Uyaqḥmis

August 2018 Issue 49



Celebrating Aboriginal Day

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Tayii Ḥaẇił ƛiišin (Derek Peters) congratulates Brent Mullin after he was sworn in as the vice chair of Huu-ay-aht's Tribunal on July 4. [Photo by Heather Thomson]

Nation names Brent Mullin to Tribunal as Vice Chair

On Wednesday, July 4, Tayii Ḥaẇił ƛiišin (Derek Peters) swore in a new member of Huu-ay-aht's Tribunal. Lawyer Brent Mullin took the oath and will begin his duties as the vice chair of the Tribunal immediately.

Mullin has 35 years' experience as a lawyer and adjudicator with the province of British Columbia. Most recently, he served for 16 years as the chair of the Labour Relations Board of B.C., the province's leading administrative tribunal. Prior to that, he served as vice chair on the board for six years.

He also brings to his position on the tribunal an extensive career in labour relations, where he focused on ensuring the timely and pragmatic resolution to disputes under the Labour Relations Code. He also uses this knowledge in his practice of law.

Mullin did his Bachelor of Arts at the University of Victoria and completed his Masters of Arts at Queen's University. He then returned to B.C to complete his Bachelor of Laws at the University of British Columbia.

Mullen went on a tour of Huu-ay-aht's traditional territory with his son Zack on Wednesday, prior to taking the oath. After he took the oath he expressed his appreciation to the Nation and said he was looking forward to working with Huu-ay-aht on the Tribunal.

huu ay aht
ANCIENT SPIRIT, MODERN MIND

We, the Huu-ay-aht People, envision a strong, self-governing and self-reliant Nation. ʔiisaak, ʔuuʔałuk, and Hišuk ma c̓awak guide us as we work together to foster a safe, healthy, and sustainable Nation, where our culture, language, spirituality, and economy flourish.

Huu-ay-aht Uyaqḥmis is printed up to six times a year to foster community engagement among a population of nearly 800 citizens. Uyaqḥmis promotes the recovery and sharing of the Huu-ay-aht dialect of the Nuu-chah-nulth language, as well as knowledge of Huu-ay-aht culture.

Please send all comments and questions to the Huu-ay-aht Communications Department.

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www.huuayaht.org
for the latest news and events, job postings, and a digital archive of Uyaqḥmis

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Marjorie White is honoured after being awarded Order of Canada

By Denise Titian, Ha-Shilth-Sa



As one of the 105 appointees to the Order of Canada this year, Marjorie White is a proactive woman. The Huu-ay-aht elder left her community in 1956 to study nursing in Vancouver.

"I boarded with five other students, and we noticed there was no place for us to gather or access services," Marjorie says. So she, in partnership with other concerned First Nations people, started one.

It took several years, starting with the Coqualeetza Fellowship Club, founded by a small group of transplanted Aboriginal students. After much consultation and networking, the club incorporated in 1963, changing its name to the Vancouver Indian Centre Society, thus forming the first Aboriginal Friendship Centre in the province.

According to the NAFC (National Association of Friendship Centres), Friendship Centres are Canada's most significant off-reserve Indigenous service delivery infrastructure and are the primary providers of culturally enhanced programs to urban Indigenous residents. They are intended to help Indigenous people transition from life in their remote communities to the urban centres.

In time, the idea grew and now there are 25 Friendship Centers in British Columbia and 125 across the nation. This is just one of many accomplishments Marjorie has achieved in her lifetime.

"You can spend all day talking about Marj's accomplishments," said Huu-ay-aht Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr., who added that he has received dozens of emails congratulating White. He listed some of her community work carried out from her New Westminster home. She is involved in the Aboriginal Mother Center Society and the Circle of Eagles Society, which helps prison inmates transition into mainstream society in a culturally sensitive way.

"For her, the people always come first; she is always concerned about people of all ages," Dennis adds.

Her other notable achievements include being the first Aboriginal person appointed to Citizen Court Judge in Canada and the first woman and Aboriginal appointee to the Vancouver Police Commission.

Marjorie has been involved for 25 years with the Lu'ma Native Housing in Vancouver, which she describes as very successful. Not only has the society delivered native housing to low income families, they've also introduced the Lu'ma Medical Centre and the Aboriginal Patients' Lodge.

She is proud of what she has accomplished over her lifetime and of how the government recognized her with appointments over the years. "I am proud of the progress the Friendship Centres have made all across the nation; they started small in basements or in churches and they've grown all across Canada," said White.

In 2016 White was bestowed of the Order of British Columbia.

"Marj is one of our most respectable elders – always involved, always attending meetings and cultural gatherings. She is a good mentor for our community," says Robert while reflecting on White's most recent recognition. "It is well-deserved and couldn't go to a better, more socially active person."

Marjorie retired in 2005 but remains active on several boards, including those tied to the provincial and national Friendship Centre societies. She is invited to do public speaking engagements and remains involved in Canadian citizenship ceremonies as an elder to welcome new citizens to the country.

"I always keep close ties with my Huu-ay-aht community," said White, adding that it's important to remember where you come from.

Marjorie's grandmother, Nina Peters, always told her to be selfless.

"What I've done is not for myself but for the people; my grandmother always said to help the people – don't just think about yourself," she says. "I enjoy working with people and seeing success."



Huu-ay-aht Executive Council meets with federal representatives to discuss the Social Service Projects. [Photos by Heather Thomson]

Nation recieves $4.2 million from Ottawa

By Heather Thomson

More than three months ago Huu-ay-aht First Nations declared the treatment of Huu-ay-aht children by the Province of British Columbia a public health emergency.

Since that time, Huu-ay-aht Executive Council and staff have been working diligently to gain support from both the provincial and federal governments.

Earlier this spring, a delegation from Huu-ay-aht travelled to Victoria and Ottawa sharing Huu-ay-aht's story and the extensive work that has been put into developing the Social Services Program. To date, Huu-ay-aht has funded the project on its own, paying more than $600,000 of the $1.8 million per year required to implement the 30 recommendations from the Social Services Report.

This month, Canada announced it will contribute $4.2 million to Huu-ay-aht over the next five years for this project. The Province of B.C. also came forward with $400,000 for this year.

"We thank the Federal Government for its major financial contribution to our Nation. Canada is putting action to its words," said Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr. "These funds will go a long way towards bringing our children home and fully implementing the recommendations from Huu-ay-aht's social services report. We look forward to continuing to work with Canada and British Columbia to bring an end to the public health emergency that Huu-ay-aht declared in March due to the removal of more than 40 children, or roughly 20 per cent of Huu-ay-aht children from their families."



Clara Clappis offers a quick overview of Anacla's Paawats to Child and Family Services Director General Margaret Buist.

Leading up to this announcement, Huu-ay-aht made great progress on this goal when they hosted senior members of Indigenous Services Canada in the territory in June.

Child and Family Services Director General Margaret Buist attended on behalf of Indigenous Service Canada.

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British Columbia and Canada offer promise of support to Huu-ay-aht as it moves forward with Social Services Project

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Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr. and Huu-ay-aht staff meet with representatives from B.C. Representative for Children and Youth in Port Alberni.

Buist brought with her Joseph Damaso, B.C. Region Program Advisor for CFS Engagement and Reform, as well as Jean MacDonald, B.C. Region Program Officer for CFS. Both MacDonald and Damaso sit at the Tripartite Table with Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Canada, and B.C.

"I was struck by how much work has already been done by your Nation, and so I wanted to see it first hand by visiting your territory," Buist said of Huu-ay-aht's Social Service Project. "We'll get in your canoe and paddle with you for the children and families who need our help."

Although all three guests were familiar with the project and how far Huu-ay-aht has come in implementing the 30 recommendations, Tayii Ḥaẇiɬ ƛiišin (Derek Peters), Councillor Sheila Charles, and the Chief Councillor all shared their personal reasons for pushing so hard on this project.

Councillor Charles explained the idea for this came out of years of witnessing the suffering and feeling helpless to do anything.

"It made me see a need in the community for something better," she said. "What we were doing was just a band-aide solution if we didn't talk about the personal stories of intergenerational trauma and what we can do to address them."

Chief Councillor Dennis said the Nation is committed to carrying out the recommendations of the panel with or without help. Knowing funds will come annually from Canada is a big relief.

"We're going to resource this," he said. "I'd rather do it with B.C. and Canada at the table."

ƛiišin said they must make healthy decisions for the community, and "by doing that we will achieve our goal to bring our children home."

The project team also met with three representatives from the B.C. Representative for Children and Youth. The Representative for Children and Youth has supported the province's young people and their families in dealing with the provincial child and youth welfare system. It also provides oversight to this system and makes recommendations to improve it. It is a non-partisan, independent officer of the Legislature, reporting directly to the Legislative Assembly and not a government ministry. The guests included B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth Bernard Richard, as well as the organization's Executive Director for Indigenous Strategies and Partnerships Lise Haddock and its Chief Investigator Carly Hyman.

Chief Councillor Dennis explained to his guests that he sees parallels between the struggles Huu-ay-aht youth face today and the period when residential school were in place.

"We here today have an opportunity to reverse this," he said. "We are determined to do what it takes to get our children back. We are going to push as hard as we can, and we want to partner with the province."

Richard agreed it is an important subject and expressed his appreciation for the work that has been done by the Nation to date.

"We strongly agree with the principles you mentioned, and we are hearing the same desire for this kind of work from the Province," he said. "If you are serious about bringing about change, you need the resources, and we will do what we can to help."

The money announced on August 21 matches the request Huu-ay-aht made of $839,800 from the federal government.







Qawii Festival 2018





Huu-ay-aht invited the community to the first annual Qawii Festival on Aboriginal Day, June 21, 2018. The event included activities on the beach, a salmon barbecue, and lots of culture. [Photos by Kelda Larsen and Heather Thomson]





Community School students release salmon

By Kelda Larsen

Students of all ages at Bamfield community school had the chance in May to observe salmon hatchery activities and help with the release during some field days at Sugsaw Creek and Sarita River.

The younger grades had already spent time learning about different types of salmon and their lifecycles. The older children, in Grades 5 to 7, welcomed guest speaker Larry Johnson, president of Nuu-chah-nulth Seafood LP and lifetime fisherman, to their classroom. He spoke about the Nuu-chah-nulth seasonal round (a diagram that links the seasons to harvests), the importance of ʔuuʔałuk (taking care of), and ḥahuułi (traditional territory).

"We're connected to the land, to the atmosphere, and everything that surrounds it. So, we used to gather food all throughout our territory," Johnson told the students. "And when I say our territory, the Huu-ay-aht territory runs from Tsusiat Falls all the way going up to Coleman Creek, all the way down to Nahmint. As far as the north wind blows, that's what I was taught."

The first day's field trip for the school involved a boat ride to Sugsaw Creek Hatchery. The students helped release 9,000 chum fry into Sugsaw Creek. Anticipation built as everyone waited for the fry to leave the pens and travel the water chute into the creek. The students did their part by gathering fry in buckets and releasing them at the creekside. They also observed and fed the coho fry at the hatchery, which were later released into Pachena River.



(Above) Students get ready to take their classroom upstream as they help release fry into the area rivers. (Below) Andrew Clappis Jr. shows off the chum fry he is set to release into the river from Sugsaw Creek Hatchery. [Photos by Kelda Larsen]

On the second field trip, the students traveled to Sarita River to release 500,000 chinook fry. When the work was done, everybody hiked along the bank to spend some time at Sarita River. Cory Howard led some songs, accompanied by Cory Howard Jr. and some of the students.

A month later, at the Qawii Festival celebrations on Aboriginal Day, there was more than one salmon in the crowd when Bamfield Community School students danced for prizes, as they were challenged by the singers to become traditional Huu-ay-aht creatures.



Huu-ay-aht announces new scholarship awards - apply by September 20, 2018

Hišuk ma c̓awak Healthy & Active Award
ʔiisaak Community & Culture Award
Kiixin Chief Louie Award
ʎiišin Academic Excellence Awards
Kathy Nookemus Memorial Award

The Huu-ay-aht education department is here to help students/families apply for attendance recognition, school supply allowance, and awards. Forms and more information on these scholarships are available at www.huuayaht.org- under Education, Trades, Training.

First visit to homeland filled with new family and great memories

By Kelda Larsen



A big welcome greeted brothers Justin and Damian Thomas-Jules when they visited their Huu-ay-aht homeland this May.

Justin, 17, and Damian, 14, are in foster care in Salmon Arm. They arrived in Port Alberni with their foster uncle, René LeGresley. The boys are both Huu-ay-aht by birth, and they are in the Jack family and belong to the ʔApwinisʔathˌʔ house.

Harry Brossault, one of two Family Support Workers at Huu-ay-aht First Nations, planned a whirlwind weekend for the boys, making sure they had the opportunity to spend lots of time on the land and meet many of their relatives.

"It was a phenomenal visit for the boys," Harry explains. "I had just as much fun as they did. Their eagerness to learn about their family and about Huu-ay-aht really stood out. When people were talking, they listened."

Justin and Damian's relative, Larry Johnson, took them out jigging for cod and trolling for salmon. It was the boys' first time fishing, and their first time in a boat on the ocean. They stayed two nights at Ben and Clara Clappis' house, who are their relatives. They also met their grandmothers Theresa Peters and Jane Peters at a community potluck. They had an opportunity to tour much of ƛiišin's ḥahuułi (traditional territory), including a visit to Sarita Falls.

A fantastic and spontaneous reunion happened just after the boys arrival in Port Alberni. Somebody sent word to Ethel (Eb) Johnson, Justin and Damian's great-grandfather's sister, that the boys were at the Huu-ay-aht government office.

Eb was in the middle of eating lunch at the Clam Bucket, just a few blocks away, with some of Justin and Damian's cousins.

"They jumped up, paid their bill, and left," Harry says. "She couldn't get out of the truck fast enough. Jack Cook had to pick her up out of the seat and set her down. She just couldn't wait to see those boys."

Justin and Damian both agree that the first thing they want to do when they come back again is to go to Kiixˌin village. That will likely happen in the near future, now that the brothers have renewed ties with the area. Justin already returned once to attend his high school graduation ceremony in Port Alberni on July 21, accompanied by Damian, their sister Cecilia, and their aunt and cousins.



(Top) Justin and Damian visit Sarita Falls with their uncle, René LeGresley. (Above) The boys meeting their great grandmother Ethel (Eb) Johnson in Port Alberni. [Photos by Harry Brossault]



KWISPAA LNG

CITIZEN UPDATE #4

July 23, 2018

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

For the month of June, the employment and training team reached out to all citizens via social media and Community Engagement Sessions. Also, the team increased the profile of programs and supports available to citizens and have generated much interest about both employment and business opportunities. The Training and Employment Working Group is working on its first newsletter targeted for release in September 2018.

In addition, the month of August will be focused on community engagement through outreach to all citizens for the purpose of collecting employment and training related data for the Human Resource and Business Opportunity Database. The purpose of the database is to connect citizens and their immediate family to employment and contract opportunities as they become available.

At the Community Engagement Sessions, the team presented an overview of the Pathways to Meaningful Employment, the theme of the Community Engagement Session in June. This included a few celebrations of success stories, both by video as well as by people in attendance.

Some of these celebrations of successes included: Ashley Johnson - Heavy Equipment Operator; Doris Johnson - Adult Basic Education and Indigenous Studies, preparing for Criminology; Elliot Randall Holland and Bruce Holland completed Emergency Medical Response, Marine Emergency Duties; Laverne Cooke - Taking Office Skills 101; videos of Scott, George & Matthew (WFP) Andrea and Shannon (LGL); and Tammy Howard completed Adult Basic Education.

WATERSHED RENEWAL

In June, the Watershed Renewal Working Group projects were focused on:

- Riparian assessments,
- Invasive species inventory and removal,
- Road deactivation assessment and planning,
- Instream habitat creation planning (Large Woody Debris), and Side Channel design.

In August, stay tuned for updates and answers to questions gathered from Huu-ay-aht citizens regarding the Kwispaa LNG project.

Salmon - a Key Focus of Watershed Renewal

3,896

Total Chinook Salmon fry/smolt from natural river spawners that watershed renewal team captured in the traps

80,000

Estimated Chinook salmon fry/smolt from natural river spawners that left the river

500,000

Total Chinook salmon fry/smolts reared and released from the Nitinat hatchery

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Huuayaht.org @HuuayahtFN Facebook/HuuayahtFN
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Co-managed by

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Executive Council offer Na-naniiqsu a tour of projects and lands, ask for input

By Heather Thomson

Executive Council see importance in consulting with the Na-naniiqsu on the issues and decisions that face the Nation.

In May, Tayii Ḥaẇiɬ ƛiišin (Derek Peters) and all of the Executive Council, took the Na-naniiqsu on a tour of the ḥahuuɬi, offering an update on projects and asking for their input.

"We want to hear from you and we want you to know you play an important role in our Nation," Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr. told them on the tour. "We want you to offer us advice and suggestions, and we invite you to participate in open conversation at any time, not just on this tour."

The tour included travelling the new road to Huu-ay-aht cemetery in Sarita, an overview of the work LGL has been doing on watershed renewal in Sarita, a tour of the Kwispaa LNG site, and a lunch and discussion at the Anacla Government Office.

The elders said it is important to respect Huu-ay-aht's ancestors and had a number of suggestions for things that could be done to improve the cemetery even more. They asked questions about how the Nation could help in funeral costs and the expense of bringing their loved ones and family members home after their death.



Members of Executive Council offer Na-naniiqsu a tour so that they can understand Huu-ay-aht's projects and opportunities, such as the Kwispaa LNG site (above). They were also invited to offer input and feedback any time. [Photo by Heather Thomson]

There was significant discussion on how the Nation could honour and connect to the Ancient Spirit while so much focus was being put on the Modern Mind.

While overlooking the Kwispaa site, elders stressed the importance of avoiding Santa Maria Island. They also voiced concerns over potential damage to eel grass and the effect on fishing. The desire to ensure the increase in traffic and other industrial noise is kept far from the residences was also expressed.

Close to a dozen members of Na-naniiqsu participated in the tour, and they expressed their appreciation to Executive Council for being given an opportunity to express their opinions and concerns. Council agree to do it regularly.

Barry Nookemus joins Vancouver Stealth Junior Lacrosse team



Huu-ay-aht youth Barry Nookemus, son of James and Annette Nookemus, has been selected to play on the Vancouver Stealth Jr. lacrosse team.

He will participate in three A-division tournaments this summer. The first tournament is in Calgary, Alberta, the second is in California, and the last is in Langley.

Barry started playing lacrosse at age four. He loves it, works very hard, and stays in shape. Barry secured his position on Vancouver Stealth Jr. after trying out for Team BC.

He is trying to raise $2,000 for his travel expenses to California and Langley this summer. He has set up a Go Fund Me page, and for more information you can contact his father.



Youth from Huu-ay-aht First Nations and Snuneymuxw First Nation took part in a cultural camp on Diana Island. The camp was an opportunity to enjoy stories, culture, and lots of outdoor activities. [Photos by Arianna Johnson]

Campout on Diana Island offers youth exciting cultural experience

By Arianna Johnson



On July 16 to July 20, Huu-ay-aht youth took part in a culture camp with Snuneymuxw First Nation on Diana Island.

The culture camp was for Huu-ay-aht kids to teach the Snuneymuxw kids how Huu-ay-aht culture is different from their culture. Every night, everyone would gather around the camp fire and listen to stories being told from Huu-ay-aht and Snuneymuxw. The kids realized that some stories are sort of the same but have different things in the stories. Also, the Huu-ay-aht kids would sing some songs while gathered around the campfire.

Many kids made new friends and met people they did not know. Kids from both nations went tubing and most of them went with each other tubing and went for walks to the other side of Diana Island. When it was dinner time, a couple of times the kids had to find someone from the other nation and find something out about the other person before they got to get their food. Most of the kids found out that they had things in common with the Snuneymuxw kids that they liked and the sports they play or played.

On July 18, the Coast Guard came and did some activities with kids from both nations. After the activities, they brought some kids out for a search and rescue practice to see how it feels to do a real-life search and rescue.

The next day, the RCMP came out and did some survival skills with the kids. After lunch, the RCMP had the kids do a contest with the chaperones to see who can boil their water first.

When the event came to a close, new friends parted ways knowing a little bit more about both cultures.

Return of the River still priority, Kwispaa project helps with renewal efforts

By Heather Thomson

The Sarita River Watershed is the heart of Huu-ay-aht First Nations and is the most important of the 35 streams and rivers in the nations' traditional territory.

Huu-ay-aht's ḥahuułi includes Barkley Sound, the Alberni Inlet, and the Sarita River watershed, which extends over approximately 190 square kilometers. For generations, the Sarita has served as a source of food, transportation, and cultural value to Huu-ay-aht people.

Surrounded by giant cedar and hemlock, the Sarita River was one of the most productive salmon rivers in Barkley Sound and, since time immemorial, the Sarita and surrounding watersheds have sustained Huu-ay-aht. However, after decades of commercial fishing and extensive forestry, the rivers and watershed in the ḥahuułi have been severely degraded.

By 1997, 62 per cent of the Sarita watershed had been logged, including 97 per cent of the flood plain. As a result, the river is twice as wide as it once was in the lower river sections.

"We have always taken care of the resources in our ḥahuułi, especially the Sarita River because it is the heart of our people," explains Tayii Ḥaẇiɬ ƛiišin (Derek Peters). "We can't forget about its importance just because we don't live along its shores anymore."

He reminds people that, although Huu-ay-aht's land and resources open doors to economic development, the Nation cannot forget to balance that with its three sacred principles - ʔiisaak, ʔuuʔałuk, and Hišuk ma c̓awak. For a time, Huu-ay-aht did not have control of their ḥahuułi and it has suffered as a result.



Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr. looks over the work that LGL has completed in the Sarita watershed. This renewal project involved the removal of a bridge. [Photo by Heather Thomson]

With its three sacred principles in mind, Huu-ay-aht hired LGL Limited in 2017 to develop a strategy for a Sarita and Pachena Watershed Renewal Program. The goal for the renewal program is to revitalize the Sarita and Pachena watershed ecosystems and, eventually, other watersheds within the ḥahuułi. This may take generations.

"When this was logged years ago, a lot of the side channels were affected and, with that, a lot of our salmon habitat was destroyed," explains Huu-ay-aht Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr. "Now if you go around touring our land you will see our own people out working on these streams, restoring and renewing that habitat so that our salmon come back – so that they have a place in our rivers."

He says without the help of Steelhead LNG the Nation would not be able to fund this project, which entered its second year in 2018. Through the co-management of the Kwispaa LNG project, Huu-ay-aht has resources for renewal in its ḥahuułi. He said, in the past, the nation received grant money for some of this work, but much more is necessary.

"We are really kicking in a big effort over the next few years, because I've been told we have to do $150-million worth of renewal to bring our salmon back," Dennis says. "This is an important project for our Nation. It is getting our people working, and it is bringing back our salmon, which is so important to our way of life."

With its history of extensive logging, the forest within the watersheds is mostly a mix of second-growth fir, spruce, hemlock, and cedar. Approximately two per cent is classified as old-growth. Historically, riparian habitats in the Sarita and Pachena watershed were dominated by large conifers that shaded and protected stream banks and provided a source of large woody debris.

See more on Page 13

Mapping Treaty Settlement Lands





This spring, Huu-ay-aht crews joined B.C. Lands Surveyors as they map out the Nations' Treaty Settlement Land. (Right) Bobby Nookemus displays a legal post from the old post line that dates back to 1884. [Photos by Stephen Smith]

Watershed renewal gets citizens working in traditional territory

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Early logging along the water courses within the Sarita watershed left little or no riparian habitat unaltered and also affected are the wetlands in the area.

The Sarita estuary is included in the renewal plans. Located in Numukamis Bay, this estuary system is one of the largest in Barkley Sound and is an important clam harvesting area for the nation. The estuary includes one of the two treaty-protected Huu-ay-aht intertidal bivalve harvest areas. Logging and road building has changed the path and structure of the estuary by concentrating the energy of the river to specific areas of the estuary instead of spreading it out across and into side channels. As a result, the productive capacity of the estuary for fish, shellfish, birds, mammals, and plants has decreased.

Another challenge the watershed faces is the damage created by landslides and erosion caused by logging and road building on steep slopes. This results in the deposition of sediment into streams. The infilling of deep pools, channelization, and the loss of spawning and rearing habitat has reduced the carrying capacity of chinook, coho, and chum salmon in the Pachena and Sarita watersheds.

The long-term goal of the renewal program is to reverse these negative impacts and revitalize the ecosystems. The Nation is pursuing these goals using an ecosystem-based approach that recognizes the interconnections between community, land, water, and biota – a modern-day take on Hišuk ma c̓awak (everything is one and interconnected).

In the last year, the renewal program has enabled Huu-ay-aht to extend the life of stream habitat structures they built in the Pachena watershed in the early 2000s and to begin renewal of Sarita's riparian habitats. A key focus is on understanding and enhancing chinook salmon in the Sarita River. Huu-ay-aht has been counting the number of juvenile chinook leaving the river and assessing how many are from natural river spawners rather than the Nitinat River Hatchery.

"I am pleased with the progress made to date for the renewal program," explains Bob Bocking, LGL, chair of the Uu-a-thluk Watershed Renewal Technical Committee. "In just 15 months, we have assessed 35 kilometres of stream habitat, planted 1,800 trees in riparian areas, and assessed 25.4 kilometres of roads within the Sarita and Pachena watersheds and developed plans for renewal of impacted areas."

The project has also been instrumental in helping citizens gain important work experience. In its first year, 10 Huu-ay-aht citizens and family members worked on renewal activities with LGL Ltd and Meridian Forest Services Ltd. The work continues in 2018 with a focus on renewal of riparian and fish habitat in the Pachena watershed, road deactivation, and wildlife habitat assessments. Most of the 10 citizens returned to the crew for another season.

ƛiišin stresses the importance of using the tools the ancestors taught to guide the Nation in this new world.

"We have to remember our principles and that what we take from our land must be returned to the land," he says. "This is something we are doing with our own money and by our people."

Family makes commitment to their great granddaughter official

By Heather Thomson

Sylvia and Simon Dennis are used to having a full house, and this spring their household officially grew by one.

The couple has been raising many of their grandchildren in their home in Surrey, and their great granddaughter, Aubree Redbear, has always been part of this extended family. On May 22, 2018, this arrangement became official, and Sylvia and Simon were given full custody of their four-and-a-half year-old great granddaughter.

"We have always looked after her, but it's been in question all the time," explained Simon. "It was good to see Aubree walking down to us knowing we were going to bring her home for good."

To show their excitement, Sylvia and Simon hosted a ceremony at the Vancouver Mother Centre. It celebrated the Dennis' commitment to caring for youth and raising them with the Nations' culture and values.



Simon and Sylvia Dennis and Aubree Redbear receive a blanket from Brodie Pountney from the Ministry of Children and Family Development. [Photo by Heather Thomson]

"This is an important day," explained Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr. "Today we see an example of what we want within our Nation – a young Huu-ay-aht will grow up with her culture and surrounded by her family."

Councillor Sheila Charles also attended the event. She said, although the goal is that no Huu-ay-aht children grow up in care, this is an important step. She explained that Sylvia and Simon are ensuring their great granddaughter does not grow up in the custody of the ministry, and that is a big success story. She said it is her hope that Huu-ay-aht will hear more stories like this because of the commitment the Nation has made to carrying out the recommendations of the Social Services Project.

"It's nice to ground ourselves and celebrate what we worked so hard to achieve," she said. "I'm glad to see it's working, and I hope it's contagious."

It was an emotional day for everyone gathered, but it was also a time to celebrate family and practice their culture. Aubree was officially handed over by the Ministry of Children and Family Development, while surrounded by her close and extended family. Tayii Ḥaẇiɬ ƛiišin (Derek Peters) helped blanket Aubree, Simon, and Sylvia, and Edward R. Johnson explained that this will keep them safe. He shared how people in the room were all connected so Aubree understood this is her family.

"It is important that we mark moments like this surrounded by family and celebrating our culture," said ƛiišin. "We have always taken care of our own children and our families. We have endured a lot of suffering and hurt as a Nation, but we are at a good place now. At one time we were a tribe with no children. They were taken away from their teachings and culture.

"As a family we remember that we came from a place of strength, and that will help us grow stronger," he said. "We can feel proud today that we still know our songs, history, and culture. We are no longer a community without children. We will raise our children with the energy of our families and culture."

Research team gets ready to present findings

By Vanessa Sloan Morgan



The Queen's University team gets ready for the Community Engagement Sessions in May where they updated citizens on their project at the Anacla Government Office.

Huu-ay-aht First Nations and the Research Team at Queen's University ("Our Journey, Our Choice, Our Future") have been busy over the winter and spring, continuing our research project to document and evaluate the negotiation and implementation of the Maa-nulth Treaty.

Last summer (2017), 33 Huu-ay-aht citizens took pictures and shared stories about their experiences with the effects of treaty implementation with Becki Nookemis, Ayanna Clappis (Huu-ay-aht research assistants), Jon Aarssen, and Vanessa Sloan Morgan (Queen's University). We shared some of the pictures and key messages from participants at the 2017 Peoples' Assembly and at community engagement sessions in October 2017.

We are now slowly writing up findings and compiling all of the pictures and stories to share with Huu-ay-aht citizens. Becki, Ayanna, Jon, and Vanessa also created digital stories reflecting their experience over the summer and beyond, which are now available through Huu-ay-aht's website: https://huuayaht.org/whats-happening/digital-stories/

You may recall that the 2017 People's Assembly Packages that were mailed out to all citizens included a paper survey asking about your thoughts on treaty implementation. We did not get a whole lot of responses, but when we (Becki and Heather Castleden) presented early findings from the surveys at community engagement sessions in May 2018, we were delighted that more people agreed to complete their surveys during or after the sessions. Thank you. Now Becki is collecting any remaining surveys and completing the analysis so that we can share our final analysis at the 2018 Peoples' Assembly.

The research team has also been busy attending conferences and with invitations to guest lecture on our research. For example, in November 2017, Heather Castleden facilitated a panel at the Lands Claims Agreement Coalition Conference in Ottawa on "Roles in Treaty Research." Tayii Ḥaẇił ƛiišin (Derek Peters) was an invited guest to this panel, alongside representatives of the Government of Canada and the British Columbia Treaty Commission. The Land Claims Agreement Coalition is a national body of all First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Nations who have a modern treaty driving their government. More recently, Heather Castleden and Marc Calabretta presented findings from Marc's thesis that traced the treaty negotiation process through the Huu-ay-aht Archives at the American Association of Geographers in New Orleans in April 2018.

The data collection for this project is complete. This year we will wrap up all of our analyses for this project. With endorsement from the Huu-ay-aht Advisory Committee, during our latest round of community engagement sessions (April-May, 2018), we asked attendees if they thought the research was useful to the Nation and whether they thought we should try to apply for more funding to continue this project. We received unanimous agreement about its value and unanimous support at all five locations to continue documenting Huu-ay-aht's journey in implementing the Maa-nulth Treaty.

Consequently, the research team will be discussing a grant opportunity in the fall, seeking support from Huu-ay-aht First Nations' Executive Council and the Council of Ḥaẇiiḥ. If we move forward, the research team will apply for funding to the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada to continue our research.

We will also hold one last round of community engagement sessions following the 2018 Peoples' Assembly in November to overview findings from the survey and Photovoice, and to discuss future research possibilities. Please keep an eye on Huu-ay-aht's Facebook page, Instagram, and website for project updates and dates for the next round of community engagement sessions.

Alliance of BC Modern Treaty Nations a reality

The five Maa-nulth Nations (Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/ Chek'tles7et'h', Huu-ay-aht, Toquaht, Uchucklesaht, and Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ), Tsawwassen First Nation, and Tla'amin Nation have formally established the Alliance of BC Modern Treaty Nations (ABCMTN).



Tanya Corbet, executive councillor for Tsawwassen, Huu-ay-aht's Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr., and Hegus Clint Williams, Tla'amin Nation sign the Memorandum of Cooperation in Vancouver.

By signing a Memorandum of Cooperation on July 24, this group commits to collaborating on areas of mutual interest related to treaty implementation in British Columbia.

Huu-ay-aht Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr. is excited about the opportunities that will be available to the group as a result of the alliance.

"The Maa-nulth Nations have seen many benefits as a result of signing our treaty, but we face shared issues with Tla'amin and Tsawwassen as modern treaty nations," the Chief Councillor points out.

"By working together we will be able to build on shared experiences and knowledge and that will make for a brighter future for everyone."

The ABCMTN will address a wide range of issues requiring joint action, including revenue sharing, police service agreements, and co-management of fisheries, lands and resources.

A Canada-wide coalition of modern treaty governments has been in place for some time to advocate for improved treaty implementation at the federal level; however, no mechanism was in place for treaty nations in BC to collectively engage at the provincial level.

Meet the Treaty Implementation Committee



Connie Waddell (nee Nookemis, traditional name Nanaa-aqs) is the chair of the Treaty Implementation Committee. Connie is an elected councillor for Huu-ay-aht and holds the Treaty Implementation and Finance portfolios.

She is the daughter of Rose and Clifford Charles. Her grandparents are the late Martin and Cecilia Charles, Edward and Mabel Nookemis, and Joe Edgar. Her grandmother Frances Edgar still resides in the Ditidaht community. Connie grew up in Bamfield, and she now lives in Port Alberni.

Connie believes that signing the Maa-nulth Treaty was the beginning of a new future for Huu-ay-aht First Nations. It is an opportunity to create a future that is our own and not one dictated by the Federal Government and the Indian Act. She is excited by the opportunities she believes will come as a result of the treaty.

"I am committed to ensuring Huu-ay-aht benefits in every way possible," she explains. "Through the committee, we will work hard to ensure the treaty is properly implemented and every citizen is better off because we signed."

The Treaty Implementation Committee is made up of Connie as chair, Derek Peters, Jack Cook and Duane Nookemus. Watch in future issues of the newsletter for profiles of the other members of this committee.

On April 1, 2011, as a part of the Maa-nulth treaty, Huu-ay-aht First Nations entered into a **Fiscal Financing Agreement** (FFA) with the Governments of Canada and British Columbia.

The FFA is a service agreement where Huu-ay-aht is responsible for ensuring the provision of federally and provincially support programs and services. The current FFA covers programs and services in the following areas: health, social development, education, governance, economic development, physical works, treaty implementation, and fisheries

The current FFA expires at the end of the current fiscal year on March 31, 2019. Huu-ay-aht has started preliminary negotiations of a new FFA. We are working closely with all the Maa-Nulth Nations to ensure we negotiate the best possible agreement for Huu-ay-aht Citizens.