

KWÄDAY DÄN TS'INCHĪ

Long Ago Person Found

WINTER 2009

A CHAMPAGNE AND AISHIHIK FIRST NATIONS SPECIAL REPORT



Upper Left - the knife he carried.



Lower Left: he wore this small bead made of native copper mounted on sinew.



Right: Sketch drawn by late 19th century traveller of Shäwshe (Neskataheen/Dalton Post) Chief Ick Ars who wears a robe and hat similar to those worn by the Long Ago Person Found.

Learning About the Life and Times of An Ancestor

Kwäday Dän Ts'inchĪ (Long Ago Person Found in the Southern Tutchone language) refers to human remains found eroding out of a glacier in Tatshenshini-Alsek Park in British Columbia in 1999.

Because the discovery was located in Champagne and Aishihik First Nations traditional territory, the First Nation rightfully stepped forward to take responsibility for the find, establishing a co-operative partnership with the B.C. Government to manage the discovery. This arrangement ensured that First Nations and tribal values were respected, as studies proceeded to learn who the Long Ago Person Found was.

The autopsy showed he was a healthy young man in good physical shape at the time of his passing. No obvious cause of death was determined; he may have died from exposure.



Looking southeast from the discovery site area. The Long Ago Person came from this direction, and would have crossed the glacier in the distance. The Haines Road is located east of the mountain on the left.

He lived sometime between 1670 and 1800 A.D.
- this is when trade between the coast and the interior was at its peak, and the Tlingit were marrying and moving in to the Tatshenshini basin.

Highlights of the numerous studies completed in the decade since the discovery in 1999 are presented in this newsletter, including revised information, such as the time when he lived. We now know, for example, that the Long Ago Person Found belonged to the Wolf/Eagle moeity or clan, and we have learned that while he spent most of his life on or close to saltwater, he also appears to have travelled inland in the months before his passing.

The traditional stories of the Tlingit and the Champagne and Aishihik people say that extensive trade and marriage took place between the two groups. The stories also note that travels over glaciers were part of such exchanges. The results of the Kwäday Dän Ts'inchĪ studies are very much in line with these stories and a clear indication of our shared history.



Spruce Root Hat



An incredible piece of workmanship, the hat is made of very finely woven spruce roots, and features an inner band, which was sized specifically to its wearer. The weaving pattern of the hat is distinctly Tlingit in style. The hat also has a chin strap; the copper bead shown on the front cover may have been tied to that strap.

While the hat had been painted with ochre, based on depictions of Tlingit men wearing similar hats in late 19th century photographs, it appears to be an everyday rather than a ceremonial hat. It had also been repaired.



Spruce root weaving is a highly skilled and time-consuming art, traditionally practiced by women. Workshops were held at Klukwan and other locations to rekindle the art of spruce root weaving. Here, the late Ruth Kasko, organizer of the September 2001 Klukwan workshop, shows progress on her spruce root hat.

No evidence of footwear or other clothing items were ever found.

Clothing, Artifacts

Gopher Robe



Robes or blankets made from the skins of gophers (also known as ground squirrels) were once cherished items in all Southern Tutchone households; lightweight but warm, they have been described as similar to a down sleeping bag. Gopher robes or blankets were also highly valued by the coastal Tlingit, who received them in trade from their interior neighbours.

The remains of the gopher robe are very fragmentary (above photo). Detailed study has shown its similarity to a contemporary gopher robe/blanket, as modelled in the right photo. Blankets are usually made from nearly 100 individual gopher pelts, and feature a distinctive sewing style.

Interestingly, while the robe started its life in the interior, it was repaired by someone with access to coastal species, including sinew from a blue whale.

Champagne and Aishihik First Nations hosted a project in 2008 to learn more about its community's gopher robe making tradition.



Laurie Strand models a family gopher blanket.

Small Bag (not illustrated) In addition to the robe, the Kwäday Dän Ts'inchj individual was also carrying a small bag made of beaver skins.

Knife (front page photo) was encased in its own hide sheath, and is very similar to examples of late 19th century "Men's Knives" from Klukwan that were sold to various American museums. It is also similar to the knives used by contemporary wood carvers. The knife blade, badly corroded, is made of European trade metal.

Numerous sticks and wooden artifacts have been found in the site area. Most are made of woods like hemlock and sitka spruce that come from the coastal biotic zone. One group of stick fragments has been re-assembled into a 12 foot plus long gaff pole; parts of other possible gaff poles have been recognized as well. Three finely carved sticks in the collection are similar to those used for carrying/hanging salmon. A stick with a distinctive hooked end may have been used for setting snares. All of these artifacts are thought to have been left behind by others who travelled this route. Only one wooden artifact, a painted stick of uncertain purpose, is clearly associated with the Long Ago Person Found.



The results of various scientific and community studies about the Long Ago Person Found were presented at a conference in Victoria in the spring of 2008. In this photo, Wayne Jim, right, pays respect as his father, Wolf Clan Elder Paddy Jim of Whitehorse drums to honor the Long Ago Person Found at the Victoria Symposium.

Chronology of Events

| | |
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| Discovery First Made | August 1999 |
| Remains Travel to Victoria for Autopsy | September 1999 |
| Consultations with Neighbouring First Nations and Tribes | 1999, 2000 |
| Medical Studies Completed in Victoria | December 2000 |
| Community DNA Study, Search for Living Relatives Initiated | Winter 2001 |
| Meeting Held With Representatives of Neighbouring First Nations and Tribes to obtain advice on next steps | May 2001 |
| Cremated Remains Returned North | July 2001 |
| Funeral Service Held at Klukshu, Remains Returned to Mountain Where He Lost His Life | July 2001 |
| Forty Day Party Held at Klukwan | September 2001 |
| Missing bones found at site and buried on the mountain | August 2003 |
| Last few bones found at site and buried on the mountain | August 2004 |
| Living Relatives of the Long Ago Person Found Identified & Study Results Presented at Conference in Victoria | Spring 2008 |

His Travels

A fascinating picture of the young man's life history and travels has been assembled from various lines of evidence.

We Are What We Eat -

Your body (bones, muscle, skin, hair) keeps a record of the foods you eat. The bones, muscle and skin show a longer-term record, your hair a shorter-term record. Study of his bones and tissue showed that, for most of his life, The Long Ago Person Found ate shellfish and/or salmon. This suggests that he was raised on the coast, where a seafood diet is common. His hair, however, told a different story, indicating that in the 1-2 months prior to his passing, his diet included lots of meat. This may mean that he had taken an extended journey to the interior. He spent his final days on the coast, however, before heading off on his last trip to the Tatshenshini country.

His Last Meals - While the young man was carrying dried sockeye salmon, the remains of some type of shellfish, which is usually eaten fresh on the coast, were found in his digestive tract. His gut also contained the flowering parts of "beach asparagus", a plant which grows in only a few places in Southeast Alaska. The latter two pieces of information suggest that his last

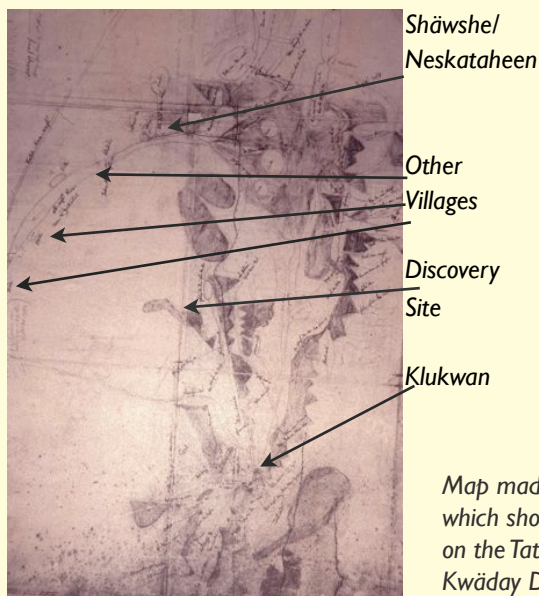
trip started somewhere near saltwater.

Where Did He Come From?

The plant remains on his clothing, as well as mineral grains in his digestive track from the water he drank, provide additional clues on his travels. His last trip started somewhere in the Haines, Klukwan area. He approached the glacier where he lost his life from the southeast.

Where Was He Heading To?

While we have no idea as to the purpose of his last trip, or where he was heading to, the traditional stories of the Chilkat and Yakutat Tlingit and the Southern Tutchone give us some ideas. Quite possibly he was heading to one of several Tutchone or mixed Tlingit-Tutchone villages that once existed on the Tatshenshini River.



Map made by Chilkat trading chief Kohklux in 1852, which shows his Klukwan home, as well as the villages on the Tatshenshini River. The approximate location of Kwāday Dan Ts'inchi discovery site has been added.

Who Are His People?

Community DNA Study

In 2000, a study was initiated to see if living relatives of the Long Ago Person Found could be found through mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) analysis. The mtDNA is inherited through the mother's line, which matches the matrilineal clan system the Tutchone and Tlingit both follow.

Over 240 citizens of Tribes and First Nations from Yukon, northwest British Columbia and southeast Alaska participated in the DNA study. The samples provided by these individuals were compared to the mtDNA sequence of the Kwäday Dän Ts'ınchi individual. The study found 17 individuals in the group of study participants with matching sequences, which means that these individuals share a common female ancestor with the Long Ago Person Found.

Since each of the matched relatives is related to many people through the female line, the actual number of living maternal relatives likely number in the hundreds. Moreover, while the children of men who are from the Kwäday Dän Ts'ınchi maternal line traditionally belong to a different clan, cultural

practice also specifies that they too honor and pay respect to their father's people. Consequently, it is a very large "living family" that celebrates the life of the Kwäday Dän Ts'ınchi individual.

Wolf / Eagle

The study results are a testimony to the integrity of the traditional clan/moiety system of the native people of the region. All of the Relatives identified through the DNA study belong to the Wolf or Eagle clan or moiety, which by tradition means that the Long Ago Person Found was also Wolf/Eagle.

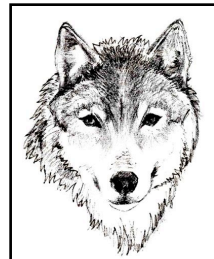
Those relatives who are Tutchone belong to the Wolf clan; those who are Tlingit are member of either the *Dakle'weidi* (killerwhale) or *Yanyeidi* (wolf) clans of the Eagle moiety. The history of these two clans is connected.

The relatives live in Southeast Alaska, B.C. and Yukon, which is not unexpected given the close relationships between people of the two regions and our shared history.

At least five of the relatives are descended from people who lived at Shäwshe, a traditional Champagne and Aishihik village on

the Tatshenshini River. Also known by the Tlingit name Neskataheen and as old Dalton Post, at the turn of the 20th century, Shäwshe was a mixed Tutchone/Tlingit village.

F Oles



Gunat̓chîsh

Champagne and Aishihik First Nations wishes to thank its neighbouring First Nations and Tribes for their support in the decade since the discovery was made. Their patience, as the results of the various studies slowly came to light, ensured that something positive came out of this long ago tragedy. We also wish to acknowledge the project's co-manager, the B.C. Government (Royal British Columbia Museum and B.C. Archaeology Branch), as well as the project's supporters, including the Yukon Government, and the many project researchers who contributed their expertise and resources.

Winter Event

Lectures, Display of Artifacts
Relatives Meeting
March 13th, 14th, 2009
Haines Junction

BOOK

(Summarizing What Has Been Learned)
to be Published Spring 2010

What's Ahead?

Memorial or Headstone Potlatch

Hosted by his Relatives
and the Wolf /Eagle People

September 2009

For Further Information Contact

Champagne & Aishihik First Nations www.cafn.ca

Sheila Joe-Quock squock@cafn.ca 867-634-4010

Sheila Greer sgreer@cafn.ca Heritage Programme



Champagne and Aishihik First Nations