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HAIDA LAAS

Newsletter of the Haida Nation

May 2012



Alan Wilson

*S*Gaana Jaads K'yaga Xiigangs, *Golie Hans* and Eth-di-ni, *John Yeltatzie* confer at the Joint Review Panel hearings held in Skidegate.

Hearings were held in both Skidegate and Old Massett.



HAIDA LAAS

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Xaayda: the language of the land & sea

Over the past few years the communities of Old Massett, Skidegate, Ketchikan and Hydaburg have been working together to harmonize spelling styles of Xaayda kil and building on the success of the others.

In the past, alarms were sounding and things looked pretty bleak – this year’s language conference was more encouraging – things are not just happening, rather, people are making things happen.

There is no question that the near elimination of our language was deliberate. It is a pattern that repeats itself around the world where one culture seeks domination over another. The function of colonialism is not simply to have dominion over other people, but also dominion over their lands and resources.

Along with the attempted killing of our language, other cultural practices were outlawed and frowned upon. They didn’t want us to sing or dance ... today, our feasts are filled with song and dance.

There was also a deliberate and concerted effort to sever the ties of our people to the land; they even tried to restrict our access to the food that these islands provide. We fought back and maintained our rights to look after our families, as we must.

It was apparent the industrial arm of colonialism had the capacity to deplete the resources where rights would be of no use on spoiled lands, or waters void of fish. They had set out to log every tree, including all the cedar.

We fought these practices, brought in a more respectful form of forestry and ensured that there will be cedar and salmon for the generations to come. Our people decided what should remain in a natural state ... there will be nature on Haida Gwaii.

We fought off tanker traffic and off-shore drilling, but we will have to beat it

again. We lost our influence for 100 years ... this is no longer so. We were locked out of any economic opportunities but are now in a good position to lead the rebuilding of an Islands’ economy. But, if we lose our language it doesn’t matter who is at fault. We know that there is nobody, except ourselves, who can save it. We know that it is in each of us to learn.

Our elders are giving their precious time to see that our language, our names, our songs, and the stories of our people are not lost. We have place names that might have been lost to antiquity. Our language is the language of the land and sea around us. We need our language to be whole.

A generation of devoted, young people are stepping up and finding their voice. We know that learning a language is not easy, but neither is the fight to look after the land and culture.

We find the will to do these things ... because we must.

haawa

Great Expectations

Haida Gwaii Management Council determines new Allowable Annual Cut

If it’s easier to fight than get along, as Guujaaw, President of the Haida Nation said at Kay during the announcement of the Allowable Annual Cut Determination, then the Haida Nation and province of BC arriving at consensus at the Haida Gwaii Management Council table signals a political shift and new working relationship between governments that have, in the past, been of different minds.

Allan Davidson and Trevor Russ represent the Haida Nation on the Management Council; Lindsey Jones and Darrell Rob sit for the province of BC; and Derek Thompson was appointed chairperson by both governments.

Over a six-month period, the Haida Gwaii Management Council read, analyzed and questioned the forestry data provided by their technical team. Together, the Council members wrestled with how best to decide on a level of cut for Haida Gwaii that would satisfy the many interests wanting access to the forest but also ensure the long-term well-being of the forest. The Council had to answer a question: How do you maintain the health of the forest and its waterways while providing work for families and communities?

Both parts of the question were answered on April 4, 2012, when the Haida Gwaii Management Council announced the maximum amount of wood that can be cut each year on Haida Gwaii. That number is 929,000 cubic metres, which is 47.8 percent of the previous AAC of 1,780,092 cubic metres. The way that wood is cut, and how the forest is treated, have also changed dramatically. The forest is now managed with the requirements of Haida culture in mind, and the assurance of a viable, healthy forest is at the forefront of decision-making – rather than being an afterthought.

At the announcement of the AAC Determination, about 80 people filled the Performance House at Kay, and the feeling was both celebratory and collegial.

“I feel proud that we came to an agreement on the decision,” said Allan Davidson. “We came together, developed



The Haida Gwaii Management Council representatives (l-r): Trevor Russ, Haida Nation; Darrell Robb, province of BC; Lindsey Jones, province of BC; Derek Thompson, chairperson; Allan Davidson, Haida Nation.

Full Moon Photos - Jason Shafo

an understanding of each other and where we were coming from, and then came to consensus on our decision.”

The HGMC’s decision triggers the next step in the process, which is how those cubic metres will be shared between the different management units on the Islands. The Chief Forester of BC will decide how much the two Tree Farm Licenses and the Timber Supply Area receive; District Manager Len Munt will decide how the wood available to the TSA is apportioned and determine the AACs in the Woodlot Licenses.

The ongoing process of building joint decision-making with the province of BC is a lively and often testy process, but at the AAC announcement you wouldn’t have known that — at the end of the event,

the audience spontaneously gave the Management Council a standing ovation!

* * *

To justify the cut of 929,000 cubic metres a document called the *Allowable Annual Cut Rationale* was produced. The 63-page GMC reasoning in making their decision and lays out in minute detail the process by which they came to their decision.

The document is available for download at: < haidagwaiimanagementcouncil.ca >



Tyson Brown

Rest Assured: Radiation levels being monitored

A year after the tsunami and Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in Japan, Old Massett has designed, built, and is operating its own radiological monitoring station. The device, which is an array of specialized units, is designed to continuously monitor the air for radioactive particles. It can also be used to test water, fish, seaweed and debris that may wash ashore.

The monitoring station takes a reading of the air every 10 seconds; that data is stored on a computer and sent over the

Internet for back-up off-Island. The station has been set so that an alarm will sound if readings rise above a certain level, and, if that does occur, a protocol is in place to seek expert advice as to the severity of the situation.

“If there is any increase in radiation from the Japanese tsunami and reactor disaster, and the debris drifting toward Haida Gwaii, we are now in a position to record it and inform the community and Haida Gwaii,” said John Disney, Economic Development Officer for Old Massett. •

Passion and Reason: a powerful combination

At the Enbridge Joint Review Panel hearings held in Skidegate and Old Massett, individuals, groups (CoAst), and local governments presented evidence to the Panel.

At the hearings in Skidegate, several individuals representing the Village of Queen Charlotte gave passionate, reasoned arguments to the JRP about the dangers of the proposed pipeline project.

“... we are concerned that the impacts (of an oil spill) will all be borne here (on Haida Gwaii), and we do not have the infrastructure or capacity, or alternative economies, to address the devastating effects of even a minor spill,” said Mayor Carol Kulesha in her presentation.



In this photo, taken at the Skidegate hearings, are Village of Queen Charlotte presenters (l-r) Bill Beamish, Chief Administrative Officer; Mayor Carol Kulesha; Councillor Kris Olsen; Malcolm Dunderdale; Councillor Greg Martin; and sitting to witness, President of the Haida Nation, Guujaaw. (Missing - John Broadhead who also presented for the Village.)

All Aboard the Freedom Train!

The Yinka Dene Alliance – a coalition of Carrier and Sekani First Nations – is sending some 30 First Nation delegates, from across the province, to board a ‘Freedom Train’ travelling from Vancouver to Toronto. The intent of this coordinated action is to put pressure on the federal government to stop the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway project.

As the train crosses the country, delegates will hold events and ceremonies at whistle stops in Jasper, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Winnipeg and Toronto. The YDA has organized a solidarity concert to be held in Toronto, the final stop, on May 8th; the following day the delegation and supporters will rally on the lawn of Metro Hall in downtown Toronto. From there, they will march to the Enbridge Annual General Meeting.

April Churchill, representing the Haida Nation on the train trip, will be speaking at the events along the way.

“I am honoured to speak on behalf of all children for clean water, clean air, healthy food, and healthy land and seas,” she said. “I will also speak to the ability of all of us to continue traditional and cultural activities while providing for ourselves and our communities.”

The Yinka Dene Alliance includes the Nadleh Whut’en, Nak’azdli, Takla Lake, Saik’uz, and Wet’suwet’en First Nations, whose combined territories in northern BC comprise twenty-five percent of the lands the Northern Gateway project would need to cross with its pipelines if the project were to be approved. •



Tyson Brown

It Ain’t Over – not by a long shot

By Valine Crist

The Enbridge Joint Review Panel continues to hold community hearings along the proposed pipeline route throughout Alberta and British Columbia, and on February 28 & 29 were in Old Massett to hear evidence from a total of 32 people.

Following those hearings, the 3-member panel arrived in Skidegate to hear evidence on March 21 & 22 from an additional 37 Islanders who also presented traditional and contemporary information related to the Enbridge Northern Gateway proposal.

In Old Massett and Skidegate the halls were full of observers, there to listen and support the speakers. Hereditary leaders were seated at the front of the room to officially witness the event; matriarchs and elected officials encircled the panel’s table.

The first day of hearings, in both communities, saw a full line-up of individuals speaking on behalf of the Council of the Haida Nation. The speakers included elders, elected representatives, local fisherman, working professionals from within the nation, and traditional-knowledge holders.

Many of the speakers on Day Two at both venues echoed similar concerns about the proposed project and presented an experience unique to people who were born here or have come to live on the Islands. This experience, which includes familial and political alliances, is a new force born out of the Islands’ collective culture.

Now, more than ever, we see Haida Gwaii coming together – all communities,

all levels of government, and a diverse range of Islanders getting informed and speaking up against this proposal that threatens our very existence. “Today we stand together as Island people, we are not just the Haida Nation,” acknowledged K’uuk ‘iwaans, *Kiefer Collison*.

Many of the presenters in both villages highlighted the amount of food that Haida Gwaii offers now and that which the Islands have historically offered. They also spoke to the uses of those foods and to the effects that an oil spill would have on these resources, on local communities and on coastal ecology. The fact that we still have a food source is largely because the CHN has been involved in long-term planning for

It ain’t over - continued next page



Some of the speakers who presented evidence at the Joint Review Panel hearings in Old Massett with CHN legal counsel (l-r): Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson, legal counsel; Nang Jingwas, Russ Jones; Sgaann 7iw7waans, Allan Wilson; Leslie Brown; Allan Davidson; Vanessa Bennett-Bellis with Chloe; Trevor Russ; Margaret Edgars; Guujaaw; Robert Davidson; Oliver Bell and Reg Davidson.

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the lands and the ocean and is successfully developing and implementing associated agreements with the federal and provincial governments. The prospect of having that work undermined or destroyed is very real given the proposed huge increase in marine traffic and, specifically, large oil-tankers.

“The Council of Haida Nation is engaged in marine planning with Canada because we recognize that humans have the ability to alter, damage, or destroy those things that are important to Haida people and Haida Gwaii,” explained Russ Jones at the hearing in Old Massett. “Human activities have already caused changes to the oceans and sea life around Haida Gwaii. Marine planning is aimed at protecting Haida Gwaii for future generations. As Haida we rely on all species that are found in Haida Gwaii and even the smallest thing is important.”

In Skidegate, April Churchill, Vice-president of the Haida Nation reinforced Mr Jones’ points and summed up what many people were talking about in the hall and on the street:

“A core Haida principle is that the living generation holds the land, waters and life forces in trust for the benefit of future generations,” Ms. Churchill explained to the panel. “We may not infringe on their rights. Consequently, we speak against any risk of poisoning, degradation or destruction to any part of our waters, lands, people and Haida Gwaii life-forces through supertanker, oil spills and bilges that bring introduced species which are part of this proposed Northern Gateway Enbridge and oil tanker project. We cannot put our precious homeland at risk.”

* * *

At the conclusion of the Skidegate hearings, it was evident that the people of Haida

Gwaii had made a connection with the panel. “I have appreciated the dignity and the respect that has prevailed throughout the two days we’ve been together,” said panel member, Kenneth Bateman, in his closing remarks in Skidegate.

The next steps in the hearings process are outlined on the Northern Gateway JRP web site. And despite recent announcements by the federal government regarding possible changes to the hearing procedures, if all goes as originally planned the JRP will return in June to hear oral *statements*. Compared to the presentation of oral evidence given at the recent hearings, which is considered a quasi-judicial process, oral statements are an informal process where Islanders can give their opinions, views, concerns, and statements about the decision the panel should make – this phase of the hearings is greatly anticipated and should prove to be much more lively than the past round. •



Some of the speakers who presented evidence with CHN legal counsel and staff at the Joint Review Panel hearings in Skidegate. (l-r): Jusquan Amanda Bedard with Honna; Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson, legal counsel; April Churchill, James Cowpar; Randy Tennant with Aria; Roy Jones Sr.; Jason Alsop; Jenny Cross; Miles Richardson; Bea Harley; Guujaaw; Golie Hans; Jisgang Collison and Robert Mills.

The Fire in Our Hearts

Evidence shows pipeline and tanker traffic too risky

by Kelsey Pelton

Coming from the south and as soon as you cross the causeway heading in to Masset, you spot the protest signs posted in yards, and they lead you all the way to the Old Massett Community Hall.

The first Northern Gateway/Enbridge Hearing took place on February 28th and 29th. Inside the hall, at four long tables, were seated Chiefs, Ladies Held in High Esteem, elected officials and community leaders – the tables surrounded the speakers who were giving evidence. Banners depicting scenes of Haida Gwaii and proud, colourful clan crests covered the walls, which were also decorated with cedar boughs.

Many in the audience wore blue scarves, which are a sign of protest and have been worn by many people at the hearings being held across BC. In the hall there was a strong underlying sense of Haida pride that made you glad to be fighting the Northern Gateway project together. You could sense everyone’s pride as they saw people from across the Islands standing up to fight against the pipeline proposal.

The Joint Review Panel consisted of Sheila Leggett, Kenneth Bateman, and Hans Matthews and they created a courtroom-like atmosphere in a hall normally used for public meetings, basketball games and community events. It was their job to listen to our evidence and determine if they think that our environmental and cultural concerns are more important than the risk of a pipeline and tanker traffic.

Throughout the two days of hearings, speakers shared stories about their lives and the traditions that have been passed on to them. Themes that most speakers spoke to were: traditional food gathering, the passing of knowledge from generation to generation, and sharing that knowledge with others so that they may understand where the speaker is coming from. Most



The Joint Review Panel (l-r): Kenneth Bateman, Sheila Leggett (chairperson) and Hans Matthews pictured in Old Massett.

speakers were very emotional, which shows how much they care and how much they hope that this pipeline project will never materialize. Before giving their evidence, each speaker swore on eagle feathers to promise to tell the truth.

Following is a selection of brief excerpts of what people said at the hearings. A full transcript of the Haida Gwaii hearings can be found at: gatewaypanel.review-examen.gc.ca/clf-nsi/prtcptngprcss/hmg-eng.html

gatewaypanel.review-examen.gc.ca/clf-nsi/prtcptngprcss/hmg-eng.html

The First Day

Guujaaw, President of the Haida Nation, led off the first day. “Our people, of course, are concerned about what is proposed here and more concerned when they see a government who seems to have already made up

Fire - continued next page

Tell the panel what you think!

There is an opportunity to do that even if you are not signed up to speak. The same 3-member panel will be here for approximately 2 weeks in June and those registered to make an oral statement will be able to speak – but you can write a *Letter of Comment* and the deadline for submissions is August 31.

Go to < gatewaypanel.review-examen.gc.ca > or call 1.877.288.8803 for instructions on how to submit your opinion.

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their mind,” said Guujaaw. “We know the stakes that are in front of us for our people and we know that it’s about big money, and big money usually means big trouble. Our culture is about how close we can be to the earth ... that’s where our songs come from, our language, our dance. All of our crests and our material culture are derived directly from the earth.”

“The pipeline [from Alberta] to the West Coast is not essential to life on this planet,” continued Guujaaw. “It’s not essential to us, it’s not essential to the Asian markets, and could be nothing but grief for all the people who live here. It may be profits for people in Calgary and other places, but I don’t think that it’s your job to worry about them,” he said.

Margaret Edgars thanked her ancestors and family for teaching her what to teach her children. “If an oil spill happens, it will be so devastating to fishing and our way of life. Enbridge doesn’t respect the lands of our people. They will never listen. We have lost so much and I don’t want to see any more harm done. The ocean is our livelihood.”

Oliver Bell is a fisherman like many people on Haida Gwaii. He introduced his uncle to the panel and explained that he was the one who taught Oliver where to gather food, and what to gather. “I want my children and grandchildren to have the same opportunities as I do today. I can’t imagine looking at the water if there is nothing there for me.”

Archaeologist, Allan Davidson, knows tons about the ancient history of our ancestors. He has handled cultural material that is thousands of years old and shows that our existence here has been forever. “There is just too much risk,” he said.

From her nonnie and chinnie, Leslie Brown learned that “we treat Haida Gwaii as a person”. She spoke about teaching her children traditional knowledge and about her hopes for them to live the life that she has lived. “The ocean brings my family together,” she said.

With her baby daughter sitting beside

her, Vanessa Bellis was clear about exactly why we need to protect Haida Gwaii. She believes in ocean spirit and supernatural beings. She uses the ocean for spiritual reasons and cleansing, as well as for



Gaaying.uuhlas, Roy Jones Sr. is affirmed before presenting his evidence to the Enbridge Joint Review panel at the hearings in Skidegate.

gathering food for her family. “Haida Gwaii was prosperous before visitors came here. We only take what we need,” she said.

Robert Davidson showed photos of his artwork and explained how they all relate back to the ocean and its importance.

The Second Day

The second day in Old Massett began with Tluu Xaadaa Naay singing in the Chiefs, Ladies Held in High Esteem and the elected officials. Sgaann 7iw7waans, Allan Wilson opened the proceedings, speaking about how well the hearings went on the first day, and how he hoped that we were about to have another very successful day.

Speakers began with Guujaaw introducing Ricki Ott who is from Prince William Sound, Alaska. She has first-hand experience with the massive Exxon Valdez oil spill that happened on March 23, 1989.

Ms Ott created an imaginary time-line in the room, stepping forward along the line to indicate the years since the Exxon Valdez oil spill and the impact that the spill had on fish, wildlife and her community.

Ms Ott offered an insider’s experience with the tragic oil spill and the repercussions. Unfortunately, panel Chair, Sheila Leggett, repeatedly interrupted Ms Ott, questioning the validity of her evidence. Guujaaw explained to the panel that he wished Ms Ott to continue as she was a guest of the Haida Nation and that it was Haida tradition to listen to others and learn from previous mistakes to prevent them from happening again.

Ms Ott said that it is not a question of “if” there is an oil spill but a question of “when”. She ended her evidence with, “No pipeline, no tankers, no problem!” And, for that she received a long, standing ovation from the crowd. Ms Ott had a huge impact on everyone in the hall; her speech was powerful, eye opening, and she truly made us realize what is at stake.

“Enbridge will do well, but no one else will,” said John Disney. Mr Disney talked about his career as an Economic Development Officer and how he would deal with a proposal like this. He said he would consider all sides of the proposal. He then questioned why the Enbridge lawyer attending the hearings was “calling the shots” about which documents and evidence Mr Disney could and couldn’t use.

Jaalen Edenshaw was one of many people speaking to the panel for Communities Against Super Tankers (CoAST), an Islands-wide community group active in producing information about the proposed pipeline and encouraging community action. He started his speech by briefly describing the history of the organization, saying that the group was created thirty years ago to oppose oil tanker traffic in the late 1970s. “The Islands came together then and said ‘no’, and thirty years later, we’re here again, and we’re saying ‘no’,” said Mr Edenshaw. “Our way of life is on trial and the loss of our culture is not



The Enbridge Joint Review Panel hearings held in the George Brown Recreation Centre, March 21 & 22, 2012 saw 37 Islands’ community-members giving evidence.



The Enbridge Joint Review Panel hearings were held at the Old Massett Community Hall, February 28 & 29, 2012 with 32 Islands’ community-members giving evidence.

an acceptable risk.”

Another member of CoAST, Kiefer Collison, showed a video that he produced. The short film has Elders sharing their point of view on the proposed pipeline and tanker traffic. “There is a fire that burns in our hearts – you can feel it,” he said. “All we’re trying to do is put that fire in your hearts. That’s it. [Fishing] teaches you to be patient, it teaches you to give, it teaches you to care, it teaches you to respect, and that is what everything is about here. We want to be respected. We are a fighting nation – we will never give up,” he said.

“If you were living here, you would know how to survive, but if we took away

all your money, you wouldn’t know how to survive,” said artist, Donnie Edenshaw. “The bottom line is, we need this place. We don’t want to learn how to clean up oil.” He then shared a song with the audience and panel.

“Haida Gwaii is a state of mind,” said Phred Collins from Tlell, speaking as part of the CoAST delegation. “The history of the coast will change forever ... there is no gain, only risk.”

Jesse Condrotte, a youth aged 14, said, “If they were to defile this great land, Haida Gwaii wouldn’t even be Haida Gwaii anymore; it wouldn’t be the people’s land – it would just be another place. I just love the

culture; it’s so deeply embedded that I don’t want one big company to take it all away.”

“Haida Gwaii captured me,” said Tlell resident, Catherine Rigg, and added, “I will protect it. These really are truly shining islands. Listening to us today, you might think we all like each other, but we don’t... but I’m happy we have all come together now!”

Day Two of the hearings ended with closing remarks from the panel members and Guujaaw. Reverend Lily Bell offered a clear and direct prayer, which, in part, said, “If we let Enbridge through, we all may as well start mourning now.” •

So Many Ways to Learn

12th Annual International Haida Language Conference showcases the variety & diversity of teaching & learning methods

By Kelsey Pelton

The 12th Annual International Haida Language Conference took place on April 27th and 28th at the Skidegate Haida Immersion Program longhouse situated on the waterfront in Skidegate.

The gathering brought together people from Alaska, Old Massett and Skidegate, all working to preserve the Haida language. Listening to everyone's stories and speeches made me eager to learn more and I was inspired on both days while attending the conference. It felt so good knowing that so many people were involved in creative language projects and working to revitalize *Xaayda kil* (Skidegate dialect).

On the first day, the longhouse was packed with people, and more chairs had to be put out as it was 'standing room, only'. It was great to see so many people show up.

Both days began with an opening prayer and welcome. The first day, Roy Jones Sr. told a story about raven and the salmon, entirely in *Xaayda kil*. Following the story, communities reported on their activities, which brought everyone up to date about what is happening in schools and communities in terms of practicing, teaching and learning *Xaayda kil*. The first report was from the Alaskan delegation:

In Hydaburg and Ketchikan, speakers and learners are working hard to preserve not one, but three languages – *Xaad kil* (Alaskan dialect), Tlingit, and Sm'algayax (Tsimshian).

These communities have an apprentice-mentor program where students are paired with an elder and spend time teaching and learning together in a focused situation. The program's goal is to have 30 students complete 700-800 hours of mentoring. Of note is that the program recently moved into a new building in Ketchikan, which has a room for audio recording. The special room was an idea they got from SHIP's setup in Skidegate.

The Alaskan delegation also announced that the first week of April is now *Xaad kil*

Awareness Week in their villages and part of their programming is to reach out to the greater community to show just how alive the language is.

In Old Massett there is a lot going on, as well. Jusquan Amanda Bedard, Lucille Bell, Candace Weir-White, Marianne Ignace, Jaalen Edenshaw and Ken Leslie reported on their numerous and varied activities.

One project in the works is sending special resources to Haida foster children who are living off-Island. Ms. Bell said this is so the young people can become familiar with, and have the opportunity to learn, the language. The resources include greeting cards and picture books.

Evening classes have been a regular event for the past few years in Old Massett. At the classes, *Xaad kil* (Old Massett dialect) stories are shared and support is given to people wanting to learn the language – everyone is welcome. Ms Bedard said there are many ways to learn the language and these days she is working on producing a variety of resources for learners, young and old. The latest batch of material is based on the Haida calendar, using audio recordings as the source material. At the *Xaad kil* Immersion kindergarten class that Candace Weir-White teaches every Wednesday at Tahayghen Elementary School, she uses materials produced by Ms Bedard. In the class, Ms Weir-White also teaches the students Haida singing and dancing.

Producer/Director Ken Leslie described his new project, called Haidawood, to the gathering. Mr Leslie and a growing team of artists are using stop-motion video to create movies that feature *Xaad kil* to tell the story. Mr Leslie and his ad hoc team have created four movies over the past couple of years and there are two more currently in production: The Tow Hill Story and The Octopus Story. You can watch the completed videos on the Haida Nation web site or on YouTube. The team is open to all community members and Mr Leslie invites people to become involved in the project.

You can contact him through Facebook.

Marianne Ignace and Jaalen Edenshaw spoke about a project that is documenting and mapping *Xaad* place names, especially at the north end of the Islands. They have mapped 599 place names so far. "Every time you say a place name [in *Xaad*] you are quoting your elders," he said. "Look on Google Earth! The entire north end of Haida Gwaii has [*Xaad*] place names."

Two other dedicated teachers working in the Old Massett area are Diane York and Colleen Williams. These women are and have been teaching language and traditional food gathering at both Tahayghen and George M Dawson for a few years now.

Reporting from Skidegate, Joan Moody and Laura Jormanainan spoke about their methods of teaching language and culture to students from kindergarten to grade seven at Sk'aadga Naay Elementary School. And, Debi Laughlin and Golie Hans talked of their work at Gidgalang Kuuyas Naay (Queen Charlotte Secondary School).

Up in Skidegate Heights, Jenny Cross, Jackie Casey, and Herb Jones teach language and culture to children up to four years old at the Skidegate Head Start Program. To assist the young children, they have translated nursery rhymes and songs into *Xaayda kil*. As well, everything in the classroom is labeled in *Xaayda kil* for the young ones to see and absorb.

Opening the second day of the conference, Golie Hans told a story in *Xaayda kil* about growing up with her grandmothers and gathering traditional foods throughout the seasons. Roy Jones Sr. followed Ms Hans with another story – this one about catching fish, with his wife.

Mary Swanson from Old Massett told a story in *Xaad kil* about two boys who were messing around on the beach. The story goes that the boys found a baby octopus on the beach and poked at it with sticks. Their grandmother saw them and called them home right away. The baby octopus

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then went back to his village and told his chief what had happened. Then lots of things happened, like the shamans came and eventually the village chiefs had to get involved to sort out the situation. The lesson, Ms Swanson said, was that you never take more than what you need, and have respect for all living things.

Jusquan Bedard and Jaalen Edenshaw talked about the master-apprentice program that is running in Old Massett. The program is designed around one hour with an elder – one-on-one – and time after that for studying. Steven Brown is mentoring six students in this way and students and mentor are paid so they can make learning *Xaad kil* their top priority.

Everyone learns in different ways and the language programs are designed to meet the needs of a specific community. In Alaska they also have a strong apprentice-mentor program but use a conversational approach to learning the language.

Jordan Lachler, a linguist also working with learners and speakers in Alaska, gave a presentation on another learning method called Total Physical Response and demonstrated how to teach *Xaad kil*, without using any English words, to the gathering. Mr Lachler spoke three verbs and taught volunteers the actions that corresponded with the verbs. Then he gave the volunteers objects (a fork, knife, plate and napkin) and pronounced the *Xaad* words for each object. He then repeated the *Xaad* words in random order, and went on to mix both the nouns and verbs to show that the *Xaad* words they had just learned could be easily remembered. He encouraged the audience to use this method at home or school. "It is an easy and effective way of learning," he said.

For me, it was so nice to sit in this longhouse for two days surrounded by elders, listening to the sing-song language of our people. It makes me feel good ... like nothing's changed. •

The Bright Lights of Haidawood!

By Florence Lockyer

In a land far, far away, there is a place called Hollywood ... and here, on Haida Gwaii, we have Haidawood! Perhaps you've heard of the project and seen some of Haidawood's work on the Haida Nation webpage, or visited YouTube, or even scanned the Haidawood Media Project website (<http://haidawood.blogspot.ca/>) and FaceBook page.

A new, stop-action video project is Haidawood's latest production – other projects include a short video called the *Haida Raid*, and three longer videos: *yanii kuuka*, *The Golden Spruce*, and everyone's favourite, *Hoopla!* If you haven't seen them, check them out. Local artists and community members are

involved in all aspects of these innovative and unique Haida-language productions.

This latest project began with an information session at the Haida Rose Café, with a second session following the next day at The Ground. Producer/Director Dr. Ken Leslie wants to entice youth and other community members to be part of the adventure of filmmaking. This latest production is the Tow Hill story – you know, the story about the brothers – and once completed it will be an exciting experience seeing the legend come to life on-screen.

Once the project gets going – after another big brainstorming and set-designing event – Leslie figures the project will take 10 days to complete, maybe two weeks by the time the sound is synced with the action. All that work will be done at

Jusquan Bedard and Jaalen Edenshaw's downstairs suite situated on the harbour waterfront in Massett.

Even at its relatively small scale, the project requires many skills and is a complex undertaking. There is story-

boarding to do, which is the sequencing of scenes and steps in which the story will come alive; designing and building the sets; defining the characters and then actually making them; recording the sound that will include songs, drums, voices, and special effects; shooting the scenes frame-by-frame; and then editing the whole works on a computer.

Xaad kihlgaa hl suu.u Society member, Lucy Bell,

and the sponsors of the project, say it is about "getting the younger generations – as well as everyone else – excited about learning language and hearing it brought to life, just like the stories are." The video is a lively and engaging way to learn *Xaad kil* and posting the Tow Hill story to the web is practical and convenient and has the potential to reach a very large audience.

Do you know who broke the stone in the Tow Hill story? If you don't know, you'll soon find out. Or, if you *do* know, you'll be able to see how it happened in this new, stop-motion animation project. But this project is not the end – the next film will be the Octopus Story, a story which is sure to draw you in and keep you hooked! •



Leona Clow, David Jones and Marlon Bell watch the action during the information session held at the Haida Rose Café. The scene shows two figures travelling through the landscape with raven flying overhead.

Sown, Germinated & Nursed

by Jeff Mosher, RPF, Operations Planner for Taan Forest

Taan Forest, a subsidiary of HaiCo, is planting 220,000 seedlings on Haida Gwaii this spring, inclusive of 112,000 Red cedar.

One of Taan Forest's responsibilities is to ensure areas that have been cut are planted with trees once harvesting is completed. The number of seedlings and the species mix are determined in the early stages of the cut-block planning.

The seedlings being planted this year were ordered in 2010 and grown specifically for areas harvested in 2007, 2008, and 2009 – a time prior to Taan

Forest taking over the management of Tree Farm License 60.

Seed used for germinating and growing seedlings is collected from living trees. To ensure that the seedlings being planted on Haida Gwaii were germinated from trees that *grow* on Haida Gwaii, Taan Forest located several hundred parent trees (seed trees) on Vancouver Island that were grown from seed collected on Haida Gwaii. It is this seed that will be planted on the Islands this year and for several years to come.

The Haida Gwaii seed was shipped to the Woodmere Nursery in Telkwa BC, where it was sown and germinated – the seedlings are monitored closely for one

year for health and vigour. Woodmere Nursery does not use pesticides or herbicides but natural methods to eliminate pests or fungi, so careful attention is paid to these little trees. When the seedlings are large enough and meet Taan's standards, they are lifted from their growing-beds and packaged – 300 trees per box – then frozen to a temperature similar to winter conditions and trucked to the Islands for planting.

Thirty local planters are now busy planting the 220,000 seedlings; Taan Forest periodically conducts safety and quality inspections to make sure the planters' work meets Taan's standards. •



In a Taan Forest Planting Quality Plot, Forest Technologist Paul McIntyre of Zimmfor Management Services shows Cyrano Jones of Taan Forest how to fill out planting quality data sheets in the Farm area of the Haida Tenure.

What would we eat?

Hunger strike has international implications

By Valine Crist

In Bella Bella – homeland to the Heiltsuk nation – 13 youth and three teachers held a 48-hour hunger strike from April 1-3. The strike coincided with the Northern Gateway Joint Review Panel hearings being held in the community and focused attention and discussion on the proposed project. By the second day of protest, these young leaders had garnered international support for their efforts.

“The idea came from us all sitting around and talking about what we would eat if there was an oil spill,” said Vi Lindberg, one of the hunger strike organizers. That spark of an idea quickly gained the support of the Bella Bella Community School administrators and board.

“The idea was perfect ... because all of our traditional foods are jeopardized [by] this [pipeline] proposal. It was a good way to do a peaceful strike,” pointed out Courtney Reid, a Grade 11 student at the Bella Bella Community School.

On the first night the protesters stayed at home, explained Reid, but the second night, gathered at the school to help encourage and support each other in their stand.

Hunger striker Desmond Roessingh, 14, spoke to how big an issue the Enbridge Northern Gateway is in the Bella Bella community. “My parents are both politically active, so I learned a lot about Enbridge from them. I’ve known about it from the start,” he said. “I wanted to help send a message to Enbridge saying that we don’t want them here and we oppose their proposal and everything they stand for.”

The youths’ action raised awareness, not only throughout BC and Canada, but also in the U.S., Egypt, the Philippines, England, Austria, Australia, and Germany. Closer to home, one of the nations that joined in solidarity was that of the St’at’imc (once known as the Lillooet Nation).

In December, 2010, the St’at’imc Nation, along with some 60 other First

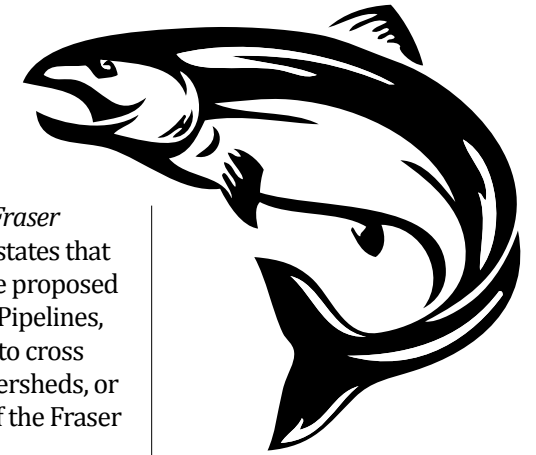
Nations, signed the *Save the Fraser Declaration*. The declaration states that signatories “will not allow the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipelines, or similar tar sands projects, to cross our lands territories and watersheds, or the ocean migration routes of the Fraser River salmon.”

“It’s part of our law, and what’s going on with Enbridge would interfere with our way of life,” said Ina Williams, a 39-year-old St’at’imc student enrolled in Bachelor of First Nations Studies at the St’at’imc Education Institute, which offers courses through Thompson Rivers University.

After researching the Enbridge proposal for a school project, Williams contacted Rachel Horst, one of the hunger strike organizers at the Bella Bella Community School. Williams then gathered local support and brought together two dozen people who fasted for a collective total of 319 hours.

Williams stated she initiated the strike out of respect for future generations and the sustenance that future generations will get from the St’at’imc sacred waters. “I wanted to help bring awareness to the issue,” she said. “We have a responsibility to protect and look after our environment.”

In South Dakota, Autumn Two Bulls, a self-proclaimed ‘actionist’ (a term she uses instead of ‘activist’), is an Oglala-born-and-raised Lakota woman. She is one of several mothers from the *Warrior Women Society* which organized a hunger strike in solidarity with the Heiltsuk youth in Bella Bella. After posting about the hunger strike on Facebook, Karen Ducheneaux,



another Lakota mother, received phone calls and messages in support of the idea. Before long, a two-day hunger strike was organized and a rally was held in nearby Eagle Butte, where approximately 75 locals marched in protest of the continued expansion of the tar sands and construction of the Keystone and Northern Gateway pipelines.

The Lakota set up a camp for the 48-hour strike near the Cheyenne River. While many couldn’t be there personally, they sent messages of support and some people fasted at home. “Everyone was really committed and so supportive,” Ducheneaux exclaimed.

The decision to join a hunger strike is not one made lightly. “We’re speaking out because we care,” said Autumn Two Bulls about supporting the Heiltsuk youth with their own action. “I stand up and say enough is enough ... we’re willing to stand on the line to protect our future.”

Reflecting on her experience, Ducheneaux recalled, “It was so inspiring to meet [young] people so committed to the earth and the water. We made some really important connections and now we know who our allies are. It’s like this was all just meant to be. I’m so impressed with the Heiltsuk youth. I’m so proud of them.” •

It is important to note that while hunger strikes can be effective in drawing attention to issues, they can also be fatal. There are a number of documented deaths attributed to prolonged hunger strikes. The Heiltsuk youth had a doctor check them before, during, and after the two-day hunger strike.

1 Project, 1 Review: How a majority government is wreaking havoc on a nation.

By Yaline Crist

On March 29, Federal government Finance Minister Jim Flaherty released the 2012-13 budget: central to this announcement was the elimination of the penny, changes to old age security, and, as promised, changes to the federal environmental review process. Flaherty took the opportunity to announce the government's goal of "one project, one review" and stated that the changes to the environmental review process will retroactively affect current projects, such as the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway project.

Making the leap from budget announcement to significant environmental policy changes is unconventional in a budget speech. Clearly, the federal government has been busy since they received their majority vote; the proposed changes to the environmental review process, if they become law, will have long-lasting implications for future generations on Haida Gwaii and across Canada.

October 2011: Government withdraws funding agreement with the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA), a body that brought together federal, provincial and local governments, First Nations, fisheries, environmentalists, and industry to design a collaborative ocean-management plan for the north coast.

December 2011: Canada formally withdraws from the Kyoto Accord. The Accord is a commitment made by developed industrial nations to reduce carbon emissions below 1990 levels and provide economic support to developing nations to encourage them to follow suit.

February 2012: Federal funding cuts force the closure of PEARL, the Polar Environmental Atmospheric Research Laboratory – an organization integral to conducting ozone-and-climate research in the Arctic.

Even though BC Premier Christy Clark hasn't publicly announced a position on the proposed Enbridge pipeline, she did hire Ken Boessenkool as her chief of staff. Mr Boessenkool was senior policy advisor and strategist to Prime Minister Stephen Harper and has also lobbied for Enbridge.

March 2012: The Harper government proposes changes to the Fisheries Act, which currently bans "the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat". The changes would see the Act protecting only "fish of economic, cultural or ecological value".

The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE) — one of Canada's most important forums

bringing together business and environment to help guide federal policies on sustainable development — is next on the chopping block and will be eliminated in 2013.

The federal government proposes increased monitoring of charitable (notably, environmental) organizations, citing that "concerns have been raised that some charities may not be respecting the rules regarding political activities".

April 2012: Hundreds of federal scientists responsible for environmental monitoring are laid off as part of the federal budget cuts.

Proposed legislation revealed by the Honourable Joe Oliver (Minister of Natural Resources) states that cabinet *could* overrule environmental assessment decisions involving pipelines, ultimately stripping the National Energy Board of its authority in the review process.

The federal government announces it will close BC's command centre for emergency oil-spill responses and centralize operations in Quebec, amidst proposed pipeline construction-and-expansions throughout the province.

These announcements and proposed legislative changes have led to a lot of questions, one of which is what does it mean to "streamline the environmental review process?" While the announcements have been made and changes *will* be made, what those changes will look like and when they will be implemented remains to be seen.

Here is what is known publicly about the proposed changes to Canada's environmental review process:

Provinces will now review what are



Joe Oliver, Minister of Natural Resources (left) recently stated, "We're very respectful of the traditional way of life of aboriginal communities. It's up to them of course to preserve what they believe is worthy of preserving. We're not taking a paternalistic approach in that regard. That's their decision."



While visiting China this past February, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said, "We will uphold our responsibility to put the interests of Canadians ahead of foreign money and influence that seek to obstruct development in Canada in favour of energy imported from other, less stable parts of the world."

deemed "small development projects", and some projects may be permitted without *any* national or provincial environmental review. At this stage of the federal policy-and-law rewrite, it is not clear what types of projects are "smaller development projects" or which government may have jurisdiction over which projects.

There will be fixed timelines for all reviews, up to a maximum of two years.

The National Energy Board (NEB), Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) will be the primary agencies involved in review processes.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Transport Canada are not allowed to intervene in an environmental review.

Only individuals who live or work near a proposed project are entitled to participate in an environmental review. Environmental groups that do not offer expertise specific to each project are not permitted to participate in the review.

This last point is of particular significance and begs a few questions. Why is a project claimed to be "in the national interest" suddenly irrelevant to a vast majority of Canadians? What constitutes "expertise"? And, how explicitly will we define who is "directly affected" by a proposed project such as the Northern

Gateway? Presumably, this will include those whose lands a pipeline crosses, or whose homes bear the risk of a catastrophic oil tanker spill. Joe Oliver again said that the government does not "see the need" to allow testimony from citizens outside proposed project areas, or from environmental groups that cannot offer "expert advice".

The new federal budget has revealed the government's view of its economic and environmental priorities: "Ottawa is committed to making the regulatory system more efficient and competitive. The move gives oil and gas companies more certainty on how long the regulatory process is going to take, which in turn makes it easier to plan and make informed investment decisions," said the supportive David Collyer, President of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers.

Also in support was Enbridge spokesman, Paul Stanway, who praised the proposed streamlining of the environmental review. "It makes great sense," he declared. And, as noted by Energy Consultant Doug Matthews, "The feds are finally saying, 'These are our resources. We are going to aggressively push to develop them'".

Criticizing the federal budget announcement, Steven Guilbeault — an environmental journalist — stated that it

"seems to have been written for, and even by, big oil interests. The Harper government is gutting the environmental protections that Canadians have depended on for decades to safeguard our families and nature from pollution, toxic contamination, and other environmental problems."

Many First Nations take issue with the drastic slashes to Canada's environmental policy. "The battle lines have been drawn and Aboriginal communities will not be deterred by this announcement," asserted Clayton Thomas-Muller, Organizer with the Indigenous Environmental Network. "There hasn't been a major environmental victory in this country without First Nations at the helm asserting Aboriginal title and treaty rights and we will continue in the face of Harper's attempt to gut democracy."

Speaking from a similar perspective, Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, said, "This incredibly stupid move on the part of the Harper government will only serve to expedite the battle in the courtrooms and on the land itself. What it does is it completely eclipses any hope or opportunity for reconciliation."

Closer to home, the million-dollar question remains: What does all this mean

Continued - next page

Did you know?

"The rationale is that for large projects that can have a national or regional impact of significance, both environment and economic, we believe the ultimate decision should be in the hands of elected officials and not appointed officials, because ultimately through Parliament elected officials are responsible to the people," said Joe Oliver, Minister of Natural Resources.

Continued from page 15

for the Enbridge Joint Review Panel? While the Harper government is making what many consider regressive policy changes, there has been no definitive statement on how those changes will impact the current Enbridge Joint Review Panel process.

In less than one year, the federal government is dismantling national environmental policies and significantly reducing funding to several key environmental organizations while suppressing charitable organizations' voices concerning politics, and now, environmental reviews.

Jim Flaherty recently cautioned that the country could lose an "historic opportunity" if we do not start exporting our oil to Asian markets as soon as possible. Given all the policy changes and announcements, a case can be made that the oil industry is leading the government. If nothing else, it is pitting the environment against the economy – are we being asked to choose one over the other?

China's largest state-controlled oil company, PetroChina, is reportedly interested in building Enbridge's \$5.5 billion Northern Gateway project. "They have made the point to us that they are very qualified in building pipelines, and we will take that into consideration when we are looking for contractors," outgoing Enbridge president and CEO Pat Daniel told the [National Post](#). "It's an open bid process. They are a very big organization, they build a lot of pipelines, and they would love to be involved from what they have told me."

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) is responsible for reviewing any projects that could have significant environmental impacts. The National Energy Board (NEB) is involved only when the project involves oil or gas pipelines. The Northern Gateway is a *joint review* between the CEAA and NEB.

Number 8 in the series – WORKING ON-ISLAND

DARLENE SQUIRES - up to many things ... often at the same time

by Valine Crist

As Program Manager of Council of the Haida Nation Operations, Doll's typical day involves doing many things, often at the same time; she is the 'go to' person for the President, Vice-president, and CHN Executive Committee, and the liaison between the Secretariat of the Haida Nation and CHN. Her job includes everything from ensuring that project deadlines are met, to making sure that day-to-day operations run smoothly.

For the past four-and-a-half years, Darlene Squires (more commonly known as "Doll", a nickname given to her by her dad when she was a toddler) has been working in this role for the Council of the Haida Nation.

The workload is hefty and Doll describes how she handles it all: "Well, you must absolutely be a team player. You also have to be very, very flexible because, in this line of work, every day the demands are different." Her work is a collaborative effort, she said, "We have a great team, and it's the contributions of everyone that make my work possible."

Hired originally as April Churchill's assistant – at the time, April was the CHN's

Executive Assistant, and is now Vice-president of the Haida Nation – Doll was ready for the challenge when she joined the CHN team.

Over the last few years, there has been ongoing restructuring of the organization; new roles have been developed and positions redefined. While Doll has witnessed many of these changes, she said that in just the past year there have been bigger and more substantial changes.

"Now that we're moving into the implementation stage [of the land-use plan] with the provincial government," Doll said, "citizens can expect to see continued expansion and evolution of the CHN. The work is very satisfying because at the end of the day, you actually see what's been done, such as the recent government-to-government agreements that are in place for shared decision-making." The agreements between both governments are giving future generations a new lease on life and are not only putting resources into the hands of the Haida Nation with which to build an Islands economy but are also setting a whole new precedent across the province in terms of how land is managed.

STUDY & SCHOLARSHIP

Considering a career with the Council of the Haida Nation

The Council of the Haida Nation is working on ways to get young people interested in and informed about the types of jobs that may be coming available. "It's a two-way street," Ms Squires said. "It's important to know what young people are interested in, and to let them know what types of jobs are available within our growing government and Nation. It's common for kids not to know exactly what they want to take, and these are good ways to get young people thinking about a career on Haida Gwaii," she added.

Earlier in her working life, and for nearly 20 years, Doll was a financial assistant for the provincial government at what is now known as the Ministry of Child and Family Services.

"I really liked my job there, but when the Liberal government was elected they started making a lot of [budget] cuts." When Doll was told that her position would be cut to half-time and based in Masset, she knew that it was time for her to move on. Doll said, in retrospect, "I enjoyed working for the provincial government, but ultimately it wasn't the right job for me. I didn't feel that they were fully utilizing my experiences and knowledge."

Leaving that job allowed Doll to "just kind of play around for a few years," she said. She went down to Gwaii Haanas and worked as a Watchman for two seasons, spending time at K'uuna Llnagaay, Hotspring Island, Windy Bay, and T'aaunu Llnagaay. This was a great learning experience, she said, and one that has had lasting significance for her. During this time of exploration, Doll also took on casual work – one job was with Haida Fisheries as a cook, and, another was as an on-call receptionist, before she was hired full-time at CHN.

In her spare time, Doll and her family are out camping as much as possible, especially at Copper Bay when the fish are running. For years, she's belonged to the Skidegate Dance Group, and has been on the Skidegate Repatriation Committee since it was established over 12 years ago.

Doll completed her education in Prince Rupert and, upon finishing, stayed in



Darlene Squires on the deck at the Skidegate office of the Council of the Haida Nation.

Prince Rupert and enrolled in Business Office Training (today, called Business Administration) at Northwest Community College. With this one-year diploma, she learned all of the essential skills that she has needed and used throughout her career, such as minute-taking, transcribing from tape, business English, and accounting.

In her 52 years, Doll has achieved much more than a successful and interesting work life – she also has a family that's her source of pride and motivation. With her first husband, Doll had daughter Tana, now

28. With Ted, her husband of 22 years, she has another daughter, Charlene, 19, who recently moved to Terrace to start an Early Childhood Education Certificate Program at Northwest Community College. Six years ago, Doll also became a Nanaay for the first time, to a baby girl named Tamara. "She's a total sweetheart – I just adore her," said Doll, beaming. •

*"It's challenging. It's rewarding. I love it.
There's never a dull moment working for the Nation."*

Darlene Squires, Program Manager for Council of the Haida Nation Operations

Number 9 in the series – WORKING ON-ISLAND

NATALIE FOURNIER - a provocative life-learner

By Valine Crist

Working for Gwaii Haanas requires an understanding of local and national politics. Parks Canada is one of several federal agencies and co-manages the Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area, and Haida Heritage Site. Together, representatives of the Haida nation and federal government form the Archipelago Management Board. This is a structure that Natalie Fournier, 39, knows inside-out from the years she has worked at Gwaii Haanas.

Natalie was hired in 2001 as the Communications Officer and was the first person within the organization to manage and coordinate community events. She designed a number of events over the years, including the “famous” t-shirt painting booth, the Gwaii Haanas Amazing Race at Skidegate Days, and the Islands-wide Great Community Beach Cleanup. In this position, she also took on the role of tourism representative to the AMB and became the lead for media relations.

For the past three years, Natalie has been the Promotion Officer at Gwaii Haanas. As the Promotion Officer, she is responsible for tourism marketing in British Columbia,

retail, advertising, and promoting off-Island visitation. Attending meetings on-Island and across the province, Natalie says that, “Attracting visitors is all about relationship building. A lot of it is meeting and talking with people and understanding and communicating the needs of different stakeholders.”

In recalling her job as the Communications Officer, Natalie talks about a steep learning curve in changing from academic writing at school to professional communications at Gwaii Haanas. Over the years, Natalie has had the opportunity to practice communication skills within Gwaii Haanas and has continued to learn from experience, an informal mentorship and formal training. “We’re a relatively small office but there’s a big belief in training staff,” she says about Parks Canada helping her gain the professional work skills she holds today.

It is important to Natalie to be a productive and contributing member of the community. She appreciates that Gwaii Haanas supports her participation in community events, such as the Repatriation of Ancestors and End of Mourning Feast

in 2005. For Natalie, this provides a great overlap with her personal interests, as she has been a member of the Skidegate Repatriation Committee for seven years and an active member of the Hltaaxulang Gud Ad K’aaju dance group for the same period of time.

“Singing and dancing just feels good – it makes me feel so connected,” she says.

For Natalie there is a big connection between her experiences in the dance group and the potlatch. “Dancing is like the potlatch – it’s so complex. Potlatches are the backbone of everything that we are. It is our law courts, it is our legal notice, it is our social system, it is our hierarchical system, it is our dispute resolution, it is about alliance forming, it is connective and bonding. It is all of those things,” she says. “That’s what dance is to me: it’s everything. It’s that soul connection, it’s cultural expression, it’s a personal expression. It’s all of that – it gives me so much.”

More than anything else, Natalie is an incredibly proud aunt to Kennedy, 11, and Trace, 3. The Haida word AwGa (Skidegate dialect, or ‘Awa’ in Massett) is used to refer to your mother and any woman of your mother’s generation in her (your) clan. It is Natalie’s understanding of the word that made her realize how important the role of AwGa is.

“My niece and nephew have a great mother and she does a great job,” she says. “I provide additional security and guidance; that’s my way of contributing to my family, my culture and my community.”

“In the old days, you were trained by your aunts and uncles because they were close enough to love you and take care of you, but far enough removed to train you and make you tough, making sure you

Proud aunt to Kennedy and Trace, Natalie Fournier is an accomplished communicator working for Gwaii Haanas.

became the best person possible. The next generations will be making decisions for your clan in the future. We need to raise people with strong values to pass on these responsibilities.”

After graduating from high school in Victoria – where she spent most of her adolescence – Natalie attended Camosun College. Like many people, she did not fit the cookie-cutter mould of a post-secondary student.

“There’s such a big difference between high school and college. Your professors don’t care about your attendance or work when you’re in college.”

In the early days, she did not know what she wanted to do in school and played with the idea of becoming an architect, and then briefly considered a career in law. Finally settling in, Natalie completed two years at Camosun College before moving to Malaspina (now Vancouver Island University) in Nanaimo. In 2004, having been working for Gwaii Haanas for a few years, as well as taking courses, Natalie graduated from university with a double minor in Liberal studies and First Nations studies.

Reflecting back on her education and career path, Natalie offers some sound advice. She says: know yourself and your passions. Take chances and ask questions. Pursue new work and volunteer experiences. Talk with your Elders, family, and clan members, and, communication is key, so make sure you put effort into reading, writing, and effective communication. •



“I know that some people think or say that we [the Haida Nation] didn’t stand on the line [at Athlii Gwaii] for Parks Canada to ‘roll in and take over’ but, frankly, to do what we do here, it’s the best fit. We’re getting our people trained and half of Gwaii Haanas’ employees are Haida. We’re a strong community partner.”

Natalie Fournier

STUDY & SCHOLARSHIP Aboriginal Leadership Development

The Aboriginal Leadership Development Program (ALDP) is a four-year training and development program offered to Aboriginal employees working for Parks Canada. The goal of the program is to hire and retain full-time, long-term Aboriginal leaders within Parks Canada. Established in 2000, every year 12 applicants throughout Canada are accepted into the three-week program located in the Yukon Territory. The program provides a holistic approach to training and development, respecting and incorporating aboriginal culture.

In 2006, Natalie completed the ALDP. Since then, four fellow Haida employees of Gwaii Haanas have started the program.

Bouncing around New Zealand

Youth exchange combines culture, politics and fun

By Kelsey Pelton

This past January, four youth from Haida Gwaii joined four youth from Ucluelet and two youth from Penticton and together they travelled all the way to New Zealand for a 10-day exchange trip, which was a trip of a lifetime!

Jason Alsop, Desiree Wilson, Niisii Guujaaw and Doreal Mearns representing Haida Gwaii, along with their peers, met with a group of Maori youth when they landed in Auckland, New Zealand. From there the group travelled south about 100 kilometres to the small town of Huntley where they stayed with the Waikato Tainui people in a traditional marae. A marae is a cleared area with a gathering place, and usually consists of a sleeping house, cook house, and a courtyard in which the people live and host events.

The group toured many places on New Zealand's North Island, and at each marae they visited, a ceremony took place before the exchange group entered the area. Jason Alsop said the ceremony was the equivalent of a Haida ceremony when entering a village: it is done to formally ask permission to enter and join them.

When approaching a marae, you wait at the gates to be met by Maori men who chant and dance with spears. A branch is then placed on the ground, which is to be accepted by a man from the arriving group. The man goes forward and lifts the stick off of the ground without breaking eye contact with the host Maori men. If this is executed properly, the group is then accepted into the marae. Once accepted, which implies being trusted, the Maori women walk forward followed by the men. Following this initiation, a Maori woman sings and the visitors sing in response, followed by welcoming speeches in the Maori language. The speech describes what the hosts expect from the visitors and then an offering is given. Once this is completed, both groups greet each other personally – women kiss each other on both cheeks and men touch noses. After the ceremony

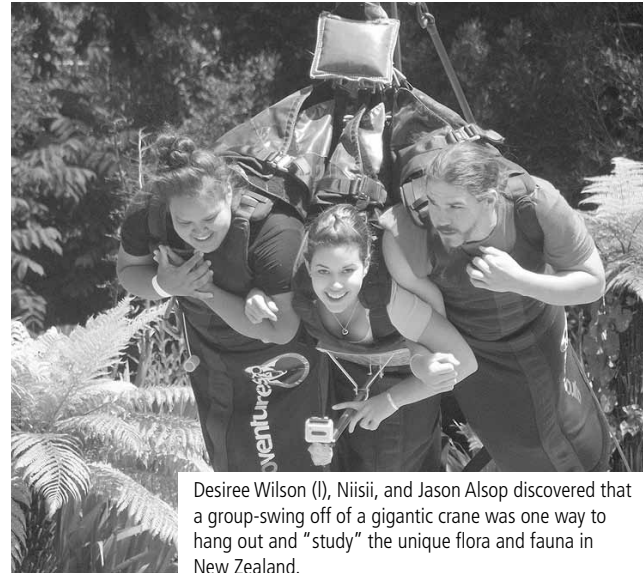
has been completed, your role as a visitor is to share the responsibilities of the group you are staying with. At mealtime, a woman will sing a song to let everyone know that the meal is ready, and a prayer follows the song. Traditional and common New Zealand foods include: kiwis, mussels, lamb, eel, abalone, sea urchin, flounder, sweet potatoes, dairy, and Vegemite!

"The experience was absolutely breathtaking and completely priceless," said Doreal Mearns. "I wouldn't change it for the world. It took me a couple of days to come out of the shock that I was [in New Zealand] – and I love how they talk!"

The lucky youth participated in many exciting and new activities on their trip. Canoeing is an important sport in New Zealand and they attended the Waka Ama National Canoe Sprint, which is a set of races using outrigger and double-hulled canoes. The exchange group also had the opportunity to paddle a traditional double-hulled canoe, called a waka te te. "Not all Maori people get to do this," Mr Alsop said. "It was something really special that we were able to do."

On another outing, the group was taken to see the King's canoe, which was rare opportunity as the 75-foot canoe is shown to the public only once a year and not that many New Zealander's have even seen it. The group also went paddle boarding, paint balling, saw geysers, and visited caves full of glowworms!

Invasive species are an issue in New Zealand just as they are on Haida Gwaii, and the group learned about impacts as well as conservation measures and practices being taken on the island. The group also learned that Haida Gwaii and New



Desiree Wilson (l), Niisii, and Jason Alsop discovered that a group-swing off of a gigantic crane was one way to hang out and "study" the unique flora and fauna in New Zealand.

Zealand have a similar past and present-day story. It is similar to the Haida Nation in that the Waikato Tainui people are in a co-management agreement with the New Zealand government. The agreement covers restoration, protection and governing of areas within their territory and there is equal representation at the decision-making level.

The trip had a big impact on the travellers. "I learned how similar our issues and history are – issues like introduced species," Mr Alsop said. "I thought it was really cool how open and outgoing they are as a people. They were always ready to dance, sing, and share with us – they are a really fun people. It was interesting to hear how much they know of their own language; they could speak it fluently and do speak it with each other. It was good to see them laugh and to talk in the Maori language."

"Just being in such a beautiful place was amazing, but to be able to experience the culture along with the Maori youth was priceless as was the opportunity to compare the similarities between us and learn about how they live," said Niisii. "I am excited to be able to show them our culture, and lands, when the group comes here this summer!" •

Masset Birth Stories: not just a book but an experience

By Florence Lockyer

Gaaw kaaygang gyaahlangee (Masset Birth Stories), the book, was launched in late December 2011 with contributing writers attending an afternoon tea to read their stories from the 60+ page book. The authors also spoke about what they each experienced during the process of writing their stories – it was history in the making, they said. The book is unique in that the stories are told in the writers' own voices, and the words were not edited – it was all natural!

The project is a partnership between Haida Child and Family Services and the Haida Health Center. One day, Lucy Bell, with HCFS and Shannon Greenwood then with HHC, were discussing their birthing experiences. By the time their conversation was over they had a book project in the works, which included other moms telling their stories too.

Ms Bell is the Research Team Leader of the Haida Child and Family Services Society, and has a degree in anthropology. With her education, work experience, and community leadership in heritage and language initiatives she has a lot of skill in locating cultural materials held in museums around the world. This knowledge was very useful in writing the birthing book and in selecting photos of art depicting child birth and implements used to help birth babies – have you ever heard of a birthing belt?

Creating the book was a huge learning curve but a great experience, the authors said. It was extremely emotional with lots of feelings coming to the surface around many of the intimate experiences described in the book. It was a healing journey for many – some stories were happy, some were sad, and some were about death. Included in the book is a bonus Baby Talk CD. The recording is of naanii Gertie White reciting phrases to use with babies and young children.

It's been many years since there has been a birth in Old Massett, as most first-time mothers are sent off-Island to deliver their babies, but it is hoped that in the near future birthing in Massett will begin again. The



A photo of SGaaga (medicine man) with a mother, bear and baby is featured in Massett Birth Stories. This argillite carving is from the Royal British Columbia Museum, 1571R

realization of that hope, especially with the benefit of certified doulas and midwives living on Haida Gwaii, is nearer than ever before.

On that note, during the week of May 7 there will be a group of aboriginal midwives from across Canada coming to Haida Gwaii – watch for notices. They will be lecturing and brainstorming plans for the future, and the Skidegate Band Council will be hosting a dinner, so come share your

thoughts. Remember, out of one thought and conversation came the book, Gaaw kaaygang gyaahlangee (Masset Birth Stories). Who knows what will be next?

Gaaw kaaygang gyaahlangee (Masset Birth Stories) is available at the Haida Rose Café. Women, only, were involved in the making of the book – with one exception. •

Did you know?

In February 2012, the Skeena Queen Charlotte Regional District passed a resolution opposing Enbridge's Northern Gateway proposal as well as increased tanker traffic in BC's northern coastal waters. This resolution registered four levels of government – the Haida Nation, Band Councils, municipalities, and regional district – as officially opposing Enbridge's proposal.

66-62 Junior Saints Vault to Victory

By Kelsey Pelton

The Junior Saints won the Annual Junior All-Native Basketball Tournament, defeating the Heiltsuk Nation by only four points in a hard-fought game – 66-62.

The members of the winning team are Joel Richardson (Most Valuable Player), Chase Samuels (6th Man), Jaylund Russ, Grant Moody, Jesse Barnes, Nathan Vogstad (All Star and High Scorer with 154 points), Cole Cross, Staas Guujaaw, Davin McDonald, Kostan Levirs, Jhett Collinson, Brandon Gibbard, Dillon Brown and Trevor Casey (All Star). The team is coached by Desi Collinson and Duane Alsop and took the title this past March in Port Alberni.

To get to the tournament the team travelled by ferry to Prince Rupert, then took the 20-hour ferry ride through the Inside Passage to Port Hardy, and from there, Steve Wesley chauffeured them six hours to their final destination at Port Alberni – total travelling time: 68 hours, round trip!

The Saints played a total of nine games, against teams like the Friendship House Beavers, the Ahousat Wolf Pack, Port Simpson, NCN Young Gunz, Haisla Nation, and a few others. Of the nine games they played, they lost only one, against the Syilx Nation from the Okanagan.

Upon being asked how the Saints' win made him feel, team member Brandon Gibbard responded, "I would say winning the championship didn't change me as a person as much as it did just change my emotions. I mean, when I got home and settled in, [winning the championship] finally hit me. It gave me that extra confidence to hold myself up high, and



The winning team show their colours. Back Row, left to right: Trevor Casey, Chase Samuels, Duane Alsop, Grant Moody, Jesse Barnes, Brandon Gibbard. Middle Row, left to right: Staas Guujaaw, Davin McDonald, Jhett Collinson, Kostan Levirs, Jaylund Russ, Cole Cross, Dillon Brown, Nathan Vogstad, Desi Collinson. Front: Joel Richardson.

be proud of who I am and where I come from. It was just an overall great experience – nothing can replace that moment of winning with a group of outstanding individuals. It was just awesome!" Brandon then added, "I was proud to have won for our community. It so graciously supports the Junior team and cheers for them the hardest at every home tournament – to finally give something back to them just feels awesome."

The tournament's Most Valuable Player, Joel Richardson, said, "I have personally lost the Junior All-Native five times before; it felt great to finally get over the hump. I want to thank the community for morally and financially supporting us – greatly appreciated!"

After the team's return home, a dinner was held in their honour. On April 6, the Skidegate Community Hall was festooned with brightly-coloured decorations,

basketballs, and colourful photos of the boys in action. The team proudly entered the hall as the crowd sang *When the Saints Go Marching In*. Team coach Desi Collinson, spoke about each one of the boys and said that he was constantly impressed and surprised with their respect, hard work, drive, and dedication. He also said that they all have huge potential for going on to college and university-level ball.

"These boys have been through everything together: sweat, blood, injuries, everything," said coach, Duane Alsop. "They are all gentlemen, with very, very bright futures. They have put in the time and hard work. They've got what it takes." The celebration dinner ended with a standing ovation for the Skidegate Junior Saints and their coaches, from all of their proud parents and friends. •

Homecoming Announcement

Haida Child and Family Services Society

HCFSS is announcing a homecoming visit by children in foster care from the North Region (Prince Rupert/Terrace area). If you know of anyone in the area who would like to meet their Haida family members and clan members, please ask them to contact us.

To welcome the children, a Homecoming Feast/Clan Dinner will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, May 18, 2012 at the Skidegate

Community Hall. Clans are invited to set up their tables, sit together, and bring their own desserts.

Family trees will be provided and everyone is invited to work together on updating them.

HCFSS – Skidegate Office:
250-559-8400
fallon.crosby@hcfss.bc.ca



Tyson Brown



HAIDA CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES
191A-3rd Ave, Skidegate ~ Fax#: 559-7746



CATERED MEAL SERVICE-Invitation to Bid

NAME OF CATERER(S) _____ PH # _____ DATE: _____

EVENT, DATE AND TIME: HOMECOMING CELEBRATION, Skidegate Community HALL, May 18th @ 5:30 PM.

BID PRICE

The Society will not be providing the food. Please list your cost for preparing soup and buns for 150-200 people.

| Soup & Buns | Cost for cooking soup & buns | Number of Guests | Total Cost |
|-------------|------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |

****Upon acceptance of your bid, you may want to meet with the food planning committee to go over a list for food supplies and the dishes to be prepared. Please contact Fallon Crosby, Program Facilitator at 559-8400 should you have any questions.**

Please note: The deadline for bids is the 9th day of May, 2012 at 4:30 p.m. Howa'a

All of us together

The Enbridge Joint Review Panel Hearings in Old Massett (February 28, 29) and in Skidegate (March 21, 22) were hugely significant events. Island residents have a history of striving to protect Haida Gwaii and everything that these Islands represent. The testimony that Islanders presented at the hearings gave the Enbridge JRP the opportunity to experience first hand what this place means to those who were born here and those that have come to live among us.

On behalf of the organizing team and the Council of the Haida Nation, we extend our gratitude to all the people of these Islands for contributing to the success of the Enbridge Joint Review Panel hearings.

To the decorators and set-up crews, you created a warm and inviting space that was truly representative of Haida Gwaii and helped the community and the Panel to truly come together.

To the cooks and servers, you helped the Panel experience the abundance and beauty of Haida Gwaii with great food. Food is a celebration, and hosting the Panel with the community showing an appreciation for the Islands' riches was one of many ways that helped create a meaningful connection with the Panel.

To the singers and dancers, you performed with dignity and grace and gave the Panel another way of seeing what we are working to protect on Haida Gwaii.

To security, maintenance, janitors, and first aid attendants, you maintained a safe, warm and inviting venue during the hearings and helped provide comfort to everyone in attendance.

To the speakers: We thank the Haida citizens who took the time to share their stories and describe their deep connection to Haida Gwaii – a big haaw'a. Throughout the hearings, all Islanders spoke with great knowledge and experience and showed the Panel why Haida Gwaii is so dear and highly respected by those who live here. Again, thank you.

To Haida Gwaii governments, thank you for your support and resources. The success of the hearings was due to the collaborative efforts of our Islands' leaders coming together.

To community members that attended, you showed the strength and unity of our community. The collective power we hold is undeniable, and that power showed the Panel our depth and commitment to stop the proposed project.

Last, our appreciation would not be complete without recognition for fellow staff and colleagues at the Council of the Haida Nation who went above and beyond to make these days possible.

To every single person that helped welcome the Panel and share the magnificent beauty of Haida Gwaii – our natural environment, spiritual connections, cultural history, and diverse communities – haaw'a.

haaw'a