

# Dä Kų

## Cultural Centre



*The Dä Kų Cultural Centre construction site this summer.*

CAFN Communications

**T**he Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (CAFN) Dä Kų Cultural Centre construction is speeding toward completion.

Construction continues throughout the summer of 2011. CAFN expects to receive the keys from the contractor, Dominion Construction, by January 2012, at which time our Heritage and Language staff will move into the facility.

As the building construction progresses, we are also busy working behind the scenes to prepare the Cultural Centre's archives, collections, exhibits and interpretive programs, as well as retail and cultural tourism opportunities.

*Dä Kų* means "Our House" in Southern Tutchone.

**Vision:** Our Cultural Centre is a gathering place that recognizes and celebrates the cultural contributions and way of life of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations peoples - the places we come from, the traditions and languages we carry, and the arts we practice and perform. It is an environment creating lasting memories, where young people will learn the wisdom of our Elders, know our stories and legends, and assume responsibility to carry our values.



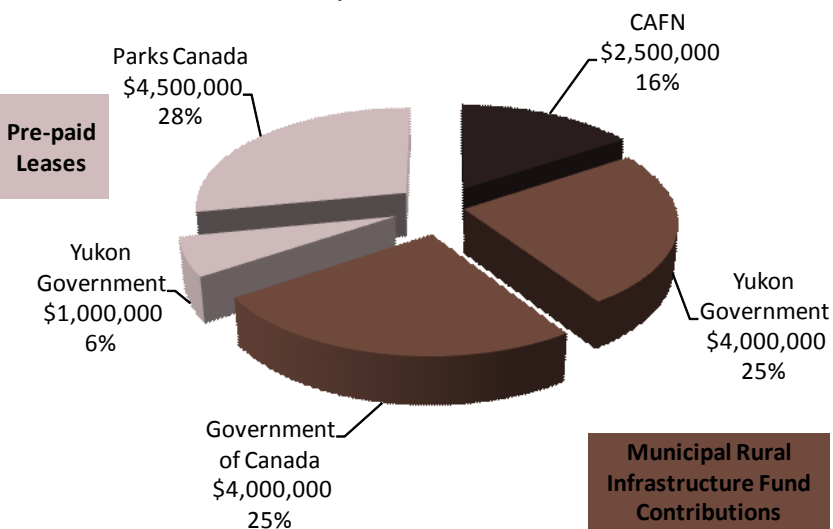
**Champagne and Aishihik First Nations**



CAFN Communications

A Site Blessing Ceremony was held in May 2010. Chief James Allen, Elder Paddy Jim, and the late Councillor Gerald Brown led the ceremony.

### Dä Kų Capital Construction Funding \$16 million



### On the Cover:

A Southern Tutchone *bibía the* (baby belt) with a traditional beaded floral pattern. The baby belt was sewn by Vivian Smith, who replicated the pattern and belt from a 1960's Catharine McClellan photo of her mother, the late Elsie Smith, who was the original artist.

## Dä Kų Cultural Centre

The **Dä Kų Cultural Centre** is first and foremost a resource for CAFN people. It belongs to CAFN people and is a place for our First Nations to continue to learn, preserve and share our story.

Dä Kų will also provide space for public visitor information services. Agreements are in place with Parks Canada and the Yukon Government to lease space for their visitor information services. The space will be shared as follows:

- **CAFN - 65%** (17,621 square feet)
- **Parks Canada - 22%** (6,120 square feet)
- **Yukon - 13%** (3,500 square feet)

CAFN is the landlord and will own the building. Dä Kų is built on CAFN Settlement Land.

The governments of Canada and the Yukon are contributing to funding the construction of the building.



Chief James Allen and Deputy Chief Mary Jane Jim tour Minister of Community Services Archie Lang around the Dä Kų construction site in May 2011.

Funding arrangements are through the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF). MRIF is a federal program that supports new infrastructure in First Nations and smaller Canadian communities.

Both Parks Canada and Yukon Government have prepaid leases to help provide for capital construction costs and ongoing building operations and maintenance costs.

## Mission:

*Our Cultural Centre will celebrate and honour the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations people - past, present and future - by revitalizing our Southern Tutchone and Tlingit cultures and languages through a living, interactive environment that inspires teaching, learning and performance of traditional arts, practices and knowledge. It will promote communications and understanding of our deep connection to and respect for the land and the special places that have shaped our families and clans and the stories and legends that we each carry.*

## Exhibits & Programs

### Exhibit Design

The Dä Kų Exhibit Design Advisory Committee and CAFN Heritage staff are working with exhibit designers to develop displays and exhibits that will best reflect CAFN people, lands and culture.

After extensive community-led consultation, six themes have been selected to reflect our story:

- **Dän - Our People**
- **Dän Kéyi - Our Land/Our Places**
- **Dän Ke - Our Ways**
- **Travel and Trade**
- **Change**
- **Our Languages**

The design company, Hilderman Thomas Frank Cram, has developed 3D conceptual designs for interior and exterior exhibits and landscaping. CAFN's team is helping fine-tune these concepts. The conceptual exhibit designs will be presented to the community for review and comment in fall 2011, in preparation for installation and the opening of the visitor portion of the centre during the summer of 2012.



CAFN Heritage

CAFN members gathered at Aishihik in 2008 for a Traditional Knowledge Oral History workshop. The Dä Kų Cultural Centre will provide space to hold similar programs, and to safely store the photos, transcripts and recordings.

### Programming

Dä Kų will also be a community gathering space and will provide activities and programs for CAFN members. It is a place for keeping our language and traditions alive and there will be special spaces dedicated to that purpose, including:

- a language classroom;
- a language lab and resource centre;
- an outdoor workshop/craft area;
- a community gathering hall; and
- spaces for artists and crafts people to work.

### Marketing

CAFN is focusing on developing a plan to market the Centre and the many attractions it will hold for visitors to our Traditional Territory. The Centre will serve as a base for CAFN entrepreneurs to market their tourism products and for local artists and craftspeople to sell their creations. It is anticipated we will have more than 45,000 visitors coming through our doors between May and September each summer.

## Gwānaschis to:

The Cultural Centre  
Steering Committee  
(2002 - 2004)

This Committee formulated the Vision, Mission and Mandate for the proposed cultural centre and participated in the feasibility study process. Their mandate was fulfilled with the formal endorsement of the completed feasibility study in July 2004 by the CAFN Council and the General Assembly. Gwānaschis to original Committe members and support staff: **Sharon Shadow, Chuck Hume, Ron Chambers, Donna Darbyshire, Shadelle Chambers, Frances Oles, Sheila Greer and Diane Strand; and the late Fran Wellar, Ed Stick and Sarah Gaunt.**

The Building Advisory  
Committee (2008 - 2010)

The Building Advisory Committee worked with the architect to create the design, based on the feasibility study and tenants' needs. Thank you for the hard work and dedication of: **Chuck Hume, Mary Jane Jim, Frances Oles, Millie Joe, Natalie Oles, Terry Rufiange-Holway, CAFN Heritage staff, technical staff from Yukon Government and Parks Canada,** and to all who contributed to the design.

## The Dä Kų Exhibit Design Advisory Committee (2010 - Present)

The Dä Kų Exhibit Design Advisory Committee meets with staff and the exhibit design firm to provide input into designs and images to be displayed in Dä Kų.

Members of the Advisory Committee are: **Ron Chambers (Elder), Melina Hougen (Youth), Monica Primozic, Sharon Shadow, and Fred Stick Jr.**

Monica Primozic is also representing CAFN on the Yukon Government Art Commission for their exhibits in the Cultural Centre. Frances Oles and Sheila Quock are representing CAFN on Parks Canada's Exhibit Development Team to ensure CAFN's story is accurately portrayed.

Many Citizens have been involved with the Parks Canada audio and visual exhibits.



The Dä Kų Exhibit Design Advisory Committee hard at work during a meeting in spring 2011.



Picture taken at Klukshu in the 1970s. Guess Who?

CAFN Heritage

## Pictures Wanted!

"Honoring Our People" will be a key exhibit area in the Cultural Centre. The CAFN Heritage program is assembling photos of our people for this exhibit, so please consider sharing your old family pictures with us so we can honor all of our Citizens.

We can make a copy of your image while you wait, so you don't have to let your important photos out of your hands for long.

For more information on this project and to book an appointment to have your photos scanned please contact:

Heritage Officer Sheila Quock  
(867) 634-4010  
squock@cafn.ca

## Dä Kų is:

- A cultural and heritage resource centre for Citizens with an assembly hall, classroom space, kitchen, meeting room, language lab, and workshop;
- A community cultural centre with displays and exhibits, and space for learning and training opportunities;
- A display venue and repository for artifacts, archeological materials, archives and contemporary art;
- A visitor facility with CAFN orientation exhibits, changing exhibition space, and a retail store;
- Yukon and Parks Canada visitor information centres.
- The governments of CAFN, Yukon and Canada are funding the project, with each contributing to the \$16 million in project costs. Funding arrangements are through the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) and through tenant lease agreements with Parks Canada and Yukon.

## Cultural Centre Timeline



**1991**  
**Elijah Smith**  
*"We should have a museum of our own."*



**2010**  
**Site Blessing Ceremony & construction begins**



**Today**  
**Dä Kų construction continues**



**Spring 2012**  
**CAFN move-in and community cultural ceremony**



**June 21, 2012**  
**Aboriginal Day**  
**Dä Kų Grand Opening**



CAFN Communications

Graduates from the 2011 Yukon Government Leadership Forum visited Haines Junction and toured the Dä Kų construction site in May 2011.

## What do a smile, art and visitor services have in common?

**By: Frank Wilps, Manager, Visitor Services**  
Department of Tourism and Culture  
Yukon Government

Think people, think personality and think partnerships—we then have the Yukon government’s Department of Tourism and Culture proudly supporting the Dä Kų Cultural Centre scheduled to open June 21, 2012.

Beginning next year in May, Yukon Tourism and Culture VIC staff, together with Parks Canada and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations staff, will be eager to share information about Haines Junction and the beautiful Kluane region with those visiting the Centre.

The Haines Junction VIC’s theme will be a celebration of Yukon visual art. Its centrepiece, an iconic commissioned artwork, will enhance the centre by providing a focal point and creating an inspiring environment for visitors, staff and residents of the region. The centre will also feature displays of original artwork, including pieces from the Yukon

Permanent Art Collection.

Currently, Tourism and Culture is in the process of completing the two-stage art selection process to award a commission for the VIC’s central artwork. This commissioned piece will be reflective of the natural and cultural identity of the Kluane region and Haines Junction, and will complement the consistent thematic approach envisioned in the adjacent Parks Canada and Champagne and Aishihik areas of the Centre.

It is exciting that all three governments are working together

with support from the community to highlight the personality of the Centre as well as speak to the history, traditions and culture encompassing Kluane National Park and Reserve. Together with Tatshenshini-Alsek Provincial Park in British Columbia, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Glacier Bay National Parks in Alaska, the region forms one of the largest internationally protected areas on earth.

As for the smiles, they will be in abundance, too! Tourism and Culture is pleased to be an anchor tenant in the new facility and we look forward to the strong working relationship fostered over the years with the citizens of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Parks Canada, and each other!

Congratulations to all those who have worked hard to see this beautiful building nearing fruition. As a place for sharing traditional knowledge, community events and youth activities along with visitor services to Yukoners and the traveling public, the Dä Kų Cultural Centre is certain to embrace the vision and values representative of a caring community.



## Kluane National Park & Reserve's New Visitor Centre:

Turning a Vision into Reality

**By: Anne Chillibeck**  
Kluane National Park & Reserve

When we set out to design the new Kluane National Park & Reserve Visitor Centre, we knew we wouldn’t be able to do it alone.

We knew we wanted our space inside Dä Kų to be a place where visitors, local residents, youth, families, and First Nations citizens alike could discover the stories of the land that has become known as Kluane National Park & Reserve. We envisioned people doing this through new exhibits, new audio-visual programs, and through a new area devoted to trip planning. We hoped it would be a place where the more adventurous could plan their own park explorations, and where people who are “passing through” might get inspired to go out and experience the real thing for themselves.

Thanks in no small part to contributions from Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (CAFN) and

L. Gorecki, Parks Canada



Marge Jackson tells a glacier story to Rosalie Washington during filming in 2010 for visitor centre audio visual programs.

Kluane First Nation (KFN) citizens, we are getting closer to turning that vision into a reality. Over the past few years, CAFN and KFN members have attended focus groups to share what they want to see in a new centre, and representatives from both Heritage departments have sat in on countless meetings to discuss the stories and messages that will be shared through the new exhibits. Last year, many individuals took part in filming so that we can show visitors what this place and its people are all about. Some of those people and the scenes they brought to life in the audio visual programs can be seen here.

*Shāw nithän*, a very big thank you to everyone who has helped out so far! We can’t wait until next year’s grand opening so we can share the new Kluane National Park & Reserve Visitor Centre with everyone in the community, and show off the new exhibits and videos to everyone coming through town.

For more information, please contact:

Laura Gorecki  
(867) 634-2329 ext 212  
laura.gorecki@pc.gc.ca



Parks Canada Parcs Canada



L. Gorecki, Parks Canada

Ron Chambers explains the impact of the Kluane Game Sanctuary



CAFN Heritage

Chief Allen and Deputy Chief Jim visit with CAFN members Bob Kane and Steve Allen, who are employed at Dä Kų, during a visit to the construction site in May 2011.

# Retail



CAFN Heritage Collection

The Dä Kų Cultural Centre has dedicated space for a retail gift shop, which will be an avenue for local crafters to sell their First Nations products. A business plan is currently being developed.

*Photos, above and below:  
Examples of the work of local  
CAFN artists and craftspeople.*

# Work Opportunities

Help be a part of preserving CAFN's past and building our future!

To date, 18 CAFN individuals have been hired to help build our new cultural centre. New job opportunities become available as work progresses, and other positions are being created to work in Dä Kų when the building is complete.

CAFN has created a "Source List" of CAFN Citizens and businesses available to work on the project construction. This list is provided to construction companies contracted to work on the building and site. If you are a CAFN citizen or family member interested in working on the cultural centre project and would like to be included on the Source List of available companies and workers, please contact:

### Companies/Businesses

Natalie Oles  
Business Development Officer  
(867) 456-6882  
noles@cafn.ca

### Individual Employment

Vera Owlchild  
Employment & Training Officer  
(867) 456-6884  
vowlchild@cafn.ca

Long-term opportunities are also becoming available, such as the Dä Kų Cultural Centre Manager, a potential archives First Nations Training Corps position, interpretive staff positions and more.

Please watch for more details!



CAFN Heritage Collection

# For more information

## Champagne and Aishihik First Nations



### Heritage Resources

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### Cultural Centre Administration

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