loss of Language

There are eleven Aboriginal language families and isolates in Canada, including

Inuktitut. Of these, seven exist in British Columbia. “British Columbia has the greatest diversity of languages, home to about half of all individual languages but because of the small size of these groups, it accounts for only 7% of people with an Aboriginal mother tongue.” (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, n.d.d) “For Aboriginal people great losses have occurred: out of some 50 languages, about half are either close to extinction or endangered. Over the past 100 years or more, nearly ten once flourishing languages have become extinct; at least a dozen are on the brink of extinction.” (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, n.d.c)

Languages already extinct: Huron, Petun, Neutral, and the St. Lawrence Iroquoian (Iroquoian Family), Beothuk (Isolate), Pentlatch (Salish Family), Tsesaut, and Nicola (Athabaskan Family).

Languages Near Extinction: Abenaki, Delaware (Algonquian Family), Tagish, Han, Tahltan, and Sarcee (Athabaskan Family), Tuscarora and Seneca (Iroquoian Family), Straits Salish, Squamish, Sechelt (Salish Family), Nitinaht (Wakashan Family), and Southern Tsimshian (Tsimshian Family). (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, n.d.c)

“There is a five-category classification of language survival based on Dale Kinkade’s 1991 study, The Decline of Native Languages in Canada”:

1. Already Extinct
2. Near Extinction: beyond the possibility of revival (spoken by only a few elderly people)

3. Endangered: Spoken by enough people to make survival a possibility if sufficient community interest and concerted educational programs are present.
4. Viable but small: More than 1,000 speakers and spoken in isolated and/or well-organized communities with strong self-awareness.
5. Viable: Large enough population base that long-term survival is relatively assured. (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, n.d.c)

“The number of Diitidaht speakers dwindled from about thirty in the 1990’s to just eight by 2006.” (Wikipedia, 2007b)

According to the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey: 9 in 10 Aboriginal adults would like to relearn the Aboriginal language they once knew. The great majority of Aboriginal adults who never spoke an Aboriginal language would like to learn one (nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of urban residents). (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, n.d.a)

In the Department of Indian Affairs document on First Nations Languages, their conclusions are:

Canada’s Aboriginal languages are among the most endangered in the world (UNESCO).

Only 3 of some 50 Aboriginal languages are considered viable with large population bases; however some small languages are also viable.

Viable languages: young speakers, successful in passing on language, spoken in

isolated and/or well-organized communities.

Endangered languages: small populations, older speakers, lower rates of transmission.

Reserves and northern communities serve as linguistic enclaves in the maintenance of Aboriginal languages.

The use of Aboriginal languages extends beyond Aboriginal communities into cities, reflecting their composition and diversity across Canada.

Intergenerational transmission is a major challenge, especially for the endangered languages in general and also for Aboriginal populations off-reserve in cities.

Language maintenance and revival are critical for the transmission of currently viable languages to the next generation and to saving endangered languages from extinction.

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommendation: language use in home and community is critical for intergenerational transmission and acquiring language as mother tongue. (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, n.d.b)

There are many sources of information about what constitutes endangered languages and there are almost as many definitions of what to call them; however, the truth is quite simple – the vast majority of First Nations languages are dying. Even some languages that are deemed to be viable have a decreasing young population who speak the language as their first language. For Diitidaht, there is no doubt that the language is

not spoken in the home and only a few elders speak it when they are together or when they are asked to provide information.

There now arises another definition that needs to be considered very carefully; that of community. When people speak of First Nations communities, they are referring to reserves, urban enclaves, or Indian settlements (new, more modern, towns built by the government on non-reserve lands to entice First Nations to leave their reserve instead of fixing up the villages. Reserves without residents are easily lost.) The problem with this is that most people think that everyone in a community comes from the same language family or dialect, which is not the case. To a large extent, in the establishment of reserves, and moving people from different places to the same reserve, they mixed people from different villages and dialects, languages and even language families. For example, at Beecher Bay First Nation, Nitinaht (Wakashan) and Klallam (Straits Salish) were combined on one reserve. Through marriage, people from one language family very often end up on the same reserve. Therefore, when seeking solutions based on community, problems will invariably arise. Is it proper to offer to teach everyone in one community one language – the one that has been designated for that community? In the old days, children usually spoke more than one language (because their parents usually spoke at least different dialects, if not different languages). When one considers the importance of reviving languages that are very endangered, based on community, a large number of families are excluded from the language program that might be established in a community. For example, as shown in Chapter Six on our history, our family extends right up the west coast of Vancouver Island. A school has been built at Balatsaht, Nitinaht, and the government has put a lot of money into providing language courses

through the school, but these classes are only available if you live at Nitinaht. If you live in Beecher Bay, you learn a Salishan language, if you learn any. I think it is extremely dangerous to the revival of the languages if one thinks only in terms of community; one must think in terms of families, and families ought to have a choice of language, regardless of location of residence. People at Beecher Bay, Sooke, or Port Renfrew, are not able to move to Balatsaht so the language program will be available to them; housing simply makes that impossible. In addition, since most housing is band owned, once someone moves away from their house, they no longer have a residence in that community.

There are a number of reasons why our languages are dying. The earliest one is the establishment of residential schools that specifically forbade children to speak their language or practice their culture. It was an attempt at genocide, and while we are still around despite the fact that our Elders were punished for speaking their language, the residential schools did have a tremendous impact upon the continuance of our languages. The fact that children and parents were ‘brainwashed’ into believing that speaking a First Nations language was detrimental and that teaching it to one’s children was detrimental to those children was also a big factor.

Jon Reyhner (1996) writes about the government involvement in the attempt to destroy First Nations’ languages:

Government supported education became the means to accomplish the eradication of Indian languages. Indian children were taken away from their families and put in government-funded boarding schools. Once there, they were kept away from their families for years at a time and punished in a variety of ways if they used

their mother-tongue. Harsh punishments such as whipping were used that would never be considered by the supposedly “savage” Indians. (p. 4)

Later events that led to loss of language were things like regular provincial schools that are still aimed at assimilation. Also the media, television, radio, and movies, have been very successful at bringing English or French into even the most remote communities where, if there is a television, families are watching shows in English or French. Another contributing factor was mentioned earlier in reference to confusion when one’s mother tongue is lost. It can be confusing to try to make changes on a reserve because you need to get everyone, each family, to agree on making that change.

Even though we have, to a large extent, lost our languages, it doesn’t mean that we have lost all of our cultural traits. Our culture is based on a village made up of closely related members of one family living near villages also consisting of closely related members of the family; however, each village was autonomous and each chief looked out for his or her family, that was a chief’s job – being a good provider. When families from different villages were placed together on reserves, it really didn’t matter how closely the families were related, each family unit (originally from one village) still expects to be looked after by a chief of their family unit – anyone else is suspect. It doesn’t matter, really, just how fair a present-day chief is trying to be, if he or she does anything for his or her family, which is expected, then he or she is seen as preferring their own family. On the other hand, if the chief tries to avoid favouring his or her own family the Chief loses on both counts – the family feels let down and the other families are still suspicious that they are losing out. This is a serious problem that is often overlooked when dealing with First Nations communities; they are designed, artificially, to not function well. That too

has been very successful in destroying our languages!

As is mentioned in the later chapter on history, Henry Chipps told how his parents, Sarah Sawyer and Gillette Chipps, moved from their home in Kyuquot to Victoria in order to keep more of their children from being removed to residential school. Henry's older half-brothers, Gerald and Randy Chipps, and brother, Stanley Chipps, had already been stolen away to residential school by the church ship that still visits Kyuquot to this day. By moving, life became harder for the family, but they saved nine children from being taken away to residential schools. The two half-brothers, Stanley and Gerald Chipps were sent from residential school to a sanitarium because they developed tuberculosis. In the fifth chapter on "Our Last Puk'u'u Weaver", Sarah Short also mentions going to residential school and developing tuberculosis.

Within language lie the keys to everything you see and believe, and everything all the generations before you have seen and believe. When language is lost, culture is lost, or as Joshua Fishman (1996) puts it, "You can also speak from the point of the culture lost. The culture has lost its language. What is lost when the culture is so dislocated that it loses the language which is traditionally associated with it?" (p. 1) and he goes on to say, "We have had this very haphazard linguistic book-keeping where you pretend nothing is lost – except the language. It is just a little language" (p. 1). When you lose your language you become lost – you may have another language you can function in, but that is all you do. It has been found that when language is lost, families tend to become dysfunctional; students do poorly in school, and there is little direction for tomorrow. Dick Littlebear (1990) states,

The problem is that others have defined for us how to cope with this transition

and their efforts have only minimally succeeded. This means we must devise our own strategies to counter the negative effects of cultural transition. Especially since this cultural transition is being complicated by alien organizational systems, by high technology, by alcohol, by drugs, by ambiguous values, by exploding populations, by erosion of language and culture, and by a shrinking world which brings new demands that impact daily the remotest villages and reservations. Because of these complications, this transition is forcing us to realign our cultures to fit the present educational, economic, political, and social circumstances in which we native minority language people find ourselves. (p. 1)

Reyhner (1996) believes that there is a serious cyclic consequence when a community begins to lose identity:

A vicious cycle persists that is very difficult to break. Lack of community infrastructure and many social problems contribute to language shift; language shift fosters dysfunctional behaviour, and so it goes. So much damage has been inflicted on the local cultures that some people seem rather fatalistic about language loss, not to mention solving the many social problems associated with the accompanying cultural unraveling. (p. 2)

Fishman (1996) asks, "What is lost to a country that encourages people to lose their direction in life?" He goes on to say,

The most important relationship between language and culture that gets to the heart of what is lost when you lose a language is that most of the culture is in the language and is expressed in the language. Take it away from the culture, and you

take away its greetings, its curses, its praises, its laws, [its history,] its songs, its riddles, its proverbs and stories, its cures, its wisdom, its prayers. The culture could not be expressed and handed on in any other way. (p. 2)

In addition, most people of a culture are aware, to a varying extent, that they are the “keepers” of the culture and the language; there is a sense of responsibility for keeping it alive, and many struggle with their failure, or their parents’ failure, to do so. I have heard many people in their fifties and sixties say that they wished they had listened better; had remembered better, when someone close who had the knowledge passed on. Well, perhaps there is something else we lose. Not just the language or the culture but something equally important – the orality of the language and the ability to remember. When Mom (Sarah Sawyer) and Dad (Gillette Chipps) were still alive, I could ask them specific details about a Potlatch and who gave what to whom and their accounts would match, exactly. That kind of memory comes with oral language; it has to! Perhaps all those who said they wished they had listened and remembered better, couldn’t do so for the simple reason that they had been brought into a literary society, and a foreign language, with schools that put more emphasis on writing and reading than on memory. In an article on “graphocentricity” Daniel Chandler, (n.d.) mentions that, “Plato, in the Phaedrus (c. 411 – 404 BC) saw the technology of writing as an external threat. It was a threat to the importance of human memory. ‘Those who acquire it will cease to exercise their memory and become forgetful; they will rely on writing to bring things to their remembrance by external signs instead of on their own internal resources’” (p. 1). The fact that he wrote this is rather ironical, but it is perhaps why we even know that these were his thoughts.

There are many ideas about how to revitalize First Nations languages, and I imagine that everyone who provides these ideas does so from their own perspective or field of study. Thus, we have educators promoting ways to revitalize language through educational programs; we have governments paying millions for task forces to study the problems; we have linguists studying the languages and making dictionaries and writing systems, but we still have others – outsiders - telling us how to fix the problem from their perspective when we, each family, and in some cases, each community, really need the opportunity to discover for ourselves how best to help our language survive. Those languages that are most endangered can't wait for task forces, or classes, or dictionaries because our language will be extinct, as it is spoken normally, before any of that can begin to make any valid changes. A dictionary will not help our language survive – it will provide merely a reference, but not help us relearn how to speak it. A class in school will not help our language survive unless it is can create an environment where it is not only spoken in the classroom, but also outside the classroom and in the home. Unless the language becomes the language of choice in the home, the language will not be taught to the students' own children when they have them. Millions of dollars being spent by the government on sending us specialists who will study our language will not make the language survive in our homes. Fishman (1996) says,

Whenever a weak culture is in competition with a strong culture, it is an unfair match. ... Small weak cultures, surrounded by dominant cultures, dependent on a dominant culture, and dislocated by those very cultures, and yet needing those cultures, are not to be envied. (p. 5)

“After all it is the white man's education and the way it was perpetrated on us that

we have objected to; we have never objected to learning itself” (Littlebear, 1990 p. 1).

In 2003 the Diitidaht council approved construction of a \$4.2 million Diitidaht Community School to teach students their language and culture from Kindergarten to Grade 12 on the Diitidaht (Malchan) reserve. As of July 2006, British linguistics professor Mike Fortesque has been living on the reserve (Nitinaht), helping to complete a 500-page Diitidaht and Wakashan dictionary. The language only existed prior to 2002, but now has a 53-character alphabet and new terminology is being developed to adapt the language to modern technology. The Diitidaht have begun publishing the language to CD, DVD, and on FirstVoices.ca. (Wikipedia, n.d.-b)

It is important here to realize that the author of the previous quote was mistaken when stating that “the language only existed prior to 2002” because there are still a few speakers left and when they are together, they love to speak their own mother tongue. First Voices is an excellent idea and has great potential; however, there are some serious problems that may well be due to a shortage of funding or lack of consistent language support. As it exists now, First Voices will not keep our language from becoming extinct. We, at Beecher Bay, can’t send our children to Nitinaht. My own nephew, although he graduated from the school and the language program at Nitinaht, still does not speak the language outside the school and he does not use it to speak with his children. He is, unfortunately, not alone in this. Schools may be good at maintaining a language, and strengthening the use of the language, but in this case school learning is not helping the language stay alive. The language of instruction is still in English by non-Native instructors who bring in Elders to teach the language for just those classes.

In the old days, our Elders taught us everything we needed to know, so why are

those who remain, our real EXPERTS, not teaching instead of those who study the language and write dictionaries in it, or who oversee the Elders teaching the language according to the “outsider’s” lesson plan, for just a short while to each class? Why are so many “outside” non-Native linguists and teachers doing the research and teaching when many Diitidaht people have actually become linguists and have collected dictionaries, but we seem, for the most part, to be ignored when linguistic jobs arise in our linguistic communities. To mention a few, just in our family, Sarah Sawyer (since deceased), Randy Chipps, and I, all graduated from the Native Indian Language Diploma (NILD) course that was once taught at the University of Victoria. Bernice Touchie has done extensive work on the language and has produced workbooks; I have a B.A. in linguistics and created a very large dictionary in the late ‘70’s, as I’m certain Bernice did as well. John Thomas (since deceased) and his sister, Flora Joseph Charles (since deceased), both worked on the Nitinaht language with Thom Hess at the University of Victoria, and in Neah Bay. There are probably others as well that I don’t know about, who may not be in our family, but who also have linguistic skills and language collections – songs, stories recorded and even language workbooks in Diitidaht. I can’t help but wonder why we are in no formal way involved in the education or linguistic work on our language. “He (Churchill, 1986) states that priority should be given to the study of their needs, placing emphasis on their (First Nations) own role in defining their own needs. ... He strongly advocates community control of language and educational policies” (Burnaby, 1996 p. 5).

Fishman (1996) mentions the differences and common confusion between concepts of mother tongue in the following:

People generally do not understand the difference between, for example, mother

tongue acquisition, mother tongue use, and mother tongue transmission. They are not the same thing. So, they frequently settle for acquiring the language not as a mother tongue, but during school experience. By then it is not the mother tongue, because they already have another mother tongue. And schools are not inter-generational language transmission agencies. How is the language learned there going to be transmitted to the next generation? (p. 6)

Fishman (1996) goes on to discuss the values of school and the limitations schools have in the transmission of mother tongues.

School is a wonderful agency, and a crucial agency for particular aspects of language use, like literacy, versatility, or formality. But that is neither acquisition of the mother tongue nor transmission of the mother tongue. So WHAT to do is a terribly important issue and what to do WHEN is a very important issue. (p. 6)

A very important statement, in my opinion, made by Fishman is, “The school has to go beyond the tokenism. We must know enough to beware of tokenism” (p. 9). At the moment, that is all we have. Burnaby wrote, in reference to Reserve schools, that only four percent of the sample of First Nations communities used an Aboriginal language as language of instruction, and these were mostly Inuktitut in the Northwest Territories. Burnaby (1996), in reference to Clarke and MacKenzie (1980a), quotes, “Aboriginal language programs give only lip service to pluralist approaches and ... they are assimilationist in intent” (p. 6). I cannot be certain whether Burnaby was referring to all Aboriginal language programs but personally, I believe this is usually only the case with schools where the primary language of instruction is English/French and where there are

no Indigenous language immersion programs.

Ensuring Oral Transmission

Jon Reyhner (1996) writes, “Both indecision and ineffective action will not reverse the current rapid loss of surviving Indigenous languages” and he adds, “Helping Indigenous Americans develop the effective right to save their languages would likely produce important benefits, not only for the various tribes on the brink of destruction but for all societies” (p. 1).

“Fishman (1989:401) says that ‘language policy on behalf of endangered languages must assure the intimate vernacular (home and personal) functions first, and, if possible, go on from there, slowly building outward from the primary (e.g., home) to the secondary (e.g., community and perhaps workplace) institutions of intergenerational mother-tongue continuity’” (quoted by Burnaby, 1996 p. 4)

It is crucial to allow the language to remain oral for the purposes of revitalization. When there is too much emphasis on writing the language in order to collect the data; teach schoolteachers and set up courses; create course materials; make dictionaries, and keep linguists busy, it is not going to save the language from extinction; help the language to become the mother tongue or to be the language used in the home. It will take drastic measures in order to revive the language while we still have Elders. We may have to resort to the exact measures it took to nearly destroy the language. I’m certain nobody really wants drastic change in any community; however, it will take a very determined decision by each family within the various communities whether or not they want the language to be restored. I believe that, with more support (for example all the money the governmental branches already pump into programs for non-Native persons to

come in and teach us, or to study us) then families will be strong enough to make this decision.

I am not certain that I like the term “revitalize” with extremely endangered languages because it makes it sound as if the language just needs a tiny boost to get it going again whereas when a language is extremely endangered, it really needs to be restored as a mother tongue, used in the home, used in school – including as a teaching language, and used in the work place within the community.

Fishman (1996) discusses some of the measures taken when Hebrew was being revived after not being spoken for over two thousand years,

It was revived through terminologies, first by working out terminologies for carpentry and for kindergarten. Very close to what you need to have for every day, what adults needed every day and what teachers needed every day with those new children who were going to be the first children to be given the language very early, but not by their parents because their parents did not speak it. Rather by the few teachers (in our case, Elders) who had learned to speak it. They were the ones to whom the children were entrusted. Children did not live with their parents. They lived in the Children’s home in a kibbutz with those teachers, the few teachers who had forced themselves to learn how to speak it, not naturally but fluently. They needed a vocabulary for kindergarten, and their parents needed a vocabulary for carpentry. So, start low. Start exactly where the mother tongue starts and try to aim for that. (p. 8)

I went to Israel in 1967, passing through Greece just after the Junta had overthrown the royal family. It was not really a good year for travelling in those countries

as Israel had just gone through the Six-Day War, and there were still quite a few bombings while I was there. I was curious about the Kibbutzim system and wanted to find out more. At the time I had children, so it didn't take me long to discover that I really did not like my children becoming the property of the Kibbutz and only seeing them when they came to visit after work. I admire the system and the functionality of the Kibbutz system under the circumstances, but it was not for me. After six months I left with much more insight than when I arrived.

Fishman (1996) adds, "Another bit of advice is, do not concentrate along institutional lines. Most languages are not institutional, but informal and spontaneous. That is where language lives" (p. 8).

To allow the language to be transmitted or taught orally will ensure that the gestures, facial expressions, stress and emphasis, tone and all the little nuances will make a language a living language. To concentrate and argue about how best to write it and to teach the writing of it, after too much time has passed, is going to take time we don't have. Once the oral language is restored, there will be plenty of time for linguists and others to work on writing systems, lists, textbooks and dictionaries.

We definitely need to look at immersion schools; however, not necessarily run within the school system, unless the program can be planned, taught, and organized by the First Nations themselves.

There are already a number of immersion programs aimed at preserving language and culture. Probably the most famous immersion program is the Maori Language Nests, or Te Kohanga Reo, in New Zealand. Marie Battiste (1992) wrote,

One of the innovative language approaches comes from the Maori of Aotearoa

(New Zealand). The language nest is a total immersion program from birth. Elders, parents and children meet in a small, home-like setting and conduct their everyday activities, all in the Maori language. While the elders provide the knowledge of the language and traditional ways, the task of caring for the children is done by the parents. This strengthens the extended family unit while teaching the language and Maori values, beliefs, knowledge and ways of doing things. By the time children reach school age, they can speak the language. Children who have been involved in the Te Kohanga Reo are able to continue using Maori in the elementary school system, Kura Kaupapa Maori, an offshoot of the language nests. (p. 3)

Many others have written about the Te Kohanga Reo language nests, but among the best, in my opinion, is their actual web site (Te Kohanga Reo, 2007). According to this website, Te Kohanga Reo has a National Trust that provides professional development programmes and provides for an applicant's competency in teaching traditionally and fluency in Maori. This is a process that was agreed to by the Ministry of Education and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. There is also a paper written by Arapera Royal Tangaere (2001) that provides much insight into the background of the language nests and the cultural considerations. Tangaere wrote about the research methods of a Maori researcher within the Maori culture but mentions that,

Kohanga reo focuses on the survival and maintenance of Maori language and traditions, and on whanau learning and development through the management and responsibility of their kohanga. It is modelled on the marae. It is the norm to see the elders, parents, extended family, teenagers and school children participating.

Kohanga reo is about intergenerational transmission. (p. 23)

In another paper, Harrison (1998) describes the start and development of the Maori language nests.

There are other Indigenous language immersion schools. One such is the Chief Atahm School at Sexqeltqin (Adams Lake Reserve) in Chase, B.C. This school was started in 1996 by Secwepemc parents worried about the decline of their language within their communities. They used the Maori Te Kohanga Reo language nests as a model. “An Elder was present to speak the language constantly to the children (babies to five years of age). The children were not taught lessons but acquired the language in a natural home-like setting. Parents volunteered to assist in children’s care” (George Manuel Institute, 2004 p. 2). Once the children were ready to begin grade one, the parents began the first ever immersion program with 17 students. They again relied upon one fluent elder and a certified teacher who planned most of the activities and the instruction was entirely in Secwepemctsin. As children grew, new grades were added until it reached grade nine. Some English was offered in grades four, eight and nine, but these were added much the way French is added in the public schools in B.C. (George Manuel Institute, 2004 p. 2).

The Tlingit held their first immersion retreat in 2002 and participants had to take an oath to speak only Tlingit for five days. This retreat took place in a remote location and joined students with Tlingit speakers. As part of the retreat, berry picking, fish smoking, steambath building, and making teas and traditional medicines were included as activities (Sealaska, 2003). Although this was not an immersion program intended to help the language grow into the mother tongue, spoken in the home, it is worth considering for providing cultural teachings in the traditional setting for any age group. As far as I can

tell, these programs are ongoing and popular.

The Mohawk Immersion Pilot Program (Kanatsiohareke Mohawk Community, 2007) was initially begun in 1998 and has since “blossomed into a multi-level program” (p. 1). The program does not replace public schools but runs in the summer time with students ranging in age from six to 60.

These are some examples of immersion programs: full time, summer, and retreats. For Diitidaht to survive, I firmly believe that a program modelled after the Te Kohanga Reo and Chief Atahm school programs is the only solution; however, I believe that community and family retreats and summer programs to engage the whole community would provide additional support to engage the families in traditional and cultural activities in the Diitidaht language.

First we need to look at the resources we have that could restore the Diitidaht language:

1. Elders: This is the ONLY primary resource we have in order to restore our language,
2. Tapes, video tapes, and any orally transmitted media with our language on it, in order to provide even the Elders with help in teaching the language and terminology; songs and stories. There are still more of these resources around than I think anyone is aware of,
3. Children, as young as possible, and preferably with at least one parent or grandparent, and anyone who speaks even a little of the language.

Next we have to look at the setting we would need:

1. A home-like environment with one or more Elders as the centre of that program and supported by other family members. The best would be to have Elders of a

- family teaching that family where possible,
2. No television with the common media on it. No “outside” influences (there would be plenty of exposure to that later),
 3. Plenty of video recorders to record every second and every interaction between the Elders and all others within this setting. This ensures that if something should happen to that Elder, then that Elder’s knowledge would not be lost and education in the actual language as spoken, could continue should no other Elder be available.
 4. Other technologies to help create interactive multimedia lessons from the video recordings as they are compiled, adding in interactive hiking, pit-cooking, medicines, and berry picking, and
 5. Financial support so at least one parent could accompany their child or children and be part of the education. This should be considered an extremely crucial job for a parent to have. The more potential speakers that can be present, of all ages, the better chance the language will have of surviving and of becoming strong again. Financial support should also be provided to the Elders for the important work they are doing.

We need to incorporate those who have been working to save the language into the revival of the language. There is no good reason at a time like this to “reinvent the wheel”. There is a lot of gathered, collected, and saved information within the families and among those of the family who have been working with language restoration. They need to be the first choice for any jobs. Even if they are not fluent speakers, they will not, as too many other researchers have, come and leave with all the information. It needs to

be gathered and worked with constantly to create a backup for the Elders in the teaching program. The only reason these people have been studying is to try to save the language and culture, and it is time they were recognized.

Finally, we have to look at funding sources. Just as the Te Kohanga Reo has a Trust, each First Nations immersion program, including one for Diitidaht, needs to establish a trust program and fund. Money may be available from the Governments (provincial and federal); there are heritage foundations that have some funding for the creation of language programs; The Aboriginal People's Television Network (APTN) may be a source of some funding, fund raising support, equipment or programming to increase language restoration, and although the government is giving tax breaks to movie makers producing movies in Canada, I feel the government ought to provide more support for language restoration for First Nations languages from the tax dollars they do collect from movie producers.

Most media has been, and is still, a contributor to loss of language and they ought to be approached and asked to donate towards the funding required to run a variety of programs to support the restoration of the language. This could be applicable for nearly any First Nations language and First Nations community:

- a. Funding to create a local First Nations Radio station,
- b. Funding to create a First Nations Television station with the ability to broadcast to all local reserves and communities, or the incorporation of the broadcasts into APTN, if possible,
- c. Training and equipment to provide these services,
- d. Funding, training, and equipment to allow Indigenous speakers to dub popular

shows in a variety of our dialects and related languages – these shows can be stored on DVD which allows a choice of language before being rebroadcast by the local First Nations Television Station, and

- e. Funding to help with the equipment required to enable the recording of Elders teaching the young on an ongoing basis for future reference and teaching.
- f. Funding for the creation of computer networks on and off reserve linking members of families and allowing for the teaching and transmission of knowledge.

APTN is a wonderful cable station, but it is presently not sufficient to undo the damage that has been contributed so heavily to by the media. In addition, although they have Innu and First Nation language programming and subtexts, there appears to be a preference to populations with an already large number of native language speakers.

If we continue to allow the government, researchers, schools, and the media to provide nothing more than what serves them, then we have a serious problem that is not at all acceptable. At the moment, they are writing our epitaph and carving out our linguistic and cultural tombstone – while our language and culture is still breathing! This is just not right!

Chapter 5: Our Last Puk'u'u Weaver

Introduction

Sarah Short is the last basket weaver in our family. Sarah lives in Kyuquot and is the daughter of Gillette Chipps' sister, Mary Ann who married Willie Oscar. There is one more basket weaver, Lucy Gillette, who is more remotely related, and who is the queen of the Checlesets, Queen Lucy. Weaving is only a small part of the knowledge required because the weaver also needs to know where and how to gather and prepare all the materials needed to make the baskets. When a weaver is too old to gather and prepare the materials, traditionally, younger weaver-apprentices would do that; however, one only becomes a weaver-apprentice by asking and nobody is asking any longer.

In order to do my research, I needed to be a student according to our traditions, so I went to Kyuquot and helped the Elders. I did not arrive with a questionnaire or consent forms but with a willingness to help and learn. I could not direct what I would learn; that was up to the Elders. When I helped Hilda Hansen, she taught me how to prepare salmon and properly set up a smokehouse, her style. I learned other styles from each Elder; I learned another style of smoking salmon from Sarah and Alec Short, and learned yet another method from Richard Patterson at Nitinaht. Fortunately, Sarah was busy working on her baskets using designs her mother (or someone before her) had sewn onto burlap squares and these were unravelling badly. I didn't have any material the first year, so I drew graph lines on paper and copied the patterns' stitches from each design. The following year, I brought coloured yarn and material and made a new set of patterns that would not unravel. While I was doing this, I was busy listening to Sarah and watching her

weave baskets. The third year, Sarah agreed to be interviewed on video camera for the project. This interview has been transcribed and follows this introduction. Where the use of names in a public document, such as this, could cause distress, these names have been replaced with the letters of the alphabet. For the purpose of our history, which is private, these names have been kept intact but are not included here.

As I worked with Sarah, I learned what materials she needed and decided to try to find them. She needed basket grass (Slough Sedge), cedar bark, and “raisin heads” (3-corner grass) and dyes. As no one was gathering the materials for her at Kyuquot, I went to Nitinaht to learn from my brother-in-law, Richard Patterson, who had been married to Hazel Chipps. Richard gathers basket-making materials every year and he agreed to teach me how. In July, we drove to a secret slough sedge location at Nitinaht and gathered basket grass. I learned how to prepare the grass traditionally and, since then, I have brought it to Frances Edgar, Lucy Gillette, and Sarah Short every year.

In August, Richard was supposed to take me to get 3-corner grass, but he was away. He'd given a few clues, and with much searching, I found it near Campbell River. I gathered quite a bit with the assistance of my grandson and a niece from Beecher Bay. Then we tried to dry it but as I had no idea what I was doing, I tried tying it into bunches and drying it – and mold grew in it. This year, the fourth year, I went to gather cedar bark for Sarah Short and decided to really surprise her by gathering not only red cedar bark, but also yellow cedar bark. Sarah and Alec were down from Kyuquot for a visit, and they were certainly happy. I was the one who was surprised because after a few days I could hardly breathe. Dad had always told us never to burn yellow cedar, but he'd never told us not to do as I had done – run my hands in the cool fresh feeling of the sap and inhaled

deeply of the wonderful smell of yellow cedar. As a result, I went into the hospital with pulmonary failure and spent six days in acute care. I'm really glad I learned that lesson, because now I'll teach my children, grandchildren and great grandchildren that not only must they not burn yellow cedar, they must not go swimming in it or inhale the smell too much, as I had done.



Figure 10 Henry Chipps gathering basket grass



Figure 11 Pakki Chipps sorting and splitting basket grass

In addition to the primary materials for basket-making, it was important to know the plants used for dyes or imbrication with which the baskets were decorated. There has been a shift toward using coloured raffia and imported dyes instead of the traditional ones, but I am hoping to learn more about this and to start making these materials available in the future. Dr. Nancy J. Turner is also working very hard at recording and keeping this valuable information available, thank goodness!



Figure 12 Basket grass (Slough sedge) drying at Kyuquot

Henry Chipps and I have taught several of the youth of Beecher Bay how to gather and prepare the basket materials, and every year the number of gatherers grows. This year, I have gathered an extra 30 bundles of basket grass to distribute to the weavers at a memorial. I am hoping to give away one large bundle to each weaver and one smaller bundle for them to give to a youth, trying to encourage youth in the weavers' villages to learn as well.

For the purpose of our history, through the videos and photographs, the weaving

process has been recorded and will be part of the “Family First” program for now and for the future. I am thrilled that this beautiful, delicate art will not be lost, at least not in this generation.

The Interview was recorded with Sarah Short at her house at Houpsitas Village in Kyuquot in August of 2005, and was transcribed in my house at Beecher Bay First Nation. I have not changed Sarah’s grammar as I wanted to keep the interview as she told her life story. The copyright and all rights to the contents of this transcript belong to Sarah Short.

A lot of place names are used in this transcript. I have drawn and labelled maps with place names for Kyuquot, Checletset, Nitinaht and Beecher Bay including the reserves, for your reference on the next pages.

The first map shows Nitinaht Lake and the reserves. The coastline is extremely rough, as are the seas at times, in this area. The turbulence and unpredictability of the passage from the ocean to the lake has claimed many lives and only the most experienced boatsmen of the Nitinaht First Nation make this journey safely. Nitinaht Lake is quite windy, to the delight of wind surfers who camp close to the primary village of Baladsa’ah, or Malachan, in a Band-owned camp ground among enormous Red Cedar and fir trees.

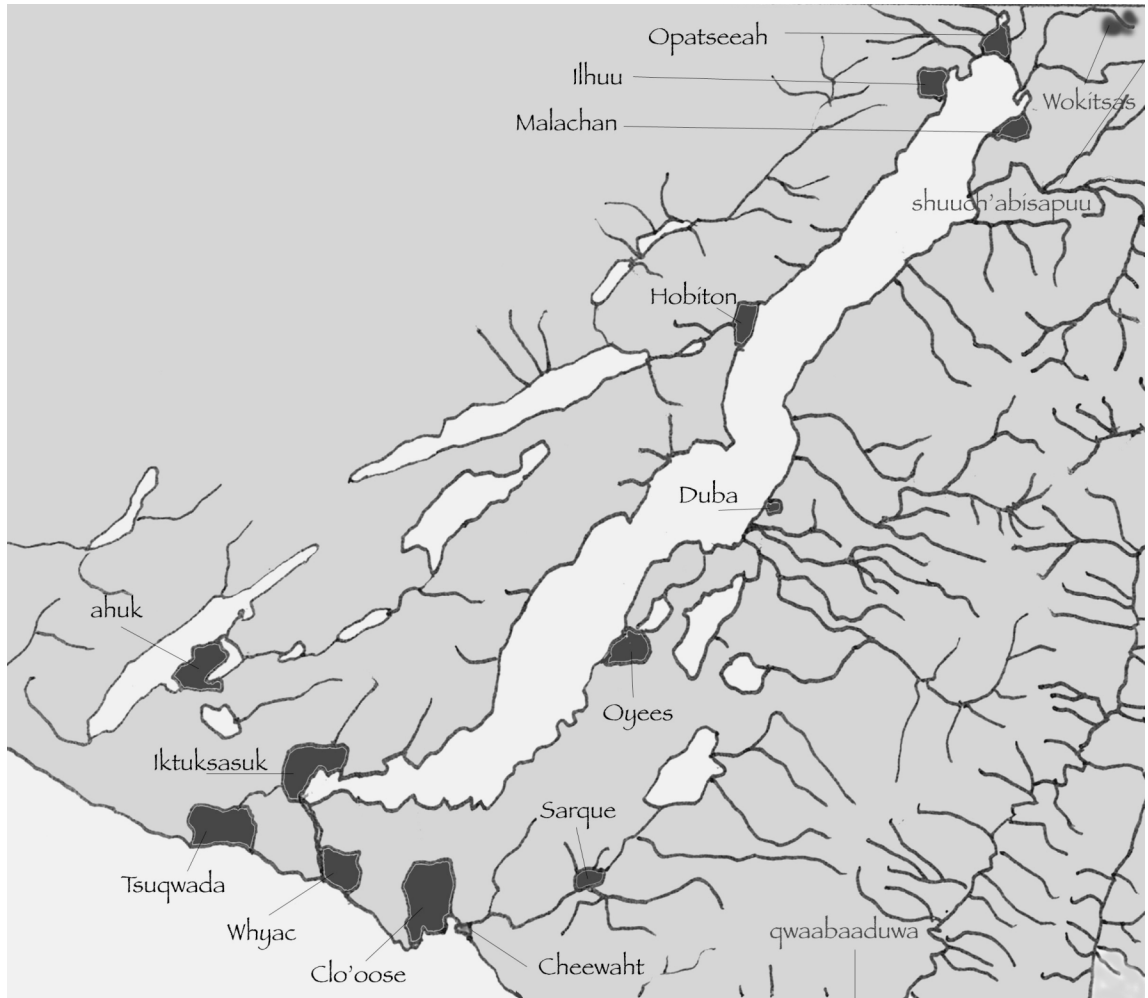


Figure 13 Nitinaht Lake and reserves

The following map (Fig. 14) shows Kyuquot and the allotted reserves. Kyuquot, in my opinion, is one of the most stunningly beautiful places on this earth, but since all access is either by boat or float plane, it can be expensive and difficult to live there now that the economy has become money-based. Not everyone has a boat and the logging road leading to and from Fair Harbour is extremely long and rough on automobiles. The boat journey from Fair Harbour; between steep mountains until you reach a large, choppy expanse of water between Mocketas and Union Islands; between the mainland and the craggy shores of Union Island, and then past wondrous small volcanic islands barely

above the water to the safe harbour of Houpsitas is a wonderful experience!

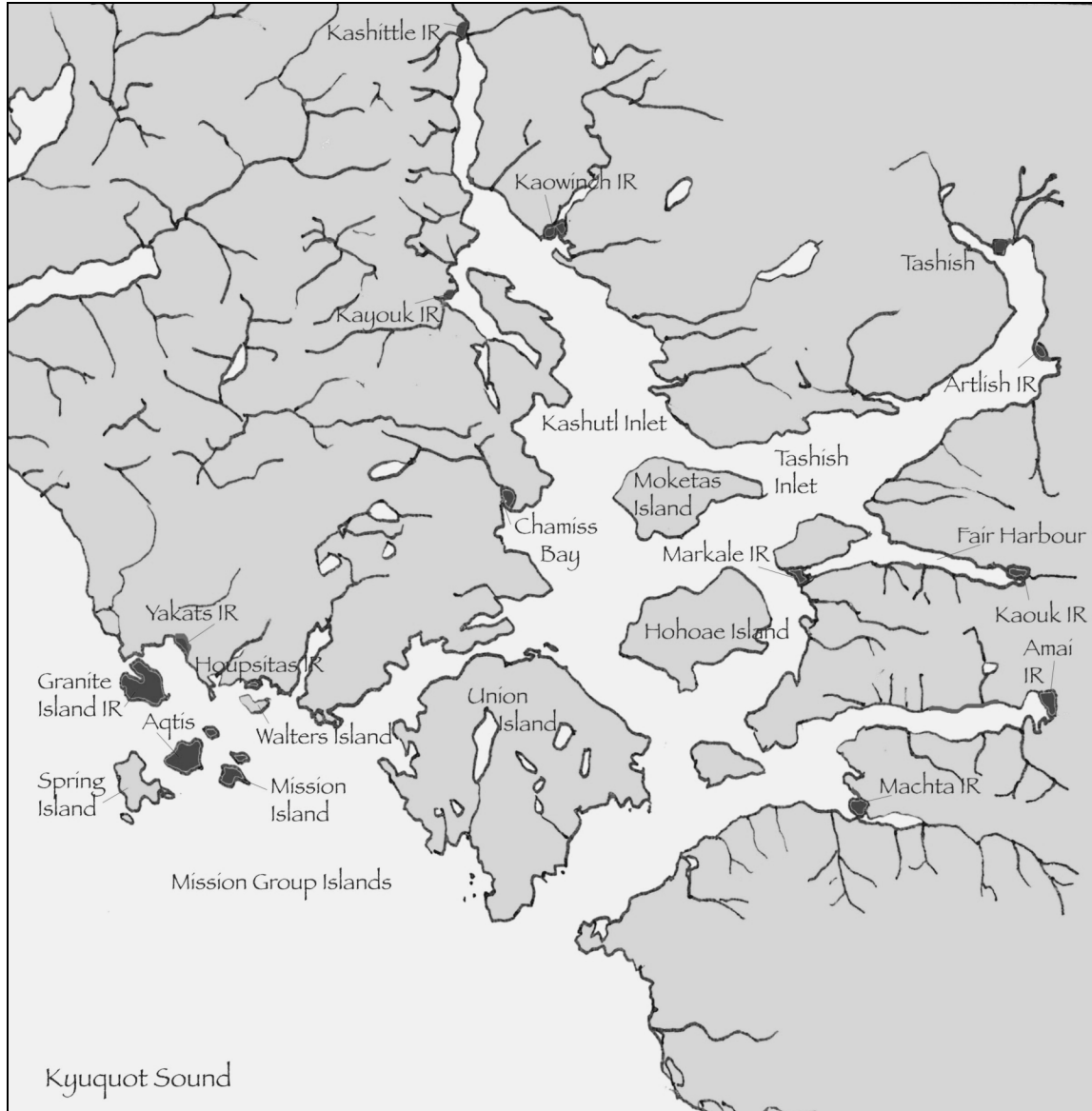


Figure 14 The Reserve lands of the Kyuquots

Figure 15 shows the Checleset reserves and, although only a few families have returned to these reserves from Kyuquot, they happily live with no running water or power. There are many kayakers traveling among the islands and reserves during the summer and it is truly a spectacular part of our world.

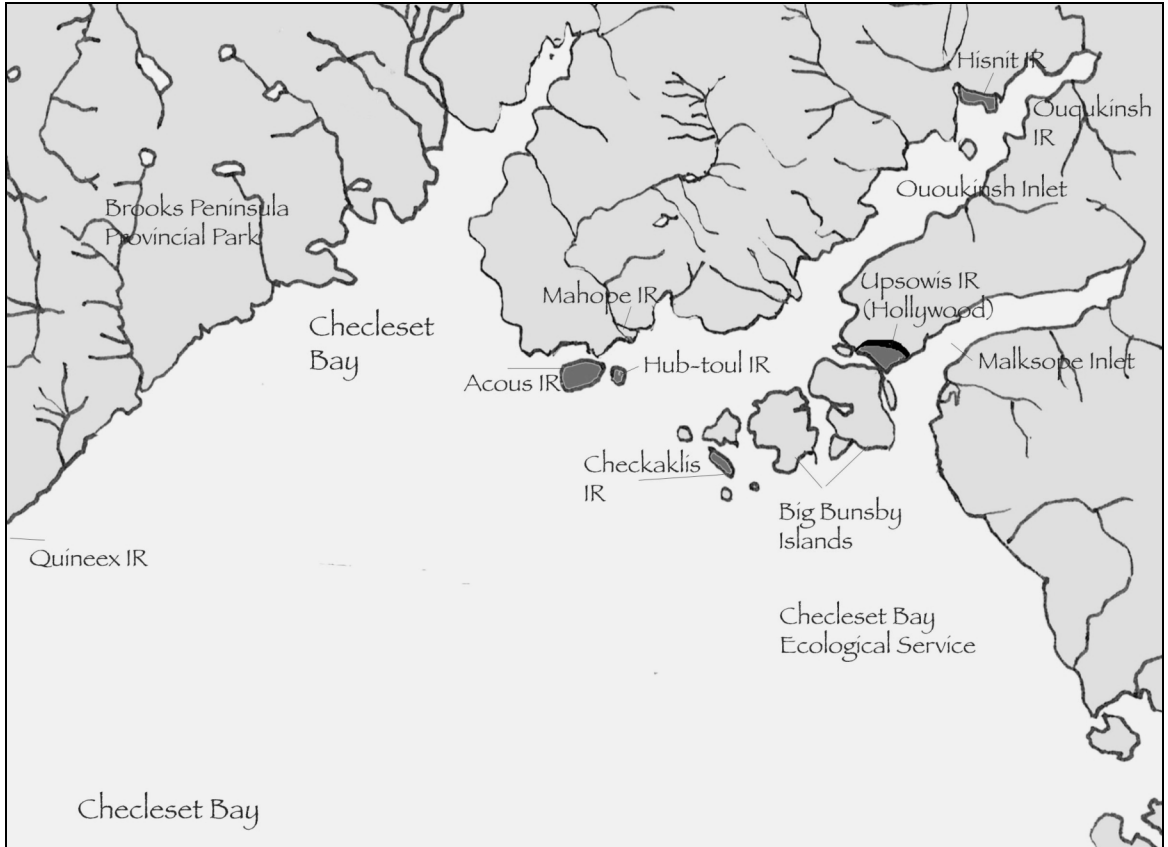


Figure 15 The Reserve lands of the Checlesets

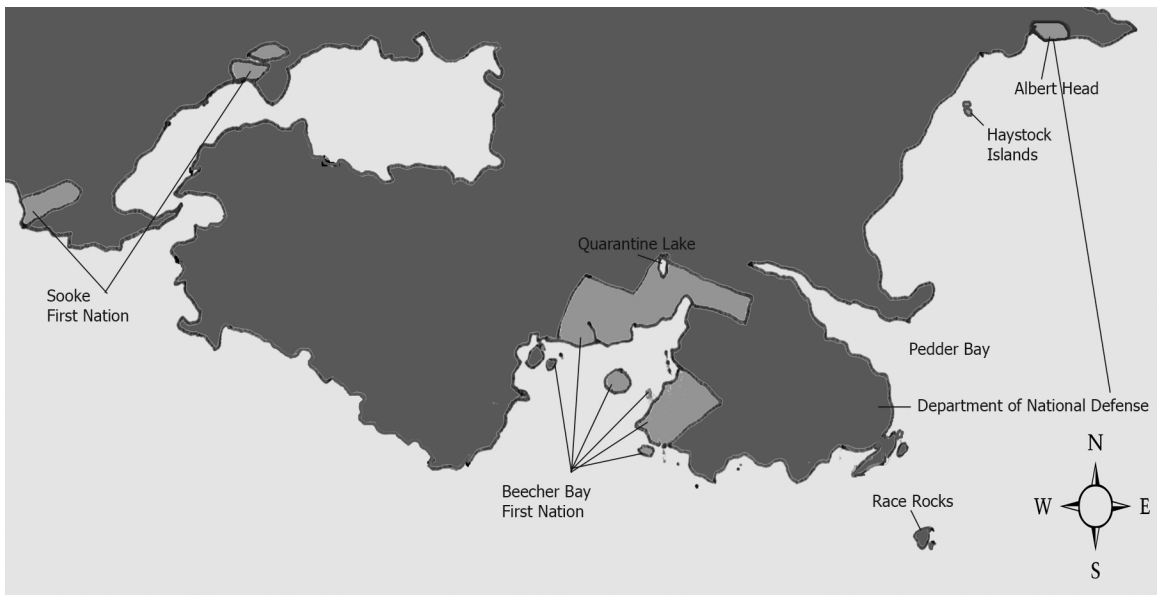


Figure 16 Beecher Bay and Sooke Reserves

The Beecher Bay First Nation, although close to Victoria, is in many ways an overlooked location. The bus routes from Sooke, Langford and Colwood do not go close to the reserve, let alone pass through. Television signals, cell phone coverage and cable services do not reach Beecher Bay. However, aside from that, living at Beecher Bay is like living in a post card. On an early morning, setting out into Beecher Bay in a small boat, craggy islands rising out of the mist and the Olympic Peninsula's mountains rearing above clouds and mist with every shade of blue and violet takes my breath away every time. I never get tired of the beauty of our world!

Sarah Short: Our Family's Last Puk'u'u Weaver

Sarah: "I was born in Upsowis. My parents, Mary Ann and Willy Oscar, had had boys before that, but they died at birth so I think I was the third child, but when I was born, right after I had cried, my uncle Louis who had no children, adopted me right there. So I grew up knowing him as Dad Louis and his wife, Lucy, I called Lucy Mom."

Sarah: "When I was 4 and a half years old, my dad Louis, hit his wife and she hit the bed and got hurt on her back. Her sister, who lived on Mission Island, heard about it and came and got her. She told us that she was never going to bring her back. So I went with – I knew that Mary Ann and Willy were my real parents, but I was adopted by Louis and Lucy, so I started staying with my grandfather, Moses Oscar."



Figure 17 Sarah Short with a basket she was working on in 2004

Sarah: “We lived in the same house, but I grew up there until I finally got moved into my own parents’ bedroom when Patsy was born; she is 5 years younger than me.”

Sarah: “So I moved there and when I was 5 we went to Clo-oose on the Princess of Maquinna. We boarded outside here and rode all the way to Clo-oose and I remember so well when we were at the Clo-oose there’s this big seiner-like thing,

but not a canoe, but it brought us to the shore and the tide was waay tall in Clo-oose and we had to step into the water and walk to Gillette Chipps' home; it was way up on the hill overlooking the little village and we went up there and they all greeted us, the old people who lived up there.”



Figure 18 Clo-oose. Image PN12473 courtesy of Royal British Columbia Museum

Sarah: “Aggie [Agnes Chipps] was there, Sarah’s mother, she lived at Whyee (Whyac) and we went there and Uncle’s place. We stayed there. The next night, we went somewhere else, in somebody else’s house, and stayed there and went back home, I guess about the third night. Aggie gave a little potlatch, invited everybody, and she said she was moving to Victoria because that’s where that Leo [Leo Sawyer] was, Beecher Bay, and that she wouldn’t be there to hold her - she was a princess there - she wasn’t there to hold it because her husband was the chief at Beecher Bay - her children would be from there so she couldn’t keep her seat so she gave it to me. She made it that I was princess of Carmanah.”

Sarah: "I didn't know at the time that the Elders said that I had to move back when I was 16. We stayed there for 2 months. My grandfather Moses Oscar was there with us."

Sarah: "We learned all Nitinaht words. We never went outside without putting blood on our face and soot from the stove before going to visit somebody. Would put it on our face then father would have to cut his tongue and put some blood on there before we go out at night."

Sarah: "And I was so amazed at the ways of my people there. I could speak that language at the time so I didn't have any problem, but my sister, Patsy, was only a baby. People, my mother's cousins, really liked her and they took her all over the place. They went all over the village visiting. We were there for 2 months and finally they said to send us back home and we came and went back up."

Sarah: "We lived there, apulht [Mission Island]. I lived there for 10 years and when I turned 11 they sent me to Christie school and said - I mean we had no choice; my parents had no choice, we had to go to Christie school or else my parents would go to jail. And I said, "Wish one of my Dads would go to jail". Anyway, I went to Christie school. I was there for three-and-a-half years when they sent me home because I was such a - I was taught to take care of myself by my grandfather, Big Oscar, and he said they have to do this, they have to do that, and if anybody has mistreated you, tell a person I'm mistreated, like a priest or something."

Sarah: "So I learned that before I went to Christie school, but I didn't know one single thing in English. Everything was in their language so when I got to Christie school I - a sister or priest would tell me what I'm supposed to do, I guess, and I

couldn't understand what they were saying. So I asked Lena Michael (she was older than me, she'd been in Christie school for a couple of years, I guess). I would ask her what the sister was telling me and she'd tell me and then after talking back and forth the sister would strap me on my arms because I was speaking my own language and I'd tell Lena to tell her I don't know how to talk English and maybe I'll learn someday but not right now and so she told the sister but still they strapped me and they said we were swearing at them, but I never knew a swear word in Indian and never ever heard of one [laughing]. So we stayed there for, well I'd say over three-and-a-half years. They sent me home because I had lumps on my – I had 7 on one side and 11 on this [right] side of my neck – my neck was like a big– they were big [showed about 1-2 inches circle with fingers] then I came home and my mother had a friend; she was a magistrate's wife. She brought me to Mrs. Blake and Mrs. Blake said come back in 4 days, I'll make a potion for her. So she did. Four days we went back. I used it twice and all the glands went away. They thought it was TB glands that's why they sent me home but they [the lumps] went away and I was okay.”

Sarah: “Then my Mother, my own Mother, said she couldn't afford to support me and I was to seek employment. I was only 14! And I says “Oh my God!” I was thinking, what next? So I applied to get welfare but they said I would take the kids, Patsy [sister] and Gerald and Hazel [Gillette Chipps' children with Cecelia Vincent] across to school in my putput [boat] which my other father had given me. I take them to school every day and pick them up, and all that, so I made \$27 a month to do that.”

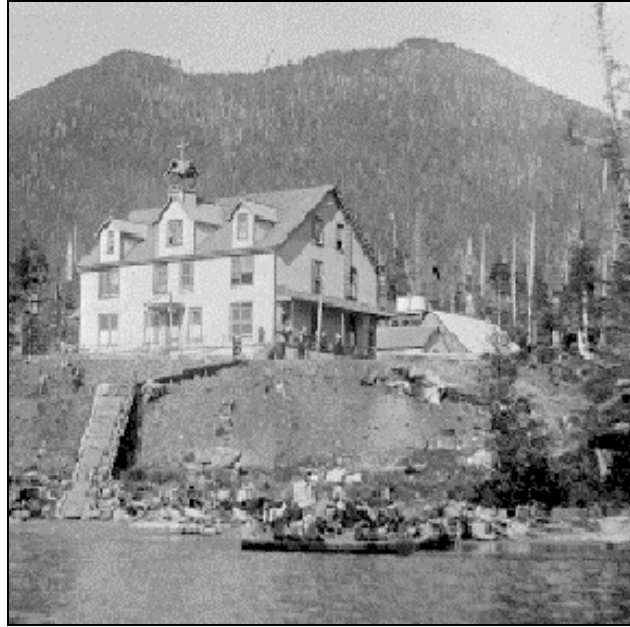


Figure 19 Christie Residential School Image A-07688 courtesy of Royal British Columbia Museum

Sarah: “I did that until I got married. And then when I was 16, instead of going to Clooose, I got married and it wasn't my will that I married Alec because my uncle, Mike George, and his son Johnny, I was engaged to, because it was in Indian style, but I refused to marry that guy because I knew he was my close cousin. And the great grandmother knew him and said, “She knows what is wrong for this wedding, she's right, she can't marry him”. So I married Alec instead.”

Sarah: “Mike George and his wife and their son Johnny put on a non-Native wedding and then Mike George and his brother, Chief Jack, said I wouldn't marry Alec Native style, which was in those days the order of the thing, they did ask for me, but they said no Indian wedding, we don't want her to transfer out of Checleset. She's to stay in Checleset because she's Haqumet maqsem (queen). So my parents said, “Okay, you're older than me; you know what you're saying,” he said to his

cousins, and I married Alec. And right from the start it was a haywire marriage because some other people had arranged it or something. That first night, Alec didn't come home. He was drinking with his niece way over there and didn't come in. But the next day he came home. But I ... in the first place Big Oscar had instructed me what to expect of a marriage and how to behave, so I behaved the way he told me. I never left my husband because of the way he was. He was an alcoholic and when he got drunk he stayed out all the time. Then I started following him and then when my daughter, Z, was only 14 she got raped by a drunken cousin and so I quit following Alec. I thought I'd better stay home and watch my girls, because I had mostly girls except for Frank, he was my only boy for a long time and then I started ... I liked to work on boats because I worked on that, working boats and repairing engines, that's what I liked. I could cook but I didn't really like housework and cooking. I did clean up and all that and wash clothes, but once I finished, I'd start working on Alec's boat.”

Sarah: “When I first married him, every year his boat went down and so when my adopted father told me to put it on the beach and, “I'll show you how to fix it”. And so he showed me and all it was was the self-bailing system on that boat. I had to plug the hole and it stopped sinking and so I learned to do that. Then after he [adopted father] got killed I was on my own again ‘cause he sort of supported me but after he died, I had no support.”

Sarah: “I had to depend on Alec to support me. And then, after I made some money and I bought a speed boat and I learned to fiberglass boats, repair fiberglass boats. I learned to fix outboard motors and I did that, I liked that. When Frank turned 14 I

gave him a speed boat. Norah had a speed boat from my own father and I used to fix their boats myself and Alec didn't like to get his hands dirty so I'd do all the dirty work.”

Sarah: “I did that and then I grew older and I liked to visit old people and I liked to hear them talk about old things and I used to listen to Sophie Jules. Even when I was at Aqtis I'd come and visit her. Eventually she called us to her house and she told us (we were living in a house across the bay on the float) we could have this property [where they live now]. That Qapchaa said that, ‘cause he said that we were living dangerously, “One of your children might fall overboard and you might not be able to get to her or him,” so she gave us, Qapchaa said 5 acres. Now I don't know what acres are about, but I put my little house along here [pointing along the shore behind their house] and then we got a bigger house and it was behind the little house and Norah took over the little house until she got her own.”

Sarah: “Before, we lived across the bay, but my Dad, we found him dead in a fish boat, and when Mom got that house it wasn't accepted. I guess Mary Ann [Mother] asked for a house from the band but they wouldn't give her one so he bought one across the bay, a two bedroom one, across the bay. But then Caroline and Philip took over and she eventually got that one. Dick Leo was the chief at that time when she first got that house. Caroline gave Mom an oil tank, she said the oil smoked, that belonged to Kinik, and Dick Leo went storming over there saying she had no right to it and Mom said that she was alone, but he took it back.”



**Figure 20 Bighouse in Kyuquot. Image PN5098 courtesy of Royal British Columbia
Museum**

Sarah: “We felt awful so eventually Mom had a two gallon tank [oil] behind the stove that we used to fill once in a while. She couldn't make it work because she couldn't find anyone to cut wood for her, but eventually she ended up with a wood stove. It was hard for me to accept the ways of the Kyuquot people. It was the hereditary chiefs that moved the Checlesets over to Mission Island; the hereditary chiefs, not the council.”

Sarah: “So we visited that one, aah there were more of us more back where we lived then. The council that went on after was wanting us hidden. They didn't want us to go back ‘cause they might not have enough money to build their houses and it turned out that, well, when they moved the Checlesets to Mission Island, they said

we had better housing than we had up there, but it was just the shell they gave us. Well, when I came home from Christie, all I had was a shell - no plumbing inside and I said, "Why did you guys move here?" and my mother told me that they'd said that we'd have better housing, but it was rotten how people were just thrown all in one spot."

Sarah: "Anyway, I didn't like it and then I moved, when I married Alec. I moved in with Sam Short and his wife and they gave us a bedroom. Clarence and Pauline were in the attic and we were a big family and it wasn't Christine that was nice to me, it was her older sister, Agma. She used to come to me and tell me what she expected me to do. I learned to take orders from her instead of her mother."

Sarah: "Then they [Kyuquot council] all say they've got a situation of heart trouble; we should spend more time raising our families. It was hard. Their ways were different from our ways, they all say they didn't like to share whereas I like to share my food with people I think are hungry, but I wasn't allowed to do that. But I felt really like - I want a place of my own so I could feed people who were hungry not just her family. It was difficult to understand that she held on to her money like it was her life, I guess. And then she got sick and she died of a heart attack."

Sarah: "That was really hard for me. Sarah Chipps, she'd taught me first aid, and so when my mother-in-law had a heart attack, and I knew she had a heart attack, but I didn't know what I was supposed to do because she'd twisted - her chest went here [pointing left] but this part [pointing to her lower body] stayed this way [straight up] so the nurse that came in said she'd break smelling salts so I broke one and

took her and watched her sister go back and forth. She lived for five days I think, after her heart attack, but then she died. And then she before she was gone, because she always kept the money no matter what it was she'd collected and had it on her breast and had it under her. She took it out and she threw it across the room and then she died.”

Sarah: “Christina and Violet were all right, everybody else was sick in the house; just the two of us to take care of them and they had a doctor but she noticed I had a bad toothache. She told me to get her tobacco. I thought she was going to smoke, but she took some of it and told me to shove into my tooth. It cracked up and it all came out. So that was useful. Something I learned.”

Sarah: “She was real kind and started to sleep and never came back [the nurse]. I never stopped working: saw a block of wood, and then chop it up; put it in the shed and I don't know why Lawrence and Alec can't help me. But then when I moved here, then Sophie and Qapchaa called instructing us how to try to work with our families so her family don't get kicked off the reserve because they got kicked off the main reserve. That's why we moved here. This originally belonged to Sam Short because Jimmy's father was older than Alec's. When Qaptaan, his family got kicked off over there, was in T'ashilh so Sam says he thinks he shouldn't have to live back up there because we need him here, so he gave him a place to move into. You know that place with the bird on the front just off the wharf? That's Lorraine's place. That was where Qapchaa's place was. The one with the fence all around it - that's Frances'. He became a spokes person for Christina who became a chief after her father. I had old people telling me where they belong; why they are

here and all that; getting to know Kyuquot people. Then my adopted father was shot by X over a lock, they said, but I don't think it was. They were drinking that night with Y and later, X's wife, who wasn't a good woman, and they probably fought over his wife. X was going to shoot Y and ended up shooting Willie Oscar.”

Sarah: “The Father to me told me I had to be kind to his family even though he had killed my Dad. Ever since then I was like I didn't have enough food any more because I couldn't go to him. He always had lots of money to spare; he always brought food to the poor; he'd go shopping, then he'd bring two or three boxes to families that don't have any. But, he taught me to be generous. Once he died, well I had my brothers, Mike and Norman and my sister Marie. Marie died when she was fourteen and died, before I had Norah ... or after. She had only a quarter of a lung. She got TB and they removed one lung and cut the other one so she had only a quarter of a lung. She had a hard time breathing and she caught cold and she was coughing. It was hard to accept that. They weren't even going to let her [her Mom] know when Marie died because she was still in the Nanaimo hospital. I don't know how they expected to hide it from her forever.”

Sarah: “First Mom and Mike went into the hospital, they both had what I had [pointing to the neck] but they opened; they had scars on their necks. It wasn't from our family, what he did across from the Hansons. Old Man Hanson Nicolaye and Mabel Nicolaye, they died of TB and throwing up a lot. Oh I guess Celia already had it when she married my Dad and they blamed it for a heart attack but she had TB before she came into the family she had.”

Sarah: “The girl, her name was Sheila, died when she was a baby. Marie was real nice; she was real gentle. When she was dying, the doctor was saying that his son had died the year before and he said, “Well then you'll have each other,” She said to Marie. “I guess I will,” she said and they prayed with her and talked about that process that all who'd survived that wreck, that shipwreck they had at Esperanza. She said, “Doctor, I'll do that.” and she went to sleep and never woke up again. She had a smile on her face.”

Sarah: “I've been here since 1970, I think, when I moved here. That's when Stan [Sarah's son] was a baby. My hopes were that we were going to move to Checleset before I die but [shakes head] 'cause we didn't like it [Kyuquot] any more.”

Pakki: “Are they (Checlesets) trying to get it back?”

Sarah: “We were ready to go some years ago. Some years ago we were just deciding which village we were going to move to because they were awful up here, but the Kyuquots won't let us; the band council won't let us. It has to do with the money 'cause they think we're going to take our share and go.”

Pakki: “Well you should. You have every right to!”

Sarah: “I mean all the Checlesets that were up there have some spare houses but Checleset is a different - is a separate reserve, well it's a different Band; different family. I heard they were thinking of ... I was just asking Alec yesterday, “How high is that reserve at Malksope?” and he says it is quite high. 'Cause I never lived at Malksope [pronounced Maqsup] we used to live at what we used to call Hollywood; it's called Upsowis (pronounced Apsxwis) but we used to call it Hollywood because ... I don't know how our grandfather learned about

Hollywood, but there's Hollywood [makes hand movements like the Hollywood sign] on the side of the mountain and it's really nice and we had the water running all the time whenever we wanted water it was running in a trough all down to the beach and we're never in need. There's fir trees up there. The fish was just across the bay and hair seals on this side [waves right arm] and go out across the entrance and they have salmon there all the time I think it's Malksope proper.”

Sarah: “I liked living there. There's gold on that reserve! It's a shame, some malhmaht's [non-native] going to claim it. My father he was picking oysters one time; he came in with a rock with gold on it and I hear some white people going to get it. They say they own it but it's MY reserve!”

Pakki: “How can the band stop you from moving?”

Sarah: “I don't know what they said. Nancy, when she was chief, she was trying to get us moved that way in, but they wanted to go Douglas Cove. Black sand beach. It was where ... on other side of the ?Melnick? I think, “oh no, I'd rather go to Upsowis”. But it's really overgrown with pulp trees now ‘cause it grows right across the whole village now. It WAS my plan! We were - our beach wasn't like that [pointing out to Houpsitas' rocky beach]. Up on this hill it was flattened and the water came from waaay up there somewhere and right down to the beach. We had a float right next to town so we had a little slanted hill like that right down to the float and boats were tied up down there. But it never really blew. Alec always says it blows but it never really blew where we couldn't go down to the boats; blew in there but not that much. Just across the way there is a little neck like there is over there [points across the open waters] and we used to go over there to pick

clams.”

Pakki: “How come Mary Ann was living at Tahsis?”

Sarah: “Patsy and James lived there. He used to work in the mill. There is another Tahsis up here belongs to the reserve by the river, Tahshis river.”

Pakki: “Oh yeah, there's Tahsis and Tashish! I heard about that.”

Sarah: “You go to the end, go west to Nimpkish Lake and you come down the Tashish River, kinda neat! I went through there once in a helicopter and we followed that river out and there was a great big elk and I thought it was a horse. I said, “What's that horse doing down there?” I was saying to the doctor. “It's not a horse, it's an elk,” He said. He [the elk] was standing about this much [shoulder height] and drinking the water. So neat!”



Figure 21 View from Sarah Short's window in Kyuquot



Figure 22 Bottle basket cover by Mary Anne Oscar (nee Chipps)

Pakki: “How did you learn about weaving baskets?”

Sarah: “What?”

Pakki: “You learned to make baskets from Mary Ann, from your Mom?”

Sarah: “Yeah from my Mom. But when I was growing up I was living on Aqtis when I was visiting grandma Lucy, Queen Lucy, or Emma Brown or Mabel Leo, they were weaving baskets so I asked Mom to teach me how to make baskets and I still make baskets. I wanted to throw it all away. When she died, I didn't want to have anything to do with baskets any more because it made me think of her, so I let it go for many years and then Ag [Sister, Agnes Oscar], she said, “Do you want mom's basket weaving materials from the attic?” and I said, “Nooo!” [Shaking head]. I guess I should make baskets so I started weaving again and now I can't leave it alone. I'm out of colours right now so I'm using this stuff (points at a bag of coloured raffia) because there's lots in the shops. I need to colour some pitsup.”



Figure 23 Mary Anne Oscar's basket-making tools

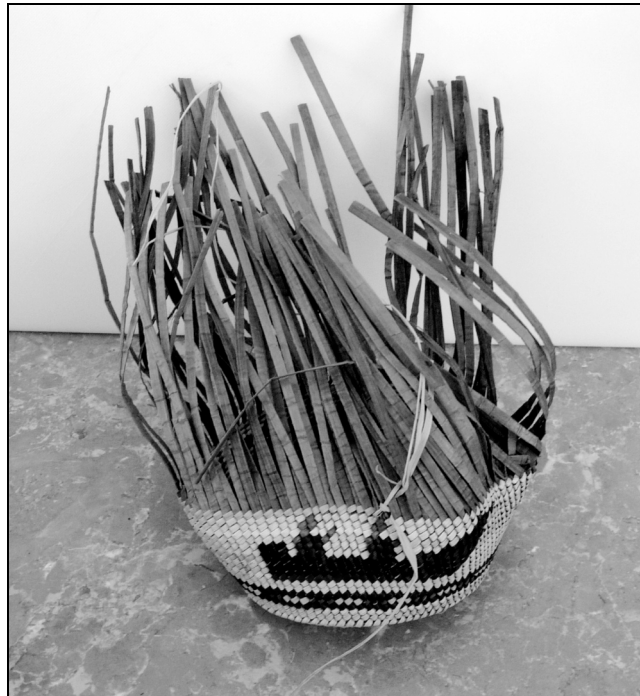


Figure 24 The last basket Mary Anne Oscar worked on

Pakki: "What colours do you need?"

Sarah: "Red, green, black, yellow, purple and my niece said they get those from the States."

Pakki: "We're going to the States to Lower Elwha and Neah Bay."

Sarah: "Are you? That's where we get it from!"

Pakki: "I'll get you some. I'll get every colour I can find!"

Sarah: "[laughing] Pick up ah, Lucy gave me one, she must have had lots [goes looking].
I think it's under those pads ..."

Sarah: [Bringing back a little unmarked bag of dye.] "It's sort of curlish. You're supposed to dip it and everything. I don't know how to use it."

Pakki: "I'll try to find that when I get down there, so is it at Neah Bay or Elhwa?"

Sarah: "Neah Bay, I think."



Figure 25 Sarah Short teaching me to weave baskets

[Unfortunately, we didn't get to go after all because I only had my status card, no birth

certificate, so they wouldn't let us through.]

Sarah: "We went to Seattle once, we were on the way to Quinault [looking like she is getting tired]. That's a nice place eh, Quinault?"

Pakki: "I haven't been to Quinault."

Sarah: "You've never been?"

Pakki: "No."

Sarah: "It's called Tahola."

Sarah: "Never even hear from Charlie Chipps' children, they were over there. I think there was a Charlie. I can't think of the other guy's name. Mom has pictures of them when they were young. Charlie used to live here with Mom and them and Lucy, Sarah's younger sister, she moved here too. She used to go to Spring Island when ... That was fun when we were over there. There were ... first there were Americans, how many people, and then Canadians bought it after those Americans left and then they ... they were really, I thought of them as really wasteful, but they always installed the houses the qutqo'as [people], and I thought whatever. Instead of giving it to the Natives, giving it to us, they demolished them all, after they worked so hard to make it modern. Alec worked there as a boatman and a handler and he was saying when they were putting in the new generators they buried the wires to each house instead of having them in the air; they buried the wires so there were wires all over on the thing. It used to be nice. The people that ran the Lowrantz station. I used to know when a boat's is in trouble I'd have someone look for it and have someone call up and see for the family, but after it closed we lost 11 people in storms."

Pakki: "Your Mom married into the Checlesets not the Kyuquots?"

Sarah: "Yes."

Pakki: "Who was Lemo Williams?"

Sarah: "That's who Annie [Nyton Chipps] was married to."

Pakki: "Yeah."

Sarah: "But he lived in Kyuquot."

Pakki: "Was he Checleset too?"

Sarah: "I think he was Bernie Williams' uncle. But they lived in this [village]. He was the spokesman for the chief. They had a house on lot 32 over there [pointing to the non-Native Kyuquot] and they had a house at ... the Tashish River is here and there was a sandy beach here [showing with her hands] gravel beach, and they had a house there. We used to go up there in the fall and stay with them because they used to dry salmon up there because it was right near the river."

Pakki: "Did Dad grow up here? Did he grow up with Lemo, or was he already grown up? He must have been 17 or 18. Charlie Chipps died in 1918 so Gillette would have been around 17, if that was his right age. He said he was born around 1902 in an interview, but I don't know."

Sarah: "I don't know how old. One time he moved up here - I guess after his wife died."

Pakki: "Cecelia Vincent?"

Sarah: "I guess he came to visit his family and married Cecelia and brought her home."

Pakki: "What about your Mom, Mary Ann, was she raised here?"

Sarah: "She said she was here in 1930 on vacation from school and came to visit her Mom and she met my Dad and married him, but it's such a long time. I always get

mixed up with her because I knew Annie as Annie Nyton, then I knew her later as Chipps. Finally I asked and I said. "How come we used to call her Annie Nyton?" Mom said that was her maiden name and she married a Chipps [Charlie] and that was my Granddad, but I never met him because I was born after he died. They were saying he was an alcoholic and somebody had wanted to marry Annie and so he [the other man] crushed a beer bottle and put it in his [Charlie's] drink and he swallowed all that glass and her mother told her that he really threw it up and he had stomach problems because of all that glass that lined his stomach. And then he knew who had done it and told his wife not to marry that guy and to move away. I guess they [Annie and Lemo Williams] met, I believe in River's Inlet, when they were working in the cannery, four of them, when the Kyuquots used to go there and work in the cannery up at River's Inlet. I think that's where she met Lemo." [Nyton has been spelled so many ways in different documents that one really needs to go by the general pronunciation to realize it is the same. It has been spelled as Nitom, Nytom, Knighton, Nighton and Nyton for example.]

Sarah: "There's a Hazel Chipps who married someone from ClemClem."

Pakki: "His last name was Rice."

Sarah: "I was in Nanaimo one time visiting my kids who had a relative in the hospital, Carol and Norah, so I stayed with Mrs. Good. I forgot her first name, anyway she said ... she asked me where I was from and I told her my background. "Oh," she said, "You have a granddaughter here!" I said, "Oh?" She said, "I'll get you the information," so she took me to Hazel's place and it was a big lady and she was knitting. She told me she was Henry Chipps' [Gillette's brother] wife."

Pakki: “Whose name did you want us to find from Alert Bay?”

Sarah: “My Dad's name. My grandmother was from Alert Bay and my Dad. I saw it on a card in Victoria; it had Big Oscar, but it was in Indian language, in their language. It had something whaleskin. It's all it had on there, in brackets. I couldn't pronounce it and I meant to ask Caroline that sentence, “How do you pronounce that word?” But she lived up in Alert Bay, or Quatsino. His mother's name was Sally Mark. Because my mother was saying that when Big Oscar's wife died, his mother-in-law was living with them and told them that if her daughter died she was going to move back in the, wherever her family came from. Her family started taking her back to Quatsino, I guess.”

End of Transcript

Every year, I try to get up to Kyuquot, to visit Sarah Short, Agnes Oscar, and Patsy Nicolaye, the three daughters of Dad's sister, Mary Anne Oscar. I always tell them that my heart is in Kyuquot, my mind is in Nitinaht, and my backside (sitting) is in Beecher Bay. They laugh about that, but I feel it is true. It is confusing to belong to more than one place. This transcript is from a video tape that will be included with the stories on the “Family First” program.

My next project, after I complete my dissertation, will be to gather information on the natural dyes, how to prepare them, and try to re-introduce them to the weavers and to teach the younger generations how to make the dyes for the basket weavers.



**Figure 26 Kyuquot Totem pole Image PN4975 courtesy of Royal British Columbia
Museum**



Figure 27 Nun at residential school (Courtesy Patsy Nicolaye)

Chapter 6: History of a West Coast Family

Introduction

This chapter is about Gillette Chipps and an attempt to recreate our family history through archive documents, remembrances of those Elders still with us and of some that are not. Gillette Chipps was the hereditary chief of Clo-oose on the west coast of Vancouver Island; he was a fisherman, owned his own schooner, an engineer and captain; he was a carver, medicine person, a holder of songs and stories, and best of all he was the father of a whole lot of children who live or lived at Beecher Bay, Kyuquot and Nitinaht.

I call him Dad, and by our custom, he was my Dad for many years, but by foreign custom he was my father-in-law. He is the father of my partner of 24 years, Henry Chipps. I wanted very much to include an interview Don Prescott recorded with Gillette Chipps in 1977, and at first I was going to arrange all the interview sections chronologically, but as I re-read the interview, the more convinced I became that it would be more interesting to weave our history, as much as possible, around this interview. Normally, I guess interviews are placed into the Appendices and references or analyses done in the chapter; however, this is not an interview I am analysing – it is an important part of our history speaking from the past, and an important part of both my dissertation and the “Family First” program.

Some of our history predates Gillette Chipps and is, for the most part, based on personal communications about the old history. Some of the history continues past Gillette’s life, and I decided to let Henry Chipps tell that part of our history.

When one lives in a community and in an extended family for many, many years,

it can become very difficult to pinpoint exactly who told you something and when.

Almost everything I have learned, if not from books or the media, has been from personal communications – we all have. However, from whom and when did you learn about the colour red, the fruit called an apple, the number one, how to behave properly? For the majority of my dissertation, if I have not specified a source; the information was taught to me by personal communications but also, unless specified, I am not certain who told me first or when.

Origins

Quite a long time ago, Gillette Chipps spoke a little about the very old times: how the Nitinaht arrived, where the old ones arrived from and other information (Gillette Chipps, personal communication, 1975 – 1985).



**Figure 28 The Old Canoe. Image PN704 courtesy of Royal British Columbia
Museum**

Gillette said that a long time ago, when the big flood came, people arrived here in a giant canoe that still sits in the mountains. The place everyone arrived from was a big land in the ocean to the west. This was back when there was only one sun, no moon, and

there was ocean past the mountains (where the prairies are now).

This made me wonder if there were any stories about a big land in the Pacific Ocean, and during my research found references to a large lost island-continent called Mu (Wauchope, 1962). There are several theories about Mu and where the stories came from, but I was not as excited about these stories as I was in the name of Mu. “Mu”, or “Bu” in Diitidaht, means the number four, and four is a magical number and its use stretches beyond the Nuu-chah-nulth Nations. In 1929, Edward Sapir noticed that the Salishan, Wakashan, and Chimakuan languages basically all had “mu” as the word for number four and proposed a language group he called the “Mosan” languages, but this theory has not developed further (Campbell, 1997).



Figure 29 Beecher Bay. Image PN 857 courtesy of Royal British Columbia Museum

If such a land really did exist, with the still-existing volcanic islands as its outer points, it would easily have allowed its inhabitants to escape by canoe to South America, North America, New Zealand, and locations along the Asian continent and the Arctic

depending upon the currents. There may have been more than one flood or the land may have been sinking over a long period of time. Unfortunately, this is all speculation. I believe what Gillette told me, so I am inclined to believe there was a land in the Pacific.

Sarah Chipps-Sawyer told me, years ago, about our “Magic Island” at one of the reserves (Personal communication 1978 – 1980). Sarah said that this island has a secret cave and if there ever is another flood, there are canoes and supplies in there. I visited the island and found a large rock cut to fit an opening in one part of the island, just above the water line. When I climbed to the top of the island, there were holes that allowed me to hear water rushing through the hollow island. I thought what she said was most likely true because if there is a flood, the water pressure inside the island might well blow the “door” off and allow access to the canoes and supplies. She said we were never to go in there. We haven’t. I have not given the name of the island nor to which First Nation it belongs, in order to protect it from potential vandalism.

In more recent times, at least not as ancient as the original arrival, there were stories that the Nitinaht peoples originally came from Ozette. The story I heard from Gillette Chipps was that when the great mudslide occurred at Ozette and destroyed the village there, a group of men were out fishing. When they returned home, and found their homes and families gone, they went up to Neah (or Deeah) Bay, to their relatives, the Makah. After spending some time there, and beginning to think of starting new families with Makah women, they were sent away. Some women must have gone with them, as they paddled across the straits to the Jordan River, as it is now known. From there, over time, people moved up and down the coast, looking for good places for their families to live; safe village sites with good fishing and drinking water. Some moved south to and

from there to Ts'ou-ke (Sooke), parts of Maqo'as (Reserve Number 2 of Beecher Bay), Chi'aduxw (Reserve Number 1 of Beecher Bay); while others moved north, to Pacheedaht (Port Renfrew) and as far as Tlu-uws (Clo-oose) and Qwabaduwh (Carmanah) (Gillette Chipps, personal communication, 1975 – 1985).

The Thunderbird Story

The story of our family totem pole makes me think of the link to the Ozette Village. The very bottom character is a bear, a black bear, holding a baby in a box. I will tell the whole story here because it is supposed to be the history of our family. The story was dictated by Gillette Chipps to his daughter, Late Mary Chipps. Unfortunately, we have no date for the telling of the story but would expect it to be around 1970 or 1971 because one of Henry Chipps' teachers at Belmont Highschool purchased this totem pole from Gillette Chipps along with the typed story. After Gillette died, this wonderful teacher gave the totem pole and the story back to my partner, Henry (Hanks) Chipps, so it would remain in our family. The story, as told by Gillette Chipps is as follows:



Figure 30 Gillette's Grocery Pole

I am very sorry that I have to give you short form of Thunder Bird tribe. This you will try to understand for I cannot speak good English.

This story begins when Chief of Hesquiet [Hesquiaht], on the west coast of Vancouver Island had an only child, it was a girl. They made her swim everyday in the river in the morning for years. This was sort of like praying to God. It had to be done early in the morning so that God would hear it. They did this so that the girl would become a lucky woman. One morning, she saw a fish, a really silver salmon so bright she didn't know how to catch it for she had no hook or line, the only thing she did have was a bear skin cape. She took it off and threw it in the water which was the only way she could catch it. She had caught the fish with her cape and was pulling [it] up from the water, as she did this the fish turned into a human being. The fish turned into a man and he was talking to her. He had said he had been watching her as she had bathed in the water. He said his name was Cho-quisk-mac.



Figure 31 Thunderbird story

He was the second oldest of the ten Thunder Bird brothers. He told this girl he had come to marry her and if she agreed he would feed all of the village because they were starving. The girl was very scared at first until he said something about food for the village so she said she would go with him because she did not want the people to starve and die. She told the man that she was going to tell her parents where she was going. The man told her not to look at her parents but to knock on the wall of the house. She told her parents that she would not be very long but if she was she would watch and protect them always. She also told them she was going to marry the second oldest of the brothers and that they would find salmon and herring and other fish in the bay. But they were not to tell where they got it. She then said so long and told her parents not to worry about her. She also told her parents her and the man would be watching the village. She did not say good-bye because if you say it, it means forever. Just before she left it started raining and hailing. This went on for four days. And on the fourth day after they had departed there was a lot of fish in the lagoon. It is said that the spirit of God notified the Chief so he and his family would be the first down there and they would tell the people about it. After the people had finished picking up the fish another gale started and on the eighth day there was a live whale in the lagoon. The natives killed the whale and cut up its meat. Three years after the whale appeared in the lagoon the girl and her three children to whom she had given birth to by the second oldest of the Thunder Bird brothers returned. She had also come back with the breast of the Thunderbird and the double headed land otter. That was the tale of the Thunderbird. [The double-headed land otter is, in fact, a land

otter with a frog in its mouth and each being counts as a head].



Figure 32 The Raven story

The other part of the totem pole is the raven. This is the tale of the raven. This raven was always hungry [hungry] and nobody liked him at all because he was an outcast of all the tribes. He stole and cheated most of the tribe all the time. He had told the people he had seen eyes in the wind and the people told him that he had eyes all over him that is why he was seeing them. All he could do was travel all over and become a bum.



Figure 33 The Bear story

The last part of the totem pole is the Bear Tribe. This bear kidnapped a child which you see on the breast. The child grew up in the bear tribe and was a very strong and big man. This young man was gone for four years before he came home. This rock was obstructing something and it would have taken four men to move it but he just picked it up by himself.

I am very sorry that I cannot give a longer story about the totem pole itself. Thank-You.

As it turns out, this is the only story we now have of our totem pole. The last part of the story states that the bear-man came home after being gone for four years and that he picked up a rock that was obstructing something. Although it doesn't specifically state what the rock was obstructing, in a longer story that was not recorded, Dad stated that the bear-man rescued his family who were under the big rock. This makes me think of Ozette, but of course, I have no way of knowing now. The old Ozette was a Makah-

related village destroyed before contact by a gigantic mudslide. The site has since been excavated and the collected items and artifacts make up a major part of the beautiful museum at Neah Bay. The only thing we know from our Totem pole is that we are descended in part from a Chief of Hesquiaht's daughter's children, and that we are related to the Thunderbird, the Raven, and the Bear.

Researching Family

Memories and notes from other Elders

There is an excellent description and general history about Nitinaht at the Ditidaht website (Ditidaht First Nation, N.D.). In this history, they mention the names of a few of the people who resided at the Clo-oose Reserve No. 4 in 1930 and include the name of Gillette Chipps (Ditidaht First Nation, N.D.p. 10). They also mention the name of the Indian Agent for the west coast of Vancouver Island, Harry Guillod, who took much of the early censuses (Ditidaht First Nation, N.D.,p. 6). Dad called himself Gillette Chipps for a number of years before he died, but the Elders from his time all call him Guillod, and apparently, this was actually his name.

There are a lot of complications and confusions around the gathering of information about family members from people's memories, especially as politics and time have their way.

At Nitinaht, in 2004, I was fortunate enough to be allowed to copy some handwritten documents with maps that my late cousin, Hazel Chipps, had left behind. I have not placed these documents in the reference section because I do not believe these notes are readily accessible. The documents are fairly old and were not complete nor did

they have a title or researchers' names The small maps and notes were drawn by Diitidaht Elders [who for the most part are no longer with us] about the many locations and houses on the reserves of the Diitidaht peoples. The following are a few excerpts from these notes.

Kwaabaaduw'a (Carmanah IR 6) from notes by Ernie Chester

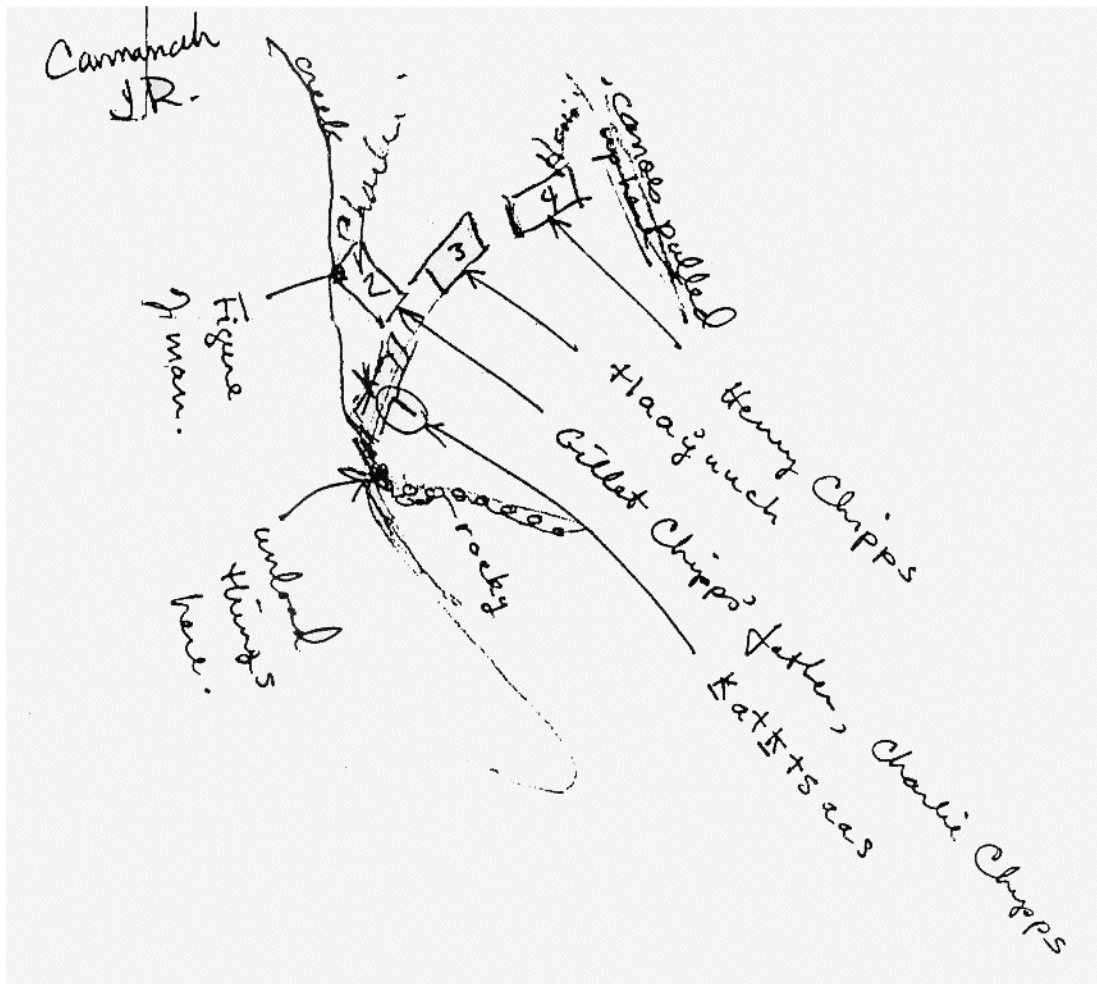


Figure 34 Ernie Chester's map

Ernie Chester's map and notes are quite detailed and informative but he remembers our family as coming from Carmanah. "Qatqtsaas (Lighthouse Jim) was Frank Knighton's grandfather [Qatqtsaas was also Gillette Chippis' name, so Lighthouse

Jim was a direct ancestor]. Tlaay'uuch, and Qwiibilaq. These three men had the tupaat for bear in the lower Carmanah River area.”

According to the preceding map, the first house belonged to Qatqtsaas, near the rocky ledge where things were unloaded and the second belonged to Gillet Chipps' father, Charlie Chipps, whose house had a carved figure of a man in the corner by the creek. The third house was owned by Tlaay'uuch, and the fourth house by Henry Chipps, [so Henry Chipps may have been Qwiibilaq] near where canoes were pulled up.

Kwaabaaduw'a notes from Martin Edgar

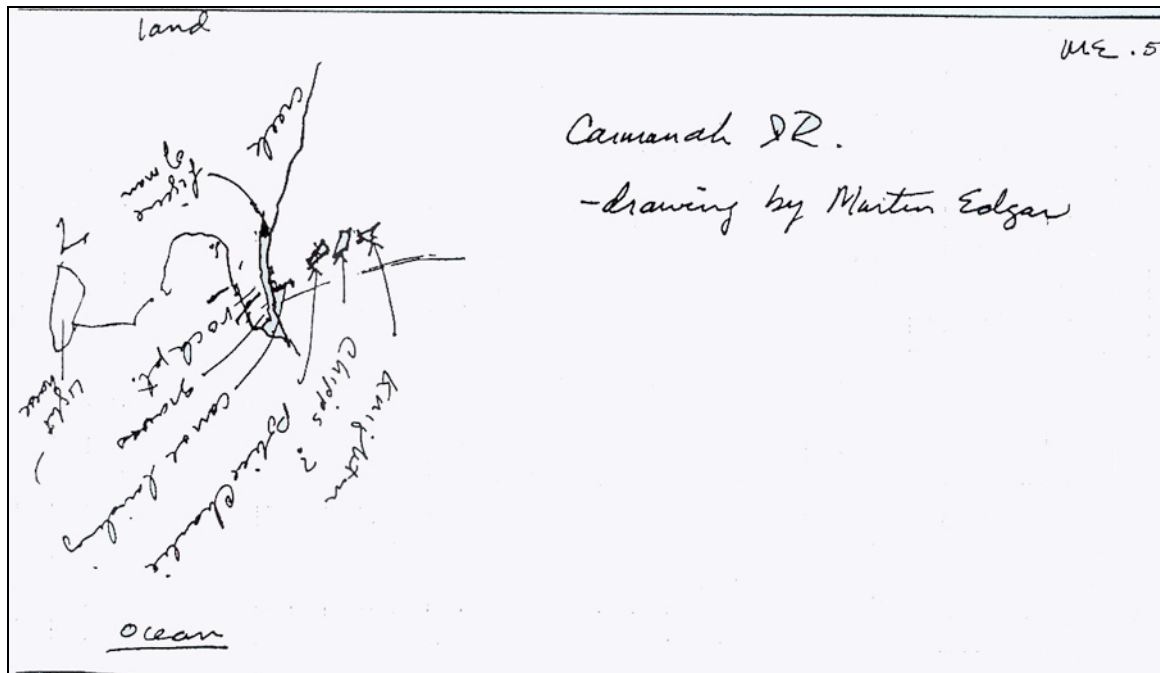


Figure 35 Martin Edgar's map

On this map, it shows the first house as Police Charlie's, the second house may have belonged to a Chipps, and the third was Knighton's. It shows the figure of the man further along the creek. "The lighthouse was on a rocky point. Trail on waterfront led from Carmanah to Clo-oose. This is now West Coast Trail. Good halibut fishing off shore

here.” Dr. Nancy Turner mentioned that she had been told the Clo-oose people traded halibut with the Whyaac people for black ducks (Dr. Nancy Turner, personal communication, June 26, 2007).

Cheewat notes from Martin Edgar

In these notes, Martin Edgar writes about the houses and the fish traps that were owned by the Jones family of Pacheenaht who were very close relatives.

Jimmy Smith house on hill going over to Clo-oose. Nicol Chester house at bottom of hill. James Thomas house. Port Renfrew people had a fish trap on Cheewat River. It wasn't in the main river. It was in creek that enters from east below inuxwachkats. They had a fish trap here for sockeye. It belonged to Charlie Jones and family. It was taken out by fisheries.

Ilhuu notes by Martin Edgar

Martin Edgar mentions that “The head man was George Gibbs.” [Gillette Chipps once described the big house at Ilhuu as being very large with running water. He said v-shaped boards brought water from a little stream into the house. On the wall was a big carved face and the bottom lip had a labret. When you pulled out the plug, you had running water] (Gillette Chipps, Personal communication, late 1970's).



Figure 36 Lucy Chipps and George Gibbs. Image PN4267 courtesy of Alberni

Valley Museum

Clo-oose notes from Martin Edgar

Martin Edgar gave a list of the houses at Clo-oose in the following notes:

#1- Back of boathouse is cemetery;

#2 - Police Charlie;

#3 – House belonged to a woman from Jones family. MatlaHa – good carver; made canoes (toys) from green alder for the kids – after he was gone, the Jones woman lived there. After her, Jimmy Chester moved here and died here;

#4 – Smokehouse;

#5 – George Thompson & family. James Thomas had the right to build on site

immediately on top of this site. James Thomas' (house was) later given to Leo Thomas;

#6 – Nicol Chester (before him, Simon Chester had a house here. Possibly this is Simon's house?);

#7 – Ernest Johnson – from Beecher Bay; moved to Tsuubaast. Behind Simon Chester, over creek, was house on stilts belonging to Jimmy and Frank Knighton. Old people made smokehouse up hill. Frank & family stayed. A small house behind Simon Chester was Bill Gibbs & wife. End of Ernest Johnson's house (west) and behind was a very small house 20' x 10' – Moses Johnson and wife lived there;

#9 - On other side of creek, belonged to Henry Tate;

#8 – Willie Jones house – on east side was church house;

#9 – M.E. built this house around 1950. Belonged to Effie Tate. Beach side of creek;

#10 – Jimmy Smith. Ralph Edgar didn't have a house here. Jimmy Smith died first; M.E.'s mother bought this house off Lizzie Smith. This is where Leonard died;

#11 – William Jackson house;

#13 – Frank Shaw built house. Joe Shaw lived to east (out of sight);

#12 – John Westley house. White house – used for Shaker house;

Joshua Edgar had a house across ravine. Chabiik'a – had house behind Henry Tate's canoe shed. There was a trail on far side of canoe shed. On other side was little house belonging to this crippled man. In later years, Guillod [Gillette] Chipps and Frank Knighton built houses up the hill. [This fits in with Sarah Short's account of visiting her uncle, Gillette Chipps in chapter 5.]



Figure 37 Clo-oose. Image courtesy of Patsy Nicolaye

Clo-oose from Carl Edgar's notes

Figure 38 shows some of the notes and the map that corresponds with the house numbers previously provided for Clo-oose by Martin Edgar and on the other map (Fig. 39) of Clo-oose by Carl Edgar, two adjacent houses by the beach are shown as belonging to G. Chipps [Gillette Chipps] and Frank Knighton. [This would most likely have been

after Gillette's father, Charlie Chipps had died, and would therefore be a later map than the one described by M.E.]

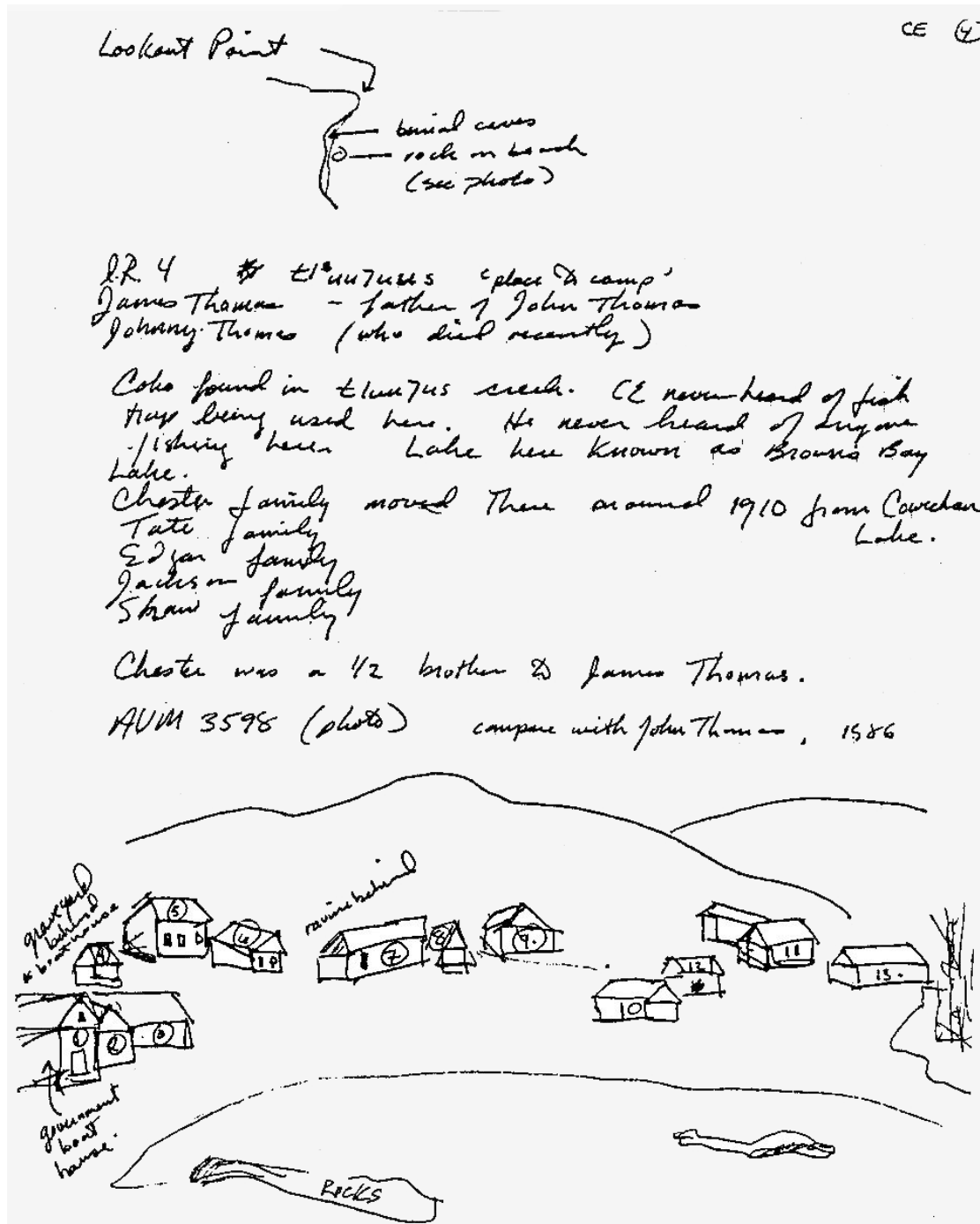


Figure 38 Carl Edgar's notes and map of Clo-oose

On the following map's notes, Carl Edgar describes the village of Clo-oose.

Rock in water on east side - when Jones family came from the American side, they landed on this rock so the Jones family built their house in front of rock.

Creek at east end of Cheewat River: Leo Thomas (James' brother) – there were 2 houses by boathouse. Leo lived in one of them (small house). Then he moved to his brother's house at Cheewat when he got married. Leo died. Little house (10 x 20) where Moses Johnson lived.

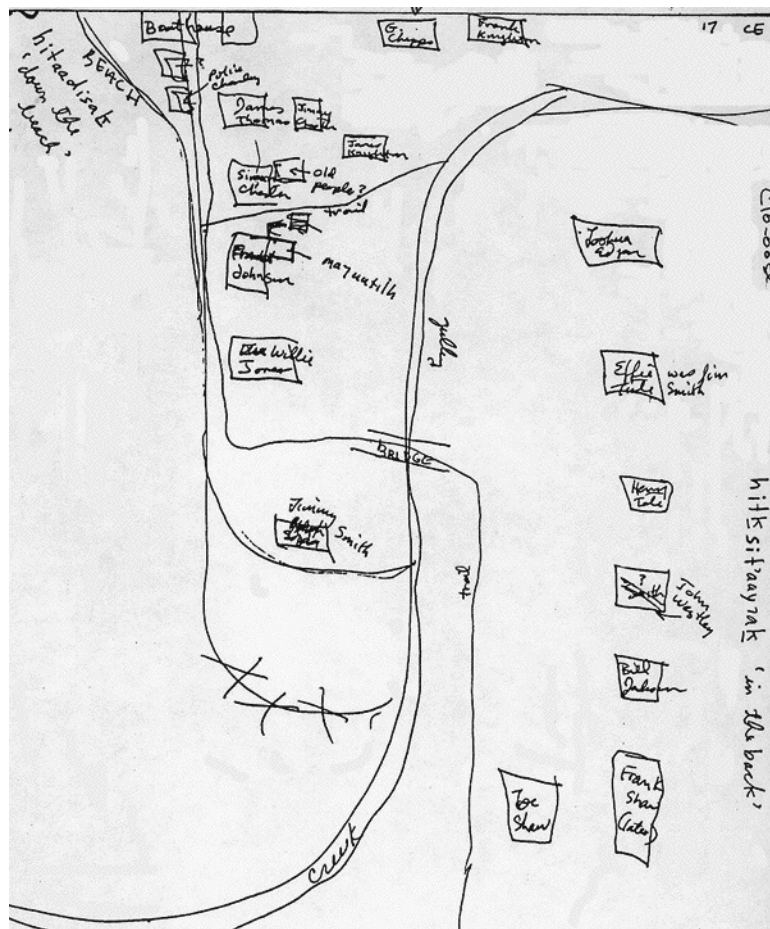


Figure 39 Carl Edgar's map of Clo-oose

Notes from M. Thompson

M. Thompson describes the use of Clo-oose and the fishing banks in the following statement:

Winter settlement - Wiqpalh'uus [bad-weather place] for Nitinat and Clo-oose people, and people from Carmanah – was original settlement of Clo-oose people after they left Cullite IR? - was year round settlement. Clo-oose was year-round settlement, although some went to the Flats. Swiftsure Bank, Tl'ushi'aa'aq (shallow, 19 fathoms deep) belongs to the Makah, Ohiat, Nitinat, Port Renfrew.

So, according to various Elders, our families had houses in different locations, but the most common is the one claimed by our own family, Clo-oose.



Figure 40 Hazel Chipps, who saved the previous and precious notes, and ex-fiancé, now famous Little Richard. Image courtesy of her husband, Richard Patterson.

Census Research

Next, I went to the census materials (British Columbia Archives, n.d.)¹⁵ to try to find relatives there. Census materials are not always readily available, but most can be seen and copied at the Provincial Archives beside the Royal British Columbia Museum in Victoria. Some of the census materials for Nitinaht have gone missing, so I can't make a reference to these. I found a copy belonging to Late Hazel [Chippis] Patterson at Nitinaht and copied down the information.

When you look at old census data, there are some very important points to remember or the census will lead you astray. First, the census has one date upon it for one year; however, it was obviously not gathered in one day. There tended to be a ten year gap between census documents gathered by the Indian agents, so the actual dates of the interviews may be days, weeks, months, perhaps even years apart. Second, people on the West Coast tended to move around quite a bit during the year and therefore the same person may appear on more than one census in different villages or different houses within one village. Third, one cannot judge whether one person is the same as another or not, because age was usually arbitrarily determined (guessed at) by the Indian agent.

One of the main problems encountered in researching the various census data is the change in the spelling of the names, and sometimes in the names themselves. Knowing some of our hereditary family names can often help. The following are some of the observations on various persons when tracking them through the census data.

¹⁵ Census materials for First Nations in British Columbia can be difficult to track down.

This booklet, *First Nations Research Guide*, can be a useful starting point.

As an example, to research Yakum, a close relative originally from Neah Bay or Ozette, and Chief of Kakayaakan Village of the Douglas Treaties, but on the census recorded as the Beecher Bay and Esquimalt at Albert Head Village. The Douglas Treaty for Kakayaakan Village was signed by Qwaytqenem and Tlayakum, I looked for any trace of Yakum or his wife through the various census documents. In the Beecher Bay Census of 1881 (Cowichan Agency) the Village of Beecher Bay and Esquimalt (at Albert Head) there is a Yakum (28) living with his wife, Snahne'air (27). In the Census of 1881 for Sooke and Clallam at Beecher Bay, Yakamkun, aged 50, and his wife, Me'amy, aged 50, appear. Ten years later, in the Beecher Bay Census of 1891, the villages have been amalgamated and the older Yakum (formerly recorded as Yakamkun) shows up as the head of one house, aged 60, with his wife, Merny (formerly recorded as Me'amy), the age given as only 55. The younger Yakum shows up as the head of another house still aged 28, and his wife, Snahne'en, still aged 27. We can make the assumption that the Yakum of the 1881 census and the second, younger, Yakum of the 1891 census is the same person; however, neither the younger Yakum nor his wife have aged in the ten year period, and the older Yakum's wife had only aged by 5 years. I could assume that the older Yakum (Yakamkun) is the father of the younger Yakum but that would be an assumption with no facts to verify that, only the knowledge that names between relatives were often handed down or were similar. The names of the wives help us distinguish between them. In the 1901 census of Beecher Bay, the older Yakum has died, leaving his widow, Mi'ami, living in the house of a man named Qwaqwist, aged 38, from Elwah, and his wife, Maude, from Dungeness. There is no longer a record of the younger Yakum or his wife. In the 1911 census, a Johnny Yakum shows up in Tseshaht, aged 47, but this

person may be related or, due to the age difference, may even be the younger Yakum, but his wife's name is Kitty. This does not tell us very much because she now has a non-Native name and her age is listed as 45.



Figure 41 Beecher Bay. Image PN1132 courtesy of Royal British Columbia Museum

When trying to track the Chipps family through the census materials, I found that Chipps or Chips shows up in many places. In 1891, in the Beecher Bay Census, Chips, aged 89, shows up. His wife is listed as Che'ahmaht, aged 70, and they are both recorded as "lodgers"; however, they would have to be related to live in the house. In the 1891 census for Nitinaht, Chips, aged 50, a sealer, with his wife, Warmition, aged 48, show up in the house of Kimkatsu'ash, also a sealer, aged 50. Charlie Chipps, aged 30, shows up in the same house with his wife, Susan, aged 30. Chips shows up again as the head of another house as a Canoe maker and his wife's name is Newwuk, aged 36. Yet another Chips, aged 40, shows up in the same census living in the house of Chille, aged 19, and Chips is recorded as the uncle and a canoe maker.

Perhaps there were four different Chips'; however, they may also have been brothers. Charlie Chipps is definitely our grandfather; however, there is more than one Charlie Chipps. One (born in 1861, 1891 census) is shown as being married to Susan, who may be Susan Modeste Nytom, the wife of Dad's close cousin, Frank Nytom. We do know that our Charlie Chipps' wife was Annie Nytom. A Charley Chipps (born in 1871, 1911 census), married to Annie (born in 1876), a Charlie Chipps (born in 1865) and also married to Annie (born in 1872), and a fourth Charlie Chipps (born in 1871, 1901 census) and married to Annie (born in 1874). It can be assumed that even though their birth ages differ, the ones married to Annie are the same person. These are mysteries, which, for the purpose of my family research, will be further investigated.

Traditionally, it was common when someone was widowed, for a brother or sister to take the place of the one who had died in order to keep the family connections in place. It was also common for sisters from one family to marry brothers in another family, again to keep family ties, or connections secure (Personal communication with Gillette Chipps and Sarah Chipps, 1975 to 1985). Another option is that Charlie Chipps had more than one wife and, as is often the case in multiple marriages, the wife remained in her home community (Gillette Chipps, personal communication 1975 – 1985).

In the 1901 census, at Tlo-uws (Clo-oose), Stanley Chipps, aged 30, lives with his wife, Mary Chipps, aged 26, and their son, Harry Chipps, aged 9. In another house, in the same village, lives Charlie Chipps, aged 30, with his wife, aged 27, their daughter, Mary Chipps, aged under one year of age, his father, Chipps, aged 63, and his wife, Lucy Chipps, aged 49. In the next house, lives Jacob Chipps, aged 33, and his wife Sally, aged 30, his daughter, Ida, aged 12, and his son, Koqwa'ds, aged 3.

In the 1911 census of the West Coast, at Clo-oose, we find Charley Chipps, aged 40, living with his wife, Annie (Nytom) Chipps, aged 35, a daughter, Salsalimo aged six, two sons named Uclworth and Mitstenth, aged respectively, five and four, as well as another two daughters, one named Wathshatsoo, aged 3 and one unnamed as yet, ten months old. Also in the house, we find Stanley Chipps, now aged 35 and listed as a brother to Charley, his wife, Mary, aged 30, Henry their son, aged 17, their daughter, Toote'issum, aged 16 (may be Ida), and their mother, Mrs. Chipps, now a widow, aged 60. At Wyak Village, George Gibbs is the head of a house, aged 30, and living with his wife, Lucy Chipps, aged 28. In 1911, in Kyuquot, I found Guillod, aged 32, a Nephew-in-law and a labourer, living in the house of Jetssakis, aged 42, while in another house, I found Guillod, aged 32, a second-cousin-in-law, also a labourer. Guillod is the same person both cases, but we don't know if he is Dad or a different Guillod. He was recorded at two different houses and thus, according to the census, became two people. In yet another house, lives the head, a widower, named Dick Chipps or Chipps Dick, aged 44.

In the 1920 census for Nitinaht, and not differentiated by village, we find Annie Chipps living alone in a house at the age of 42 and a widow. We know from the death certificate that Charlie Chipps died in 1918, most likely from the terrible influenza epidemic that swept the area in that year. In the same census we also find Hazel Chipps, aged 22 and a widow, who later married a Mr. Rice of Nanaimo, living with her daughter, Winnie Chipps, aged seven. In addition, we find Charlie Winasoo'as, aged 83, with his wife, Annie, aged 72. In yet another house, we find George Gibbs, aged 61, with his wife, Lucy Chipps along with the note that she died at the age of 55 on November 10th, 1920, and their son, Willie Gibbs, aged thirteen. In First Nations tradition, people's names often

change over time. This further confuses the research.

As you can see, the census can be useful for researchers of genealogy; however, it can also raise more questions than supply answers. Mostly, I think they can generate clues to follow up.

Death Certificates

Another important source of information is death certificate records. This is where the census comes in handy because you need to supply a name and you can find a variety of spellings of names there. Although the birth dates and ages may not be entirely accurate (many of the people were born before records of birth were made while others were born away from their communities), the death dates, where they died, and in some cases, the names of their mother and father as well as the persons who attended, usually relatives. I now have hundreds of death certificates of family and it has helped in determining some of the confusing relationships, but certainly not all.

The Pelagic Sealing Era

Yet another source of information is the Pelagic files generated by the Royal Commission in 1913. This Royal Commission heard the claims of Pelagic Sealers arising out of the Washington Treaty of July 7th, 1911 and the regulations made under the Paris Award that came into force in 1894. Many of the claims were filed by First Nations people of the West Coast, and although there is some information, many of the records and reels are missing from the Archives at the Royal British Columbia Museum (Royal British Columbia Museum Archives, 1895 - 1914). Out of the six most important of the

85 reels, many of the claims most crucial to my research were missing¹⁶.

The files for certain people of great interest, especially for Beecher Bay, Sooke and Pacheenaht, were missing. These were people such as Edward Chips, Yukum Jim, Mary Chips, Henry Charles and Annie, Mary claiming for Sam Sayer (may have been Leonard Samuel Sawyer, Mom's father), Minnie of Beecher Bay, Chips and Sally, Annie of Beecher Bay, Cecelia of Sooke, Johnny Yukum, Annie and Charlie Chips, Lucy Chips, Chief Charlie Quisto, James Gillet, Lemo and Annie and Gibbs, Charlie Chips, many with numerous claims, and they may have provided much needed information.

Of the claims I did find, there was some information of great use, and other information that, again, confused the issue further. For example, a Chips of Clayoquot was married, but the record didn't give the name of the wife; he had three children, but these were not named either. It showed that he sailed on the sealing schooners *Sapphire*, *Dora Seward*, *Vera*, and otherwise made his living picking hops, drying fish, and sealing from shore.

Of interest because it illustrates the many names people had, is the claim of George Robinson of Nitinaht. George Robinson, it states, was also known as George Jack

¹⁶ On Reel 11142: Claims 150-499, the claims 197-299 and 400-489 were missing. On Reel 11143: Claims 500-799, claims 550-599 and 700 - 749 are missing; however, claims 700 - 799 show up on the next reel. Reel 11144 has the claims numbered 700 - 1049, but the claims 850 - 1049 are missing. On Reel 11145 with the claims 1050 - 1349, claims 1100 - 1149, 1151 - 1249, and 1258 - 1299 are missing. On reel 11146, with claims 1300 - 1499, the claims for 1350 - 1426 are missing. On the final reel of interest, reel 11147, the claims 1450 - 16052 (I'm not certain whether that should be 1652 or 16052) have the duplicate files of 1450 - 1499.

and as Pachena George.

Billy Gibbs, of Clo-oose, was married with no children and it states that he kept count of seal pelts by knotting string. Billy Gibbs also made a claim on behalf of Old Chips, deceased, who was a brother, who had also lived in Nitinaht. It says that his brother started sealing with his father at the beginning of the sealing industry and that his brother was considerably older than Billy. Billy Gibbs also makes a claim on behalf of Wadahaps of Clo-oose, who was Billy's brother-in-law. He states that the Indian owner of the *Amateur* had invited Wadahaps to go aboard his schooner as a sealer. Dad used to speak about the *Amateur* schooner, but unfortunately, I can't remember the details. All I remember is that it belonged to a relative. I always thought that it belonged to Charlie Chipps, but perhaps it belonged to Charlie Chipps the Elder.

Lucy Gibbs of Nitinaht sailed on the Schooner, Minnie, with her husband who was not named, but would be George Gibbs, and she would be Lucy Chipps by birth. It states that she worked on the schooner steering and cooking. She also sailed on the *Allie I. Alger*, *Ida Etta*, and *Zilla May*. When not on the schooners, she made her living at the Fraser River canneries and basketmaking.

Jacob Chips of Nitinaht was married with no children (as his daughter, Ida, had died) and sailed on the *Borealis* and *Ocean Belle*, later working at a cannery on the Fraser River, hop picking in Washington, and working in a sawmill in Seattle. There will be more about Jacob Chipps later in this chapter as certain events in his life have been recorded by newspapers and authors.

Henry Chips made a claim on behalf of his father, August Stanley Chips who had died around 1909. Henry was 27 in 1913, and he states that his mother's name was Mary

Chips. In another claim on behalf of Maggie Chips of Nitinaht, Henry states that Maggie's mother is Mary Chips, but not that Maggie is his sister. He states that Maggie was out on three schooners, *Amateur*, the *Enterprise*, and the *Ida Etta*, and she worked at the Fraser River Cannery and hop picking in Washington State.

A Maggie, of Nitinaht, made a claim on behalf of her father, Harry, who died a long time ago. This may be Maggie Chips; in the family tree, there was a Harry Chipps, 1861 – 1932, but we don't know to whom he was married. Stanley Chipps who was married to Mary is recorded as having a son named Harry, but he would be unlikely to be the father who died a long time ago.

In the Beecher Bay claims that I was able to find, I find the names of people I'd never found in any of the census materials, for whatever reason. For example, a claim for Young William, deceased, was made by his uncle, Charles Lewis. It states that Young William was engaged in the sealing business, sailing out of Victoria. It was stated that Young William's average salary per season was \$100, so his uncle was claiming a compensation of \$38.85.

Another claim by Minnie, the daughter of Willie Johnson of Beecher Bay (Young Willie?), it stated that Willie Johnsons' salary was approximately \$140 per season and thus Minnie is claiming compensation of \$101.20. It also shows that Willie Johnson sailed on the *Walter A. Earle* from 1893 to 1894. He was very fortunate to have stopped sealing on the *Walter A. Earle* when he did.

Grant Keddie, of the Provincial Archives, provided me with some information from a supplement stating, "First Nations crew members made a lot of money when hunts were successful but two voyages in 1895 – 96 were devastating to many First Nations



Figure 42 The May Belle (3rd from left). Image C-00461 courtesy of Royal British Columbia Museum

families in the Greater Victoria area” (Keddie, G., 2007). This document goes on to say,

On May 8, 1895 Victorian’s heard the tragic news that the sealing schooner Walter A. Earle capsized in the night in a violent storm on April 14 off Cape St. Elias Alaska with 26 aboriginal crewmembers. They included 12 from Victoria: Tom Andrew, Asi Billy, Vic Johnny, Vic Frank, Tom Frank, Isaac Robert, Joe Enday, Tom, Drew, Walter, Joe and Louis; six from Becher Bay: William John, Young Jim, Johnny James, Abraham Sam, Dan Connor, and Young William; from Sooke: Charley John, Joe Henry, George Henry, Sam Sayer and Peter Charley; from Rocky Point: Rocky Point Jim; from Metchosin: Harry Hutz and from Cowichan: Jimmy Daniel. [The ‘George Henry’ listed as lost, was Henry

George. He was married to Mary Tate (c. 1858 – Mar. 22, 1956). Agnes provided a great deal of information on the language and history of the Songhees to linguists and anthropologists. Agnes was married to Louis (also Louie) George of Discovery Island (born July 1881). Louis George's father was Harry George (also George Solcwoosit and Qunteenica) who was born on Discovery Island and was also reported to have drowned on the *Walter Earle* – yet his name does not match those listed in the official records. Mary (Tate) George mentioned above was the daughter of George MacQuinna Tate and Mary Patterson of Clo-oose. Her brother was Henry Tate (1897 – Feb. 7, 1958) who married Jane Ashelina Bob (born in Esquimalt c. 1918)]. The biggest tragedy occurred in late January of 1896 when the schooner *May Belle* sank off Cape Cook with twenty-two men – practically the entire adult male population – of the Becher Bay Band. Of the close to 300 vessels that participated in the hunts, at least 19 were lost at sea with all crewmembers. At least 158 First Nations, mostly men from the West Coast of the Island, were lost. (Keddie, G., 2007)

Staying with the Pelagic information, Peter Murray, makes many references to both the *May Belle* and *Walter A. Earle* ship wrecks, as well as the First Nations schooner owners:

On April 14, 1895, a number of schooners were caught in a sudden storm which blew up while they were sealing on feeding grounds just south of Cape St. Elias. The weather had been fine when the small boats went out in the morning, but the barometer plunged shortly after noon. The boats were quickly called in before the winds hit with full force as darkness fell.

The Libbie under Captain Fred Hackett and the Favorite under Alex McLean – both Cape Breton Islanders – were able to ride out the blinding blizzard and sub-zero temperatures during the night, but the Walter A. Earle was not so lucky. In the morning the Favorite came upon the Earle's mainsail, and a few hours later the schooner was found bottom up. Her masts were in place but the rudder was gone. There was no sign of the Captain Louis Magneson, or 26 Indian hunters, including 12 from Victoria's Songhees tribe. (Murray, 1988p. 81)

In 1788, Alaska was claimed as Russian territory and remained as such until that land and the adjacent islands were purchased by the United States in 1867, but the state did not become an organized territory until 1912 and a state in 1959. The boundary of the two countries ran halfway between the Aleutian and Komandorski Islands, dividing the Bering Sea. The Pribilof Islands became the property of the United States and was the principal breeding grounds of seals in the area. The pelagic sealing industry was established in 1870 and lasted until 1911, extending through a difficult time of American legislation, disputes and international treaties concerning the land, the water and the sealing within these waters. The killing of seals was prohibited on the Pribiloff Islands and adjacent waters by the United States Congress between 1868 and 1873. In 1870, the exclusive right to kill seals went to the Alaska Commercial Company on the conditions that the annual number of seals killed was limited but to otherwise protect the seals. In 1886 and 1887, American revenue cutters began to seize British sealing schooners 60 miles from land leading to an attempt to establish a joint convention to settle the disputes. This convention lasted from 1887 to 1890 but was unable to reach agreement on sealing regulations and, especially, on the pelagic zone. In 1890, American revenue cutters again

began to seize sealing schooners in Alaskan waters and the British ambassador laid a formal protest before the United States government. In 1892, a treaty was signed at Washington. A few primary contentious points had been that the United States regarded seals as semi-domesticated, and therefore able to be the property of a country; that sealing on land was legitimate sealing and that pelagic sealing, or sealing at sea, was analogous to piracy. The award, which was signed and published on the 15th of August 1893, was in favour of Britain on all points, and the total amount of damages paid to the British sealers was \$473,151.26. Many sealing schooners were actually seized and the crews were set ashore in Sitka, Alaska, to make their own way home (Wikipedia, n.d.-a). I suspect, but have been unable to research, that a number of the First Nations sealers, rather than facing a long and difficult journey home, may well have stayed in Sitka. We may have family there.

Another important entry from Peter Murray's book discusses the interception of the sealing schooners,

By the end of the season U.S. and British patrol ships had intercepted 107 of the estimated 110 schooners in the area. Evans fired warning shots at some to bring them to. He seized the Indian-owned Mountain Chief of Port San Juan and turned her over to the Royal Navy officers, telling them to keep her out of the area in the future, 'or we will blow the stuffing out of her.' A few weeks later the little schooner was stopped by the Navy sloop Adams. The boarding party found seven freshly killed seals on the deck, six of them females. The Adams attempted to take the Mountain Chief in tow but had to give up because of the heavy seas. The schooner made her own way to Unalaska where she surrendered to the

Melpomene. Captain Parr ordered her to Victoria, where she was restored by Customs Agent Milne to owner Jim Nawassum after the Indians pleaded ignorance of the modus. (1988,p. 117)

Nawassum, in Nitinaht, is Dawasib, the original chief of Clo-oose previously referred to. The name Dawasib belongs to our family and was the name passed on to Dad's son, the late Stanley Chipps of Beecher Bay.

References to the conditions under which First Nations sealers worked as well as information about Charlie Chipps and other relatives from Neah Bay show up as well in this wonderful book:

It was incidents such as this (mutiny because captain refused to let them leave and after he withheld food from them and kept them prisoners below decks) which spurred some of the B.C. Indians, particularly in the San Juan area of southern Vancouver Island, to acquire their own schooners. But only a few vessels were native-owned and despite their greater numbers, the Island Nuu-chah-nulth were never as extensively involved as the Makahs. Some went across the strait to Neah Bay to sign on the schooners there. One of these was "Charlie" a 55-year old Nitinaht Indian from Pachena Bay, who sailed as a hunter on the L.C. Perkins in 1891. (Murray, 1988p. 117)

Peter Murray goes on to state that: "The Makahs did not fare well with their schooners during the 1890's. In March of 1892 the James G. Swan, was ordered confiscated by a Seattle court for sealing in the Bering during the modus" (1988p. 117).

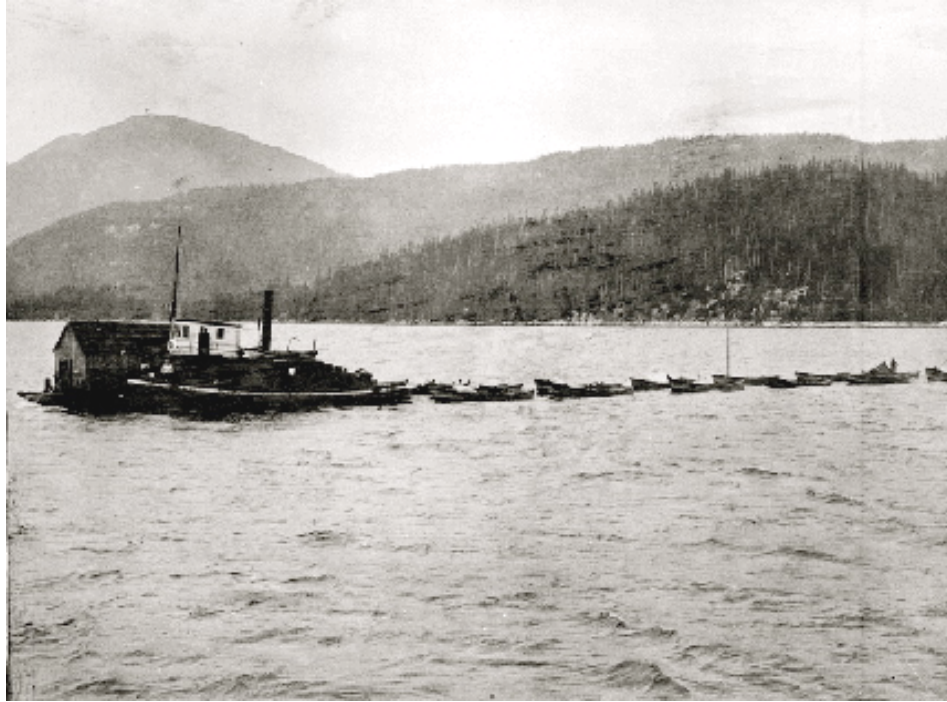
Although there were legal hearings of claims by Canadian or American First

Nations' sealers who lost property or employment due to the collapse of the pelagic sealing industry, no First Nations' person ever received the promised compensation.

The Makah's sailing income came to an abrupt halt in 1897 when the U.S. banned pelagic sealing by its citizens. Suddenly their schooners were worth little or nothing. Since they were smaller and less well maintained than other sealing schooners, the vessels had no resale value for other uses. Chief Maquinna Jongie Claplanhoo of Neah Bay owned three schooners in 1897. He said a "Navyman" had promised he would receive compensation from the government for the loss of his business. It never came. As late as 1954 the Neah Bay Indians were still appealing to Washington for compensation for the 1897 law. (p. 160)

There is mention of many family members in Peter Murray's book, and some of the names, although they can be confusing, shed additional light on the common names used. The information is most likely from government documents, and the many Chips', their aliases, and their residences referred to may not be entirely accurate.

In depositions taken for the 1892 Paris Tribunal, a number of coastal Indians described the offshore fishery around that time. There were usually three men on an offshore expedition – two to row and one to steer – so as to be able to get home quickly if caught in a storm. "Charlie," a Nitinaht Indian living at Pachena Bay [Pachena Bay is not located at Port Renfrew but is a large bay north of Nitinaht territory by Clutus Point], said 100 men at Pachena [Pachena Bay may be the actual reference] is made a living as seal hunters. 'We sell the skins, eat the flesh, take the oil out of the blubber and use the paunch for holding it'. (p. 194-195)



**Figure 43 First Nations fishermen homeward bound. Image H-07108 courtesy of
Royal British Columbia Museum**

In reference to some of the First Nations' schooner owners, Peter Murray mentions the following:

Some Indians sailed on their own schooners. Charlie Chips of Nitinaht, also known as Charlie Gipson, [We have heard that the Amateur was owned either by Charlie Chipps or his father and the Gipson may lead to the later Gibbs family; close relatives] owned the 18-ton Amateur, which had been built in Seattle. He paid \$1,000, including duty, for her in 1894. She could carry eight canoes and Chips took one of every three skins. He never went to the Bering but was warned by a U.S. cutter 100 miles south of Cape Flattery for sealing out of season. After the Amateur was wrecked on the Nitinaht Bar, Chips decided to give up and go

out on the white men's schooners as a "boss". He said he was tired of being harassed by U.S. patrol ships. (p. 195)

Yet another Charlie Chipps, this one is definitely Gillette Chipps' father because we know he owned the Fisher Maid and we met someone in Marysville, Washington, who had recently seen it off the San Juan coast about six meters down. The man's name was not remembered by the present Henry Chipps, who had the conversation, and although I was present, I was not close enough to overhear the conversation.



Figure 44 Frank and Susan (nee Modeste) Knighton (Nyton) Image PN17723

courtesy of Royal British Columbia Museum

Charlie Chipps lived in San Juan and owned the Fisher Maid, which he bought in 1893, also for \$1,000. After he died in 1898 [Charlie Chipps, owner of the Fisher

Maid, died in 1918] the schooner was left to rot on the beach at San Juan [actually, it was sunk just off shore]. Another San Juan Indian, Jim Nawassum, a brother-in-law of Chief Charlie Quisto, had sailed for a number of years on Neah Bay Schooners before buying the Mountain Chief from Victor Jacobson. He abandoned her on shore in 1895. Jimmie Nyetom of Nitinaht owned the 18-ton Pachewallis whose hull had been bought by his father for \$600 from a Chinese and which was outfitted for another \$700. (p. 195)

From these quotes, although confusing, and, it would appear, from the Pelagic sealing claims, I found a lot of family names but some of the information is not correct. We do know for a fact that Dad's father, Charlie Chipps, owned the *Fisher Maid* and that Dad owned the schooner named the *Golden Cloud II*. Gillette's close relatives were the Nytoms and the name, Duwasib (Nawassum), is one of our family names. This places several of the Native-owned schooners within our family. That was exciting to find outside the stories we were told by Dad.

The Royal Commission that was reviewing the pelagic sealing claims, ran into a lot of confusion with the names, the commissioners often wondering if some were the same people. At one point, when looking through the schooner records, there were, '21 Charlies, 28 Toms, 20 Annies, 18 Joes, and 13 Billys' (p. 224).

Peter Murray continues by quoting an interesting discussion among members of the Royal Commission regarding the confusion over names:

The more common names were frequently expanded to 'Charlie of Ahousaht' or 'Billy from San Juan,' to help the Commission keep track of who was who. It was

not easy, as shown by this exchange in the transcript for Claim No. 1410, that of 'Bob of Ehattesah't':

Audette: 'Haven't we had this man before?'

Cox: 'I think the Bob heard last fall was Big Bob.'

Witness: 'There are two Bobs in Ehattesah't. One is Big Bob, and I am Bob.'

Audette: 'Then we will hear him under the name of Bob.'

Patton: 'Last fall we heard a man named Bob, and it should have been Big Bob. These papers ought to go in with the last claim, and those papers go in with this claim. The papers got turned around.'

Audette: 'But there is only one Big Bob, and one Bob. We will hear this man as Bob.' (1988, p. 224)

Not only were family in Beecher Bay, Sooke, Port Renfrew and Nitinaht decimated by the sinking of schooners, but even our family in Kyuquot was affected.

The Indians' concern about safety was heightened in the fall of 1902 when the schooner *Hatzic* was reported missing with 24 men from Kyuquot and seven whites. One of the crew members was John Daley, who had been skipper of the Willie McGowan when she was seized by the Russians in 1892. Since her departure in February there had been no word from the schooner. The anxious

villagers wanted a steamer sent to look for her. If the men were lost, they wanted the Department of Indian Affairs to make provision for their widows and children, which it did when the tragedy was confirmed ... Superintendent Vowell was outraged when he read in "The Colonist" about the subsequent destruction of property at Kyuquot over the *Hatzic* loss. He blamed the local missionary, the Rev. E. Sobry, which was a bit irrational since the missionaries did their best to stamp out what were regarded as the Indians heathenish practices. Sobry, in fact, replied that the newspaper report was exaggerated. The Indians had burned some goods belonging to the dead in their usual custom, he said, and spread out over the ground a few yards of calico and about 10 blankets – not 2,000 as reported by the Colonist. The newspaper's report was 'a most egregious misrepresentation of facts,' said Sobry. (Murray, 1988, pp. 196-197)



Figure 45 Aqtis. Image PN15990 courtesy of Royal British Columbia Museum

From these quotes, it can be seen that the sealing industry had a huge and negative effect on First Nations communities. The yearly harvesting round was destroyed as was the independence from store-bought foods and supplies and, thereby, the diet that best suited the First Nations people of the Northwest Coast.

Men were picked up by schooner-captains moving out from Victoria. The earlier schooners would pick up all available men from the nearest villages, and as time went by, the schooners would have to pick up men from more distant villages. The women, children and older men were left to fend for themselves while the men were away, often leading to malnutrition and starvation when the men did not come back. As shown, when the pelagic schooner era came to an end, people were so dependent upon money that they had to find work in fish processing plants and canneries, the hop fields, and selling hand made objects such as small totem poles and baskets.

As noted, another effect of the loss of all the men of a community was that the women and children were left behind without providers. As we don't generally have orphans (a benefit of extended families), this led to an influx of male relatives from other communities and one can often see, as in the Beecher Bay and Sooke censuses from 1901, that the heads of the houses have never appeared in the census records for these communities before. In the case of all the reserves where our family lives, this has been the case – the drastic change in population and, often, a confusion of our family trees.

When one considers the adult male populations of the Reserves before 1901 (in the case for Sooke and Beecher Bay), one can see just how devastating the shipwrecks were. Beecher Bay, which, in 1881 was a combination of villages and reserves (Clallam at Cheanuh – ten adult males, one 60 years old; Beecher Bay and Esquimalt at Albert

Head – had eight adult males, the oldest 50 years old, and Clallam at Beecher Bay had ten males, one 70 years old) gives a combined adult male population of 28 males over the age of fifteen. In the same census, the Sooke Band had eight adult males, one being Louis Lazar, an Iroquois/French man who most likely arrived with the Hudson's Bay Company and, as was common, married the Chief's (Jack Squawqilluk, or Captain Jack) daughter, Te'emknat.

There are two important questions I have about the 1881 census for the Beecher Bay area: how can each census fill exactly one page for each reserve? And how can each village have exactly 25 members? I have no answer to these questions but exactly one page per reserve and 25 members seems too neat for reality.

When I look at the 1891 census, the last census taken before the tragic wrecks of the *May Belle* and the *Walter A. Earle*, the separate villages of the Beecher Bay area have been amalgamated onto one reserve. The adult male population is now 23, however, many of the names have already changed from the 1881 census. I don't have the census for Sooke in 1891. In the 1901 census, Beecher Bay has twelve adult males of which the vast majority are newcomers. The new chief, claiming to be from Beecher Bay (Cheerno) is Charley Hioquacher with his Saanich wife and two daughters, three sons and two "orphans". Another man is from Clallam Bay, one from Songhees, one from Elwah with his wife from Dungeness looking after Yakum's (deceased – probably on the schooners) widow, Me'ami. Another man from Dungeness with his wife also from Dungeness with a man from Sooke and a Cheerno child; a new Elder, La Hampton, shows up as the head of a house with his wife from Songhees, looking after two women and the head's sister from Cheerno, one young child from Cheerno and a cousin from Dungeness. In yet another

house, two brothers claiming to be from Cheerno but who were absent from any of the previous census lists live with three granddaughters and four grandsons from Cheerno. In the last house on the list, a man from Songhees with his wife from Dungeness look after a son and a granddaughter from Cheerno. There are many other noticeable differences, but this list should suffice to show that the very structure of the First Nations at Beecher Bay was changed drastically; since these families were basically patrilineal, the family lines became totally changed forever.

The main point here is that the Sooke First Nation, with an adult male population of eight adult males (one of whom was Louis Lazar who obviously did not go out on the schooners because he reappears in a later census), seven of whom were eligible to go out on the schooners, lost five men leaving a male population of at most three. In Beecher Bay with an 1891 total adult male population of 23, 28 were lost (I assume some of the younger boys grew up in the five year period) including two from near Beecher Bay.

Gillette Chipps's Story

In the following interview with Gillette Chipps, not very much information was sought regarding family, which is unfortunate; however, there is still much important information in the document. The birth date Gillette gives is most likely not entirely accurate, but it is important to remember that often people would state their birth date as the year they were told they were born. Gillette was most likely born around 1879, even though he gives his birth date as 1902. Personal comments will be enclosed in square brackets [] and I have added headings to separate the long interview into the primary topics discussed.

Gillette Chipps (GC) was interviewed by Don Prescott (DP) of the Aural History

Programme, Provincial Archives of British Columbia, Victoria, B.C. Canada. V8V 1X4
on December 1, 1977. Accession No. 2815, Tape 1, Track No. 1 & 2.

The Early Years

DP: What is your full name?

GC: Gillette Chipps.

DP: And your Indian name?

GC: K'ak'q'thas [actually it was qatqatsa'as]

DP: Where were you born?



Figure 46 Gillette Chipps dancing. Image courtesy of Henry Chipps

GC: I was born in (what do you call this place). It is a lighthouse there. The other side
of Port Angeles. It is Port Townsend.

DP: And then did you go to Clo-oose or you said that at one time you were from Clo-
oose.

GC: My father was the boss of the hop yard in, let's see what did he call that, he used to have five hundred pickers, women, otherwise he gets five dollars a head doing it so he used to have people from Nootka Sound all the way up this way to get that many people, you know.

DP: Were your parents Nitinaht people? [Referring to Charlie Chipps and Annie Nytom Chipps]

GC: We belonged to Clo-oose and my Mama's family from Carmanah Point.

DP: Did your parents have a large family? Do you have a lot of brothers and sisters?



Figure 47 Gillette's sister, Mary Anne Oscar (nee Chipps) left and relative Hilda Hansen. Image courtesy of Patsy Nicolaye

GC: I had brothers and sisters. I grew up with eight, that's from fathers, kids, daughters.

DP: Where did you live as a child? How many places did you move to?

GC: Well, we moved to Seattle in 1911 because my Dad was working at the mill at the south of Seattle, inside the bay. That was between, what do you call that point

again?

DP: Was that Port Townsend?

GC: Oh, no, right in Seattle.

DP: Oh, I see.

GC: It's, it is a simple name too, we were in a Bay like Etna Point but I couldn't get the name of it.

DP: So you went to Seattle then?

GC: We stayed in Seattle for five years because he was working in the mill then. So I got a friend, there were no agents in the beach right where we were through next door to us the father was working the same place where my father was working at the mill. So they used to go to school in the sandspit and they called me every morning to go with them, walking the beach to go to the school. So I sit outside, I didn't want to go in. They told me to come in, even the teachers told me to come in. I said no and that is why I lost out in English. They gave me coffee in the coffee house and still I didn't go in.

DP: They tried to bribe you?

GC: You know one day I was seen the white people I was Indian and I don't think I was fit to be inside with that people and there were lots of kids when they come out at recess I would be playing with them. Some I got name yelled between times at me and I didn't go for it, I just got away. It wasn't my friend so it didn't bother me or anything like that. It didn't scare me or nothing 'cause I was waiting for my friends to go home with. And there were two boys of this origin and one girl so four from that beach every day. They never missed calling because they were next

door to me.

DP: After that time, when did you move to Victoria?

GC: We moved back home in 1915, we went back to Clo-oose because the regulation of the Indian Department of the Indians five years they have to go back home. If you don't go back home it is your own fault.

DP: What would they do to you?

GC: They erase you from the book. Then you belong to no band so you got to protect your band and go back before five years. No matter where you go you have to watch your step. Don't stay away from home too long. I think it is why those people there are lots of people over at Tacoma right now who haven't been home for many years and they are off the band.

DP: What was Victoria like in those days?

GC: Oh yes, Victoria right here there was a big tree right here and there was another tree right here, big ones, in front of this building and there was some, not road like this now, it was just a few houses, there was trees along Douglas Street towards Oak Bay, standing trees here and there and just a few houses were around. If I remember correctly, I think that at Government House over here was a little smaller. Looks like maybe I was crazy at that time but it sure looked smaller anyway. It seems to be twice the size she was before and I am talking about 1911, 1915.

DP: Was that before you were working? You were still a child at that time?

GC: I was only a kid in 1911. I must have been about seven years old. I was born in 1902. [This may not be Gillette's correct birth date.]

DP: Did you get to Vancouver in those days, your family? In the early days did you get to Vancouver? What was it like? That city.

GC: Well, Vancouver was the same, bushes on corners, not like it is now. It's from Steveston all the way down now compares to what it was before. In Steveston, Lulu Island there was just the farmers. Now you see nothing but houses and stores along Lulu Island. Steveston, it was just an Imperial and Lummi Bay Packing Co. and Company and, what do you call it, a Jap outfit.

DP: Japanese?

GC: Yes.

DP: Steveston had a lot of Japanese in the early days.

GC: Yes, a whole island, no one from the whole island is just full of it and good farmers like us. Good strawberry patches but today you can't see that. They tried to do little island, white fellows work, but they had, they got no strawberries bigger than my thumb. What the Japanese, what they have secret you know they make you swallow real good.

DP: They do a lot of fishing also, the Japanese.

GC: Oh, yes. Most of them are gill netters and you don't know when they sleep. They are right there and never seem to go to sleep and they put their legs together. I think that is how they sit and sleep because they never lay down or sleep in the houses there, just cross their legs and not talking at all and between times let me talk to you right back. They are just waiting for action.

[An important source of information about Lulu Island is available at the Steveston Museum in Richmond, B.C. <http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/>. I wrote to them for a period

of two years asking permission to use a few of their photographs but, unfortunately, I never received replies to any of my requests.]

DP: What was your first employment? Your first job?

GC: Making cans.

DP: Where was this?

GC: In, I mentioned it a while ago, that island.

DP: Lulu Island?

GC: Yune's Cannery, Yune's Cannery.

DP: Yune's

GC: Making cans there, boy you really every day overtime work we had to make lids for it. When we work on overtime. And nothing but the foot work. We work about I guess....

DP: What were you doing with your foot?

GC: The lever.

DP: Oh, I see.

GC: Pressing out. Compressure down and cut the cans the same time so you have the lids ready. All you got to do is bent them.

DP: What age were you at that time? What year?

GC: 1915 and believe me boy that was two bits an hour. Got a long day to make a dollar. Anyway it adds up to \$760 dollars a year with overtime.

DP: It doesn't seem very much these days does it?

GC: No, no. That's about , that's about. It works out anyway in a year you have \$760. You get more overtime then.

The Fishing Years

DP: When did you get into the fishing business? What year?

GC: I started fishing when I grew up and I started on the same boat 1917 on account of my brother bought a fishing boat, Same boat. We thought it was a great big boat, it was a diesel engine in it and my brother, Henry Chipps, said he needs engineer so he sent me to Vancouver and it cost me \$750 to learn how to do some mechanic work on the diesel engines and that was only six months, six months.

DP: Course.

GC: Course and you can't do any more if you no good you no good. If you win you all right. You got to take the engine apart and put them together piece by piece before they let you go, before they say all right, before they say here is your certificate for that purpose. Whether you get the first class engineers ticket of second class engineer or third class engineer than that third class is just the oil wiper they call it. You can't do any more.

DP: What did you get?

GC: I didn't get the first class.

DP: But your English was very spotty.

GC: I guess I, well anyway, I did my best to do my part. I never get it. Someday I feel like to cry to work on the subjects because I didn't understand English too good so I really go ahead with my brains, although it is washed up and don't understand it I tried to fill it out. But I done pretty good. I done pretty good for a short period of time so when I hear the engine running when I quit that engineering course I hear the engine run, you know what is wrong with it even though it is only quchu-

quchu-quchu. The valve leaking that's why it don't send out enough pshchuchsh, qwichwichu-qwichwichu-qwichwichu, maybe two or three valves missing. Or too late to shut, that's the trouble, opens too soon so it don't give compression enough to the engine that's why it sounding like that. And then it gets that way when the nozzles choked. They often get plugged, the small little holes they got spray out the fuel.

DP: You told me at one time that somebody, I think you said he was Norwegian or Swedish, was surprised that you could do, take an engine apart, even though you couldn't understand him. Can you tell me about that again?

GC: He used to tell me everything in English, what to do, I'd have my lips wide open against him watching him and then he tried telling me with Norwegian language. I still don't understand him but I try my best in the part and then I took the pieces and they 'notch' he said so I fix it and put it on and go to work. There is times I was crying, try to solve the thing, it was pretty hard for me. Don't understand what he said and it seemed to be all right if I understand what he said and both ways, maybe it was my habit when I speak to him I speak my own language that's the reason why he speak his own language to me. I don't know why but yet we get along together. Oh, we get along just like brothers. He'd started to press on my shoulder and as a thank you, I know what he mean. Anyway, day in and day out same thing, go to work again and then pat my shoulder and walk away. He satisfied what I'm doing. He never said go ahead get busy because I know in the language he was using me someday I find now today that he was swearing at me. What he was swearing at me for nothing. I tried my best, I didn't do right I guess,

the whole trouble was that I did not understand him what he was telling me to do, otherwise I would do it.

DP: He was the instructor of this course? Teacher for the course? After you passed the course did you go to commercial fishing at that time with your brother?

GC: Well, after that engineering course I come out, it's funny, I am going to tell you about that. When I got my certificate for engineering course, number one engineering course, Matsuyama outfit, Tobetra outfit, Nelson Brothers, B.C. Packers, Canadian Fish Company, were right there waiting for me. Want engineer you can't get out that office, they waiting for you right there. They want engineer. And the only trouble with some people they wouldn't care if you a good engineer or not, they take the engine apart and put them back together. Some fellows I see them try to work on the engine with the best engineers certificate that's a white man, whether it is a Norwegian or English or Scotch, it takes them three days to put the engine together and mine was one day. That is taking apart and putting it together and runned it that evening.

DP: Amazing.

GC: See the whole trouble with them Norwegians or white man, they want the help and I never had no help I just made a winch on the ceiling and hoist the block up, nothing to it. If you get a help you do this, you do this, you never get along.

DP: Who hired you right when you got your ticket?

GC: Well, I told them in the company right in the office, I didn't learn that engine to run it for somebody else. I came Vancouver to learn the engineering course for my brother. So I'm told that's what they sent me for. I started engineering for my

brother so we made pretty good for one season. My money turned into a storage closet because I don't need it. It is no good for me. It is good for the family because I don't stay home. So we worked out together me and my brother but we brought the goods to the village and they done pretty good with it.

DP: Who were you selling your fish to?

GC: Oh, we had the independent buyers.

DP: Oh, I see.

GC: Was Invik. He was in Vancouver. He buys the fish. He sent a packer into Nitinaht so we got nothing to do with it. All we got to do is catch the fish. Everything was set up right the beginning part of it. All you got to do is catch the fish you ready.

DP: Did you ever work for a fishing company after you, after you finished with your brother?

GC: Well, when my brother died 1919, when that flu was on, it didn't last long. Too bad. It didn't last long at all, only about a week I guess and he was gone and his wife made a mistake. She sold the boat right away so I had no more boat, no more engine to run. I sent a wire to Matsuyama Outfit and Tobetra and Canadian Fish Company and Matsuyama Outfit answered right away. Come on over. If you need money we will send you money. I said I need money because I was out of food right there and then I said how much and I asked my mother what they need in the house and she started managing it and then I figure it out right there in the house was \$150 roughly so I said I need \$200. They say all right, nothing to it.

DP: That company was in Vancouver?

GC: Yes they were in Vancouver and the company was in the Alberni Canal. It didn't

take me long to get there and it cost me nothing. Course I got to have a lunch yes but I pack a lunch in Clo-oose and I walk to Bamfield. That is 35 miles. That cost me six hours walking.

DP: How long did you work for the Matsuyama Company?

GC: Oh, I quit them when they got off the Island, before they got off the Island. I think I worked for them possible seventeen years and then Nelson Brothers took me over.

DP: As an engineer?

GC: Engineer, yup. I run the boat, the packers only one year but Nelson Brothers tested me through skipper.

DP: Nelson Brothers did, I see.

GC: And then I went for skipper [-] by jiminy [-] man at skippers school it is worse than high school. Mathematics, holy cow, they don't pick up, the man up if you don't know much. You got to know it, like you do shoes. You know the size of your shoes and you never wears different size if it is tight. Don't work so good. It's got to be just right. So that is the way the companies do it. Whatever they do they know who to hire in the cannery to be boss, in the plant to be boss, and in the net loft to be boss. They don't pick up anybody, they pick up the right person. The person they'll see he'll work there right. And then he leave him to be boss when he hires a person to make the seine or gill nets right there got to be patched, they patching it ready to sell it to the machines.

DP: What did they teach you in that skippers school?

GC: The skippers job in the school, it is just like mathematics, of course you go to

learn the miles and the distance you are going and you have one, two, three, four boats in front of you, five boats in front of you. You know your course and you know they know their course possible one of them on course so you got to take a notch, move out of the way because you don't want that bump. Might cost money. So you got to watch it, that is what they teaching you and boy it is hard. I wouldn't go through it again, no matter.

DP: How long did that take you?

GC: Well if you don't go through six months they wouldn't take you in again. You got to know it. A lot of people don't go through, even well-educated guys. Yes they go through the papers pretty quick and give it to the desk man and it is all finished and this one checks it, checks it, checks it, checks it and go. And he would say I'll get it, six months I'll get it. Oh thirty-six I was when I went through the course. Out of thirty-three, two Indians and one white fellow went through and only one proposition help us a lot. We didn't drink and we didn't go in the beer parlour after school. And the rest of them to hell with it I'll go through. I went through today, no that's not it, some big hill I call it, got to climb whether you make it or not you try to climb it anyway. It is a steep hill too, some sections are just like sand I call it. Standing still pulling your foot out of the sand, never go any higher that's what them well-educated white fellers I seen. Never make it and then when this war came, the world war, you got to know the signal lights, you got to go through that too. And it's no fun. Well it's just alphabet to them people, nothing to it. Try to read that buoy in the distance, they don't do it like a 100 yards away, they do it miles away, asking you questions what the name of your boat.

DP: A little tiny light.

GC: Yes, what's the name of your boat, where you going, quick too. A quick reply, next question, a quick reply.

DP: How long were you a skipper?

GC: Seventeen years. I was on the wheel seventeen years and I got through. I guess I was trustworthy cause they trust me for \$62,000 a week to pack around camp to camp. Keep the camp money level. Crazy there is something else I don't understand in English maybe I'm too crazy. I hope I stay crazy a long time. They buy the fish for Nelson Brothers the camp and you go there, your fish packer, you go there, they put it on the scale, you buy their fish to go in the hatch and your fish packer from Nelson Brothers you pack the fish out to Nelson Brothers camp. You buy that fish. You don't just take it and they want even money. Kind of crazy to me. When Nelson Brothers already bought it. That is what I'm referring to. The camp don't want to lost the quarter pound and I don't want to lost a quarter pound. I guess I was a good robber or something I guess. I know I never lose a quarter pound, I never lose a pound. I gained.

DP: How did you do that?

GC: Well I guess when they're scaling you know, roughly what I estimated I used to get thirty-two pounds extra a load and that's a scad of money for me. I get the money, the company don't get it cause it's what them bookers really, it's right to the office and when I get thirty pounds or best one I get a week was sixty-two pounds but a quarter pound here and there. No a pound and a half each camp. Ask me how I do it, I said I never take it down to you. All I did was take that slip out

from the office to workman. Do the same in Vancouver take the slip to the office.

I never touch it. It's all in. Then they say well here's your money.

DP: They didn't figure it out.

GC: I can't help it. It was mine. That is what the agreement is for.

DP: How large was the Nelson Brothers fishing fleet?

GC: Oh, the whole island. All Vancouver Island. All Nelson Brothers. Camp here and camp there, all over the island. East coast and west coast. Well you used to travel one week to finish the island and go back to Vancouver. Some places I could load up in one day when it's a good fishing day and I got to take that trip to Vancouver. I don't go any further, cause I am loaded and I seen the fellers, my friends, a skipper get overloaded, deck loaded, which is not worth it. All these boats can take what they can take. If they overload it that's too much, not only for the boat but for the engine because more weight. I seen a feller in Nootka Sound got a deck load of fish not protected, not protected. Not worth it. You can't make a six hour trip to Vancouver in that distance.

DP: With fish on the deck?

GC: Fish on the deck. I asked him why he do that. Percentage war. Yes, I said yes, I never said no because that's what it is is no. If the weather is pretty bad on the coast there is no fish on the deck. All washed overboard. So they done it a long time. No more deck load when they land. No fish.

DP: How many boats worked for Nelson Brothers?

GC: Oh, they had all kinds. I think there were seventeen fish packers.

DP: Were they the largest company?

GC: Well, Nelson Brothers a big, well, they had a whole island anyway. Not like Canadian Fish Company. They had fish by a year, fish by a year in spots. But Nelson Brothers were all over the bay, any bay you see in the island. Their anchorage is there. They used to ask me what's the best anchorage on the island so I take short trips around the island with me to find the good shelter what I could put the camp in so I had to do my best for that work to tell them the truth. No lie. So I think it's why Nelson Brothers like me very much. I could take them all points the best way I can, not to say that I help them a lot, but I guess I was thinking about where the Indians fishes most and they never lose out anything. It is always the company, they never lose the camps because they are in good shelters bought all over the island. And, of yes, '42, 1942, when they said to me I was too old to be skipper I said all right that's fine Archie. That's Archie Nelson. So I said I'm not glued on this boat, I'm not nailed on this boat so I'll just get off. Oh, oh, no, no not today. Well if I'm not old anytime you say the word you never get me on them anymore. So I quit. He says no, no, no, you got lots of time yet. He should have think of that before he said a word. I said to him, instead of taking a longest looking like that. Right away a man gets scared, a dog gets scared, horses get scared by the whip, that's why the horses trots when you get that weapon in your hands the cows see it or horses see it and they trot because they don't like it. It sting. It just like me. I knew I would get the word. Old, I know I'm getting older every day so I quit. I quit them, well I done my duty on seventeen years with them. I called them my brothers and they called me their brother. They used to take me to their houses in Vancouver. When I am in Vancouver for a

week they call me over to their house. Just like my brothers. They are a big family you know.

DP: In those days you were working for them how large was your boat? What size was your fish packer?

GC: The fish packer was 95 the biggest packer. That is an engine with it and they had buoys they called on it 122 feet.

DP: How many crew?

GC: There is a second mate, engineer and a cook and a deck hand. And then see, six.

DP: How many of your crew were Indians? Or were they all white men?

GC: All white men.

DP: Is that right. How many Indians ...

GC: I didn't care nothing but let's put it this way. If I knew the island they particular white man aboard the ship so I can learn the shelters, the harbours. That's what, I think I was a teacher.

DP: I see.

GC: They never put no Indian aboard my ship, mostly white fellers, Englishmens.

DP: Were they young?

GC: I think the oldest man I had was a Norwegian, he was a cook. He must have been in that year 45, 50 years old. Most of us were I would say comical I guess, good brothers. Young fellers, pretty nearly all the same age. But most of the time he tried to force me to change engineers, I wouldn't. I wouldn't trust the other engineer with my life. He put a poor engineer on the boat it just like you put old shoes on your foot. You goin' catch cold. So that engine room get wrecked

someplace so it best to have your engineer and your cook in one piece.

DP: So you had a good boat and good food.

GC: Yea. You have good cook that is the main thing. You know your cook you all right.

DP: So your cook was a good one most of your career.

GC: Yes. Everyone liked that Norwegian Jack. He was comical you know, never get lonesome. His family was on Queensbury. He used to take me home sometimes and one brother I had was an Irishman, the engineer John. The Irishman looked like, I would say, just like an Indian. It looked just like it. You can't tell the difference. Whether you home or not you it makes you feel like home. Oh, they eat fish, smoked fish, Indian dried fish. Any style, they knew how to cook it. One time, at home, I'm going to poison you, I said to him, "all right". We get along together nicely, the whole family, even his sisters. He had three sisters and two brothers. Just his older brother didn't seem to like me, his oldest. And I didn't know why. The whole family was good, just one. Looked like you feel funny when he's go behind, because you know just how he feels and you have these feelings inside of you.

DP: How did he try and poison you?

GC: Huh?

DP: You said he was going to poison you, what did he do?

GC: Oh Yea. He make this, what do you call them, made the bread with dough with a piece of bacon in it and put it in the boiling water. He didn't know that Indians do it too. Indians would sometimes smash up the fish you know and put it in that and

boil it. All you do is boil it, it tastes good.

DP: You said the Norwegian cook never got lonesome. Did anyone else in your crew get lonely? Did you?

GC: Well, that Norwegian, that is the surprising part of it, along the coast the whole island, you would see Norwegian. They knew each other and they call themselves my brother. They are not their brother, no. You never see Norwegian get goofy or anything like that. To drink they drink mixed tea. Honeybuck when they drink it. And that Englishman I had was a mate of mine, gets goofy.

DP: He is the one who used to report on you, is that right?

GC: Yes. He gets goofy. He wants to go home. Or he wants to go into port and he gets really goofy, 'cause he is drunk. Showing off I call it, showing off. Go into port for him for his purpose he never go off the boat. He's scared, he wants you to go with him. Yes. So I don't understand him.

DP: Any of your other crew like that?

GC: No, no. That Irishman had pretty good. Take you for brothers.

DP: So you didn't feel isolated?

GC: No, no, no, you never get, my wife was on Clo-oose. My home town was Vancouver. Every port every week, I can't go home 'cause it \$250 if I go home on the plane. One way I am talking about and while I come back again it's another \$250, say \$500 right then, waste. You never made it.

DP: So how often did you get to see your wife?

GC: Ten months a year.

DP: You didn't see her.

GC: Didn't see her.

DP: So you had holidays two months?

GC: Two months holidays. But that is not holiday. When I go home I cut wood.

DP: Different kind of holiday.

GC: It played the shits out of you. Tired. My house was enclosed and on a hill. Load a box up there, boy oh boy, if you pack a small piece at a time well it take you a long time. For that much you couldn't do it, roll the block up. Cut lots of wood up there in a short time. And you don't pick the log on the beach you cut from the inlet. Certain sized logs, what you can cut up there in two months you all right. If you don't do that then well, you have to buy wood.

DP: When you were fishing what did you do for entertainment on the boat? Did you have time to entertain yourselves, cards or anything like this , with the other crew members?

GC: Well, on the back the whole crew goes in the galley and plays cards just for fun, just to kill the time. If you go, when you get your chance or it's rough weather you anchor it out somewhere, some bay, you got the chance for that card game to keep alive 'cause the radio, yes you got the radio all right, but don't satisfy you. Cards which you do. You hear the news all right and well, I'm going to put it in my English, you don't give a shit what's going on in the world there. That is the way you feel you know and you don't know what to do. Might as well take what you have got coming right there.

DP: Did you ever have good quarters on your boat?

GC: Oh yea, real good. The engineer had his own radio to listen in. I had mine own

radio so I can tune in what I want and they can't do the same thing and they have different quarters in the bow with the engineer.

DP: Comfortable were they?

GC: Very comfortable. Really, really home 'cause, well, the Irishman used to say, he used to say, "it's two times better than the home". 'Cause you are in the right company, never get that deal in their home. Go home you do this, do that, you do this, never get the chance.

DP: They never had a chance to do what they wanted then?

GC: Yes, you never get the chance to do what you want to do, that's why he used to say it's better than the home here in the boat because you never stop in one place, well, unless it's rough weather you stay in one place one day. You travel here and there, got different country to see. You meet, well the whole island you'd say you make a good friend that you never know before wherever you go. That's fishermen's life. It's got to be good friend to get what they want, what they ordered that week.

DP: Did you have a lot of fishing regulations to follow in those days?

GC: Hum, it's um, it's the stores had the biggest problem. What the fisherman want they got to order that and you have that job when you get to town. That's why you never out of job in town. You go here and there. If you don't get it try to make it to the next store. So sometimes you lucky you buy this in one place he's got it. He's got the whole stock and you got nothing else to do next day. You in town.

DP: When you were an engineer you were on a seiner.

GC: Yep.

DP: And when you went out fishing was there government regulations that said that your boat could only be so many miles from the next boat and these kinds of regulations? Or how much fish you could catch?

GC: No there is no regulations like it is today. Got just to get enough fish.

DP: You could catch any fish and as much as you wanted.

GC: Any amount, any amount.

DP: So was it quite dangerous in those days?

GC: Pardon me?

DP: Fishing was dangerous in those days?

GC: Yep. We were fishing pilchards beginning part of it and when the pilchards are finished we fish dog salmon, coho. When the dog salmon and the coho finished we'd go out for seining herrings so we had nothing stoppage. I was lucky enough to get my two months every ten months to get home.

DP: What dangers were involved in fishing?

GC: The weather. Mostly weather or if you got a rough skipper the limits dangers. You got to say no no matter how much you think it's a good chance to get in there you got to say no. If you don't understand him, if your skipper don't understand you in the proposition when you say no get out of the way. Go to your bunk or do something.

DP: There was no union in those days to watch out for the fishermen.

GC: Well, where all unions, member of the local 44 each man on the seine boats or the packers all belong to the member of the union. If you are not a member they chase you off as long as you are in port.

DP: Any strikes in those days?

GC: Oh yes, real heavy. Nothing today in comparison with. If you not a member of the union soon as you port you got a boss there. You got to join the union or get off. All you got to do is get that man in the galley and then you talk to him understandable, say yes well, ask him what would \$20.

DP: Were relations good between the management of the fish company and the unions?

GC: Yes, yes.

DP: No trouble, no strikes?

GC: No, no trouble. All we started that union business. The reason why we started, me and the Stevens, what you call that, Stevens union member and I. He was a bookkeeper. When we started. The whole trouble was there was too many unions. Then a member of the union and didn't care whether he sold his fish or not. And this was the trouble I see when I was in for a while. When they don't sell their fish they give it to the village to smoke the salmon and some of them just takes the fish in the beach and the crows get at it or the seagulls, eagles. None goes to the Indians. I seen a lot of places like that 'cause I used to travel here and there around the island but it doesn't good. Just good enough to get it free what didn't do the right thing. They wanted the fish. When they could give it to somebody else, pick one, pick ten or twenty or one hundred. They do better that way, instead of just letting it go.

DP: Was the skipper of the fish packer under a lot of pressure, more than the other crew?

GC: No, no. Well, the skipper feels funny to somebody else like you and me or somebody else don't like him and say out. Don't like that man or else the engineer don't like that man, say out in the galley when you all eating and then there will be no heat in another. It will be all feel home, safely. Nobody else lost a pin or socks on the boat 'cause they were told that way. Don't touch somebody else's property, keep away from trouble. Looking for someone else's property asking for trouble, not only that you ask for this (fist). Maybe just one person maybe the other feller feel the same way you get two persons then on your face, so it's no use. My toothpick in the cabin you welcome to it.

DP: How did you navigate when you were fishing?

GC: Well, when I was young feller my dad had sailing boat, one of those calinbear boats, flat bottoms, we used to go around the island, go to Horseshoe Bay, Nanaimo, to Vancouver, all over. Sechelt Islands.

DP: Did you use compass?

GC: We had a compass, yeh. That's why we knew the road pretty good before I had because he used to tell me, my Dad used to tell me what port to take for that point. I tried to remember it and sometimes they used to don't care for it that Daddy's talking about. Believe me boy never care for it and I knew that by gosh I need that. I can't get it 'cause it's dead. It's too late to find out, it was too late to find out and I'm sorry to say I don't care. What I needed when I was too old what I should have, what I should know and I never used to care for it. Well, I'm laying the point right where it maybe I'll never need it but these days we need it, very much. I wouldn't say we are satisfied today disappeared we need more net

because we need our protection. Let me say it the right word I guess you need the bread more than anything else no matter how much you think you got the bread in your house you need some more, every day. So that is why the old people say be careful what you doing, be careful where you going and that means a million words, not only one thing you got to be careful, got to watch where you're going, gotta watch who you are talking to, never can tell boy, never can tell. It's smore important to that poor person what is the way, what he's got on his mind. It's something you don't know 'cause we people in this world they can't read a person's mind, and don't care how rich you are, how poor you are it's just the same, you can't read a person's mind. No matter if the mens healthy, no matter how fat he is, no matter how skinny he is, can't read that person's mind. No matter if he is rich, can't buy it.

DP: Altogether did you enjoy your career fishing? You liked it?

GC: Yep. No I used to love that fishing.

DP: You never wanted to do something else?

GC: When I work on something else I set my heart into it and do it. I don't do it like people does, I can do this I can do that. Yes, it is true, we can do it but how long. Maybe short time, maybe just that time and you got it.

The Retirement Years

DP: What have you been doing since you retired from fishing?

GC: Well, when I retired from fishing I been trying to get my kids educated. That's why I moved to Victoria area. When my boys grow old I need to have education for my boys so they went through school, most of them older boys I got didn't go

through. They give the thing up and want to make money. They never finished whatever they do. They quit again. Only one boy, my youngest son [Henry Joseph Chipps] went through into carpenter's work. He is still working it and my son and I talking about how he will never make it. That's what I used to say you never make it. If the brothers didn't make it what they doing then the youngest can't do that. That was on my mind. I even said it. Said you will never make it and the young fellow, skinny fellow, my God he made it. He been doing it for two years now, got out with the certificate, carpenter and he is all right. He is still working at it.



**Figure 48 Gillette's 'Curtain'. Image PN16831 courtesy of Royal British Columbia
Museum**

DP: Do any of your children speak Nitinaht? Did they learn their language?

GC: No I don't think the Nitinaht language is used at all on count of English. All I see nothing but the kids in Nitinaht Lake now today never speak their own language. English mostly.

Stories: The fur trading years

DP: Are there still the old stories in Nitinaht the people tell?

GC: Yes.

DP: The old generation tell them to the young ones? Do you remember any stories of the first white man coming to Vancouver Island?

GC: Yeh.

DP: Could you tell me some of those?

GC: I am going to tell you about the first white man appeared in Nootka Sound, first white man I saw. These Indians were dancing around the Island, they call it an Island, seen a red face white man they said they had entered a cove. Pale face white man said it was the dog salmon and oh that's a spring salmon, I think they said it was a Spanish, dark colour. White man and their schooner. They said there's an island because big trees on it. Big trees on it, they say Indian doctors goes out there singing a song, find out, try to find out what it is. Rattling their rattles around the canoe, go around, all see a lot of white mans standing aside, goes on the other side sees all kinds of white man too. All different kind of faces. Maybe it was the same men on the other side when they go around the other side the same person but different places. That is what I think myself. So anyway they seen lots of cohos aboard that boat. Red faced men, big nose and so they said it

was a coho. That was the first white man appeared in Nootka Sound in the schooner.

DP: They were Spanish you said?

GC: Some of them were Spanish, yes.

DP: Was that Captain Cook's crew?

GC: Yes. They dance around, dance around, and invite them people in so Captain Cook and his engineer and his cook and some, I think it was two sailors with them, go ashore 'cause the Chief, Chief Maquinna, called him in. All of those days there was nothing but Chinook as we call it now and big English boy. They call them in. Captain Cook said all right so they go in there, in the big house, Maquinna's house, big smoke house. It was a big one. A lot of people go in there and they start dancing and eating. It's where they learn that their pilot bread. It's a bisquit, they call it pilot bread. First time they seen it. They didn't know what the heck to do with it. Some people used it to pack in their bag for a good luck charm, it has lots of holes on it. And they figured that was a bad luck piece of word comes to you, goes through that hole so they have it, never eat it and that is the first time they have find out this biscuit was eatable. When Captain Cook brought some ashore to the people to show them that you can chew them and some Indians said "Ah, they must be poison on it, don't eat it, don't eat it!" And a lot of people never ate it, believe that man, just like what you see down the bible. One bad man that doesn't agree whatever you say, so a lot of people say the bisquit because they scared going to be poisoned. Then they started dancing in the smoke house, a lot of people all went work throughout the day towards the morning and

mate Tom going to sleep, half awake of the dancing in the smoke house, went to sleep. Don't know what to do with it, can't get the man out 'cause Captain Cook says wait, wait, it's not finished yet. He was right, he wasn't called wrong in a short time. Got to wait until he is finished. So dance all night towards the morning again they finished, the band finished because they are lots of bands and in the Nootka you know. From all parts of the inlet all chiefs got to finish singing.

DP: Captain Cook sat all through this?

GC: Yes. Anyway, I guess they had a good time. Captain Cook sort of wake Captain, I think he was, no he was not a mate, he was a blacksmith, Captain Tom. Yes, he was a blacksmith, on the schooner. That's what he said. It cost them all night and most of them people on the schooner saying that must go see towards the morning, you know, what is going on. Well, the mate whoever it was, said it's no use, don't come out when you are finished. And most of them said, I guess he is dead, kill him. Because they seen the warriors coming on the schooner with their rattlers. Yes they seen the coho and dog salmon and dogfish. The oldtimers thinking when they saw this face what he was. We didn't say it was a human. They all didn't know what it was, the schooner. All they know it an island, island drifting 'cause they seen the trees, three sticks, no knots on it at all.

DP: Were they scared?

GC: No, no, they were not scared. All the warriors in the village were ready, half-way canoe down getting ready all the time, the warriors.

DP: They knew it was coming for quite a while? The schooner?

GC: They seen it, they seen it towards the morning, coming in. This island coming in

slow. They seen it, they were getting ready in the beach. Because the warriors never wait, never wait.

DP: Otherwise too late.

GC: All they wait for is for the Chief to say go, then go.

DP: Last week, you mentioned that you knew a story about Captain Cook joining with the Hudson's Bay.

GC: Yes, yes, yes.

DP: Can you give me some detail?

GC: Yes, Captain Cook when he appeared at, in the coast he bought some skins off the Indians, regardless what kind it is, and maybe it land otter or deer, as long as it is a skin. Minks and all that. First sail, there sail, all over the coast, travel all over the coast. Stop here stop there, but the Indians wanted the gun most of all. Didn't care for money 'cause money was no good to them, and what they knew was the gun would feed them all the time 'cause it will kill something. Some animals, some deer or bear or anything like that. That was in their head but the money wouldn't do that so didn't take the money. They take the gun or axe, anything, a knife, anything that's sharp and the Indians were all for the gun all right and they had to stack up (furs) floor to the top of the gun before they get the gun. If they don't reach the top of the gun they don't get the gun.

DP: Stack up with furs?

GC: Yes. On the floor to the top of the gun, they don't get it and if they haven't got much fur well they get, they get the axe or knife 'cause they can reach it any time at night. And I think it was lots of furs before around Vancouver Island, all kinds.

Indians were making the deadfall traps for minks or coon. They get them all the time. They get it at night or they get it in the daytime soon as they finish their trap I think it was quite a few animals then. Soon as the deadfall trap would go, well, the mink or coon would be in there. Before they go a little ways on account of they beat their head and on the wall soon as they jig that bait they trap is down. There was nothing to it for them and what they had to fall was all kinds of rocks on top of the deadfall trap. What a weight so don't waste a minute, it just collapse. Only the land otter take a long time to skin but the rest of the animals were easy, like mink and coon don't take any more than two minutes to get them off, the hide. All you got to do is cut the right angle to the butt, the end of the animal and then just pull it. Before when you do that everything is done right because you stretch the fur with it as you pull the skin off. You stretch everything. They mink got larger size than it was because this man pull it. You step on the feet and pull it up. I seen my uncle and my Dad do it. Didn't take them any more than two minutes it was done, and all he had was the skin instead of the meat to pack. Don't know what they were doing, but they were doing right all the way through.

DP: And those furs they traded to Captain Cook?

GC: Hum hum. All a lot of times they tried to give them money but they didn't agree. Until my father's race, well, it changed from the old-fashioned way. They care for the money then. But in the early days, no, they didn't want the money 'cause they don't know what it is. That was the whole thing. They didn't know what money was for because they didn't buy the seafood they just wait for low water to get them. So they thought that money would be no use at all. And Captain Cook buys

the skin off the Indians whether it is land otter, or, what do you call those things in the water,...

DP: Fur seal?

GC: Fur seal. It was give them \$5.00 a skin, that's all and I think that is why the Hudson's Bay Company got rich pretty quick. Yea. And this sea otter, they give them a little amount of money too. What do you care about the sea otter costs lots of money for skin and the Indians used to get very little but sometimes changes of flour or anything important, beans stuff, you know. We Indians think this was really bought what we got, really paid for it. Just one reason why they were doing it they didn't know where to go spend the money if they get the money. There was nothing in the village, no stores, no stores. So I think it, the money, that it looks useless altogether.

DP: Was there much trading when Captain Cook first met the Indians?

GC: There was no trading at all in the fall that Captain Cook arrived. Because the Indians didn't know what it was for and on the other hand didn't have the gun, didn't have the axe, nothing at all. Captain Cook brought the knife on account of blacksmith Tom on the ship made the knife and show them what it is for and show them how to sharpen it so Indian took that very much. So years going by Captain Cook went away and he brought in Hudson's Bay Company with him and then they make a good deal out of that 'cause they get, Hudson's Bay Company gives them blankets, green ones and white ones and red ones. Real thick so they start getting furs for the Hudson's Bay Company, made good deal out of it. People understand the money little bit then, they can use it but elsewhere. And before

that, when Captain Cook arrived, the money was all useless, all the Indian didn't want trade for it. Absolutely whether it was silver or paper they didn't know what it was. Not like you need today anyways. So they went around east coast and west coast when the Hudson's Bay was with them. On Sound all over the coast there just buying some furs. I think Captain Cook arrived Vancouver Island with three masts and the Indian called that Big Island with the trees on it. Old Dan brought the warriors out when they first time seen this and witch doctor never seen whatever you have in the village, that's sing a song find out what it is 'cause they don't know what it is.

DP: You said they brought out the wires?

GC: Warriors.

DP: Excuse me.

GC: Because they don't know what it is, they are scared and might as well be prepared for the action they will get into it. And they gave them the hardtack, well they eat it and didn't know what it was for and some of them of I think it was a lot's of different nationalities on that ship, whether it was Spanish or didn't know what to say about how to do the bisquit. Some of them keep it for medicine and they make a good luck charm and that much they didn't know what the hardtack was for. They tried to teach them to chew and it was too hard for them. Couldn't make it, some people crack it in the floor and step on it and then get the little piece and put it in their mouth. They find out it melts in the mouth and they understand after that it is eatable. And all the time the warriors having it on their neck to find out later that it was food. I think they have a lot of good times otherwise when you

don't understand anything at all, they have great fun with it. They don't know what to do, don't know what to say.

DP: Did you hear any stories concerning what the Indians thought of Captain Cook after he left the first time?

GC: Well, they didn't know what Captain Cook was, altogether. I think he was a red nose a little bit or something in the nose so they thought he was a coho. Yes. Know when they hook-nose gets red at the time in the rivers put the hook onto it.

DP: So you think he had a hook nose?

GC: Yes.

DP: Red.

GC: Red. So that's what they thought. Well, all that nationality, whether it was Spanish or Frenchmen, the French didn't compare one another so they didn't know what they were. Some were coho, dog salmon, even the witch doctors were singing the best songs around the ship, didn't know what to find, didn't find anything at all. So when the warriors came ashore and asked them what they find and ask more cohos, a lot of people in, start singing songs, can't find nothing in it. Around the house sing all the songs, go around the big smoke house no find anything. Still don't know what it is. It is an island drifting around that is what they call the schooner. Island drifting around. Apparently Chief Maquinna I think it is Chief Maquinna's grandfather was invited aboard the ship and he go in, down the hall looking at it. Big house. No to the forward didn't know what to make of it in the forward. As you go forward getting narrower and narrower and narrower what really high. So he didn't know what it was, couldn't make it out when he

was aboard the ship and when he come in, when he come in he told the people he don't know what it is. The big house in there all different kinds. So they gave him, so they gave him rice and pilot bread to take home.

DP: Captain Cook's men?

GC: Yes. So he invite the peoples to have peace with them. They cook the rice, some pots get burned didn't know how long to keep it on the open fire. Some come off real good. I tried to find out the rice was really good food so people tried just steam boil it you know like potatoes.

DP: Um, yes.

GC: Come out good, not just dump it in the boiling water, just steam it. And they find out real good then. You can boil it, you can steam them, which is good to boil potatoes. They old Indian times didn't know what the potatoes are. They call it, with the skins on, bread and when they bake it they find out it was just like bread so they call them bread. It gets soft, it gets soft as it is cooked. Bake them in the sand, open fire pit, put the hot sand out and put the potatoes in it, real good, baked that way, the open fire.

DP: You are making me hungry.

GC: And one ship came to Nootka Sound before Captain Cook came back. Maybe it was flour and they didn't know what the flour was for. Wash ashore, the whole ship wash ashore outside the Nootka.

DP: Washed ashore?

GC: I think it was a stormy day. I think so. So the Indians from the board the ship and this crew was scared the Indians hide them, hide in the bush. They each man

come out the ship brought a sack of flour on deck, he opened it and dump it on the beach. Didn't know what flour was for. Nobody knew it. And the ship was real high and listing over, yet that flour was just sticking to the deck to the beach.

That's how much, what they do the Indians, some of them do it right there. Cut the corners off the flour and put it arms through it to get a shirt.

DP: They weren't interested in the flour?

GC: Not want the flour, get a shirt anyway. No I guess that much we didn't understand at all long ago.

DP: So that ship was just after Captain Cook had left the first time?

GC: Yea. And some Spanish schooner came ashore with the flour. Different ship altogether. I think it thought that we cannot carry through, seems like we forgotten a lot of things what we were told. And in the olden days how we lived was I guess very poor. Nobody know it, the crabs was food so the fellow find out the crabs was real good mixed water and the people outside tried to listen what that cracking sound was for and some people look through the knot hole and said they eating this funny looking animal.

DP: Who was saying that?

GC: People look through the knot.

DP: The Indians from...

GC: The Indians, yes.

DP: Looking through the knot hole?

GC: At Nitinaht, yea.

DP: Looking out to Captain Cook's

GC: We had the people eating the crabs.

DP: Who were the people eating the crabs?

GC: Were Nitinahts.

DP: Nitinahts. Different group of Indians.

[I believe that Dad is speaking of the story world in which people and animals are not the same as today and I think this is why the interviewer is becoming confused.]

Transformer Stories

GC: Different altogether. And what they, and what they used to do is people find the crabs as food. Used to wrap around little bandage on it so it don't crack some. Keep the cracking sound out. More meat get the whole arms off then. Don't want anybody else find out it's food. That was the case they doing. They were hiding it 'cause all kinds of crabs on the rocks under the water. Don't need no spear, all you got to do is pick them up with the paddle. Of course the crabs grab it when it moves by something else. They want to find out too what they moved them. That's how they find out the crabs are food. Although it's in a story about the crabs. It's um, the crabs supposed to be youngster deer, youngster. The older brother it's our deer.

DP: Oh, I see. So the crab is related to the deer?

GC: Youngster deer. That is why you see the crabs got that mowich ['muw'ach or buw'ach' deer] fur on the chest.

DP: Ah, I see.

GC: You see a deer picture, if you look at the backs, if you look at them cross-eyed, you look at them you see a deer laying down like that. Whole body, whole picture

of a deer. Don't imagine things. The eyes, little bump, nose, horn, it's there on the crabs. Just telling the story. You try it and see it. Don't make it out rub top back a little more clean and then you will see the eyes and the nose, you'll see the legs, everything is there.

DP: How did the deer become a crab?

GC: Oh, when this world, yes when this world was coming to normal, like it is now, when, when the, how would you say it? When God got this world to pretty well fixed the way it should be two humans live onto it and they get his food right. There was this person appeared was making an animal, rock, and deer and all the wild cougars and they ask this person what you want to be. Well the oldest deer warned his brother of the deer said I want to be deer so the Indians would call me Buwach. And took the mussel shell on the horns, yes, go now run the bush. So that's how the deer is and the younger brother said I will be the crab so the Indians will call me Hasaabts. So he put his hand out because this fellow is telling him to put his hands out, that is why you see all that figures on the crab. All around them in the early. He was the laziest person when he was one of these very youngster deer, laying down all the time, never move no matter the father and mother says. That is why I guess you often see a person lazy in certain age 'cause at the beginning part of the teens they are changing into human and all kinds of animals, into that. They answer don't know where the white people come from, we don't know where the Indians came from. So much as I hate to say it we don't know who we are. That's the size of it in this world. 'Cause everything is made through the God's spiritual I guess you would say it. Right, you don't know who

that person was changing this man to be that animal and fish and so on. You don't know him, nobody knew him. Where he came from – where he was, yet he make that person what he want to be. In no time just slap on his back and all finished. As they are now. And I think all the time the deer was hawks, nobody had the fire and the fire we have now. So they put these under cedar bark that's the deal honestly, in his arms

DP: The deer did?

GC: Deer yea. 'Cause that man don't want anybody else getting near to his fire. So he started dancing around hoping will touch that fire when he turns around. So went all over dancing around and he touch that fire all right on his knee. That's why you smell that burning smell on his knee, the deers.

DP: Oh, I see.

GC: They never get away with it. You can smell them, it's burnt. He stole that fire from that man and bring it to that person and they start the fire then. That's why the Indians used to twist a little stick on there to get them burning. Because the deer brought that little, little bit burning, what they had on their knee on the cedar bark twisted together. Wasn't burning, just a little flint on it and she sees sparking and burning anyway. That's why the Indians got that fire going, why the stick just heat the end of twisting it together. Well, the deer was the foxiest I think in putting the dancing clothes on and get that fire. They did, they done it. That's how we got the fire now. I think that's where the match came from too. 'Cause somebody got smart, know how to do it, what to do when the fire was around.

The War Years



Figure 49 L. Mabel Jones (nee Modeste), Clara Charlie (nee Modeste), Susan Knighton (nee Modeste), Sarah Modeste and Elwood Modeste. Image PN17720 courtesy of Royal British Columbia Museum

DP: You once told me ... last week you were telling me about the war when you went into the army. Can you tell me of your experiences or stories, how did you get into the war?

GC: Yes, I guess I can try it.

DP: Was that the first war?

GC: World War I yes, 1918. World War I started in 1917 for sure, getting heavier and they were taking all the young fellows all over. Some of them were trained, some of them were just take and sent out. A lot of people have done that, that World War I and in here, in Victoria I was working in the C.P.R. wharf that time. They

used to laugh at them, people walking the street and the Army guys were there, with a gun on their shoulder. Big sharp knife at the end of the gun and take that down on the back of the man we didn't know what they were doing, we know they going to kill that man and they give him in the bushes. They were about fifty of them, fifty army guys marching along. My uncle used to make us laugh like what they used to say, I don't know what they used to say, in the army when I was in for. My uncle grab his gun, turn around, Alla Um, See Um, all that sound the army make it when they, when they on patrol. That is what they would say, that's the way my Uncle put it out. Alla Um, See Um, that was close enough I guess. He used to start laughing at them like that time he had seen people conscripted in town right here in Victoria. Some people cry, don't know what they are crying for.

DP: Were they forced to join?

GC: Oh, yes with a gun in their back they had to be forced, they had to go. You cruel on 1918 from. I used to work in C.P.R. wharf when they come back you couldn't see a man on the street. You be lucky to see one C.P.R. Wharf Johnson Street you get to see woman, one woman on the road. That much of Victoria cleaned, no fooling. I got my training 'cause out of 10,000 people with them in London there was scuttled there and I came home.

DP: Did you, were you forced to join or did you join on your own?

GC: No, no. Were conscripted, all the Indians, all the Indians. The biggest mistake point of the government when you come back you're Indian, they know where you born to and they take you back. You lost out your pension right there. It's

different now, sure yes, they get the pension now. But when you go back to the reservation, what I am talking about, years I am talking about, you get nothing, you're Indian again. They knew you were Indian at the beginning part of it, yet they took it.

DP: Did you get overseas?

GC: As far as London.

DP: As far as London.

GC: I got pneumonia there t'was all. That's why that ship with the 10,000 people aboard scuttled. Nobody alive, no one. Caught the ship just as it pulled out.

DP: From where?

GC: I think, I think, I think myself, I don't think it was scuttled by a torpedo, I think somebody planted it on the ship. When it moved well, bound to do something like that.

DP: It was leaving England was it?

GC: Hum um. Aah it's a good place boy. Never forget that. Well, anyway, long as you got the combats clothes everybody is your friend. They know you, they know who you are when you get your suit on. You know where you are going and most of them speak out though, one word. He's not coming back. Yea, what's the use say no because you don't know where you going, you don't know how far you going. Nobody knows. That's the craziest part of the Army, you don't know where you are going except the Sergeant or the Captain, that's all. You don't know what you are doing, yet you are in the army. You don't know where you are going but you know you are going to get your dinner.

DP: That is all you know.

GC: Yea. And some other things. But hard to say about sleep you know, you might get into the canteen yes, you go to sleep. It is in your mind but when you get in there you don't know what is going on down there. When you go to sleep that's another step you got to watch, watch out the light. The best never mind the others, go to sleep, go to sleep, no matter how much it bother you. As long as you don't answer them it's all right and if you do answer them you open the door what they want and they get more what they want because they will find you crazy too. That's what they after. There is something to argue about, talk about, they will never quit. I'm telling you you get the habit of it and they let you go in your own time, they let you go when you know how to say, how to do these.

DP: Where did you have your training?

GC: Right here in Esquimalt canteen. We used to laugh at them boys, Indian boys, we walked from the canteen house one to the harbour to East Saanich and come back and a lot of our, well, let me put it this way, the right word, what I am trying to say, your uncle is right there and he fall out long ago, before we go through five miles he stopped, got tired and crazy, I call those crazy buggers wouldn't tell you nothing. They are shipped back on the truck but you have to walk back yourself. That's what we were mad about, us young fellows. Why they don't tell us.

DP: Then you wouldn't want to walk.

GC: And boy we start off without breakfast, you hungry and tired yet all they say is go in the shower, that's all. Go through the shower you come back get your clothes on again and you're waiting for your lunch, coffee or something like that. And

then the bell rings you have to run for it 'cause you will never find a place to sit down. And all that men. No I find out that time how people feels and the other person looks like he'd say "to hell with them". You're all alone in whatever you do. No matter if you done a good thing you are still all alone. Because that is how we feel one another whether it's Indian or white men or no Indian. Do the same thing, the heck with the other one. Mind his own business. But what business is he in, he doesn't care for you.

DP: How long was your training period?

GC: Well, those days I am talking about it wasn't amount of anything in the training. As long as you are in there, as long as you are conscripted they ship you out.

DP: They didn't show you how to use a gun or....

GC: They show us in the canteen that's all. How to training, how to clean the gun, how to fire the gun, all that, but when you finished it that day you have to clean it, oil it. Got to. If you lift the nozzle up and put it back in again you have to pull it out altogether and oil it. If you don't do it the Sergeant will get after you. They don't do it easy, they grab the gun and throw the gun, no matter whether they are two feet away from them or ten feet away from them it doesn't make any difference. Long as you do it, you do it too, you don't be careful that fist coming, if you don't dodge it you get it in your face. Got to dodge, got to watch your step. On the other hand I figures whether you are an Indian or Englishman or Scotchman it didn't make any difference, as long as he is the boss he is way up top. Got to be men behind him.

DP: Right.

GC: He don't give a damn to you. Whether you got a good shoes or good clothes or poor clothes. No.



Figure 50 Gillette Chipps with grandson

DP: Were you treated differently than the white men in the army?

GC: No, no. Everybody was equal. Tough life, tough life, try to climb that up top, I don't know if they will make it.

DP: It was a big wall.

GC: That is all, that's what they do. Long as you it with your little fingers you are all right. But you have to have a good grip, that's the main thing in their life. As long as you have a good grip, something you can grab you grab it. You don't want to fall back on the floor again and the Sergeant was right there, "Get up and go" and

you see if you don't move he'll kick you. You got to get away damn quick. I think it is what they told before to take over the job and do it and they do it. No mistake boy, all that trouble coming.

End of transcript.

Please see Appendix C for a copy of the letter from the Provincial Archives giving me permission to use this transcript and selected photographs.

Unfortunately, much has been left out of Dad's history due to the interviewer's interest in the early fishing and war years. It is wonderful to listen to Dad's voice on the tape – brings out the happy/sad tears – and I see him, sitting there, talking. I see him laugh and chuckle and I love it when he totally throws off the interviewer. I know that inside, he was laughing at the interviewer's confusion; not an evil laugh, but more a chuckle. The written interview loses all the nuances of Dad, but I have left his words unchanged to get as close to Dad's way of speaking.

I remember so many things about Dad! I can't even begin to write about them all! They are all fond. I remember when Dad's son, Stanley, gave me a beautiful eagle feather and I hung it up in my car ever so proudly! Shortly thereafter, the same day, Dad needed to go to the store, so I drove him. All the way to the store, Dad eyed that eagle feather swaying in the window. All the way home, Dad eyed that eagle feather. I just knew I'd lose that feather and, sure enough, when we got home, Dad reached out and said, "I like this feather!" I was taught that when someone admires something you have, and touches it, it belongs to them. I remember a beautiful hair barrette I made for Mom out of leather and beads, and how she proudly wore it to a gathering. When she came home without it, I asked her where it was and she grumped, "(no name) liked it!" and she had to give it

away. It doesn't happen as often as one would expect, and in certain circumstances one can refuse, but it is what I was taught.

I also remember Dad calling out to all the kids to come and sit down, he was going to tell a story, and everyone would scramble in and sit all over the floor by his feet. I remember the quiet as Dad spoke, even though I don't think any of the children understood all of it, but I can still see the living room with Dad's easy chair near the front door, the old stove made from an oil drum to his right; Mom standing in the wide opening to the kitchen in that old plywood house Mom and Dad had. There was a big rosebush outside the door with big, bright red roses. The rosebush is still there, but the house is gone now.

Combining all the Information from all the Resources to create a Family Tree

From the census, a man named Cukamayk [quqamay'k], who was born around 1810, had three sons. The oldest son, Setatuqwa' born in 1825 married Wolwi'ut, born in 1831, but they did not have any children. Setatuqwa' then married Tla'elhc [I wonder if this was the original Tla'chaht] and they had two sons. The oldest son was named Tootah, born in 1856, who married Widukwitlim and they had a son named Lachwhoten [lachxwoten], born in 1877. Their other son was named Aneedachhist [anidachist] who was born in 1868 with no record of a wife or children. The second oldest son of Cukamayk was named Jumeke [chumaka a name that chiimaatuukh, the female version may have derived from], born in 1826 who married Nu'inahtik. There is no record of children for this son. The youngest brother, who was born around 1841, was named Chipswailkudsoo'as. As it is quite common for a person's perceived first name (Chips) to

become the last name of his family (Chips or Chipps) this is most likely where our last name Chipps comes from. The name, Chipswa'ilkudsoo'as, may be related to Dad's name, Qatqatsaa'as. Chipswa'ilkudsoo'as married Wumitis, born in 1843, and they had three sons. The oldest son was named Kaykwa, born in 1856 and he married Hiyawkoht [hiyawq'aht] born in 1865. There is no record of their children. The second oldest son was named Tlakhoust [tlaqawst], born in 1859 who married Chi'amuh [very close to Chi'anuh, Beecher Bay], born in 1867. Again, there is no record of children. The third and youngest son was named Charlie, who was born in 1861, This may have been the Charlie Chipps who married Susan. After this, it becomes very difficult to track the same families into the next census because names change, ages change, and because it is usually omitted if a man has more than one wife or children by that wife.

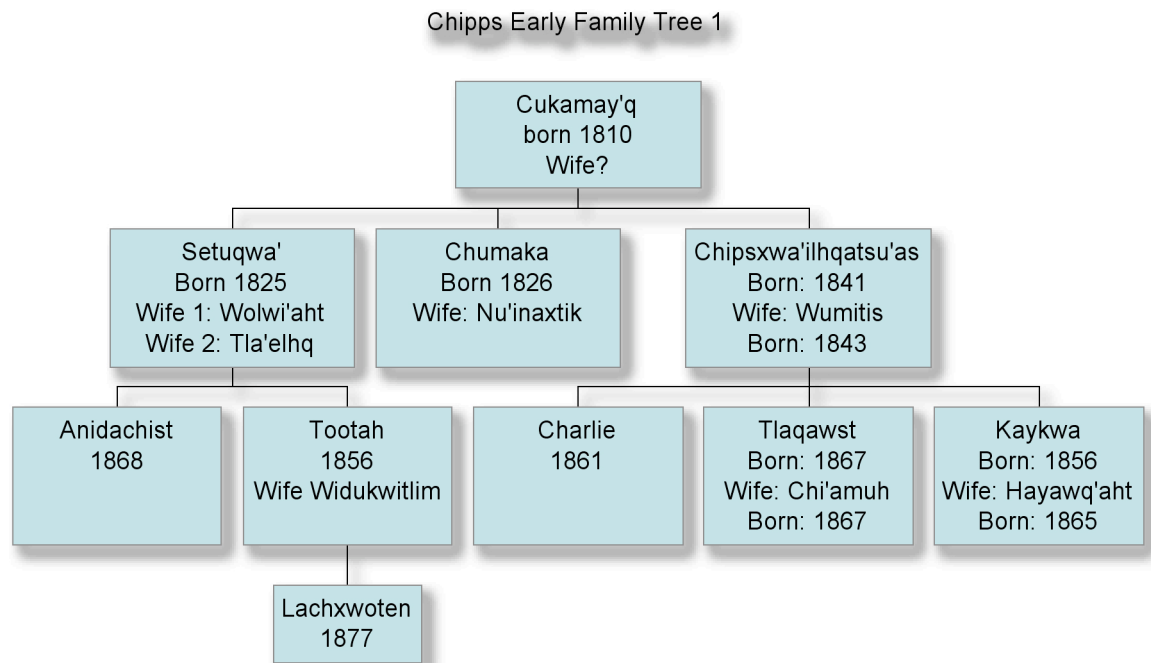


Figure 51 Possible early Chipps family tree example 1

In another family tree, from 1881, there are four brothers. The oldest, born in

1821, is named Juneta [this may be the aforementioned Jumeke) who married Nuno'til [this may be Jumeke's wife, Nu'inahtik]; the second and third oldest brothers may be twins as they are both born in 1831. One is named Jim Katsisask, or 'Nitinat Ned' and whose last name may have become Nytom, who married Coulhatuks, born in 1847.

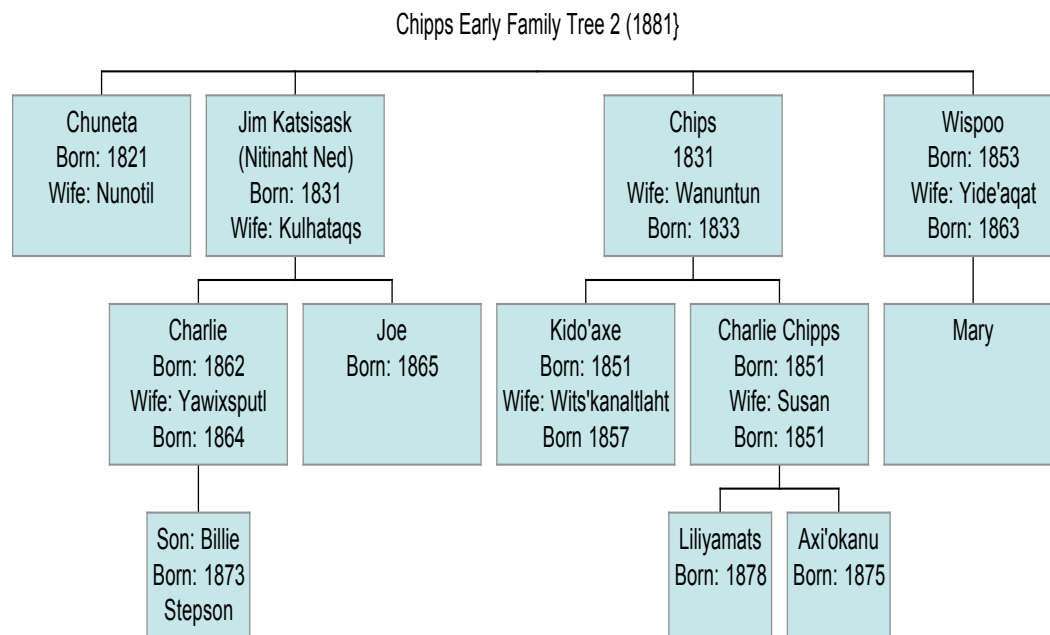


Figure 52 Possible early Chipps family tree example 2

Jim and Chuneta have a son named Charlie, born in 1862, who married Yowihspuotl, born in 1864. Charlie and his wife had a son named Billie, born in 1873, and who was a stepson to one of the parents. Jim also had a son named Joe, born in 1865, who is not recorded as being married. The fourth brother was named Wispoo, born in 1853 who married Yide'akat, born in 1863 and they had a daughter named Mary. The third brother, also born in 1831, was named Chips, who married Wanuntun, born in 1833. They had two sons, who may also have been twins, as they were both born in 1851. One was named Keedo'ahay who married Wits'kanaltlet, born in 1857 and the other was named Charlie Chipps who married Susan, also born in 1851. They had two sons, named

Ahi'okanu, born in 1875, and Liliahmuts, born in 1878. Three peculiar pieces of information now become pertinent. The first is that Gillette Chipps mentioned that twins ran in the family, and had one set of twin daughters of his own. The second point comes from a story told to me at Nitinaht. It was explained to me that Dad (whose name means one-sided or on-one-side) was from one side of the family while the Nytoms were from the other side of the family. He always called Frank Nytom his brother. The third point is that "Nitinaht Ned" was also known as "Lighthouse Ned", and we do know he was a Nytom. This makes this complex census-based family tree quite intriguing.

From our story, Charlie Chipps married Annie Nytom and they had a number of children. Unfortunately, Charlie died in 1918, most likely from the terrible flu that hit Nitinaht. Following her husband's death, Annie Nytom went to work at the Canneries where she met Lemo Williams and they returned to Kyuquot. As far as I know, Lemo had a daughter named Lucy Jacob, 1896 - 1941. Since all this information is very confusing, I have added a family tree, or rather a very small central part of one to help illustrate the information. Charlie Chipps (1865 – 1918) had a brother named Harry Chipps, 1861 – 1932; a brother named Jacob, 1863 – 1937; a brother named Gerald Chipps, and a brother named Stanley Chipps. Charlie and Annie had several children, but it becomes a little hazy because the same names are passed down by Charlie and his brothers. Agnes Chipps, 1878 – 1979, married Leo Samuel Sawyer, Chief of Beecher Bay at the time of the marriage; Mary Anne Chipps married Willy Oscar of Chicletset; Agatha Chipps, 1886 – 1928, married Joseph Williams, and Gillette Chipps, 1879 or 1902 to 1986. Gillette may also have had a brother named Johnny Chipps, 1903 – 1918.

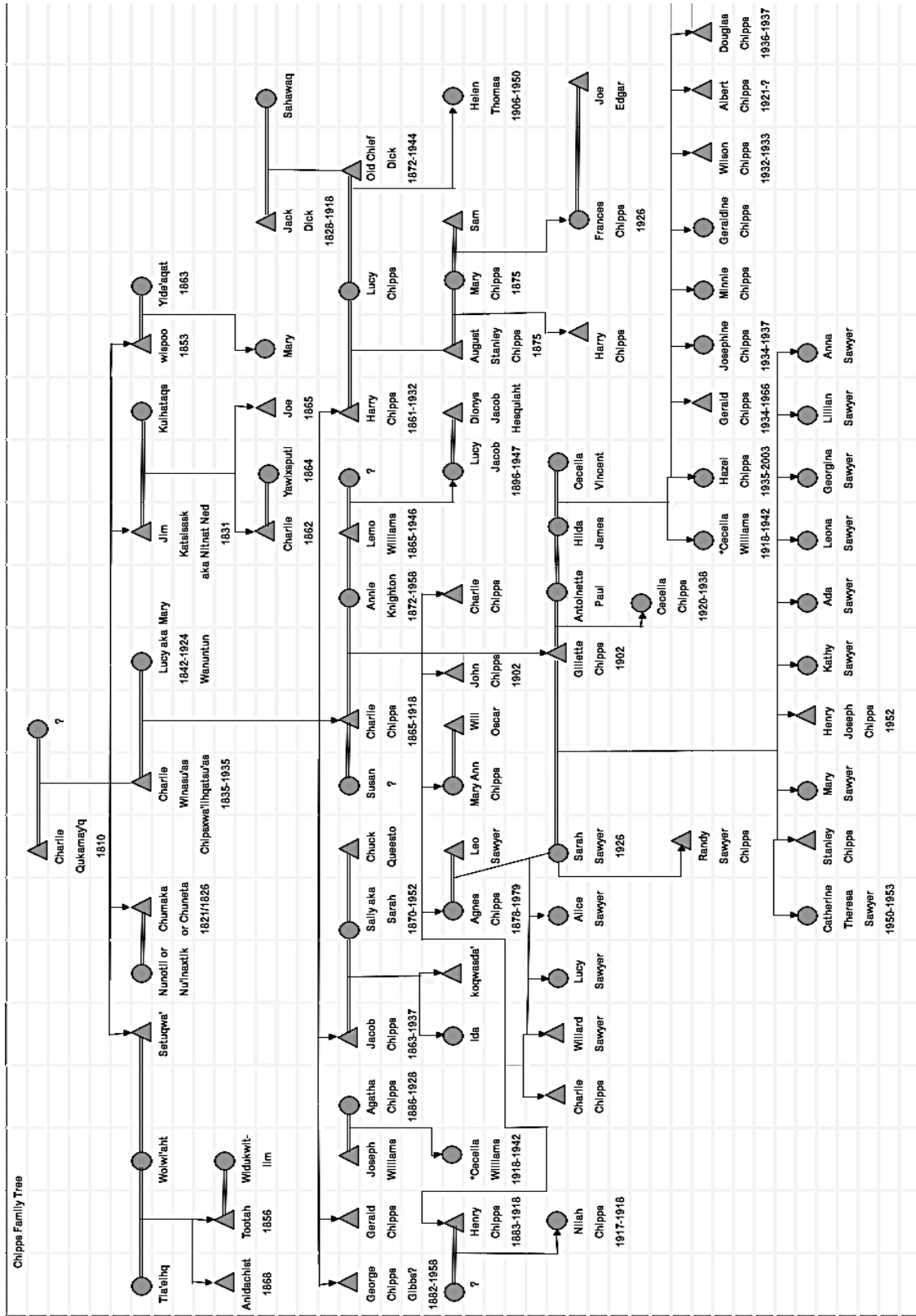


Figure 53 Small part of Chipps Family tree

Gillette Chipps, always told us that he had eight wives, but we haven't been able to find them all, especially one in Alert Bay. According to a document for membership to Clo-oose, Gillette stated that one of his wives was named Antoinette Paul with whom he had a daughter named Cecelia Chipps, 1920 – 1928. He also married Hilda James, but we have no record of any children with her. Then he married Cecelia Vincent with whom he had nine children, including a girl named Cecelia Williams, 1918 – 1942, who may actually have been Agatha's child with Joseph Williams. Living at Clo-oose with Cecelia Vincent, Gillette also had Albert Chipps born in 1921, Wilson Chipps, 1932 – 1933, twins born in 1934, Josephine (1934 – 1937) and Gerald Chipps (1934 – 1966), Hazel Chipps born in 1935, and Douglas Chipps, 1936 – 1937. There may also have been a child named Minnie and one named Geraldine. When Cecelia Vincent died, Gillette moved to Mission Island and his niece, Sarah Sawyer, came to help out with all the children. In time, Sarah and Gillette had many children as well. I don't have the birth (or death) dates for them all. Catherine Theresa Sawyer, 1950 – 1953, Stanley Chipps (1951), Henry Joseph Chipps (1952), Mary Chipps, Ada Sawyer (and I believe Ada was a twin), Lillian Sawyer, Georgina Sawyer, Leona Sawyer, Kathy Sawyer Campbell, and Anna Sawyer. Sarah had a son by a previous relationship, George Randall Sawyer, who was raised as Dad's son, and later changed his name to Chipps. In my dissertation, I will not get into the children of Gillette Chipps' grandchildren because this information is confidential and would fill another whole chapter. That information, however, will be included in the "Family First" program.

Sarah Chipps

This is a partial interview with Sarah Chipps-Sawyer by Souie Gorup while Vanden Berg and Associates handled the Treaty research for the Te'mexw Treaty Association on October 6, 1997 as part of the community mapping project. I am not going to write everything in the interview and I have paraphrased it in order to keep it as if Mom's just talking to us; otherwise, I would be adding another chapter; however, the whole interview will be in the "Family First" program, which was videotaped. (Personal copy)

My name is Sarah Bertha Sawyer and I have two Indian names. I use one at Chianexw and another at Clo-oose. People, when they're travelling, always take a name that everybody knows so they will be welcome. Then they sing the song because we're coming in. We are – they are – saying, 'We are, we are from Nitinaht' or wherever they come from and they go there. We give gifts and then the people in the canoes say, they say, 'Oh, we are bringing you flour and bread.' See that's the way it's always been. Growing. I used to be a Queen, once upon a time. But we are selected by how we feel. If we feel cranky we shouldn't be there. That's the understanding we got from our Elders.

If you ever see anybody that needs help, stand up and say, 'I am here. I will help you.' That's the way it was in the olden days. We never had shoes. There was no such thing as shoes! I don't know how we got along but it was because they said, "that's the White man's". But as I say, it was always a privilege for us to come to our Elders and ask the way we – because I think that it's time. They say time is

running short for all of us. It's time that we start teaching our loved ones, the little kids, that they not be hurt by the beer and all the ugly things that are coming out.

We have to take them by the hand and say, "come with us." Because it brings back so much memories for me because I loved my parents. It's like – it's like the heavens open up. They say when the heavens open up your heart blossoms and you hand it to your grandchildren and say, "Take this, that is yours." And you tell them "You're going to wash; you're going to feed your family; you're going to get up early – four o'clock and three o'clock – and that's when your day begins."

The values: never swearing, never hitting anybody, because they say it keeps life. They say we don't belong to the outside world, we are in this place.

I was born in 1925 and my mother's name was Washatsu. My Dad was from Chi'anuxw. When my father was born, his mother and father passed away and he was given to Chief Jasper Charlie so he can teach him how. I grew up in Nitinaht, though, because my Uncle Knighton's sister was married to my granny's brother. See, that's how it was. You get married and the whole family moves. He taught us to dry fish and how to dig clams; how to fix them up and hang them up so they'll dry, and he taught me how to smoke them [Leo Sam Sawyer]. My father was chief because of my Mom, she was Queen of Nitinaht (Agnes Chipps). They (the women) were the backbones of the men that go out and get food. You always hear when they [the men] are coming in; you hear them singing away because they knew they had fish or they had flounders.

My Dad was the most wonderful person there was. No matter what anybody

called him he would be smiling. He would come to us and say, “Come here. Come here kids.” He would let us sit down. We’d tell him, ‘Those people, their kids are calling us names!’ He’d say, “Look, does it hurt anyone?” We used to say, “Yeah!” and he’d say, that it was nothing because our sisters and brothers



Figure 54 Agnes Sawyer (nee Chipps) in the centre (Courtesy of Patsy Nicolaye)

here will always be with you. “Never listen to people’s words. Never pick it up ‘cause it goes on; you take it, and sometimes it doesn’t fit. Just leave it.” He taught us in many ways because even learning songs, they tell you that you have to be quiet. You have to learn to sit down. Sometimes our bums used to get so darned sore because we were told not to move. They sang a song and they called for the masks. They would bring in the masks and tell them to take out the evil.

And those people really cared about one another.

My brother was Willard; my sisters were Alice, Minnie, Mary, Josephine and Lucy, and there were my step-brothers, Charlie and Richard. They were never called by their names, always their Indian names because they said that is what keeps you together. That name goes in between the evil words. My husband's name was Qatqatsaa'as, it means one-arm person because he was the one who went hunting; seal hunting.

And even the little kids used to come and sit down and say, "Nanny, tell us a story. You'll make us happy." But today you don't see that – it's gone. We were told you guys [non-natives] are gonna blow it away. It's not gonna come back again. But they said, no matter how the people hate you, turn the other cheek and keep turning until you've finished all your cheeks.

This is a lake [Nitinaht Lake]. You see, it takes you to here and keep going on because that's where many people went to travel. They didn't stay in one place. They only carried what they needed. They can go wherever they want to go. I remember that Joshua used to carve the canoes in the village, and my husband.

I met my husband at a Potlatch. They had the girls in a room like this, and the boys over there and they would have three or four Elders in each of the four corners. The old lady would ask, "Who would you like to know here?" and we'd say, "We don't want to marry you, we want to play!" [laughing]. We were all sitting around in there and they sang a song and we said, "Oh!" That's all we could say because a lot of us girls wondered why we should get married when we

came there to dance. You know, it's just the way they were – the Elders got people together.

We moved back to Chi'anuxw around 1957. In the schools they are putting it in there [history] but the people were saying they wish they had the true facts about what went on in the war years. Being tied up and having to walk so many miles. The army never thought us as human. We were tied at the back, at Rocky Point. There's an ammo [ammunition] dump there. There was a Jasper Charles from Beecher Bay but there was also Jasper Charlie but they are not related to each other.

When I was twelve, we went to Nitinaht. The Elders and the grandmothers they had two teachers, Indian teachers, that taught us about the way of life; how you treat one another; if you have too much things, like food, then you go to people that you hear that have nothing and you give it to them. That's what they wanted us to be like. The two teachers, that's what they were there for, because they were books. I'm book one and there is a lady who is at Nitinaht who is book two. We hold the history. The other book's name was Effie [Tait] but she's dead now. We should start caring for people when we're small and then by doing that we raise the children up so that they will remember that all Indian people are poor. They should be taught about love and how we cry and how we laugh. That's what the Elders said we should do and that's why we were all taught to dance. We had to make all our clothes in the wintertime, with needles made from whale bone.

I used to travel with my parents, right across to Neah Bay, because they couldn't

leave me at home. I was too much mischief [laughing], I'd go pick berries and get lost. I was about five then. To keep us amused, they sang songs and taught us how to talk; never speak against anybody. They'd fill the canoes with seal oil and everything. We used to make seal oil by cutting it into small pieces and putting them into a big pot with water and all the oil stays at the top. Granny used to cook for my first-born, because she was the first-born, she was my mother. The other one was the second, and she looked after the boys. The boys had their own place; their own things to do. In the morning, they wake up the old people who sit down and sing about what they're doing that day and what they are going to use. If they are going sealing, they would get the drums out and ask the Nanay to come down and bless the canoes and everything so they will come home without turning over. Some people have died in their canoe when it turned over. They used to say that you should never waste food. If you can't finish it, you should put it back in the water so it is not wasted. And we shared. That's how you have the fruit there and all kinds of food so they would use it and it was something that really healed, but you must never make fun of it. That's one thing they said, "Don't laugh or make fun of it because it comes back at you some way or another. I guess that was true because, you know, my grandmother and my Mom they always made us sit down and be quiet while they are telling stories or they are teaching us how to fix the food and which sounds we should use so that the food is blessed and that was something we don't – we forgot. And we always wait until it is too late and the Elders are right because we wait until it is too late. We say I want to do that and do that but all the good things that were in the centre are gone. And that's the

teachings.

That's what my life in Clo-oose was like as a young girl 'cause my Mom, and her Mom, were Queens. It's passed down. That's why, when we go to a dance, we have our place to sit. I'm going to pass it down to my daughter-in-law [Patricia Chipps]. She's white but she has it – she's a dancer and she also dances the mask because she was especially blessed by the Elders and now she does everything – books – and that's why we always say it's a blessing when they do the things that we ask them to do.



Figure 55 Natural History Society excavating for treasure in cairns at Pedder Bay, 1920. Image PN14135 courtesy of Royal British Columbia Museum

Sometimes we would go to Discovery Island because my Dad and his uncle, Huttie Dick, is from Esquimalt. But my Dad's Mom and Dad died when he was just a baby. They got that smallpox. They got it from the Quarantine Station. Lots

of people died and they just died like rats while they were walking. The Quarantine Station was at William Head and the ammo dump was at Middle Peak.

Rocky Point was taken during the war because of the ammo dump. They didn't know where to put it. So they took all the Indians off the island and moved them inland but there was no food. We were supposed to get that one – get that one – get that one, Swordfish Island right here. If we said anything, we lost a lot. They took all this, this is a river and left us – we were supposed to fly over a mountain! They should have had enough sense to say, “These people need food to come over.” See these Arden and Yates - they're white people. And we ask, “how did you get it?” They said they bought it. You see how big these white people [the amount of reserve land] and how did they take over? Why couldn't they [land] have been given to some of the Indians so they can go out and stand up straight? Instead of sitting down and being miserable. Beechey Head, it used to be our land. What can we do about them? Then the story comes out that they sold things. This land! But they never told the Beecher Bay people.

My Dad was also raised by Agnes Dick from Songhees. You never know. Your life is valuable to you – so is mine. That is why we really don't go into this taping thing because it shortens our life and that's the teachings we got from Chief Thunderbird – because Chief Thunderbird was my Dad's cousin from Cowichan.

Gerald Chipps – the Lakota Connection

We're not certain why or how Gerald Chipps ended up in the Lakota Nation. In

1877, according to the Archives' Black Series¹⁷ "Reserve Commissioner Sproat reports that 2 American Indians have visited Chief Chileyheetza requesting co-operation in a rising in the spring". Here at Beecher Bay, Randy Chipps and I found a red clay Indian Head pipe on the beach after a storm. Things don't wash out of the ocean as much as they wash out of the embankment from the old village over on Number 2 Reserve. We took it to the Archives, but they appear to have lost it. We did find out that these pipe heads were not traded in this area at all, so it was a bit of a mystery. However, I suppose the Lakota people travelled around to the different Villages and spoke with people. We don't know how many people went with them, but many years ago, when Henry Chipps and I were at a conference in Ottawa, we found out what happened to Gerald Chipps. A man named John Movescamp heard our names and came over to introduce himself. He said he was related to us and told us all about how Gerald Chipps had come to the Lakota. He was a medicine man [as our family is] and Gerald had even written the Lakota National Anthem. I've written numerous emails to various Chipps' in the area, but I've never had a reply.

Jacob Chipps – the Songhees Connection

The story of Jacob Chipps was known to us, but not all the details. Our stories told that the Orcas helped Jacob, his daughter, Ida, and her baby, to shore. Our stories also said they were in the water for 18 hours after their canoe capsized. Jacob managed to get his family to shore, but only then did he realize that both had died of hypothermia. We heard he was given a medal, but that he gave it back because he didn't feel he should

¹⁷ DIAND correspondence file B286 3656 9111

have it; he hadn't saved his daughter and grandchild. Years ago, when I painted this painting of our story, I showed it to Mom when I finished. Sarah held it for a long time, singing a quiet song. I was very honoured, and named it, "Mom Sang a Little Song".



Figure 56 Mom Sang a Little Song

In an article in the Times-Colonist's Islander edition, Sunday, September 19, 1993, Jacob Chipps is mentioned.

The Strait of Georgia witnessed a similar miracle 86 years ago. In July, 1907, Jacob Chipps, his 18-year old daughter, her 18-month infant and three companions were en route to the Fraser River fishing grounds in their small boat.

Chipps, from Clo-oose, was in the stern, steering, when the baby began to cry. He turned his head slightly to see what was the matter. As he did so, he released his grip on the tiller just as a large rogue wave swept down on them.

Before Chipps could regain control, the boat was carried onto its side, plunging all six occupants into the frigid Strait. Chipps and the three passengers were able to get a hand-hold on the overturned boat's keep but his daughter and grandchild (clasped tightly to mother's breast) were swept away.

Stripping off his clothes, boots and a moneybelt containing \$700, Chipps swam to his daughter's side and cradled her in one arm, the baby in the other. Then, kicking his feet, he began to dog-paddle back to the boat. But that craft, with its three helpless passengers clinging on, was hurried away by the wind.

Grandfather, daughter and baby were on their own. But this Clo-oose native was no ordinary man. News accounts of the tragedy described him as being a magnificent specimen of manhood, strong, powerful and skilful.

Jacob Chipps couldn't remember what happened after that. He knew only that he struggled ashore, about midnight. His companions, rescued from their overturned boat, estimated that they'd capsized about 5 p.m. Meaning Chipps had been in the water for seven hours.

Rescuers who found the exhausted fisherman, lying seemingly lifeless, on the beach, marvelled at the nightmare he'd endured. Like readers today, they could only try to imagine what he'd been through. Somehow, daughter and grandchild

wrapped in his arms, he'd kick-paddled the several miles to shore. How long he swam, virtually in a state of semi-consciousness – driven not so much by the instincts of self-survival as by an almost superhuman compulsion to save his family – we can only wonder at.

Upon being revived, Chipps' first thought had been for his family. They were beyond help, he was told, dead of exposure, probably within half-an-hour of the accident.

Days later, the CPR steamer Princess Victoria brought a solemn Chipps and the bodies of Ida and her baby to Victoria. The grieving hero vowed he'd never again live in Clo-oose, "where there are so many things to remind him of his lost ones".

The following month, Jacob Chipps was awarded the Royal Humane Society Medal. (Paterson, 1993)

In the Edmonton Daily, on August 14, 1907, an article appeared telling of the aftermath of the tragic accident.

Chipps, Jacob Chief. Victoria, Aug. 13, a sad sequel to the heroic fight for the lives of his daughter, grandchild and himself made by Chief Jacob Chipps of Clo-oose, in the waters of the gulf near Vancouver, took place a few days ago at Clo-oose, when the sorrowing chief and his wife paddled back to his home.

They were met on the shore by the tribe with loud lamentations for the loss of his daughter and her child.

Jacob had a good house fitted with a steel range and other modern accessories, but in token of his grief he decided to sacrifice these as well as the \$700 which was lost in his long swim. His wife first cut off her hair, and while she and other women of the tribe wailed, he gathered his belongings into his house and set fire to it. That was not burned was broken up. He and his wife have now returned to Victoria and they have taken up their residence at the Songhees reserve here.

(1907)

Grant Keddie, in his wonderful book about the history of the Songhees, (Keddie, G. R., 2003p. 143-44) devotes two pages to “The Memorial Potlatch of Ida Jackson”. It shows the paintings Jacob Chipps painted on the walls of Alec Kulqualum after 1908, representing a dream Jacob had about the loss of his daughter and grandchild, as well as photographs of people gathered for the potlatch.



Figure 57 Fish ready for "Party" at Kyuquot

Henry Joseph Chipps' Story



Figure 58 Henry Chipps (2007), first graduate of the Indigenous Governance Diploma Program

Henry Chipps is Gillette Chipps' youngest son, and, unfortunately, the only son who is left. Henry, or Hank, was a council member of the Beecher Bay First Nation for four years and, when he finished, went into the Indigenous Governance two-year diploma course at the University of Victoria. As Henry often says, laughingly, "I was born in Kyuquot; I'm hereditary chief of Clo-oose, and I'm a Beecher Bay Band member." This just shows how confusing the imposed First Nations' membership can be. Henry tells a small part of his story in the following:

I was born on April 24, 1952 in a two-room hospital in Kyuquot, B.C. which is

situated right next to the reserve. The hospital is a place to visit when the doctor comes to the community; usually a nurse is stationed there to make referrals or to call the air ambulance if bad injuries need medical treatment at another hospital. Sarah Sawyer, my mother and Gillette Chipps, my father, took me home to where we lived on Mission Island, which is across from the main village of Aqtiis. On the island, as far as I can remember, were two families. My Dad's sister, Mary Anne Oscar and Brother-in-law, Bill Oscar, lived in a house about five hundred feet from ours and there was a well that we used for drinking water. Our house was a two-bedroom house that was heated by a pot-bellied stove. In our house, at the time, there were seven of us living in it: Mom, Dad, myself, Lillian, Mary, Leona and Ada.

My Dad had a thirty-six foot commercial fishing vessel called the *Golden Cloud II*, and Bill Oscar had a boat named *The Lady*. When I was four, Dad took me out fishing with him. He had told me that one had to make money to buy food, supplies and clothes to wear. There were times when we got caught in some pretty bad storms, waves as high as twenty-five feet. When we got enough fish to sell, we went back and picked up the rest of the family from Mission Island and went to sell the fish.

There was a time when Dad taught us the value of money. My brothers were home for the summer, Randy and Stanley. The boat needed to be caulked and painted and at high tide the *Golden Cloud II* was driven on to the weighs that was built to do repair work to the boat. At low tide the three of us caulked and painted the boat. When we completed our work, Dad made sure there was a good meal for

us. He rewarded us with a hundred dollar bill and left us alone in the room. We looked at each other and thought, "That is a lot of money to do what we just did and we could buy a lot of things that we wanted." There was only one thing wrong, a penny could not be divided three ways. We started arguing over the one-third of a cent and that turned into a big fight with the three of us. While we were fighting, Dad would come in the room and change the one-hundred dollar bill for a fifty, then a twenty, and then after an hour of the three of us fighting, he took the twenty. After all the money was gone, Dad came in and told us, "While the three of you were fighting I came in and changed the money until there was nothing." He said, "It is not worth fighting over one-third of a cent, now you have nothing for your efforts." Dad left the room and we looked at each other and said, "It's your fault!" and started fighting again. Eventually, Mom got fed up with us fighting and used her corn broom on all three of us and we were sent to bed.

My cousin, Junior Oscar, used to get in a lot of trouble. Whatever we were told not to do we did it. Our parents told us not to go out in the little skiff by ourselves as the waters surrounding the island were very dangerous. When we thought no one was looking, we took the skiff, went fishing for Perch and on Sundays, we would row over to the main island to watch movies until our parents caught up to us. We explored our little island and one time we saw a snake under a big rock, so we decided to try to catch it. We went home and got a small hook and line and put some bait on it. After a long time, we hooked the snake. We were pulling it out from underneath the rock and then the snake spat the hook at Junior. The hook was sharp and sank into Junior's thumb. We had to go home after that and were in

a lot of trouble because now we had to make a trip to the hospital to get the hook out of Junior's thumb.



Figure 59 A few of Gillette's children over twenty years ago

When I was about to turn five, my mother and father decided to move to where my mother was from, Beecher Bay on the southern part of the island. In those days, when a child turned five the child would be picked up and taken to the residential school. After losing three kids to residential school (Gerald, Randy and

Stanley) our parents did not want to lose any more.



Figure 60 Nun and children (Courtesy Patsy Nicolaye)

When we left Kyuquot, Dad left his boat in Gold River and we came down-island. We ended up living at the Songhees reserve for a couple of years before our house in Beecher Bay was completed. I started school on Admirals Road, which doubled as a church on Sundays. My teacher there was Mrs. Frith and she taught a lot of subjects.

We moved to Beecher Bay and lived in a four-bedroom house and our big family lived there for years. There were many of us living there at the time: Annie, Ada, Leona, Kathy, Gina, Mary, Lillian, Gerald, Randy, Stanley, and myself. The house had the modern conveniences: a tap, sink, bathtub, and plumbing, but we

did not have water. We had to dig a well and an outside outhouse to go to the bathroom. While Dad was here, he made totem poles that he could sell downtown at stores. He made sure that when he was carving the poles that the kids would sand them down before he painted and varnished them. He made two five-foot totem poles for the Museum of Man and the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. To this day, we have not been able to find either one of them. (Henry Chipps, Personal communication, 2007)

Summary

This is but a tiny part of the information I have gathered during my research. I sit here, among mountains of papers, books, reports, with much more carefully filed away in three file cabinets and on computers, and my biggest chore was not to write a history of our family, but to keep confidential information out of it, and to keep it short. I'm aware of the length of the chapter, but considering the amount of data on our history and just how much I wanted to share it all with you, I had to cover as much interesting information as possible about our history, without writing another dissertation in the process.

This is but a small sample of the information that will be contained in the "Family First" program, and it illustrates the point that the program will most likely continue to evolve over the years as family members study the information and remember things to add or change. The primary reason why the "Family First" program will largely be built around a database foundation is that I anticipate the need to continue to add and change the information. With a completed program, such changes would be extremely time-consuming and tiresome whereas with a database, the changes can be made relatively

quickly and the program updated easily. I envision that, someday, I, or someone else, can make specific modules of certain educational aspects of the language and/or knowledge that can be far more interactive and exciting to participate in. However, I find this information exciting beyond any of the expectations I had when I first started my dissertation.



Figure 61 Clo-oose; First Nation members with Methodist Missionary. Image F-08207 courtesy of Royal British Columbia Museum

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This dissertation is a work of love and pain all in one. My ideas and assumptions underwent enormous changes which, I believe, is what writing a dissertation is all about. It is so important to remain as flexible as possible to make room for the necessary changes. Sometimes the changes were excruciating and frustrating but when I emerged from this with new insight and understanding, I was ready to proceed.

The idea of creating a multimedia program to enhance communication and the teachings of a First Nations' family is very important. I strongly believe that the establishment of reserves had a far greater impact on the loss of the teachings than formerly thought because it created communities that were not composed of a family for the first time in a very long history.

A family consisted of an extended group of closely related persons, of multiple generations. When a new village was established, usually with the oldest son of the "chief" (a foreign term, the Nitinaht word for the head of the village/family translates as a good and proper person) became the new "proper person" and family members had some choice of whether to join the new village or remaining where they were. If a "proper person" was not deemed to make proper decisions or was not a good provider, village members just left. Our old houses always had room for family and visitors.

Depending on the locations of family members, they were split off into different communities, separating the family. The establishment of reserves discouraged the traditional yearly rounds of each family and closely related families from other villages, thus decreasing the amount of time Elders and children had together, restricting the opportunity to teach and learn as well as alienating some of the Elders from some of the

children. Now, we mostly meet at funerals when teaching is not a priority. Add to these complications the law forbidding the Potlatch (1885 to 1951) and leading to the loss of our masks and other important belongings, and it becomes easy to understand the hesitancy of First Nations families to share their knowledge with persons outside their family. We cannot, at the moment, bring back the original villages or even split up reserves to become villages wherein each closely related family can live; too much time has passed for that. Yet, since we are on the verge of losing the last of our family teachings, something must be done to preserve what is still available.

The idea of using modern technology such as multimedia, or more correctly, a combination of a variety of media accessible to users within one program, is important because it allows the use of :

- Videotapings of existing Elders because video tapes are far more satisfying and educational than text;
- Audio recordings of any family-owned tape recordings of family members from the past are important in situations where video was either not available or was not acceptable;
- Written documents, and
- Some limited interactivity for practice, such as language learning and reinforcement of skills learning and travel.

It is important to capture and keep as much information by and about our families before those options disappear forever. As more technology reaches our communities, options in programming, communication, education and technology increase.

In these chapters, I have described some of the commercial programs that can be

used to create such family programs and I have discussed, at length, the information I see as important to gather for the teaching of the young and not-so-young, whenever they become interested in learning. I have given examples of the family stories my family and the Museum archives have graciously allowed me to use. These stories may not be relevant to your family, but I believe that the fact that these stories can be gathered is important. The stories may not contain all the information you seek to pass on, but they provide a foundation for the research that will need to be done. These examples may help guide you, even if it leads in a completely different direction. I have discussed some of the problems encountered when trying to gather family information from government documents and even from family or those close to your family, and I hope they help you if you decide to try to gather your own information. I don't believe that either this research or this program is restricted to First Nations families; I believe that this would be invaluable for any family as globalization changes the world in which we live and as immigration or the movement of family members away from each other makes family knowledge, handed down from generation to generation, hazy at best.

Much more research needs to be done in areas such as the collection of family trees and genealogy, and the traditional dyes used by First Nations' families so future generations can carry on the skills of the families. A concentrated effort to raise support and funding for the establishment of immersion programs for the small children, families and Elders for communities with endangered languages and to find the best ways for the preservation and restoration of our languages in ways that will help them become living and used mother tongues. In addition, more research needs to be undertaken in areas such as the curriculum that will best promote local First Nations history and knowledge into

the public and private schools in First Nations Studies courses or in future courses (Kindergarten to grade 12) for First Nations students or schools.

Perhaps in the near future, with a careful examination of the items at the museum(s), it will be possible to differentiate between designs enough to link them to families and, thus, return the designs to the families.

With the documentation of the differences in speech, and discovering the ancestral line, we can quite possibly re-establish which village each family lived at and the difference in speech they “owned”. Future researchers, especially those working with their own communities and families, might be able to learn much about the original villages from small differences in speaking. These small differences may turn out to be very large repositories of information thought lost or forgotten.

I believe that it will be crucial to start a First Nations publishing company for books and multimedia that not only creates relevant and valuable First Nations curricular materials for schools, but that also helps communities and families develop their own curricular materials for school or home use.

Research, including those carrying it out, and the areas of research, need to be scrutinized carefully in order to provide better results that are of real value, especially with people of another culture. Grants need to be provided more generously to First Nations students, or anyone, wishing to research their own family, community, history and language. I hope that some day, in the near future, funding for such field work will go to the First Nations researchers before even being considered for others. This is not discrimination; it is crucial for the survival, in my opinion, of our knowledge and culture.

Non-family researchers need to allow more time to get to know the communities

and families; the language and worldview; the proper ways of behaviour and respect, as well as the proper way of learning before trying to carry out research. Without this knowledge, an “outsider”, cannot even hope to properly understand what they are learning.

Equally important is the recognition and acknowledgement that the true experts are the people who teach the researchers, who are really just students hoping to learn something valuable. This treasure, the knowledge gained, is the treasure of those who teach, and it will always belong to them. The little a researcher takes away with them is nothing compared to the knowledge held by those experts who taught them and it is important to ensure that multiple copies of the information gathered goes back to the family so it cannot be lost in a single fire or death.

It is respectful in our families and communities to look, listen, and to keep questions to a minimum as too many questions are translated as laziness and it is important to allow the Elders/Experts to direct learning within their time-frames.

First Nations families are not rich in money, and it is important to bring gifts. The gifts ought to be useful. When I travel to Nitinaht, for example, I tend to bring a 50 pound case of potatoes, and some fresh fruit and vegetables because those things are the hardest to get there. If you are staying over, it is important to bring money to help the family with the cost of your stay.

I'd also like to mention the importance of continuing contact with the community or communities in which one does research. The people seldom forget the researchers, and often ask about them. Once you become part of a family and you feel you are liked, it is important not to just disappear once you've gathered your information. This happens

far too often and it doesn't leave a good feeling behind.

Another important point to remember is that copies of family information must be returned to the family, not the Band office, unless you have prior permission from the family. Not to do so can lead to very serious consequences. As mentioned before, present reserves are usually made up of more than one family, sometimes even more than one cultural group. The Band office, chief and council may be from one or more families on the reserve, but traditional knowledge belongs to a family not to the community. Views and opinions of the history from one family may not be appreciated by another.

I have referred to many of these points throughout my dissertation and I thought it would be useful to mention them again in the summary.

I have learned so much from my years at the university and it wasn't always easy. I found it difficult, at times, and in some classes, to go in, not as a student, but as a representative of my family and our history. Sometimes I'm certain other students grew tired of my words, and I of theirs, but I believe that everyone left a little of themselves on the others. I sincerely hope so.



**Figure 62 Henry Chipps walking among the ruins of his birth home on Mission
Island, Kyuquot**

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Appendix A: The Phonetic Writing System of Nitinaht

Some of the sounds in Nitinaht are not found in the alphabet of English, but some may occur in speech. The sounds of Nitinaht and their symbols are listed below:

a or aa	the short and long form of a as in the exclamation ah!
b	as in English
b'	a glottalized b
c	ts as in <u>its</u>
c'	glottalized ts
ch	as in <u>child</u>
ch'	glottalized ch
d	as in English
d'	glottalized d
e	the e sound is often a pharygealized (strangled) a
h	as in English
i or ii	the long and short form of i as in <u>each</u>
k	as in English
k'	glottalized k
k ^w	rounded k, much as in <u>quick</u>
k' ^w	glottalized k ^w
l	as in English
l'	glottalized l
ł	as l in English, but you blow around the tongue

m	as in English (usually b is used instead of m)
m'	glottalized m (usually b' is used instead of m')
n	n as in English (usually d is used instead of n)
n'	glottalized n (usually d' is used instead of n')
o	o is often a pharyngeal u (strangulated)
p	p as in English
p'	glottalized p
q	as k but pronounced way back in the throat
q'	glottalized q (usually a pharyngeal stop ʕ)
s	as in English
sh	as in English shore
t	as in English
t'	glottalized t
ʔ	a tɫ sound, as in atlas, if you say it fast
ʔ'	glottalized ʔ
u uu	short and long u sound as in boot
w	as in English
w◌	glottalized w
x	soft h made in back of throat
x ^w	rounded x
X	harsh h made in the back of the throat
X ^w	rounded X

y	as in English
y'	glottalized y
‘	glottal stop
ʕ	pharyngeal stop

Appendix B: Documents of Clarification and Permissions

Letter of Permission to use photographs from the archives at the Alberni Valley Museum received by email.

June 20, 2007

Pakki:

This email gives permission to use PN4267 and PN10522 in your dissertation providing credit is given to the Alberni Valley Museum.

Thank you and congratulations!

Cindy VanVolsen
Collections Curator
Alberni Valley Museum

avmuseum@city.port-alberni.bc.ca



University
of Victoria

University of Victoria - Human Research Ethics Committee

Certificate of Approval

<u>Principal Investigator</u> Allis Pakki Chipps-Sawyer Graduate Student	<u>Department/School</u> EDUC/EDCD	<u>Supervisor</u> Gloria Snively	
<u>Co-Investigator(s):</u>			
Title: Tupaatii: Rediscovering Our Hereditary Rights and Knowledge			
<u>Project No.</u> 476-03	<u>Approval Date</u> 02-Dec-03	<u>Start Date</u> 02-Dec-03	<u>End Date</u> 01-Dec-04

Certification

This is to certify that the University of Victoria Ethics Review Committee on Research and other Activities Involving Human Subjects has examined the research proposal and concludes that, in all respects, the proposed research meets appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria Research Regulations Involving Human Subjects.

J. Howard Brunt
Associate Vice-President, Research

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the procedures. Extensions/minor amendments may be granted upon receipt of "Request for Continuing Review or Amendment of an Approved Project" form.

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476-03 Chipps-Sawyer, Allis Pakki



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Fax - (250) 478-3585

December 1, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

The Chief and Council, undersigned, support the research proposed by our Band member, Allis Pakki Chipps-Sawyer for the completion of her Ph.D. dissertation.

We understand that Pakki Chipps will be creating an interactive multimedia program with information on our hereditary knowledge and rights in order to preserve information that may be lost and in order to provide our family with a teaching tool for this information. We support the creation of this program as well as the travels to other family members in North America in order to bring our family into closer contact. We urge our family members to help Pakki Chipps with her work and to participate in a meeting to evaluate the completed Dissertation and interactive multimedia program.

We also understand that Pakki Chipps will be attempting to gather copies of documents and artifacts belonging to our family that are presently held by public collections, private collectors, and researchers. We support this effort and urge all who hold such information to freely share with Pakki Chipps for the benefit of our family.

We further understand that any information that Pakki Chipps gathers will be reviewed by those who provide the information and that the Elders, the teachers, will be fully able to decide what information may be used for family only, what may be included in the dissertation, and what should be removed or not used at all. The Elders will receive a copy of any information they have given and they will receive a copy of the final Dissertation and interactive multimedia program when it is completed. Pakki Chipps is aware that the Elders are the teachers and she is merely the student.

Signed,

Russell Chipps
Beecher Bay
Chief

Gordon Charles
Beecher Bay
Council

Bernice Millette
Beecher Bay
Council

Pakki Chipps
Beecher Bay
Ph.D. Student

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada / Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada

Chronological no. - N° consécutif
File reference no. - N° de référence du dossier

BAND COUNCIL RESOLUTION
RÉSOLUTION DE CONSEIL DE BANDE

NOTE: The words "from our Band Funds" "capital" or "revenue", whichever is the case, must appear in all resolutions requesting expenditures from Band Funds.
NOTA: Les mots "des fonds de notre bande" "capital" ou "revenu" selon le cas doivent paraître dans toutes les résolutions portant sur des dépenses à même les fonds des bandes.

The council of the Le conseil de	<i>Beecher Bay First Nation</i>	Cash free balance - Solde disponible
Date of duly convened meeting Date de l'assemblée dument convoquée	D-J M Y-A Province <i>10/17/06/04 B.C.</i>	Capital account Compte capital \$ _____
		Revenue account Compte revenu \$ _____

DO HEREBY RESOLVE:
DÉCIDE, PAR LES PRÉSENTES:

That the Beecher Bay First Nation Chief and Council are sponsoring the Research scheduled to be carried out by one of our Band members, Allis Pakki Chipps-Sawyer, for her PH.D. dissertation during 2004-2005.

We appreciate any support, funding or donations you can provide to us to help her with her research.

Quorum	<i>[Signature]</i>	_____	(Chief - Chef)
	<i>Bernice Mellett</i>	_____	(Councillor - Conseiller)
	<i>Gordon Charles</i>	_____	(Councillor - Conseiller)
	_____	_____	(Councillor - Conseiller)

FOR DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY - RÉSERVÉ AU MINISTÈRE					
Expenditure - Dépenses	Authority (Indian Act Section / Autorité (Article de la Loi sur les Indiens))	Source of funds / Source des fonds <input type="checkbox"/> Capital <input type="checkbox"/> Revenue	Expenditure - Dépenses	Authority (Indian Act Section / Autorité (Article de la Loi sur les Indiens))	Source of funds / Source des fonds <input type="checkbox"/> Capital <input type="checkbox"/> Revenue
Recommending officer - Recommandé par			Recommending officer - Recommandé par		
Signature _____		Date _____	Signature _____		Date _____
Approving officer - Approuvé par			Approving officer - Approuvé par		
Signature _____		Date _____	Signature _____		Date _____

Nolin, Kelly-Ann RBCM:EX

From: Nolin, Kelly-Ann RBCM:EX
Sent: Thursday, May 31, 2007 3:37 PM
To: 'as4705@telus.net'
Subject: Re: Status of application for permission

15420-20/B

May 31, 2007

Allis Pakki Chipps-Sawyer
Beecher Bay First Nation
Sooke, BC

Dear Allis:

Your application for permission has been forwarded to me by my colleague, Dan Savard.

You have been granted permission to use Royal BC Museum images in your Ph.D. Dissertation. Fees have been waived for this one-time only use. A copy of your approved form will be sent to you by mail.

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Regards,

Kelly-Ann Nolin
Permissions Officer, BC Archives
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Phone: (250) 387-3845
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