

The Bamfield Historical Society Presents:

Sharing our Stories

This is the 10th annual exhibit of the *Bamfield Community Museum and Archives*, under the umbrella of the *Bamfield Community School Association*. The annual exhibit as well as the museum and archives are overseen by the *Bamfield Historical Society*. This year's exhibit came about through consultations with the *Huu-ay-aht Na-naaniiqsu (Grandparents) Cultural Society*. We are grateful to them for their generosity, guidance and encouragement.

We wish to thank those who shared their stories, and allowed us to share them in the exhibit, providing an opportunity for us all to begin to understand the rich history of this beautiful territory.

A special thanks is extended to Charlie Clappis, Huu-ay-aht Councillor at the time of the creation of this exhibit and chairperson of the *Bamfield Community School Association*. His passion for community and history has made this exhibit possible.

We are grateful to *Bamfield Cennennial Park* for their generous financial contribution towards the exhibit and to the *Bamfield Community School Association* for the technical expertise and creative support of their *Canada Summer Jobs* student, Fiona Hawkes.



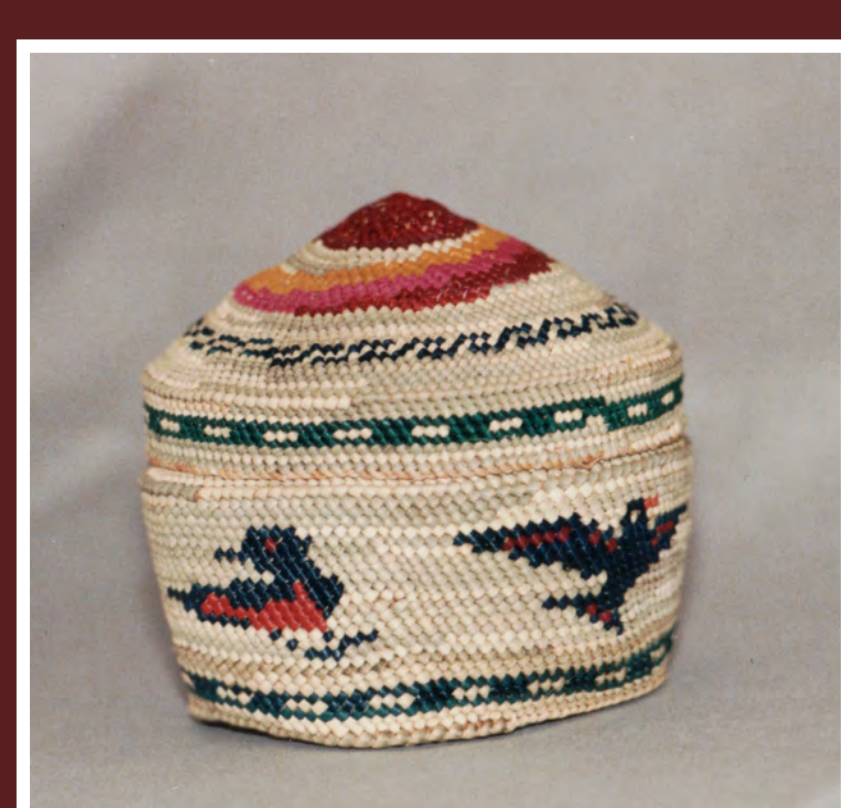
Kiix?in, National Historic Site of Canada, From the collection of E. F. Jennings circa 1910, Bamfield Community Museum and Archives.

Sharing our Stories

THE DENNIS FAMILY BASKET WEAVERS AND BOAT BUILDERS

Information told by Nellie Dennis. Photos from the collection of Nellie Dennis.

In the 1950s, Nellie Dennis who had been born in Kildonan, lived for a while on Burlo Island with her husband, Simon Dennis. They moved back and forth between here and Sarita and sometimes lived on their boat with their youngest daughter, Valerie, traveling on weekends to visit the rest of their children at the residential school in Port Alberni. Life was not easy on Burlo. Nellie recalls that she had to pack water quite a distance from a well. There were lots of neighbours on the island at the time including Billy and Lizzie Happynook, Ebb and Ralph Johnson, as well as Mabel and Paul Jack. Art Peters owned the house that they lived in.



Several examples of baskets that have been woven by Nellie Dennis.



Nellie Dennis in the kitchen of her home in Port Alberni preparing grass for weaving after picking, drying, and trimming.

Nellie learned to weave with grasses when she was 16 years old and living in Sarita. Her grandmother, May Williams encouraged Nellie to watch while she wove in order to learn. Nellie continued to weave and sold many pieces of her work.



Nellie Dennis working on one of her beautiful baskets.



A copy of a news article about a three-day First Peoples Festival in Victoria in 1990. Nellie Dennis was invited to participate by the Friendship Centre to demonstrate her weaving abilities.

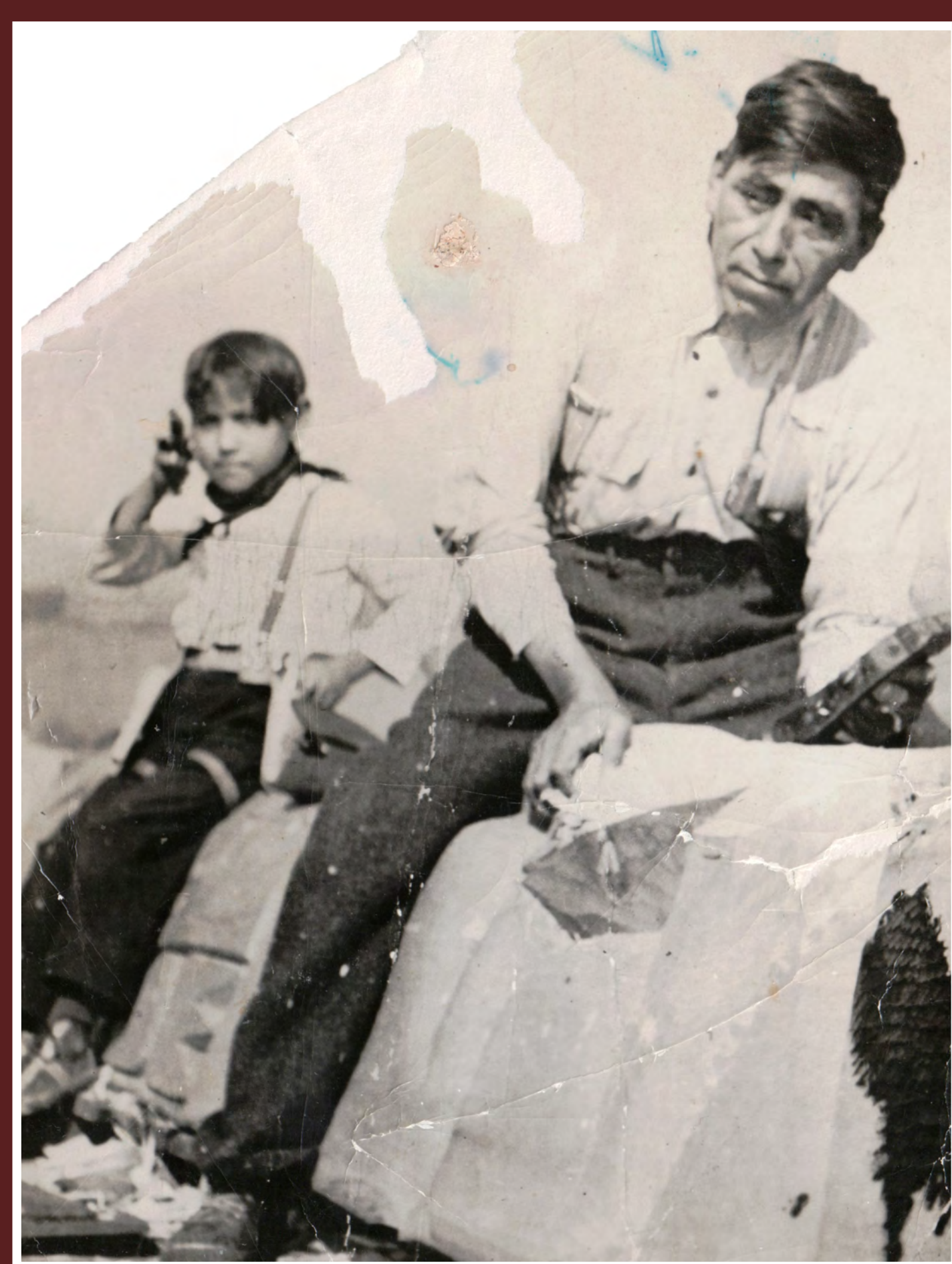
Simon's father, Telford Dennis, was a boat builder who built everything correctly by eye with no need for measuring. He made the bottom from one piece, intuitively understanding the angles and placement.

When Nellie and Simon were living on Burlo Island, Simon decided that he would turn his hand to boat building, like his father did. He priced out a boat house and went to talk to the fish company. The company called the Vancouver office and Simon was told that the fish company would cover the cost of the boat house. Nellie recalls Simon coming home and announcing, "We're going to build a 34 foot boat!"

In seven months there was a 37 foot boat in the boat house. Simon and Telford built it together with help from Simon's brother, Moses and his nephew, Billy Dennis. Simon found that he was very good at doing the window frames on the boat. These were difficult to do. He didn't have the boat long before he sold it. He named it the Val-Pat II after two of his daughters.



May Williams, (left in photo), was Nellie's father's (Alex Williams) mother. May's father was Jimmy Clamahouse (Tlamahaus). Nellie, (top right), is holding her cousin Ida May Williams. Lenore (young girl in back) is the daughter of Leonard Williams. From left, (out of photo) Irene, Stephen, Victor Sr., and Walter Williams - all of whom, including Ida May, are children of Mike Williams. Alex, Mike and Leonard Williams were all brothers.



Sam Williams, from Ditidaht, was the father of Eva Williams (Nellie's mother). In this photo, he and his son Raymond are working on a boat built by Dan Williams in Dodger's Cove.



The Dennis family about to launch the Val-Pat II after its construction on Burlo Island in Bamfield. (from left) Simon and Nellie, Myrtle, Eva, and Pat (front row) Marsha, Robert, Lyle, Telford, Simon Jr., and Valerie.

A previous vessel, purchased by Simon in Kildonan after it had been burnt to the water line, was restored by Telford and named the Val-Pat I.

Sharing our Stories

HUU-AY-AHT FIRST NATIONS WHERE WE ARE NOW

Information compiled by Charlie Clappis. Photos supplied by: Charlie Clappis.

Mission

As a leader among First Nations, the Huu-ay-aht will create certainty for its people and generate wealth for financial independence by providing economic opportunities, social, cultural and recreational programs for all Huu-ay-aht.

Vision

The Huu-ay-aht envision a strong, self-governing and self-reliant Nation. Lisaak will guide us as we work together to foster a safe, healthy and sustainable community; where our culture, language, spirituality and economy flourish for all.



House of HUU-AY-AHT

The Maa-nulth Treaty

April 1, 2011 was the effective date of our Treaty. This day was the start of a new journey for our people. The Treaty process started back in 1993 and it took a better part of two decades to achieve. In the end the treaty included 5 first Nations. On effective date the HUU-AY-AHT people received over 8000 hectares of land and the ability to govern over this land. This land spans between Bamfield area and Franklin River.

The treaty will bring certainty with respect to each Maa-nulth First Nation's rights to use, own and manage lands and resources throughout its claimed traditional territory. It will provide the Maa-nulth First Nations with modern governance tools to build strong and workable relationships with other governments, including federal, provincial and local governments.

The HUU-AY-AHT has its own Legislation which includes a Constitution Act. We as a people are no longer Band Members, we are HUU-AY-AHT Citizens and we no longer live on Reserves, we live on Treaty Settlement Lands (TSL). The biggest change of all is that our people are no longer governed under the Indian Act. We can invest in business and we approve what happens on Treaty Settlement Lands. As of 2012 the HUU-AY-AHT have a seat on the Regional District Board. We currently are reaching 800 Citizens and growing with a Citizen not needing to be of First Nations decent. Of our population 10% live on TSL, approximately 40% living within the Alberni Regional District. Our goal is to build an appealing place for our people to want to live.

www.maanulth.ca



Anacla Government Office.

HUU-AY-AHT Government

Our Governance includes an Executive Council of 7. There is a Chief Councillor, 5 Council Members and 1 appointed Hereditary Chief (Ha'wilth). Included are Committees and an Administration with a Peoples Assembly that is held at least once a year in the form an Annual General Assembly. Currently there are two offices that serve for the HUU-AY-AHT people, one in Anacla and one in Port Alberni.

www.huuayht.org



The board room at the Anacla Government Office.



Anacla Government Office.

HUU-AY-AHT Development Corporation

Also the HUU-AY-AHT formed a Development Corporation that manages the HUU-AY-AHT group of businesses. The Nation only sets strategic direction for the Corporation and the Corporation has an operating board that is responsible for the day to day operations. The Corporation currently operates a gravel pit, gas station, campground, the East dock, café and grocery store which includes a liquor store and a forestry company. Also it manages the West Coast Trail guardians and a dry land sort and sells firewood in the winter.

www.hfndevelopmentlp.org

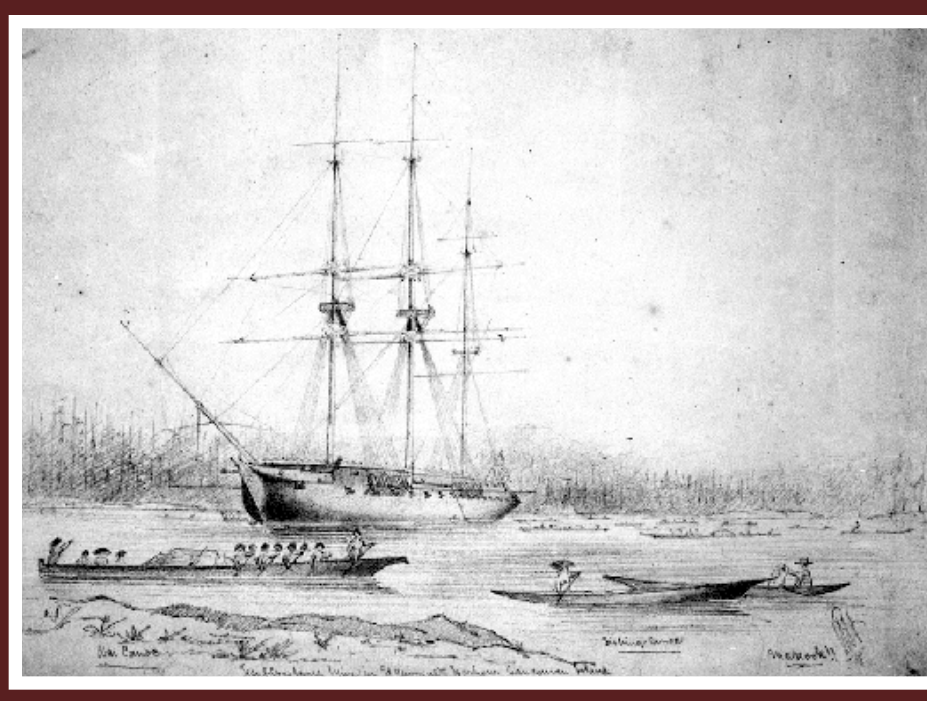
BUILDING BRITISH COLUMBIA WITH THE DUGOUT CANOE

Information compiled by Stella Wenstob.

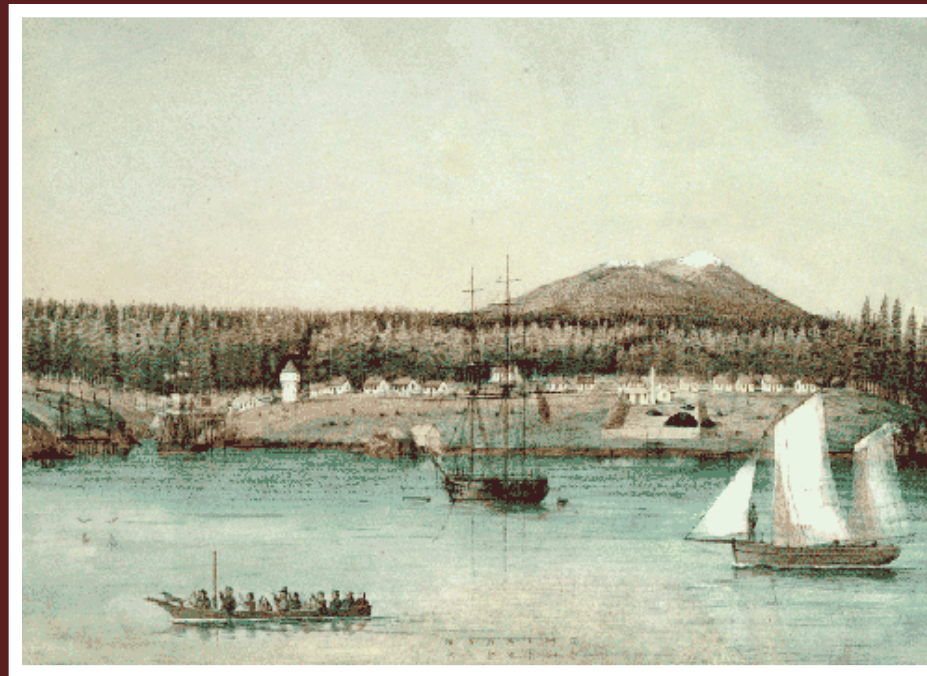
"The superb canoes made by the Hydats [Haida] and Alits [Nuu-cha-nulth] are perfections of design and accurate workmanship; and it might be added, that the lines of the first clipper build by an eminent ship-builder of Boston were taken from a Nootka [Nuu-Cha-nulth style] canoe."

-Dr. Israel Wood Powell 1873:7

The dugout canoe and the First Nations carvers and canoeists who made it possible, have not been well remembered in history, yet Indigenous labour has always been integral to the development of British Columbia's economy. From the early years of the Province right into the mid-twenty-first century, the canoe was often the most manoeuvrable and dependable method of water transport. As ships' tenders (transporting goods between ships and shore), for transport of mail and goods and for travel, the dugout served as the early and most efficient connector between coastal communities.



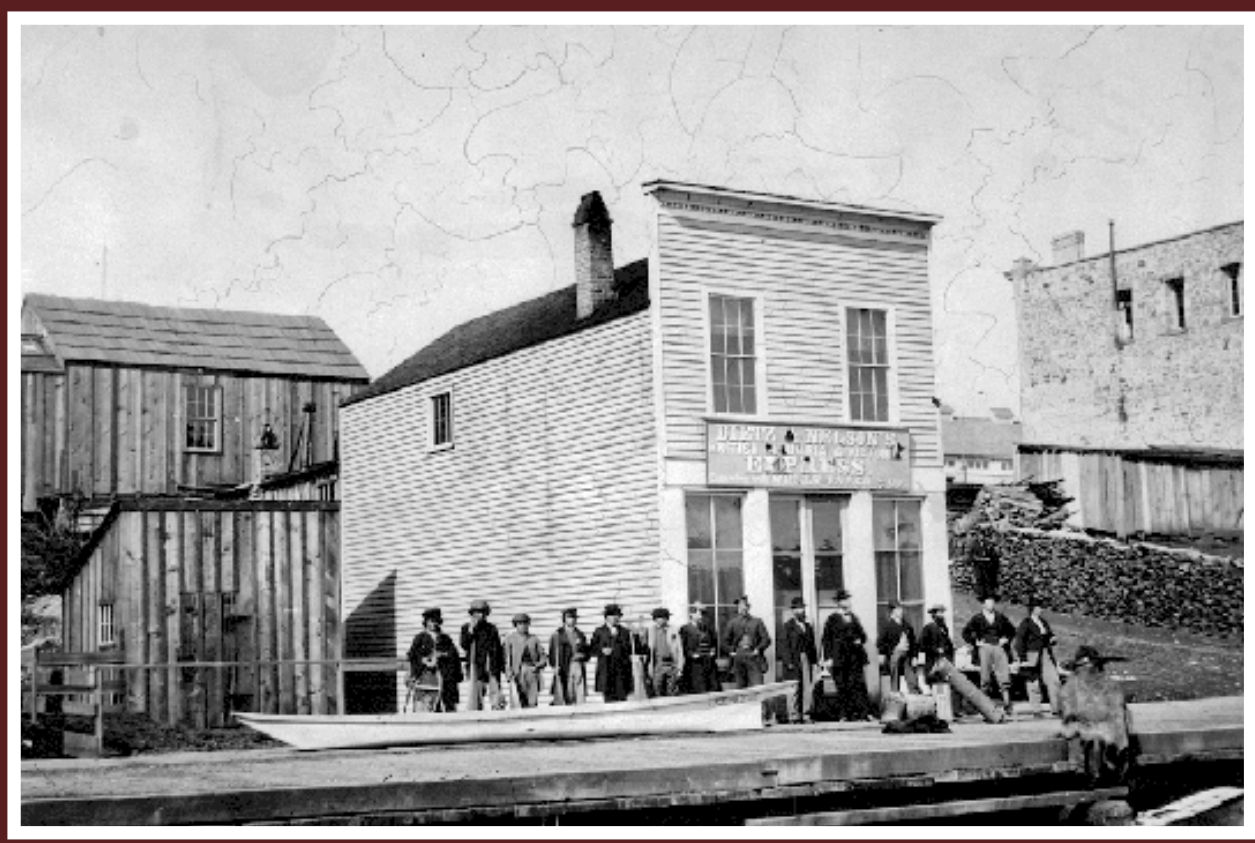
HMS Constance lying in Esquimalt Harbour, Vancouver Island. August 1848. John Turnstall Haverfield. Cat: PDP01182. Courtesy of the RBCA.



Nanaimo. Between 1856 and 1863. Edward Parker Bedwell. Cat: PDP02614. Courtesy of the RBCA.

The dugout canoe mediated a lot of firsts in British Columbia history:

- In 1849, the first settler arrived by dugout.
- In 1850, the first governor travelled over 200 miles by dugout.
- In 1853, the first official survey of Vancouver Island's South East Coast was conducted by dugout.
- In 1900, the first installed gas engine, the Easthope, was in a dugout.
- In 1901, the converted Nuu-chah-nulth dugout, the Tilikum, circumnavigated the globe by sail.



Dietz and Nelson express office. New Westminster. 1864. Francis George Claudet. Call: E-07736. Courtesy of the RBCA.

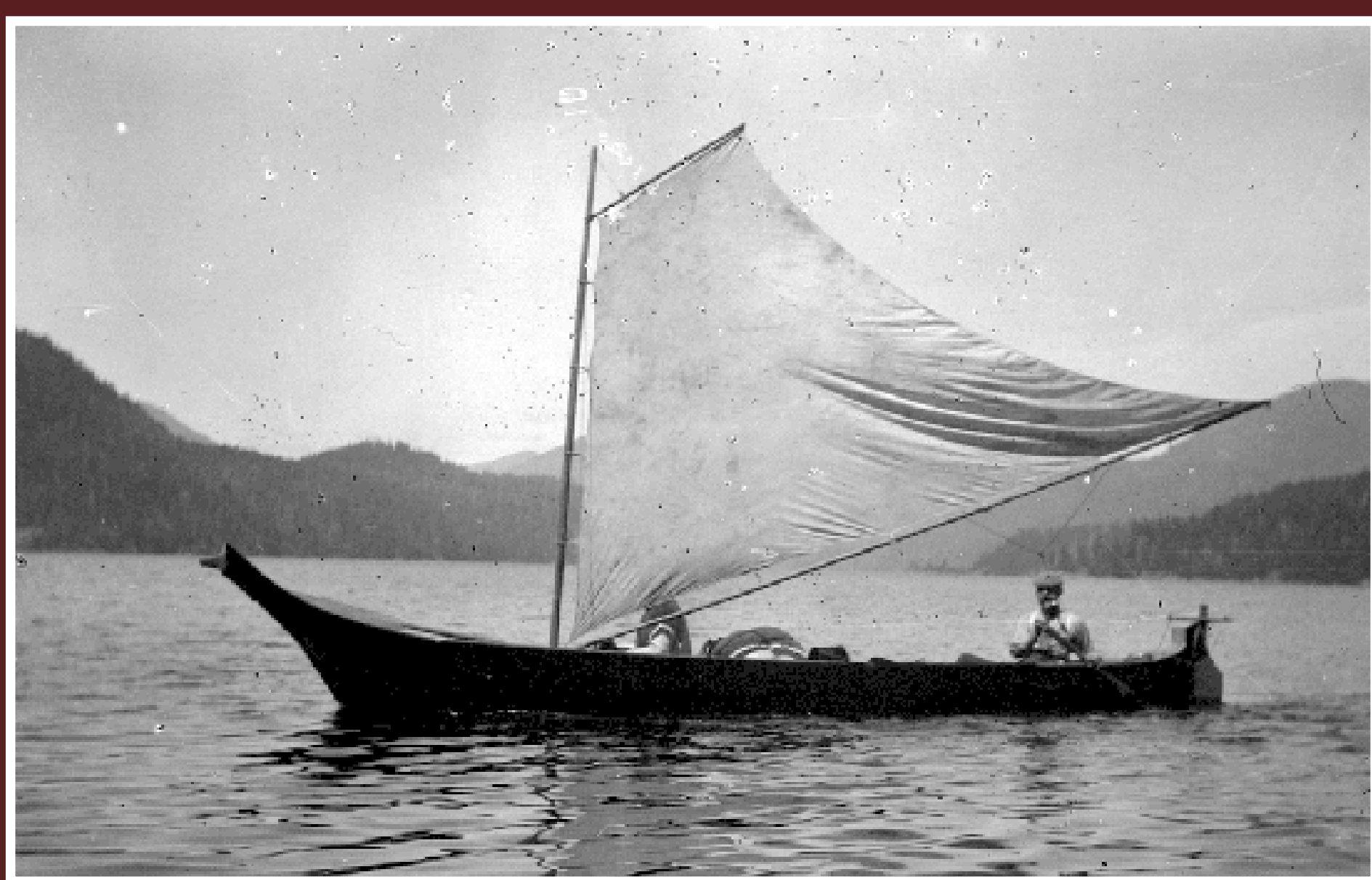


Sailed Canoe "Tilikum" at anchor. Oct. 1901. Converted Nuu-chah-nulth dugout. Reference Code: Am54-4; Bo P369. Courtesy of the City of Vancouver Archives.

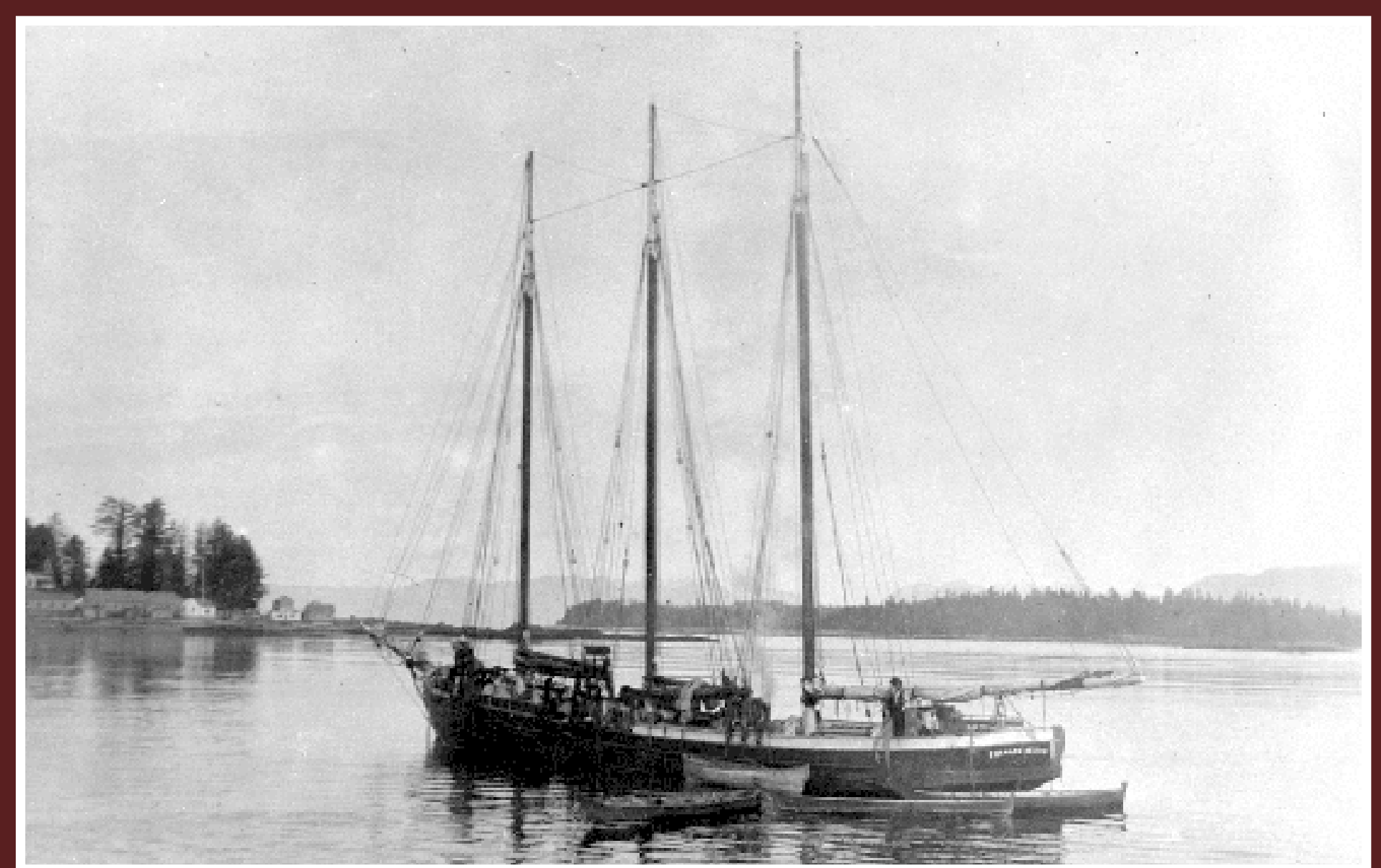


Canoe landing supplies off the boat the Maquinna, at Clo-oase. From the collection of the Logan family, Bamfield Community Museum and Archives.

The dugout canoe was important to the development of industry and infrastructure in the Province. Fisheries were conducted by canoe and the pelagic sealing industry (from 1880s to 1900s) was developed as a partnership between European schooners and First Nation sealers. The Nuu-chah-nulth sealing dugouts were specially adapted with a cut-water keel that enabled the canoe to glide noiselessly across the swells (without slapping) and flat gunnels that allowed the canoes to be stacked aboard the schooners.

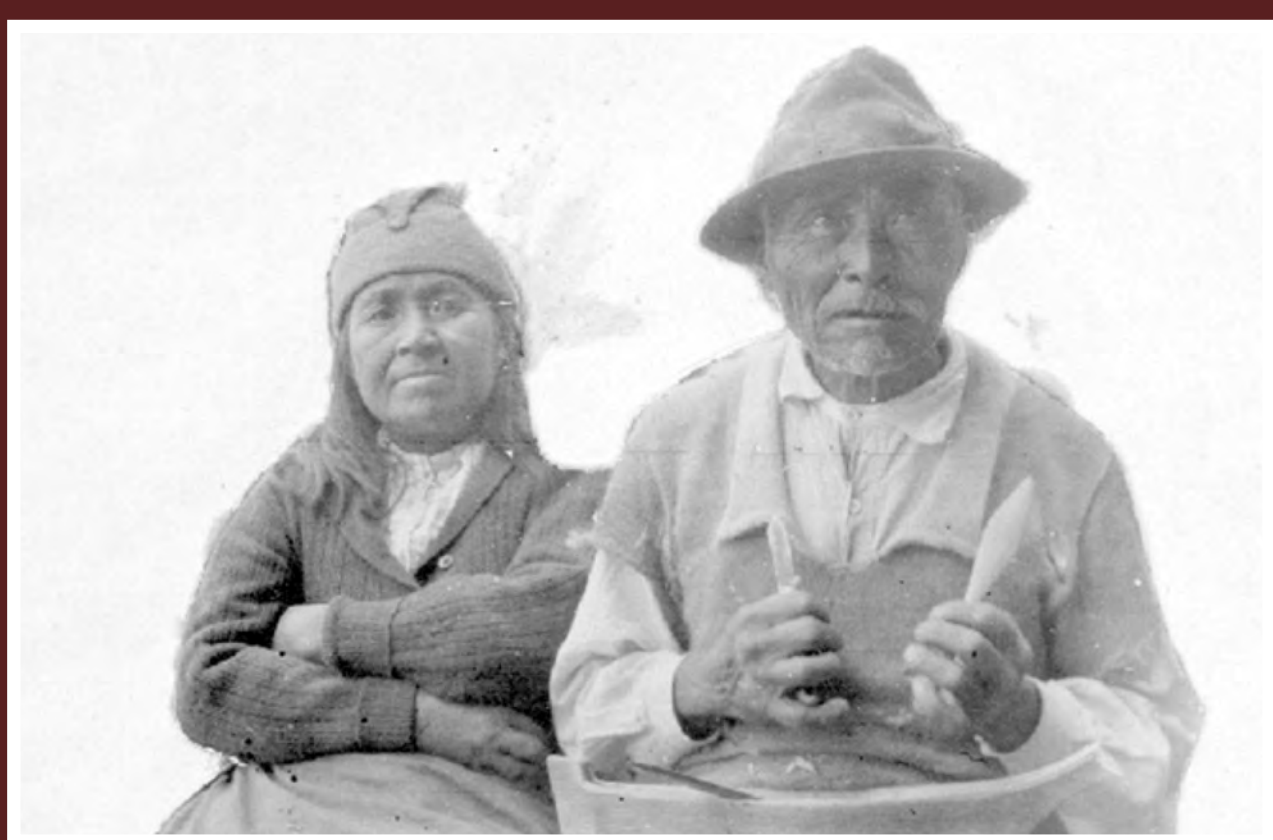


Canoe used for the Pacific cable station survey in the Alberni Canal. June, 1901. Frank Cyril Swannell. Call: I-33640. Courtesy of the RBCA.



Sealing Schooner Eva Marie. The Eva Marie was owned by Captain Victor Jacobsen, the grandfather of Bamfielder, Ardie Logan. Call: C-05447. Courtesy of the RBCA.

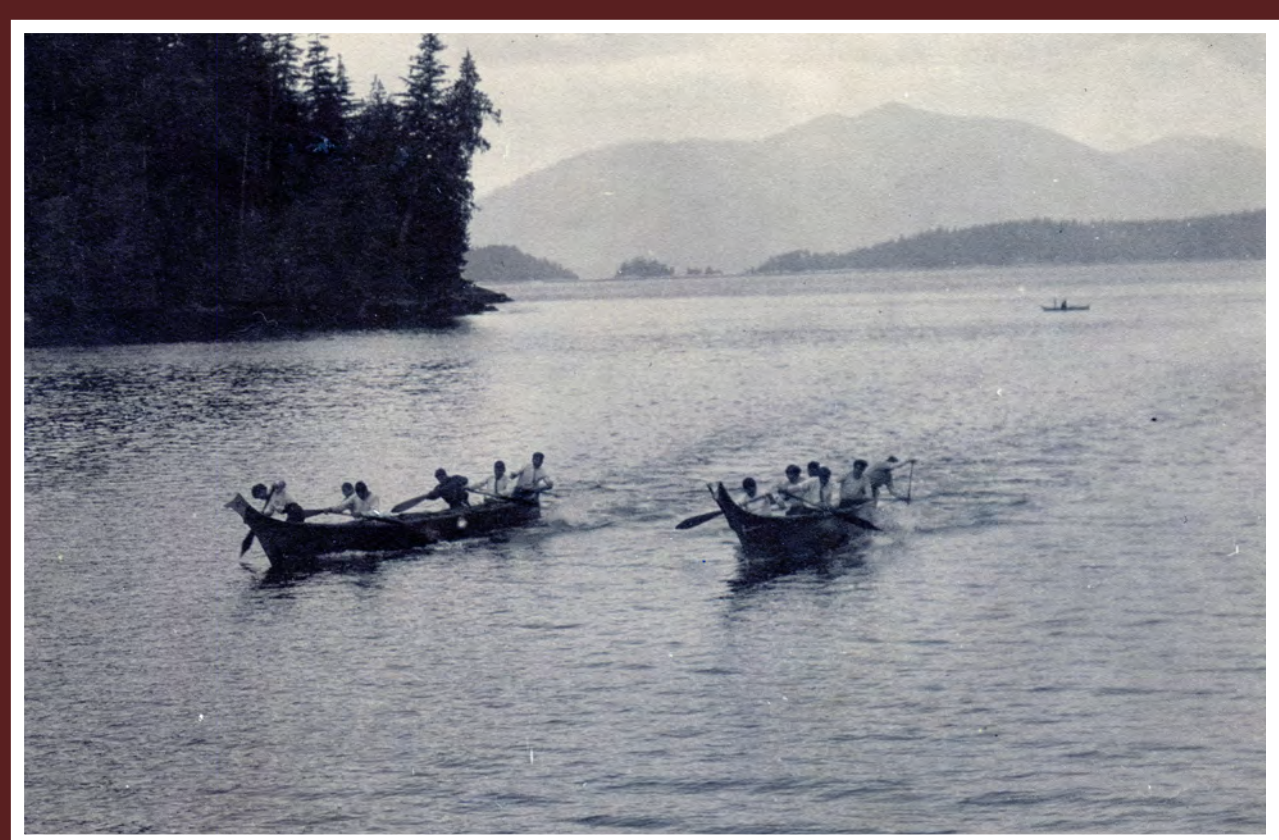
The dugout was the primary and most valued means of transportation in the years of the gold rush. With the demand exceeding the supply, prices inflated in 1858 from \$35 in April to \$200 per a canoe in June. Model dugout canoes were often sold to tourists. Outings, picnics and recreational use of the dugout canoe were common. Regatta canoe races were especially popular.



Huu-ay-aht elders Sa'sawatin and his wife Yima'uk; he is holding a small carved canoe in his lap and a pen knife and small paddle in his hands. Call: I-61566. Courtesy of the RBCA.



Cecile, Johnnie, and Gabrielle Vanden circa 1920's, Bamfield Harbour, in a Nuu-chah-nulth canoe. From the collection of the Phillips family, Bamfield Community Museum and Archives.



War canoe race, Bamfield 24th, May 1908. From the collection of E.F. Jennings, Bamfield Community Museum and Archives.



Friendly cove; canoe presented to Lieutenant Governor William S. Nichol for preservation at Government House. August 13, 1924. W.R. Lord. Call: A-06091. Courtesy of the RBCA.

Silenced Stories

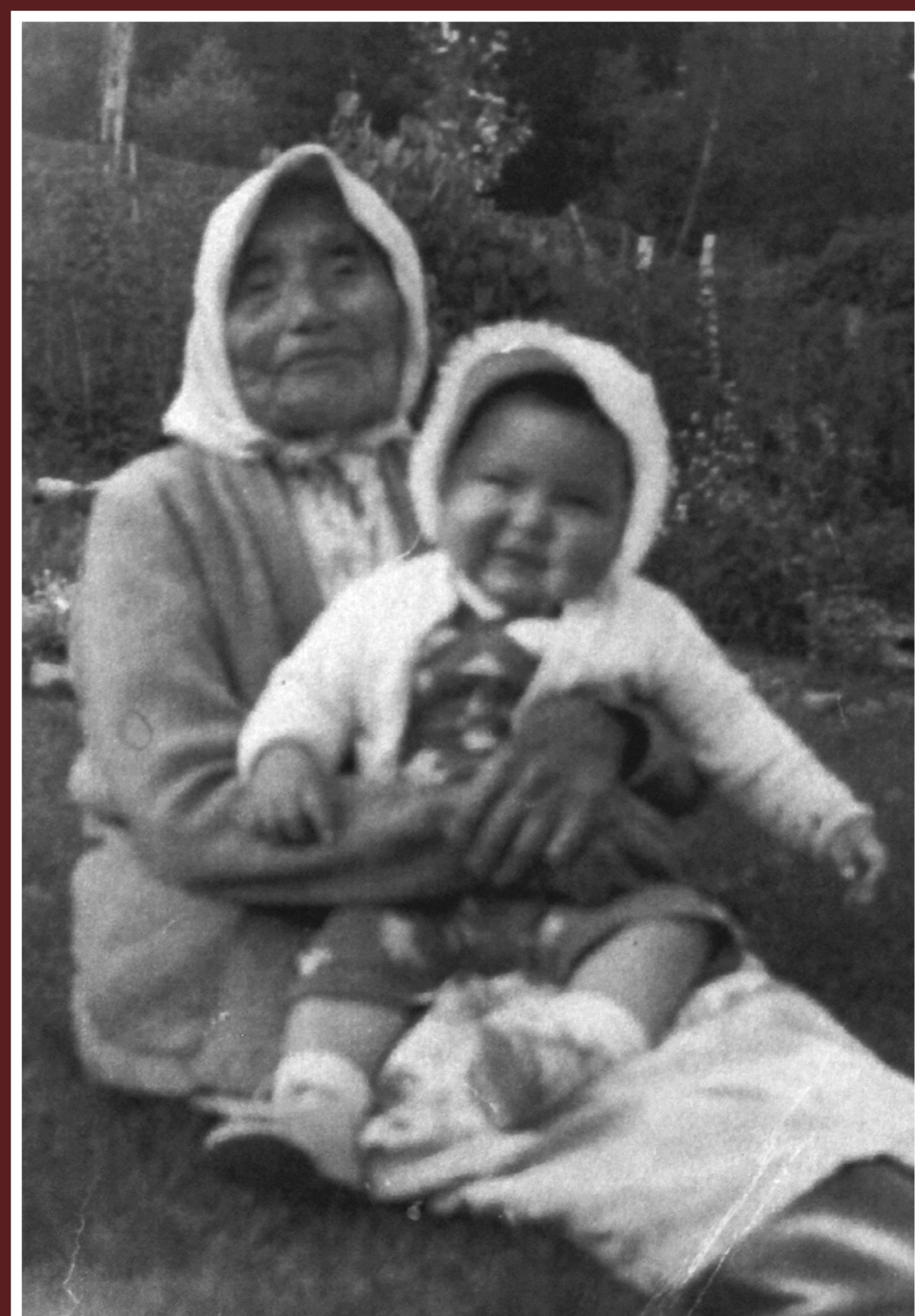
To justify the wrongful treatment and displacement of First Nations peoples from their land and resources, First Nations values, technological achievements and ways of life were often denigrated with First Nations leaders and entrepreneurs excluded from white-European histories of British Columbia. Yet if we look beyond the dominant histories by examining images and reading between the lines in written accounts, we see glimpses of how pervasive and impactful First Nations labour and technology were historically to the development of British Columbia.

Sharing our Stories

THE JACK FAMILY OF OHIAHT BOAT BUILDING IN DODGER'S COVE

Information gathered by Jane Peters as told by Ernest and Al Jack. Photos from the collection of Aggie Peters

Jackson Jack was a boat builder and a sealer. His father, Old Man Jack, was a canoe builder in Dodger's Cove. It is said that he was given his name by the Indian Agent who saw that he was a "jack of all trades" and recorded him simply as Old Man Jack. When Jackson was born he became 'Jack's son, Jack', or Jackson. His mother, Lucy Jack, passed away in 1958 at the age of 108. Her obituary stated that "Up to a short time before her death, Mrs. Jack was active, rowing her canoe down the creek to Bamfield to shop." A previous news article from before her death reported that at the age of 107 Mrs. Jack could remember when "Indians were in the majority among Alberni residents."



Lucy Jack, wife of Old Man Jack, holds her great-grandson, Spencer Peters. Spencer was the hereditary chief of the HUU-ay-aht until his death and was the son of Aggie, one of Jackson and Maggie Jack's children.



Old Man Jack in a canoe he was building at Dodger's Cove.



Jackson Jack hunting seals. Shown with the permission of the Alberni Valley Museum Photograph Collection PN01854

Jackson was married to Maggie Cootes, from Kildonan. The couple had twelve children, including Lizzie (Happynook), Daisy (Ginger), Aggie (Peters), Ernest, Paul, and Ethel or Ebb (Johnson). With the help of his sons Ernie and Paul, as well as Arthur Cootes Sr., Jackson built the three Native boats at the summer HUU-ay-aht home of *Chap-is* (Dodger's Cove).

The original Native was built in the 1920s, followed by the Native II in 1945. In March of 1964, the same weekend as the Port Alberni tidal wave, the Native II burnt to the water line. By June of that year she had been rebuilt by Alberni Engineering and Shipyard, and was being re-launched. The Native II was owned by Paul Jack, one of Jackson's sons who died a few years after the re-launch. It is uncertain where this boat is now.

The Native III was built in 1947 and is currently owned by Jackson's son, Ernest, who, with his son Al, often moors at the dock in Bamfield during fishing season. It is said by people who lived in Bamfield during the late 1940s and the 1950s that the Native III, a double-ender, was the fastest boat of her kind, being able to travel at 8 knots.



(top left), Children in dugout canoe towing their handmade sailboat behind Dodger's Cove, circa 1940s.



(bottom left), Jackson Jack working on a dugout canoe at Dodger's Cove. Circa 1940s



Jackson Jack and Aggie Peters with Jackson's dugout canoe 'Warrior'. Unknown person in foreground. Dodger's Cove, circa 1940s.

Jackson built several other boats, including Clarence Cootes' boat, the Levi C in 1942. Ernie recalls that the lumber for the Native boats came from Beaver Creek in Port Alberni, leading to speculation that perhaps the lumber was milled at the McLean Mill which was operated by R. B. McLean and his three sons from 1926 until 1965. The Alberni Heritage website says "The McLean "Steam" Sawmill is the only commercial steam-operated sawmill in Canada.



(top left) The Native II ready to be launched at Dodger's Cove, 1945.

(bottom left) The Native III owned by Ernest Jack, fishing near Bamfield in 2014. Marc Phillips photo.



(centre top) An early photo of one of the Native boats with its sail up. Circa 1940s.

(top right) The Native II, Paul Jack's boat, coming into the harbour. Bamfield Community Museum and Archives. Jennings Family Collection.



(bottom right) The Native II. Circa 1940s - 1950s.

Sharing our Stories

HUPINYUK HISTUKSHILTH ČAČAAḤSI?AS (HAPPYNOOK'S OF CARNATION CREEK)

Story told by Tom Happynook Jr. Photos from the collection of the Happynook family.

Nuu-chah-nulth ha'wiih (hereditary leaders) own painted curtains that serve several functions, the most important being that they portray a record of the family's history, the responsibilities, and rights of the ha'wiih and his family. The curtains of the ha'wiih are a part of their ḥupaquinum (treasure box); a symbolic box in which each ha'wiih has all his regalia, songs, chants, dances and ha'houlthee (territory). The curtains are hung during ceremonies so that the oral history can be told and also so that the dancers can prepare for ceremony behind the curtain prior to performing the dances.



The Happynook family posing in front of the Happynook family curtain.

čačaahsi?as means “knocking on the door” and our family name, “hupinyuk” means full circle. Both of these words are very important to our family and connect us with the other ha'wiih of Huu-ay-aht. Billy Happynook talked about the amalgamation of the Huu-ay-aht First Nations. When you look at Huu-ay-aht territory in its entirety - it is a circle - by water from čačaahsi?as, to numukiimus, kookswis, klanawah, and tsusiaht, then back by land from tsusiaht to čačaahsi?as – it is a full circle.

This is why you see tsusiaht falls, which is klatsmiik's (Bill Frank's) hahoothlee, shown on our family's curtain because it is the eastern boundary of Huu-ay-aht territory but also to show the connection to čačaahsi?as. Tsusiaht also signifies one of the boundaries in which we have the right to hunt whales.



Lizzie Happynook in front of the home she shared with her husband Billy Happynook on Burlo Island in Bamfield.



Lizzie and Billy Happynook in front of their home on Burlo Island.

The image of “Sacred Mountain” is on the curtain because it is one of the places used in the preparation for whale hunting. Whaling is a very important part of the Happynook family's responsibilities and history. Our family's oral history and teachings talk about the time of amalgamation and the extensive negotiations that took place to bring the čačaahsi?asaht into the Huu-ay-aht amalgamation. It was through the extensive negotiations that our family was given the honour and responsibility of being the head hereditary whaling family for the Huu-ay-aht First Nations.

The supernatural entities on the curtain are the female and male sea serpents. These beings are called to bring the strength to hunt the most powerful animal on earth with a stick and a mussel shell tip. This belief combined with prayers, chants and months of preparation in the mountains help us in our responsibility to hunt whales.

The whaler must connect with the entities and with the whale to thank it because it is going to feed your family.



Hupinyuk histukshilth čačaahsi?as - The Happynooks of Carnation Creek.

The curtain shows two whaling canoes with eight men each. The two birds are maatkii (petrels) they are whaling birds because they hang around whales. The curtain shows seven species of fish in čačaahsi?as. The bear represents the bear skin that was worn by the harpooner so that when the harpoon was heaved into the whale (ḥiihtuup) the whaler would crouch down in the bow of the whaling canoe and cover himself with the bearskin to avoid getting caught up in the cedar bark rope. Many of the images on the curtain relate to our family's responsibilities as a whaling family.

Sharing our Stories

GROWING UP AT DODGER'S COVE

Story told by Marie Newfield. Photos from the collection of Marie Newfield, unless otherwise stated.

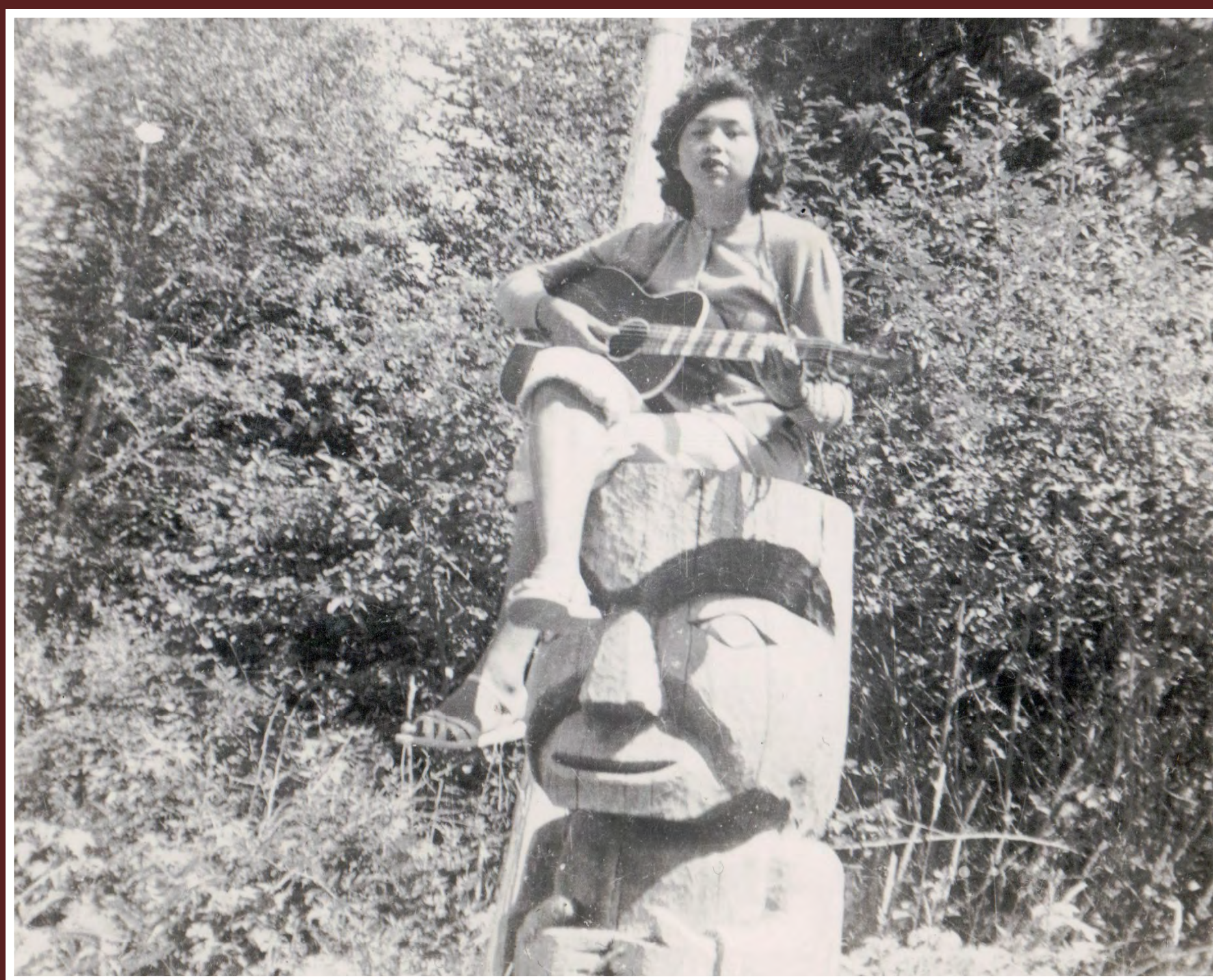
As a young child, I lived at Sarita in a house that my grandfather, Chief Louis Nookemus built. He also built a smokehouse for my grandmother, Janet Clappis to smoke our fish in. My other grandfather, Dan Williams, was a boat builder and built boats at Sarita. He taught his sons to build boats and to fish. Andy Clappis, my father had built all our furniture and my mother, Annie Clappis, made the mattresses from flour sack material and stuffed them with down, so they were very comfortable.



A scene from Dodger's Cove as it was in earlier days, from the collection of Lizzie Happynook.

Then trucks showed up in front of the house and began construction for a logging road. At first it was okay, until the blasting started and big rocks started to come down, even hitting the house, so we were forced to move because of the danger. McMillan Bloedel offered my father \$1000 for the house and \$100 for the smokehouse, so that's when we made our move to Dodger's Cove.

My father built us a house on Diana Island with money that the logging company, Macmillan Bloedel had given him for in compensation for having to leave our home in Sarita. He continued his fishing from a boat called the Western Rover which he bought from Alex Williams.



Marie pictured here at Sarita. Marie and her first husband had a career in music, traveling throughout the United States playing Gospel music.



Cecil Joseph, Marie's son, plays on the beach at Dodger's Cove.

My mother was busy raising three children during the time that I was a child at Dodger's Cove. It was my grandmother, Janet Clappis who would row around the islands, collecting seafood, driftwood and berries. I remember that she was a bit of a tomboy. My grandmother, taught us to harvest seafood during low tides.

No English was spoken at home when I was a child. There was no school at Dodger's Cove when I was young, but previously there had been a Catholic school there.

Everyone in Dodger's Cove had a fish boat at that time and it was only the women and children who were there during summer days. The women would gather on the beach laughing, talking and eating sea urchins. Us kids would swim and Dad gave us a canoe – everyone made canoes then – and we would do what our grandmother had taught us, gathering seafood and berries and learning what to pick and what not to pick - also what not to eat too much of. After the fishing season we would move back to Sarita. There was a place there where Dad built another house for the winters in Kookswi:s, in the Sarita area. A few people might have stayed in Dodger's Cove all winter, but it was very dangerous with the storms.



Marie and her family picnicking on the beach at Dodger's Cove where she played as a child.

Sometimes at night it was like a city in Dodger's Cove, all lit up with boats and houses. We had gas lights in our homes at that time. At three or four in the morning you would hear people leaving to fish. In the evenings the boats would come back to sell their catch. There were two floating fish buyers at Dodger's Cove that were anchored away from the residences. One was Western Fish and the other was BC Packers. We'd watch from shore as Dad tossed all the fish onto the deck of the fish buyer. There were also stores on the floats that sold different things – half was an ice house and half was the store. We would get "chumus" or goodies there.

Later on in life we went to Dodger's Cove to picnic and reminisce of our life there.

Sharing our Stories

KLEE-KLEE-HA WHITE LIGHTNING

The Story of carver Ed Johnson as told by Charlie Clappis



Ed Johnson at work on one of his carvings.

Klee-klee-ha means white lightning in the Huu-ay-aht language. One day while the canoe was being carved lightning struck down around the carving shed and this is how the canoe was named.

Ed Johnson Sr., master carver of the Huu-ay-aht First Nations, started the canoe with the help of his son Edward Johnson Jr. and Hipolite Williams which took them five months to complete. Edward got to hand pick the log that would be used to carve this 40 foot long canoe. Ed had learned the techniques from Fred Peters, from Ditidaht First Nations on how to carve a canoe.

Once it was complete the Huu-ay-aht set out on a journey to invite other First Nations to witness the opening of the House of Huu-ay-aht, in 2000. This fine work has been a pride and joy of the Huu-ay-aht community of Anacla. The *Klee-klee-ha* has been out on Aboriginal day's celebrations, it's been out for weddings and it's just been out for a paddle.



Klee-klee-ha

The canoe sits 14 and a skipper. *Klee-klee-ha* has never been flipped, there have even been many attempts but it has never happened. The Huu-ay-aht hope to one day participate in a canoe journey although this takes a lot of training and a dedicated team to achieve. The canoe has mostly been used lately to bring out groups for short paddles in the Pachena River.



Klee-Klee-ha is used for a variety of events such as weddings, and by school groups. Photo by: John Jack.

Ed Johnson Sr. started carving at the age of 11, and found that he liked doing it because it put him in a "different space" which made him feel good. Ed apprenticed with Wes Williams and Charlie Mickey for one year and then independently mastered the Nuu-chah-nulth style and designs.

Ed contends however, that it is the privilege of carving masks, talking sticks, poles and canoes for ceremonial purposes that he is most proud of.

Ed's artistic objective is to bring back some of the great carvings that are traditionally Nuu-chah-nulth in form, and to promote the traditional use of these items, and the forest from which they came.