

HAIDA LAAS

Newsletter of the Haida Nation

APRIL 2009

How do you say cell phone in Haida?

by Kwiaahwah Jones

Language gives us a way of communicating with each other and the Haida language is a link to our past, our present and our future.

Our language, *Xaayda Kil*, or as it's spelled in the north *Xaad Kil*, gives us a deep knowledge of the land and sea, and a way of thinking that is uniquely Haida. In the Skidegate Haida Immersion glossary you can look up the word *wave* and find not just one or two words, but twenty-plus words to describe a wave, and each word brings a special knowledge of the weather with it. And then if you look up the word *door*, you will find the word *k'yuu*. This is also the same word for path, road, door and ladder. For years I would marvel at this word *k'yuu*, and its Haida meaning. I never could make a connection with the English translation. But, a short few days ago one of my dear friends who knew my *k'yuu* dilemma came to me and said that during this past music festival she saw a short film that was made by a student in Massett. She said that collectively, *k'yuu* — road, door, path and ladder — were all pathways to a different world and that's why they all used the same word. Just take a minute to soak that in and then read on.

Today, we are so fortunate to have Haida speakers in our nation and coming up quickly we are going to

see our Skidegate speakers (SHIP) host the 8th Annual International Language Conference at the Haida Heritage Centre at *Kaay Llnagaay*. The conference will be three-days with presentations from the *Kaigani Haida*, the *Gaaw Xaade*, and the *Hḻgaagilda XaaydaGa* and feature two guest speakers.

Jordan Lachler will be speaking about an intensive learning system that is being used to teach languages in the USA, and Hiro, a linguist from Japan who has been coming to the Islands for over eighteen years, will be talking about his experience studying the Haida language.

A big *and* sensitive topic to tackle is the need for a common orthography. This discussion has been ongoing between Massett, Skidegate and Hydaburg for a few years, and the language conference hopes to take this topic a few steps along the path. As it stands today, there are at least three systems being used to spell and teach Haida. A common orthography would set conventions for spelling, using agreed upon letter and form combinations which will standardize the rules for writing the language.

Another important subject on the language conference agenda is a push for the creation of a Haida language curriculum for teaching in the school district. There will also be reporting on the new Master/

Apprentice program, which is a one-on-one immersion program and creative teaching methods used to build knowledge about the Haida language with new learners will also be shared.

Two years ago several members of SHIP sailed to the southern islands of Haida Gwaii and reclaimed the place names of the ancestors. The elders also gave names to places where the original names had been forgotten. The names and project report will be presented, and to end the conference a discussion will take place about the development of new Haida words. In these modern times there needs to be a way of explaining things like computers, cell phones and X-boxes.

The Haida language is your *k'yuu* to being Haida, attend the conference at Haida Heritage Centre, at *Kaay Llnagaay - Gina Gualth Ju-naay, Performing House*, April 18th to 20th, 2009. For more information contact SHIP at ship@haidagwaii.net. •

8th
ANNUAL
HAIDA LANGUAGE
GATHERING

▼
April 18 - 20
Kaay Llnagaay, Skidegate



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NEWSLETTER OF THE HAIDA NATION

published by the
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FEBRUARY 09

haidanation.ca

program reports : haida laas
links : diplomacy : agreements
government : working groups

- it's all good -

How to answer the phone in Haida

In Skidegate

*Courtesy of the Skidegate
Haida Immersion Program.*

Sii.ngaay 'laa.
Good day.

Ernie huu ijii.
This is Ernie.

Sing.caay 'laa.
Good morning.

Ernie huu ijii.
This Ernie.

Sintaajiga 'laa
Good afternoon.

Ernie huu ijii.
This is Ernie.

Singxyas 'laa
Good evening.

Ernie huu ijii.
This is Ernie.

In Massett

Courtesy of the Language Nest.

Singee 'laa gang Good day.
The ee is an ay sound as in gay.

**Gasinuu dang gahl tlaayd
hlang.aang?**
How can I help you?

Haws dang ahl guusuu asang.
I will talk with you again.

.....
You can visit SHIP in Skidegate anytime, their door is always open. Regular evening classes are scheduled for Monday and Thursday 7-9. They can be reached at 250.559.9073 or by email ship@haidagwaii.net .

In Massett, Lisa White of the Language Nest can be reached at 250.626.5135 or 250.626.3718.

CHN Quarterly Meetings Coming Up

Quarterly meetings of the Council of the Haida Nation will be held in Massett at the Howard Phillips Community Hall.

Quarterly Meeting
Thursday, April 23
10:00 am

All Leaders Meeting
Friday, April 24
10:00 am

Haida citizens are welcome to attend the Quarterly and All Leaders sessions.

xaad kil = Haida language

Speaking Out for Language

by Florence Lockyer

With the International Haida Language Conference just around the corner (April 2009) there are questions about what's happening in Old Massett with regards to the revitalization of our Haida language? Well, just to let you know there are many initiatives in Old Massett that have been running for years.

The Haida Language and Culture Program has been supported with financial assistance from the Old Massett Village Council. It is a program offered in all three local schools — Chief Matthews School, Tahayghan Elementary School and the George M. Dawson High School.

Chief Matthews School operates its own program, but is still under the umbrella of the Old Massett Village Council. There they have the expertise of Ms Rhonda Bell, naanii Nina Williams and tsiinii Stephen Brown who have been assisting Ms Bell with mentoring and translation. Marilyn Collison is staff support in the classroom. It is the practice of the Chief Matthews School to incorporate as much Haida language and culture into all classrooms, not just the language class.

The local public schools, Tahayghan Elementary School and George M. Dawson, offer the Haida Language and Culture Programs as an elective course in their system. It's offered in partnership with OMVC and School District # 50.



photo: Lisa White

Emily Goertzen, Archie Stocker and son, Rylie at the Language Nest in Massett.

Students at Tahayghan Elementary School attend the Haida Language and Culture Program which is lead by Maureen Lagroix. She has the assistance and strong support naanii Mary Swanson, tsiinii Claude Jones and Diane (Smith) York and sometimes Louise Almqvist fills in as relief staff.

At George M Dawson, the Haida Language and Culture Program is offered as an elective for students who want to learn more about their language and culture. The lead teacher is Marni York with support from Candace Weir-White and tsiinii Stephen Brown. The

program has been operating for almost 25 years but with depleting enrolment at the high school it is in jeopardy. It is important for our youth to learn about their culture and language. Encouragement for higher enrolment in the electives is essential for its continued success.

Simon Fraser University Linguistic courses are offered on a regular basis in Old Massett. Want to attend, but don't want to take it for university credit? You can 'audit' the course, which means you can take it, do the work, but not be 'graded'

continued next page

xaad kihlgaa hl suu.u = speak Haida

continued from page 3

on your assignments – it’s a great way to learn. In the same program a few students successfully completed the certificate in Haida Language Proficiency this last academic year. This adds to the number who received their certification several years ago. There are at least twelve community members who have received language proficiency through SFU. Contact Lucille Bell about the SFU courses.

Along with these courses that are offered there is also a Monday night language practice at the Family Center. At these sessions SFU students can practice speaking with an elder but you don’t have to be an SFU student to attend, all community members are invited to the practice nights – they are free and you don’t have graded assignments!

For the younger children not yet of school age, (up to four-years) and their parents, the xaad kihlgaa hl suu.u Society continues to offer the Language Nest on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays from 11 am to 1:30 pm.

The Language Nest is open to all parents and their young children; it is designed to help the parent learn alongside their children so that our language can be used more at home and in the community. A learner needs to practice the language with another speaker and so the practice of teaching parents and children is a good way to begin, as parents and children can use their new words in a variety of settings.

Currently, we are in an era where the number of our valued elders is decreasing and the number of flu-

ent speakers is not increasing. Our children who are learning xaad kil in school are not having an opportunity to use or practice Haida outside of school. Why? Because few parents are learning the language. The Language Nest is free – it’s just up to you to get there. When you walk through the door you are greeted by Lisa and the elders, usually naanlang Emily Goertzen, Primrose Adams, and Merle Andersen. After a few ‘lessons’ a very nice lunch is prepared and served by the OMVC Culinary Artists. Then after lunch, songs are learned by both parent and child. Bring your drum... it’s fun! Lisa White is the coordinator and can be reached at the Family Center from 9 am to 2:00 pm on these days. •

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for information



Tsiinii Stephen Brown

photo: Lisa White



The splash page of the Haida Legends web site.

Hooked on Haida

Haida Legends web site could interest a new generation of learners.

A b-ball player — clearly the star — receives a pass, makes a slick move and in the dying moments of the game shoots from centre court, only to be robbed at the basket by Raven. Sounds like the All-Native in Rupert but it's not. This is the final scene in the video, *Hoopla* a 4-minute video produced locally with a crew of over 25 Massett and New Massett artists, animators and set designers.

Getting young and old to discon-

nect from the TV and spend time learning is a difficult assignment. But getting hooked on Haida rather than the latest "reality" show was the task this group set themselves. Why fight it!

The Xaad Kihlgaa Hl Suu.u Society certainly wasn't going to, but what they did do was realize that the power of TV and other media could interest a whole new audience and plant the seeds for learning the Haida language. So they got busy writing proposals, which were successful, hired a team and began working on scripting videos, and writing stories.

The fruits of their labour is now posted to the web and available at haidanation.ca. Just click on the link *haida legends* and up pops the societies Haida language site. There are nine legends ready for viewing and reading. There are four short videos — *Yaanii K'uuka*, *The Golden Spruce*, *Hoopla*, and *the Haida Raid*. Most of the material is in Haida with English translation.

The illustrated stories include *Tree Spirt*, *Yaahl gin Tlaaw hlaas Gyaahliingee* (Raven Creation Story) *Taan Aaw Gyaahlingee* (Bear Mother) and three others. These stories are accompanied by audio files of the story being read in Haida and more content will be posted as it is developed.

Xaad Kihlgaa Hl Suu.u is the umbrella Haida language organization for the northern dialect and assists Xaad Kil Gwaaygangee (Language Nest), school programs, and Simon Fraser University Haida Language Proficiency Program among others. •

WEB VIDEO TIPS

When viewing the Haida Legends site remember that some of the video file sizes are large and the time to download onto your computer will be affected by the speed of your connection. A good practice is to let the video download at least half of the file — you can see it's progress in the download bar — and then hit play. Depending on your connection speed the rest of the file should be downloaded to allow non-stop viewing. Or, just download the whole file and then press play. •



Illustration by Ernie Swanson for the story *Sgaan lihlaangee Gyaahlingee*, *Killer Whale Man* on the Haida Legends web site.



8th Annual Haida Language Gathering AGENDA

**Haida Heritage Centre at Kaay Llnagaay, Xaayda Gwaay
April 18, 19, 20, 2009**

SATURDAY - Community Reports/ Master Apprentice Programs /CHN Resolutions

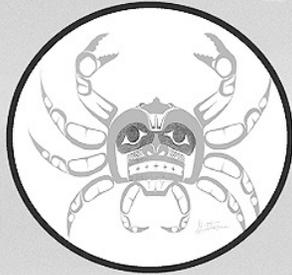
Saturday 10:00am – 10:50	Saturday 11:00am – noon	Saturday Noon	Saturday 1:00pm-2:00	Saturday 2:15pm-3:00	Saturday 3:15pm-4:15	Saturday 4:15pm	Saturday
9:00am Registration Opening Prayer Hydaburg Welcome Addresses Opening Song Introductions Agenda Review Meeting Schedule 2009-2010	Massett Community Report 30 minutes Hydaburg Community Report 30 minutes	Lunch at Heritage Centre Cafeteria	Ketchikan Community Report 30 minutes Skidegate Community Report 30 minutes	Master Apprentice Program Reports Hydaburg Masset Skidegate (15 minutes each)	Council of The Haida Nation – Haida Language Resolutions Guujaaw Arnie Bellis CHN Reps	Sing 3 Songs: Hydaburg Masset Skidegate Closing Prayer Hydaburg	Gathering Participants are invited to attend a <u>K</u> 'aadas <u>Ga</u> <u>KiiGawa</u> Clan dinner at the Skidegate Community Hall

SUNDAY - Haida Language k-12 Curriculum / Orthography

Sunday 10:00am – 10:50	Sunday 11:00am – noon	Sunday Noon	Sunday 1:00pm-2:00	Sunday 2:15pm-3:00	Sunday 3:15pm-4:15	Sunday 4:15pm	Sunday 5:30pm
<p>Opening Prayer Masset</p> <p>Haida Language Curriculum</p> <p>*Chief Mathews School *Alaskan Curriculum * Marla Pryce *SD #50</p>	<p>Haida Language Curriculum</p>	<p>Lunch at Heritage Centre Cafeteria</p>	<p>Haida Education Council:</p> <p>GMD Tahayghen Sk'aadGa Naay QCSS</p>	<p>Orthography</p> <p>3 dialects: Masset Skidegate Hydaburg</p>	<p>Orthography</p> <p>3 dialects: Masset Skidegate Hydaburg</p>	<p>Sing 3 Songs:</p> <p>Hydaburg Masset Skidegate</p> <p>Closing Prayer Masset</p>	<p>Celebration Dinner</p> <p>Skidegate Community Hall</p> <p>5:30pm</p>

MONDAY - Modern Words / Dictionary Projects

Monday 10:00am – 10:50	Monday 11:00am – noon	Monday Noon	Monday 1:00pm-2:00	Monday 2:15pm-3:00	Monday 3:15pm-4:15	Monday 4:15pm	Monday
<p>Opening Prayer Skidegate</p> <p>Haida Heritage Centre Tour</p>	<p>Hirofumi Hori <i>Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences - Shizuoka University</i></p> <p>Jordan Lachler <i>Sealaska Heritage Institute (Intensive Foreign Service Institute language training)</i></p>	<p>Lunch at Heritage Centre Cafeteria</p>	<p>Community Language Awareness</p> <p>Action Plan: *website *Gathering Logo *signage * Language Resource Books</p>	<p>Dictionary Projects *Grant opportunities</p> <p>Modern Word Discussion</p>	<p>Language Activities</p> <p>Alaska = ? Masset = ? Skidegate = Diigwey</p> <p>Closing Remarks</p>	<p>Sing 3 Songs:</p> <p>Hydaburg Masset Skidegate</p> <p>Closing Prayer Skidegate</p>	<p>Travel Home Safe Everyone</p>



8TH INTERNATIONAL HAIDA LANGUAGE GATHERING

APRIL 18 - 20TH
2009

AT KAAY LLNAGAAY
HAIDA HERITAGE CENTRE

**HLGAAGILDA XAAYDA KIL NAAY
SKIDEGATE HAIDA IMMERSION PROGRAM
SKIDEGATE, HAIDA GWAI, B.C.**

THIS GATHERING IS OPEN TO ANYONE INTERESTED IN SAVING AND REVITALIZING OUR HAIDA LANGUAGE. DISCUSSIONS WILL INCLUDE A WIDE RANGE OF TOPICS, INCLUDING HAIDA LANGUAGE CURRICULUM AND TEACHING MATERIALS, HAIDA DICTIONARIES, MASTER / APPRENTICE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS, DEVELOPMENTS IN HAIDA ORTHOGRAPHY ... AND MUCH MORE.

**XAAYDA KIL DA KAAGANDA
SGAAWDAGII DANG GA T'ALANG KIL 'LAA**

for more information contact ship@haidagwaii.net