Huu-ay-aht Community Newsletter
September 2008

Traditional Tlıłıuch-haa Ceremony Held in Pachena Bay on Aug. 22

See Page 5 for details...

Kamatap –hák hi’t -ʔiʔʔá̱hkuuʔ?
Do you know where this is?

Hints:
(1) The traditional Summer village of the Huu-ay-aht
(2) Name of a pass between islands.
(3) Where whalers attempted to fill up with the bones of their catch.

Answer on Page 6...

Newsletter Contests
> Submit a name for the newsletter! $100 Prize
> Submit an original logo! $200 Prize

Deadline is October 17th, 2008!
See back page for details...

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**Education Is More Than School**

An Editorial by John Jack

All around the continent, September is the month we go back to school. Whether it be our first day of kindergarten, our last year at secondary school, or our fourth year at university, September 2nd will be our opportunity to learn and challenge ourselves in preparing for the future ahead. Ultimately, school is about preparation. By going to school, our parents and our community is offering our young people the tools they need to succeed in social life, work life and even home life. The responsibility of our students is to grasp these tools and learn to use them. The responsibility of family, and the community as a whole, is to inspire and serve as an example to our youth. It is our mutual responsibility to be in constant support of education.

Our education is central to our identity: what language we speak, where we live, who our parents and grandparents are, where we go to school, where we go to work, what we choose to learn and with whom we choose to learn are all aspects of our education. When we go to school as children, we do not only learn our lessons, but we learn how to act around other people and what behaviours are acceptable in a variety of situations. We learn and learn and learn. It never really stops. We do, though. At some point, many of us decide that we know “enough” and stop paying attention to the lessons all around us. But who determines just what amount of knowledge, what level of wisdom is enough?

Our youth prepares us for the rest of our lives. Our younger years are not the be-all and end-all of the human experience, and perhaps this is something that we need to remind ourselves as we continue to grow as individuals and as a community. In this day and age, we strengthen ourselves and our community through the transfer of knowledge and wisdom from one generation to the next. We need to reward those of us who make the effort to teach as well as those of us who make the effort to learn.

If you do not make the effort to define your identity, others will do it for you. Try as much and learn as much as you can, when you come to a point where you must make a decision, make one without hesitation. Your options are wider than you believe and despite what the prevalent culture tells us, it is necessary to make mistakes in order to learn anything of value. We have included profiles and articles on some Huu-ay-aht members who have achieved much in education, in both learning and teaching.

As you enter your classroom, as a student or as a teacher, remember that you are not just preparing yourself for the future, you are also preparing your community.

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**SUCCESS IN EDUCATION**

Huu-ay-aht Youth Set to Graduate with a Teaching Degree Next Year

Natasha Wendi Keitlas Nelson (nee Ginger) is one step closer to becoming a teacher. Last April, she successfully completed course work for her Native Indian Teacher Education degree program at UBC. Natasha is currently in the midst of direct work experience called a practicum, and will officially graduate with a degree that combines a degree in elementary education with First Nations education, in May 2009. When it is all said and done, Natasha will be able to work in any elementary school in the province and her specialization in First Nations education will give her a unique insight in aiding First Nations students. Natasha Nelson's success did not start with her university education, however, it started on her first day of school and the hundreds of days spent learning over her entire “school career.”

Graduating from secondary school in 2000, Natasha enrolled that same year at Langara College. During the two years she spent there, Natasha took a wide sampling of courses to help her decide what she wanted to accomplish with her post-secondary education: fine arts, business, psychology, art history, and anthropology. Natasha then transferred to the University of British Columbia and entered into the Native Indian Teacher Education program that integrates traditional teachings with a public school teaching certification.

Natasha believes that education is the most important aspect of childhood, and says that “it teaches the children their identity and where they can fit into society to help improve it, in their own ways, but our children must first discover ‘their gifts’”. “The purpose of education is to inspire and improve the children’s chances at success in adulthood.” For Natasha, it is not limited to the lessons of textbooks:

“We need to regain the knowledge of our elders before it is lost. We need to receive their offering and pass it on to younger generations. We need to inspire ourselves and our young people by teaching each other our history, where we come from, because it will help us make decisions in the future. We need to help our children discover these gifts, how to improve them, and how to use those gifts for the benefit of not only themselves, but our society as a whole.”

Like others, Natasha is well-aware of our dual responsibilities to learn and to teach. But she also stresses the importance of integration with the communities around us. As individuals and as a people, it can only be a benefit for us to understand the ways and means of the societies we live within and beside. She goes on to add:

“The First Nations children of all the different Nations need to be inspired and encouraged; to be who they are, learn who they are, and to carry on their traditions. Our societies, both within and outward, need to have some connection with each other, in order to have the children of these societies, benefit from the passing on of our elders’ teachings.”

Only through understanding can any true communication and progress be made. And as Mrs. Natasha Nelson says, “It all starts and ends with education.”

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**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Do you have any comments, questions or requests? Please send them to us at hfu.communications@gmail.com or mail them to the Huu-ay-aht Treaty Office:

Huu-ay-aht Newsletter
PO Box 20012
Port Alberni, BC
V9Y 8J8
Coordinator. 

The Huu-ay-aht community wishes Nancy Logan good fortune for Huu-ay-aht youth as the HFN Youth Activities Coordinator. She has a BC Teacher’s Certificate in Education and Training, having also completed two Immersion Language sessions with Jane Jones at the Ha-ho-payuk School in Port Alberni where she later taught the Nuu-chah-nulth language. 

Nancy attended the Alberni Indian Residential School (IRIS) for nine years during the 1950s. She was Accredited by the BC College of Teachers to teach Huu-ay-aht in the BC School System that included recognition of our Huu-ay-aht Language Authority in 1999. In collaboration, with SD#70 and the NTC Aboriginal Education Program, she helped to develop and publish a series of Huu-ay-aht language print and audio instructional materials.

In 2007, Angie bounced back from some health setbacks returning to her position at the Bamfield Community School.

Angie was raised in Nuu-mukamiis (Sarita) where she moves to study and work in Port Alberni. Much loved by the entire community of Bamfield for her excellent advocacy for quality education of Anala and Bamfield children, Nancy worked for past 3 years with great patience and compassion for Huu-ay-aht youth as the HFN Youth Activities Coordinator.

Although she has now reached retirement age, she is back in her position at the Bamfield Community School.

In 2007, Angie bounce back from some health set-backs returning to her position at the Bamfield Community School.

The Huu-ay-aht First Nation is pleased to announce that Natika Bock has taken the position of Youth Activities Coordinator. She has a BC Teacher’s Certificate as well as a wealth of experience in working with youth and their communities. “I am thrilled to have this opportunity and look forward to working closely with Anacala students and their families. Because I work part-time at the Bamfield Science Centre (BMSC), I see great possibilities to bridge Bamfield Community School (BCS), the BMSC and the village of Anacala,” Natika said.

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HUU-AY-AHT CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

HUU-AY-AHT EMTI AND IDENTITY

On the planet Earth, our human population is over seven billion and growing. Some six hundred and fifty Huu-ay-aht people are part of this number.

With these mind-boggling numbers in mind, some may ask the question, “When there are so many identities out there, what makes it so special or distinctive to identify oneself as Huu-ay-aht?”

Ya-thlu-u’a (Jeff Cook), the second hereditary chief of the Huu-ay-aht First Nations recently gathered several members of his family to share some thoughts on the important role that traditional Huu-ay-aht names play in the formation of a Huu-ay-aht identity.

“The importance of maintaining the custom of passing on and receiving traditional Huu-ay-aht emtii (names) cannot be overestimated”, said Ya-thlu-u’a. “Naming keeps our culture alive.”

Ya-thlu-u’a’s younger brother, Hay-uu-chish-tuulth (Jack Cook) and his wife Deborah shared what it means to carry family names. Jack shared that his name, Hay-uu-chish-tuulth, means “Can Get Ten Whales.”

Deborah, who comes from Nisga’a country, said that she was gifted with the Huu-ay-aht name of A-naa-pii-a-tuk, “She alone owns it” (translated by Ron and Tuff) from late Mary Moses when she married Jack. This name, as well as the other Cook Family Emtii mentioned above, came from the family of the late John Moses. Deborah said, “This name identifies me as part of the Moses family.” She also provided some background on the Nisga’a names she received from her mother’s family, which can illuminate a similar function as Huu-ay-aht naming.

“The first Nisga’a name X-ka-yats is of Gitxsan origins, which had been passed on to my late auntie Besy Nelson/Morgan. The name comes with a story, but briefly, it means “the right to cut salmon in half.”

“At my late auntie Besy Nelson/Morgans Stone-moving Feast, I received a new Nisga’a name and it is Hlgu-noxs-gaanii. “Noxs gaanii’ is a matriarch’s name and “Hlgu” is the younger or in training/princess version of the name. As my uncle, Sim’oogit Gadim Galdool’ow Charles Alexander, explained to me, “at a future Stone-moving Feast if she’s shown that she has earned it I will get the younger version of the name removed and will have outright the name of Noxs-gaanii” or I may even receive a whole different name.

Why is this naming becoming so important?

“It identifies where you come from and your family ties, who your family is and how others -- mainly older people -- can identify who you are,” said Hay-uu-chish-tuulth.

Ki-ke-in (Ron Hamilton) is in the final stages of completing a research project of collecting traditional Huu-ay-aht emtii (names). He has collected a wealth of information on traditional Huu-ay-aht names and documented their meanings and histories. This draft study is presently circulating in our community for additions and corrections. Although it is a project that will be constantly updated and revised, the names we have collected thus far will be published and bound into a hardcover book to be presented to the Huu-ay-aht family heads at a future community ceremony.

“I think we have lost the collective memory of the names and what they mean,” said Ya-thlu-u’a. This is what makes Ki-ke-in’s work so important. “We know that there are Huu-ay-aht people out there who may know the names but may not know where they come from and what they mean.”

Contact your na-naniiqsu (grandparents) and family historians for more information on Huu-ay-aht emtii.

Pictured at right: Ya-thlu-u’a (Jeff Cook), Hay-uu-chish-tuulth & A-naa-pii-a-tuk (Jack & Deb Cook) and Ki-ke-in (Ron Hamilton).

DENNIS FAMILY GATHERS AT CHAP-IS TO PLAN FOR POTLATCH

Close to twenty-five Dennis family members gathered this past August 11th to 16th for a fun campout at Dodger’s Cove (Chap-is) to have a lot of fun as well as to prepare for the Dennis Family Potlatch next year.

Siblings Marge White, Reverend Simon Dennis and Chief-Councillor Robert Dennis gathered the family to create great new memories for their children and grand-children where they themselves played care-free as children. The grand-children were asked to leave their technical gadgets at home making it easier for them to swim and explore the sandy beaches, go fishing and learn to can fish with their auntie Sylvia.

The family relates the stories of wonderful evenings around the campfire, singing, drumming and sharing Huu-ay-aht knowledge. After 5 days camping the children said that they wanted to stay on – all of which bodes well for the family to repeat the campout adventure next year with

Read the full text of Marge White’s “A Family Campout” on the Huu-ay-aht Website: <www.huuayaht.org>

Archival Photos Courtesy of Denny Durocher
On Friday, August 22nd, the Huu-ay-aht community hosted a traditional thluch-haa ceremony welcoming the Mowachahats and Uchuckleshaht family of Cory Howard who paddled for three days in dugout canoes to the Huu-ay-aht village at Anacala. Cory Howard, son of Bill Howard and Beulah Rush, brought with him his closest family members and relatives. As the beachside ceremony unfolded, it became clear that the family of the intended Huu-ay-aht bride, Tammy Nookemus, beloved daughter of Clifford and Marie Nookemus (McCarthy), were not prepared to let her go without seriously challenging Cory Howard and his family who came to claim her for a bride.

In the Huu-ay-aht tradition, only after the brides family is convinced of the strength, intelligence and character of the groom and his family are they willing to allow them to approach the beach, much less get close to family of the bride.

Although tired and hungry from their three-day canoe journey from Port Alberni and Ucluelet, the Mowachahat wedding party were respectfully met at the beach but asked to go across the river and wait until they were advised to come back at which time they could make further representations about who they are and their business.

While on the other side of the river, they sang songs and performed masked dances from their country so the Huu-ay-aht gathered at the beach side of the river could see and hear. They listened to the words of the Spokesperson for the Nookemus family, Kike-i (Ron Hamilton), advised the Mowachahat that they would have to demonstrate sufficient worthiness to the Nookemus family. They were asked to perform songs for their hosts.

The Nookemus family had prepared a number of tuu-paa-tii (challenges) for the Mowachahat. First, the father of the intended bride asked if the Mowachahat had among their delegation a good swimmer who could swim across the river and bring back a stick from the other shore. Cory’s cousin, Duane Howard completed the task with such prowess that upon presenting the stick to the Father of the Bride, he was given the name Nashuk-suus-aa (Strong Swimmer) by the bride’s family.

The next tuu-paa-tii was to retrieve feathers firmly tied to the top of a twelve-foot greased pole. The Mowachahat demonstrated their intelligence in successfully retrieving the feather and delivering it to the host in good time.

Perhaps the greatest tuu-paa-tii challenge was met by the groom’s “Best Man” Louie Johnson who picked up and carried a t-aya-uus-im (70kg anchor stone) some fifty feet, placing it gently at the feet of the Huu-ay-aht ha’wiilh. Representing the bride, moving the t-aya-uus-im demonstrates how difficult it is for the bride to leave her home community.

When it was clear that the Mowachahat were sincere and resolved to embrace Tammy as a family member, they were brought out of a near by tent where she was tearfully surrounded by her parents and other Huu-ay-aht family members who found it very difficult to bid farewell to their beloved relative.

The host family and their guests mingled as one family, they embraced and retired to the House of Huu-ay-aht where hot supper was waiting. A civil wedding ceremony was held the next day at the House of Huu-ay-aht and the family and guest were celebrating with songs and dances preparing for an evening feast when shocking news was delivered of a tragic death in the Mowachaht community that morning. As the head of the host family, Clifford Nookemus asked the prayers be said and appropriately asked that the wedding celebration be postponed to a later date. He also requested that people remain quiet out of respect for the grieving family. He also indicated that all the food gathered for the night’s wedding feast be donated to the Mowachaht who would be gathering back in their home community. Finally, he asked everyone to travel safely home and quietly keep the thoughts of the grieving family in mind.

Once invited to cross back to Anacala Beach, they formally told the assembled Huu-ay-aht Ha- wiilh and designated “Keepers of the Beach” who they are and their intentions to ask for Tammy Nookemus as a bride for Cory Howard.

The Mowachaht guests were allowed to disembark but remained together at a respectful distance from the Huu-ay-aht.

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The Mowachahat provided numerous and eloquent assurances of their love for the new bride. They guaranteed that they would cherish her as one of their own, love and protect her with all the strength they demonstrated there at the beach.

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The First Annual Huu-ay-aht People’s Assembly will be held at the House of Huu-ay-aht on October 18th, 2008, from 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM.

Huu-ay-aht will gather from far and wide to celebrate the signing of the Huu-ay-aht Constitution by our elected and hereditary leaders. Drafted and ratified by Huu-ay-aht, this Constitution was passed with a vote of more than 90% in favour on April 28th, 2007.

This event promises to be historic for two connected reasons: it represents our best first efforts to blend ancestral traditions with our right to legally govern ourselves in the 21st century.

With our new Constitution and People’s Assembly, our Nation will be taking the next step in our campaign to rebuild our pride and independence.

Over one-hundred years ago, the Huu-ay-aht First Nations were governed by the ha’wiih, or hereditary chiefs. With decision making authority in the hands of the ha’wiih, our tradition allowed for leaders to seek out the advice of any member of the community a variety of issues. While the community was led by a small number, the community could still be called self-governing. With the arrival of the colonial authority over our lives, our traditional government was abolished and federal ministries had control over all decisions made for our territories and our people. With the Maa-nulth Treaty between the Huu-ay-aht and the governments of Canada and BC, and we have regained our right to self-government.

Through the Maa-nulth Treaty and our Constitution, the Huu-ay-aht First Nations has attempted to reconcile our traditions to contemporary political realities.

Our government has four main branches: the Constitution, our ultimate law; the Huu-ay-aht First Nations Council, our elected body of law-makers; the Ha’wiih Council, our sitting hereditary leaders; and the People’s Assembly, a gathering designed to give a voice to all of our voting-age members.

The Annual People’s Assembly will serve as a means of communication between the government and its people. Members of the Huu-ay-aht government, known as the Huu-ay-aht First Nations Council, must report to the people they represent their plans for the coming year. In addition to presenting their strategic plans for the year, the Huu-ay-aht administrative staff must also make available a report on the community’s finances.

At the People’s Assembly, however, each and every member of the Huu-ay-aht First Nations is allowed to have his or her voice heard. This is a right granted to the people in the Constitution. Of course, this does not require anyone to agree with an individual opinion, but it certainly requires everyone to allow for that opinion to be expressed. By way of a vote of the people at the assembly, resolutions may be passed that the Huu-ay-aht government must consider in their deliberations. The purpose of this practice is to promote open and honest discussion on topics that are important to the people.

If you want your voice to be heard and you want to help rebuild a sense of what it means to be Huu-ay-aht, make sure to make note in your calendar: The first People’s Assembly is going to be held on October 18th, 2008.

The New Gas Station Opens in Anacla

Anacla residents and tourists can now purchase gas in Anacla from the just opened Huu-ay-aht Gas Pump. Status card purchase of gas (mid-grade only) is $1.39 per litre and everyone else is $1.64 per liter — still a bargain price considering the convenience. Located next to the Natural Resources Office, it meets all environmental and safety standards.

Congratulations to the HFN Anacla Community and the HFN Chief and Council for moving this project ahead, and finally, to the HFN Capital Maintenance Manager, Rodney Murray, who oversees this and the new water pumphouse projects.

Kamatap – hak hit’ -?i ?ahkuu?

Do you know where this is?

ANSWER:

CHAP-IS

(Dodger’s Cove)

Harry Williams, Cedar Carver
Phone: (250)728-1290

Barbara Johnson, Cedar Weaver
Phone: (250)724-6815
**Huu-ay-aht Events Calendar**

**Monday, September 1st, 2008**  
• Labour Day. Huu-ay-aht and NTC offices closed for this statutory holiday.

**Tuesday, September 2nd, 2008**  
• Huu-ay-aht Implementation Committee Meeting. Chief & Council, Ha’wiih, Consultants and Staff meet to discuss implementation of Maa-nulth Treaty.
  • First day of school. Good luck, students!

**Thursday, September 18th, 2008**  
• Huu-ay-aht Na-naniiqsu (Grandparents) Cultural Society leave to visit Neah Bay in the state of Washington, USA.

**Saturday, September 20th, 2008**  
• Huu-ay-aht Na-naniiqsu (Grandparents) Cultural Society to return from Neah Bay, Washington, USA.

**Tuesday, September 23rd, 2008**  
• Huu-ay-aht Chief & Council Meeting

**Tuesday, October 7th, 2008**  
• Huu-ay-aht Implementation Committee Meeting. Chief & Council, Ha’wiih, Consultants and Staff meet to discuss implementation of Maa-nulth Treaty.

**Monday, October 13th, 2008**  
• Thanksgiving Day. Huu-ay-aht and NTC offices closed for this statutory holiday.

**Saturday, October 18th, 2008**  
• Huu-ay-aht People’s Assembly. The Huu-ay-aht Constitution requires an annual meeting of the Huu-ay-aht People to consider the state of the Nation. At the inaugural People’s Assembly, the Constitution will be signed by the Huu-ay-aht leadership, plus other reports made to members. To be held at the House of Huu-ay-aht, Anacla Village.

**Tuesday, October 21st, 2008**  
• Huu-ay-aht Chief & Council Meeting

**Tuesday, November 4th, 2008**  
• Huu-ay-aht Implementation Committee Meeting. Chief & Council, Ha’wiih, Consultants and Staff meet to discuss implementation of Maa-nulth Treaty.
  • Election Day in the USA

**Tuesday, November 11th, 2008**  
• Remembrance Day. Huu-ay-aht and NTC offices closed for this statutory holiday.

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**Hilda Nookemis Completes First Phase of Huu-ay-aht Fluency Training**

On August 26th, 2008, Hilda Nookemis (pictured below at left) made a presentation to a group of her friends and supporters that included three members of the committee set up to evaluate her progress toward fluency in the Huu-ay-aht Dialect.

Just completing the first five months of the Mentor–Student training funded by the First People’s Heritage Language Culture Council, Hilda has been working toward full fluency through her language mentor, Benson Nookemis.

Although a bit nervous about speaking for 15 minutes entirely in the Huu-ay-aht dialect, Hilda spoke so clearly and strongly that one of her evaluators, Nellie Dennis said, “You sound just like my grandmother!”

Huu-ay-aht linguist Dr. Terry Klokeid who has been working with Hilda and Benson over the past two years commented that Hilda’s departure from her notes demonstrating real fluency.

Hilda said, “This is one of the hardest challenges that I have ever had in my life.”

The Huu-ay-aht Language Development Team joins all Huu-ay-aht in acknowledging Hilda’s perseverance, hard work and language skills. We know that she will pass her skills to the next generation of students ready to take on the challenge of recovering language fluency.

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Pictured at Top Right: Huu-ay-aht member Karen Haugen performs Tla-sata dance at the NTC Fisheries Litigation Appreciation Dinner on July 30th.

Pictured at Bottom Right: North American Indigenous Games Opening, August 3rd.
Submissions, Questions or Comments?
Contact the Huu-ay-aht Communications Department if you have a question or want an electronic copy: <hfn.communications@gmail.com>

HFN Newsletter Contests
Submissions for a new name should be sent to the above mentioned e-mail address. Please include your name and contact information. Hard-copy logo submissions may be submitted to the Band Office in Anacla or the Treaty Office in Port Alberni. Send electronic submissions to the HFN Communications e-mail address. Winners will be selected on October 18th, 2008 and contacted via phone.

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- Kathy Waddell, Supervisor <nicaly@shaw.ca>

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- Jane Peters <jpeters@pachena.ca>

Huu-ay-aht Health Clinic
- Phone: (250) 728-2021
- Coral Johnson <coralj@pachena.ca>

Huu-ay-aht Website
For new articles, job posting, updated events calendar, and an archive of the digital version of the newsletter.
<www.huuayaht.org>

Huu-ay-aht YouTube Channel
For videos of Huu-ay-aht people, places and special events, subscribe today!
<www.youtube.com/user/HFNCommunications>