

Kuthlath IR#3 as a Natural, Historic, Settlement, and Spiritual Site

David Sulz

Ethnohistory Field School 2002

Dr. John Lutz and Prof. Keith Carlson

28 June 2002

To the extent that there can be no doubt in this post-modern world, it seems safe to say that there was a settlement at the site known as Kuthlath¹ Indian Reserve #3 about a mile up and across the river from the present town of Yale. At the physical level, there are numerous pit-house depressions; the iron crosses, mounds, and depressions of the cemetery; and the remnants of what may be rock-wall fortifications. At the ephemeral level², there are references to the settlement in s_xwo_xwiyam (oral histories describing the distant past when the world was in chaos and how Xexa:ls came to make it right), in historical documents produced in the post-contact period, in the memories of elders (mostly recordings), and in archaeological site inventories that record many artefacts. All of the evidence points to a considerable, if not major, settlement on this site in the past.

The present interest in this now abandoned settlement comes from three sources: academic, political, and spiritual. The academics are interested in putting a human face on archaeological sites that uncover the physical remains. The questions to be answered here revolve around who lived in the settlement, what it looked like, why it was abandoned, and where the people went. Politically, the site is interesting because it is the only reserve in the Fraser Canyon that belongs to a band that is many steps removed in terms of physical proximity. Typically, reserves belong to bands that are closest; in this case, Kuthlath IR#3 belongs to the Shxw'ow'hamel band despite at least four bands that are closer. The questions here are why it belongs to Shxw'ow'hamel and whether this has any potential for conflict. Also, political is the fact that the site gives access to extremely rich salmon fishing grounds so questions arise over who has rights to use the site. Finally, the spiritual interest revolves around the fact that the residual spirit power that emanates from the site. The simple fact that people lived there and died there give it resonance in the present. There are ancestors buried there whose spirits need to be tended by descendants who may not even know that they are connected to the site. Furthermore, transformer sites and rumours of such things as an altar suggest a deeper spiritual dimension.

Having set forth the rationale, there are several factors that make an investigation of this site more difficult than might appear at first glance. The first is that the site itself is inaccessible except by boat or, perhaps, a long walk along a busy, narrow railway track. Secondly, no one lives on the site at present and indications are that it has been abandoned longer than the living memory. Thirdly,

¹ This may be referred to as Xelhalh in this paper, they are equivalent.

² Ephemeral here meaning evidence that remains in the second-hand form of documents or stories; there is no direct way to ascertain the truth of this evidence except by triangulation or faith. I include archaeological site inventories here because one must trust that the physical evidence which is now located in museums actually came from this site. This is

there is little obvious reference to it in the historical record; the name is difficult for non-Sto:lo to pronounce and so has spawned a variety of spellings from Kuthlath (most common Anglicisation), to Xelhalh (in current Halq'emeylem orthography), to Qetla'tl (Franz Boas), and many others. Another difficulty is that the historical record often refers to Yale, Lady Franklin Rock, the Falls, and the head of navigation almost interchangeably as one place even though it covers several miles in reality; the positive identification of references to Kuthlath would require much more accuracy. Finally, the site is not on the tips of Sto:lo tongues today, at least not to a non-Sto:lo newcomer. There are indications that there is information in the community but there is a reluctance to talk especially to outsiders, especially if the information is going to be committed to recording in writing or even on tape.³

This issue of communicating history is an interesting dilemma for many in the Sto:lo community. On the one hand, there is a reluctance to share oral histories for reasons of interpretation and power but, on the other hand, there is a recognition that passing on history is essential. The dilemma arises from the changing realities of communicating history where the oral methods are losing ground to the recorded in its many forms (writing, audio, and audio-visual). Oral cultures value the fluidity and expressiveness of extemporaneous oral telling which can be compromised in the process of recording. Expressiveness “allows for vocal subtleties to be perceived such as intonations, pronunciations, and variations in voices ... as well as hand gestures, facial expressions, dances, drumming ... [to] convey aspects of *Sto:lo* culture.”⁴ Fluidity allows the story to be told in the most appropriate way because “certain audiences are excluded from particular variations of a story based upon their age, understanding of the culture and history, their position in society, and so on”⁵; not everyone has a need for, or a right to, the same degree of detail. Of course, neither of these concerns should be surprising to self-reflective practitioners of the recording arts who struggle to capture stories accurately with a minimum of ambiguity and who fully recognise the possibility of many versions of the same story. The problem is that recordings freeze the story; the teller has no control over who reads/sees which version nor how the captured story is used in different contexts.

Knowledge is power and there are often concerns about how shared knowledge will be used by the receiver. Questions arise such as: “Whose interests does it serve? Who will benefit from it?

not to suggest that physical evidence is necessarily more reliable than ephemeral evidence as physical evidence can also be created or misinterpreted.

³ Tyrone McNeill and Ralph George in conversation with David Sulz, 5 June 2002 and 11 June 2002, respectively. Transcript of Ralph George Interview on file at Sto:lo Nation Archives (SNA)

⁴ Keith Thor Carlson, ed., *You Are Asked to Witness: The Sto:lo in Canada's Pacific Coast History* (Chilliwack: Sto:lo Heritage Trust, 2000), 189.

⁵ Carlson, *You Are Asked to Witness*, 188.

Who has designed its questions and framed its scope? ... How will its results be disseminated?⁶ The dilemma for many elders is that there is a strong belief in the importance of knowing one's history but the traditional ways of passing on private knowledge have been supplanted. People who have "forgotten their history and the lessons of their Elders are considered to be *s'texem* - of lower status"⁷ or, in other words, "low class people are those who don't have anything and don't know anything."⁸ The connection between being high-status and knowing one's history is crucial in a society where rights to a fishing spot, for example, depend on being able to prove those rights were passed down through a family connection - if the history of that passing down is lost, so are the rights to the fishing spot. Unfortunately, for various reasons too complex to engage here but which include residential schools and the banning of the potlach and a greater Sto:lo identity vis-a-vis non-Sto:lo people, the days of orally passing on private knowledge are over; the benefits of recorded transmission seem to outweigh the disadvantages.

The task of putting a human face on a physical place like Kuthlath is not an easy one. There was more information to be found than expected but it is extensive rather than intensive; not enough to deal with a few topics in depth, but too much to deal with many topics fairly. The questions presented in the first part of this paper can not yet be answered as there is still much preliminary identification of sources that needs to be done. For this reason, this paper should be considered a preliminary background with an eye to identifying ways of getting at the broader questions by starting a dialogue on the site and hopefully encouraging other researchers (particularly those with a personal interest in the site) to dig further and deeper.

The task of trying to integrate natural place and historic place is difficult in that the history depends on the natural place yet is simultaneously involved in altering the place. Furthermore, integrating written and oral sources runs into problems of chronology, written sources are usually fairly precise about time but oral sources are less concerned with precise dates than with the causes and effects in the longer term. Also, sources like photos and maps may capture a moment in time, but that moment is dependent upon the past and inform the future. Given these complications, what follows is divided into two sections: the natural site and the historic site. The section on the historic site will present a few selected events in the written and oral history of Kuthlath that may shed some light on the academic, political, and spiritual questions posed at the beginning.

⁶ Linda Tuhiwai Smith. Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples (London and New York: Zed Books, n.d.), 10.

⁷ Carlson, You Are Asked to Witness, 189-190.

⁸ Wayne Suttles, Coast Salish Essays (Vancouver: Talon Books, 1987), 8.

Kuthlath as Natural Site

As a natural site, Kuthlath is located at precisely the spot where the Fraser Canyon widens out at its southern end and the north-south course of the canyon makes a sudden jog to the west before continuing north-south to the lower Fraser valley. The site is on the east side of the river in the bowl of the s-curve with towering mountain cliffs surrounding it on the three non-river sides. This bowl consists of a relatively flat piece of land sitting just above the river course that was probably created when the mountains behind were undercut by the river and rock and debris slid into, and filled, that corner of the river. A rocky point juts out toward Lady Franklin Rock, a towering rock (about 60 feet high by 100 feet long) that sits in the middle of the channel and forces the river to rush past in two narrow channels. On either side of the point are two fairly large back-eddying bays where the rushing current of the river slowly cycles back upstream. This is a dangerous spot where “the rocky undersurface of the rivers and their changing water levels create whirlpools in many places both visible and under the surface”⁹ and the steep, narrow rocks and ledges are often wet and slippery from the water’s spray.

Interestingly, there are hints in one elder’s stories that in the not too distant past (relatively speaking), the Fraser River actually went along the east-side mountains behind the Kuthlath reserve and not past Lady Franklin Rock. According to this story, there was a “big storm, winter storm, and ice and everything came down and it plugged up this river that went around here. It was all iced up. And then it flooded, it flooded the river and then it just cut through there, where it is now.”¹⁰ In fact, Lady Franklin Rock and the Kuthlath site were supposedly part of the west side of the river. Another elder was recorded as saying that “their place went dry, now high up”¹¹ which is cryptic but could refer to the river changing course. In looking at a topographic map or examining the site in person, it is easy to see how this could be true; there is almost a channel between the village and the mountains behind.

As for natural resources, the whole bowl area is forested to a fair distance up the mountain-side behind the site even today; there is a history of logging and wood-cutting that suggest that this was so in the historic past which, in turn, suggests that the site has probably been forested for almost as long as it has existed. There are recent reports of deer and grizzly bears¹² and, of course, the millions of salmon that migrate up the river to their up-river spawning grounds every year. As the river narrows leading up to, and through the canyon, the fish are forced closer to the

⁹ Crisca Biewert, *Brushed by Cedar, Living by the River* (Tucson: U of Arizona Press), 50.

¹⁰ Ralph George, personal interview, 11 June 2002.

¹¹ Patrick Charlie, recorded in Wilson Duff, *Stalo notebook #1, 1950*, 70.

cliff-like rocks on the sides and the water speeds up and “boils,” making the journey upstream increasingly strenuous. Conveniently, the back-eddies along the way provide a resting spot and even a bit of an upriver push. For the salmon, the southern bay of the Kuthlath site is situated at the end of a hundred miles of up-river swimming just before the first really challenging rapids, while the northern bay is just past those rapids; both of these bays are obviously perfect resting spots.

Kuthlath as Historic Place

In 2001, Kuthlath became the focus of attention when a “clerical error” by the Department of Indian Affairs assigning the reserve to the Yale Band instead of the Shxw’ow’hamel band was noticed by staff at the Sto:lo Nation. When followed up, the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) replied that they had been asked to check the title of Kuthlath #3 and found in the Report of the Royal Commission (1915) that it belonged to the Yale Band.¹³ The Sto:lo Nation, on behalf of the Shxw’ow’hamel band was able to gather enough evidence to show that the Kuthlath Reserve belongs to Ohamil (old name for Shxw’ow’hamel) and have the DIA records amended. It is not totally clear who initiated this process and why but it is suggested that the Yale band had previously initiated a claim to have Kuthlath transferred to itself.¹⁴ One can make a few likely speculations about why title to Kuthlath is desired: it is a large reserve (388 acres) with access to good fishing sites, there is timber on the site, there are both railway (CNR) and power transmission (BC Hydro) right-of-ways through the site that may pay rental fees, and it is a single pocket of outside ownership and control in the midst of locally controlled reserves. The academic value of this error is that it demonstrates how knowing one’s history is essential to maintaining rights and privileges in the present, just as one’s rights to a fishing spot or a name depended on the ability to prove historic or inherited lineage to the satisfaction of others in the past. It also provides an opportunity to explore how the Kuthlath reserve came to belong to Ohamil and what the consequences of that have been.

The Reserve General Register keeps track of land decisions for each reserve and is maintained by DIA. In some ways, it gives a thumb-nail historical sketch of each reserve with respect to land decisions. Below are most of the transactions shown in a recent Reserve General Abstract Report for Kuthlath with further detail of a select few following:

1879 - reserve of 20 acres on left bank of Fraser River about ½ mile from Yale confirmed by Commissioner Sproat

¹² Julie Malloway and Sonny McHalsie, personal interviews, 18 May 2002 and 7 June 2002 respectively.

¹³ Barbara Beck, <beckb@inac.gc.ca> “Re: Kuthlath IR 3 Title clarification,” 25 September 2001, email to John Dwyer<John.Dwyer@stolonation.bc.ca> Copy on file at SNA.

¹⁴ John Dwyer, <address unknown> “Kuthlath IR 3 Title,” 25 September 2001, email to Dana Andrews, David Smith, Sonny McHalsie <addresses unknown>

- 1884 - reserve on left bank of Fraser River about 1 mile above town of Yale confirmed and expanded to 168 acres by Commissioner O'Reilly
- 1900 - the foreshore contiguous to the reserve is allocated to the reserve
- 1915 - Royal Commission confirms reserve at 362 acres
- 1917 - Chief James allotted whole reserve to Ohamil band but Yale Band has rights to timber
- 1925 - band grants timber rights to Crown Canada
- 1925 - right of way granted to Canadian Northern Pacific Railway Company (13.76 acres)
- 1930 - reserve confirmed at 388 acres
- 1952 - granting of timber licence to whole reserve to N& R Logging Company
- 1977 - right of way to BC Hydro (51.53 acres)
- 1987 - rental clause for BC Hydro right of way amended¹⁵

In response to Aboriginal grievances over land rights and reserve size and the possibility of the issue becoming violent in the Okanagan region, the Federal and Provincial governments created a Joint Reserve Commission in 1876, to resolve the issues. By the time the commission got to the Kuthlath area in 1878 or 1879, it had dwindled from 3 members to just one, G.M. Sproat. Sproat had two problems when it came to assigning reserves in the Fraser Canyon, firstly, the conflict between the government policy of encouraging agriculture over the traditional reliance on fishing and, secondly determining which Indians should be assigned the reserves.

One position ascribed to the government of the day asserts that the assimilation of Aboriginal people required that they take up the superior pursuit of agriculture and leave behind their stone age culture based on hunting, gathering, and especially, fishing. This was a problem in the narrow, arid Fraser Canyon which was “deemed unfit for farm pursuits.”¹⁶ Sproat, however, recognised the problem in reporting on the “scarcity of good land, the roughness of the country, [and] the detached situation of pieces of good land fit for cultivation”¹⁷ but his solution was to recognise that the Fraser canyon fishery was important to all Indians in the wider region, not just those engaged in the fishery;

“the greatest anxiety was shown by all the Indians as to their salmon fisheries above Yale. Not only are the salmon caught there used for the sustenance of the tribes of the neighbourhood; they are a commodity in intertribal traffic over a great extent of the country.”¹⁸

Furthermore,

¹⁵ Department of Indian Affairs. Reserve General Abstract Report: 08089 - Kuthlath no. 3, 10 September 2001. Copy at SNA.

¹⁶ Keith Thor Carlson, A Sto:lo Coast Salish Historical Atlas (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 2001), 31.

¹⁷ Sproat to Superintendent General, June 12, 1878. Copy at SNA.

¹⁸ Sproat, note attached to Minute of Decision, Yale Indians Proper, August 5, 1879. Copy at SNA.

“My instructions from the Minister of the Interior ... lay great stress, most wisely, upon the necessity of not disturbing the Indians in the possession of ... fishing stations and the impolicy of attempting to make any violent or sudden change in the habits of the Indians now engaged ... in fishing.”¹⁹

Given the importance of the fishery, the next problem was to assign the reserves. The problem here was that it was not clear who were the rightful beneficiaries of the canyon reserves. He identified that the “Indians at Yale are composed of Upper Frazer and Lower Frazer Indians”²⁰ and that the Lower Fraser extends from “Yale (the head of navigation) to the mouth of the river”²¹ and that although the Lower Fraser Indians might claim to belong to particular villages, they “move about constantly from one place to another” and come from outside places in search of employment²² and consider themselves one people.

On 5 August 1879, Sproat assigned the reserve at Kuthlath to the Yale Indians Proper with the following notation:

A reserve known as Kuth-lalth on the left bank of the Fraser river round the bluff about half a mile from Yale containing 20 acres or thereabouts to be laid off with a frontage on the River and so as to include the Indian houses and cleared, enclosed or cultivated land. This is the place which the Government Agent at Yale assigned to the Indians, and more particularly to an Indian Seke-a-theta.

20 inches of water for irrigation and other purposes are assigned from any sources of water which, on survey, may be found available.²³

The reference to the Yale Indians Proper may explain much of the controversy and confusion over the site which has ensued over the succeeding years. At present, the Yale Band (a creation of the DIA band system) claims that any reference to the Yale Indians refers to the Yale Band. However, as Sproat noted, the Indians of the Yale area were not necessarily a homogenous, traditional group but, rather, composed of many people from up and down river who came to use the canyon during the fishing season. This is supported in the oral history by Patrick Charlie who relates that “Yale was the head of all the villages above New Westr [Wesminister] ... to elect a Yale Chief, the chiefs of all the downriver villages would come up to Yale, and there elect one.”²⁴ This could be taken to mean that the Fraser Canyon fishery was open to all people and the Yale chief was chosen as a representative of all the canyon people, especially to take care of the area during the non-fishing time. In fact, Sproat recognised this in another notation he made the same day;

¹⁹ Sproat to E.A. Meredith (Minister of the Interior), July 30, 1878. Copy at SNA.

²⁰ Sproat to superintendent General, May 1, 1878. Copy at SNA.

²¹ Sproat to Superintendent General, November 25, 1878. Copy at SNA.

²² Sproat to Superintendent General, November 25, 1878. Copy at SNA.

²³ Sproat, Minute of Decision, 5 August 1879. Copy at SNA.

²⁴ Patrick Charlie, recorded in Wilson Duff's Stalo Notebooks, notebook # 1, 1950, page 46.

“The right of these and other Indians who have resorted to the Yale fisheries from time immemorial to have access to, and to encamp upon the banks of Fraser river for the purpose of carrying on their salmon fisheries in their old way on both sides of Fraser river for 5 miles up from Yale is confirmed so far as the undersigned has authority in the matter.”²⁵

The 1884 addition to the reserve began in late 1881 when I.W. Powell (Indian Superintendent) wrote to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs on behalf of the Chief of Yale Indians and the Indians at Kuthlath.²⁶ In this letter, he noted that these people were making their livelihood by selling firewood to the people of Yale but it had been recently noted that the official survey of the reserve had left out the greater part of the timbered land behind the reserve by a misunderstanding. The need for action stemmed from the concern that “as soon as the people in Yale find out ... some of them will go over there and log, and take away the trade from the Indians.” Powell added that “these Indians seem a quiet and steady working lot, some of them were working on the Railroad works during the summer” and, perhaps more importantly, that granting this land “will not cause inconvenience to anyone.”²⁷ The wheels of bureaucracy may turn slowly but by mid-1884, local Indian Agent O’Reilly was able to report that all formalities had been completed and 168 acres of timbered land had been added to the reserve.²⁸

In November 1914, the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of B.C. (a.k.a. McBride-McKenna Commission) met with many bands. The transcripts reveal that the Commission had little interest in determining the concerns of Aboriginal people, per se; it was concerned mostly with the agricultural, religious, occupational, and educational progress of the various bands as well as the level of satisfaction with the local Indian Agent and doctor. The witnesses, when permitted, expressed concern over the loss of their traditional ways of hunting and fishing as well as the encroachments of white settlers and the alterations they were making to the environment (e.g. dyking, sewage disposal). A telling remark was made by Chief James,

The salmon is my food, and then the white men came with a policeman, and they stopped me from using my food; and I was sore again in my heart. I would never do such a thing to the white men. If the white people feeding on a place, I would never go there and snatch away their food; it would be a bad thing to do.” (Chief James, p. 2).

The commission met with the Ohamil band on November 18th and then with the Yale band the next day; the subject of Kuthlath came up in both of these meetings. The transcript records that

²⁵ Sproat, Minute of Decision, Yale Indians Proper, August 5, 1879. Copy at SNA.

²⁶ I.W. Powell, Indian Superintendent to Superintendent of Indian Affairs, 28 December 1881. Copy at SNA.

²⁷ I.W. Powell, Indian Superintendent to Superintendent of Indian Affairs, 28 December 1881. Copy at SNA.

Chief Jimmie Joseph of Ohamil confirmed that their band held three reserves including what was recorded as “Enthlath” but obviously refers to Kuthlath. When questioned by Commissioner Shaw why Ohamil has claim to Reserve No.3 (Kuthlath) even though it was so far away, Chief Jimmie responded,

It is our forefather’s, and it belongs to this place²⁹. It is where the fishing was carried on. Later years, the Government has given us this piece, to some of us living down here.³⁰

He also reports that he goes there every year to fish but that no one lives there permanently anymore. As for the agricultural potential, it seems that the site is mostly rock with only 15 or 20 acres that might be suitable for cultivation.

When the commissioners met with Chief James of Yale the next day, he confirmed that the No. 3 reserve belonged to Ohamil but “the timber I understand to be mine, according to suggestions made by Sir James Douglas.”³¹ On further probing, it seems that the Yale band had rights to take firewood or timber for fencing but not the sole right to timber. The Commissioner seemed somewhat surprised to learn of this provision but notes that it is “evidently correct that an understanding of that kind was made.”³²

From these two extracts, it is evident that the issue of rights to Kuthlath was confusing still in 1914. Perhaps it was that other arrangements and agreements had been made between the Yale and Ohamil bands outside the official channels. At any rate, the matter was again addressed in 1917 when Chief James signed an affidavit swearing that,

The Shulath [sic] Reserve was allotted by the Indian Commissioner, the right to the land to go to the Ohamil Indians as this had been their burial ground for years but the Yale Indians were to retain the right to take timber from this Reserve for their private uses owing to the scarcity of timber on their own reserve.³³

In 1925, it appears that the matter of title was cleared up for good when the “Chief and Principal men of the Yale Band of Indians” surrendered to the Crown all claim on the Kuthlath

²⁸ O’Reilly to Superintendent General, 5 June 1884. Copy at SNA.

²⁹ This suggests that reserves could belong to certain people for reasons other than mere proximity. If this is the case, it is interesting that title to other reserves do not belong to bands that are not in close proximity, especially if the fishing sites in the canyon belonged to people who may have come from areas far from the canyon itself. This leads to the question of whether other down-river reserves might have claim to canyon reserves but that question is beyond this paper.

³⁰ Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of B.C., 18 Nov. 1914, page 12 or 303. Copy at SNA.

³¹ Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of B.C., 19 Nov. 1914, page 8 or 317. Copy at SNA.

³² Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of B.C., 19 Nov. 1914, page 8 or 317. Copy at SNA.

³³ Chief James, affidavit sworn before J.P. in Mining Recorder’s Office, 7 August 1917. Copy at SNA.

reserve “in trust for the Ohamil Band of Indians.”³⁴ This appears to be clear evidence that Kuthlath belongs to Shxw’ow’hamel but there are indications that other events transpired in the intervening years to suggest that title was again in contest. During the 2001, clarification of title it was remarked that despite the 1917 affidavit, “subsequent documentation indicates Yale or shared ownership. But the most recent documents ... indicate Shxw’ow’hamel now has title and receives payments.”³⁵ Even then, the same writer would only go so far as to say that “Shxw’ow’hamel FN feels they have title.” Perhaps this is just legalese or perhaps it suggests that title to reserves is still in flux and is negotiated outside the official channels.

It seems that having legal title and having *de facto* control are two different matters and, if anything, legal title is more influenced by *de facto* control than vice versa. There are well-founded rumours that members of the local band (Yale) have, in past years, made access to the canyon fishery by downriver bands somewhat difficult through the use of informal tactics such as monitoring the river (from shore and by boat) and by intimidation. One downriver fisherman reported having been escorted downriver by a number of local boats while the wife of another, tells how her husband and his relatives, were forced to assert their rights to fish in a bar-room brawl. How, then, are rights to fish assigned and defended? It seems that claims to a spot depend on two factors: family ties (inherited right) and long-term use. In the case of a dispute, it really comes down to who is willing to defend their claim most vigorously, either through appeal to legal process (DIA, Department of Fisheries, Sto:lo Fisheries), traditional consensus (potlach, council, House of Elders), or, ultimately, force³⁶. Apparently, the case of Kuthlath is being decided by a combination of all three.

Kuthlath as Settlement

In Brushed by Cedar (1999), Crisca Biewert describes the site of Sweetie Malloway’s fish camp. Although Biewert overwhelmingly locates the site by reference to Lady Franklin Rock, it is fairly obvious that the site is actually on the Kuthlath reserve (across the river from the highway). It seems that she is aware of Kuthlath as she refers to it (*Xelhalh*) as “an old village site across the river just above Yale, near Sweetie’s fish camp”³⁷ but it is probable that Sweetie’s camp is much nearer the village site than Biewert is aware. In fact, as the BC archaeology site inventory locates

³⁴ Affidavit signed and sworn before J.P Creighton, at Yale, 25 Jan 1925. Copy at SNA.

³⁵ John Dwyer, <address unknown> “Kuthlath IR 3 Title,” 25 September 2001, email to Dana Andrews, David Smith, Sonny McHalsie <addresses unknown> Copy at SNA.

³⁶ Sonny McHalsie, personal interview, 7 June 2002.

³⁷ Biewert, Brushed by Cedar, 56.

several village sites and cultural features within the reserve boundary³⁸, it is more than likely that Sweetie's camp is within metres of that old village site if not in the middle of the greater village area. In the early 1990s³⁹ then, Kuthlath seems to be accessible only by boat, and it has a "one-room cabin with a cooking stove on the porch"⁴⁰ that is intermittently inhabited in the summers by a woman and her family from the Tzeachtan Reserve in Sardis,⁴¹ about 100km downstream.

There is a photo taken by Richard Maynard which, according to the caption added later, "shows the village of Xelalh on the shore behind Lady Franklin Rock. The reserve is Kuthlath IR#3. Photo taken just above Th'exelis (scratch marks) - The Points fishing sit. Date 1885(?)⁴²

There is much information to be had from this photo especially when it was shown to Elder Ralph George. The photo itself is taken from the Yale side of the river and, although Lady Franklin Rock blocks most of the picture, there are at least four shacks and possibly a longhouse visible in a clearing to the left (north, upstream) from the rock. A map published in 1886 based on surveys in 1882-84-85 by W.S. Jemmett might indicate structures on this site just up from Lady Franklin Rock⁴³ although it is difficult to tell for sure from the copy I have.

Interestingly, Ralph George identified the structures as miners' cabins that were just little cedar-plank cabins and that the village of Kuthlath was behind Lady Franklin Rock (from the view of this picture). He goes on to explain that there were still people living in Kuthlath during the gold rush era (mid-1800s) and that there were few if any conflicts,

Those cabins there, that ain't our Indian village. That's from the gold rush. All in through here, right from this point here, all this was covered by gold rush people on both sides of the river... The gold rush people just went in there and they camped right on the beaches at Kuthlath and there were no problems because if they started making problems, then they would have probably got kicked off that reserve. They just had to live side by side with them people, and, you know, there were all kinds of nationalities of people that were coming through.⁴⁴

³⁸ British Columbia Archaeological Site Inventory Forms for DjRi 14, 80, 54, 22, 58, 76, 52, 20. Copies in Archaeology files at Sto:lo Nation.

³⁹ It is not always clear when Biewert's observations were gathered, the book was published in 1999 but there are references to conversations in 1992, for example and hints that she spent more than one summer at the fish camp.

⁴⁰ Biewert, Brushed by Cedar 48.

⁴¹ Biewert, Brushed by Cedar 36.

⁴² Richard Maynard. Classified in Royal B.C. Museum as Negative # PN6092. RBCM/ Fishing and River Scenes/p.1, 1885. Copy at SNA.

⁴³ W.S. Jemmett, Plan of the Yale Indian Reserves. Yale District British Columbia (map), signed off by Wm. Smithe on 1 May 1886. Copy at SNA.

⁴⁴ Ralph George, personal interview, 11 June 2002.

It is not really clear from this explanation who had to be nice to whom. I take it to mean that the miners had to avoid problems with the people of Kuthlath because traditional ways allowed for shared use of land but, in the case of dispute, there were property rights that could be enforced. However, it could equally mean that the people of Kuthlath had to avoid problems with the miners who might have been more numerous or been able to enlist the support of colonial authorities.

It is likely that this site is what is designated as DjRi22 by archaeologists. If this is so, the site inventory form⁴⁵ based on investigations in 1963 and 1986 indicates a wide variety of archaeological finds on the site from stone flakes and tools to hand-blown glass and metal artefacts as well as two house depressions “partially lined with large angular boulders.” It is also noted that the site had been damaged by more recent mining activity such as an artificial creek channel as well as the detritus of old, mining equipment around a small plywood bunk shack. This report concludes that it “may be a late historic site or old CNR camp.”

This report and its conclusions point to one of the major difficulties in the way people look at the past. Although we intellectually recognise that the past is not a single point in time, there is often a desire to establish the past reality of a place. In this case, it might be un-satisfying or even un-nerving to some that we cannot say for certain whether this site was pre-historic or historic, aboriginal or non-aboriginal, a fish camp or a mining camp, composed of long-houses or cedar plank shacks. The reality is that it is probably all of these things at different times and there may or may not be clear breaks between the usage. The small, plywood bunk shack may have been a conversion of the cedar plank shack that may have been built on the site of a pit-house. The point is that we can never fully define a place in the past and we can never tell the full story over time. This attitude helps us come to grips that there are eight identified archaeology sites on the Kuthlath reserve with many of them containing pit-houses. One site inventory form notes that while DjRi 14 (at the south end of the reserve) might be a protohistoric village while DjRi 20 (at the extreme north end) might be the traditional village Kuthlath.⁴⁶ Perhaps they were all part of a larger village, or the village centre moved over time within the same general area.

⁴⁵ British Columbia Archaeological Site Inventory Form, Site DjRi 22, 1987.

⁴⁶ BC Archaeological Site Inventory Form, Site no. DjRi 14, 24 March 1987. Copy at SNA.

Actually, “Sto:lo informants identify the area containing archaeological sites DjRi14, 20,22, 52, 54, 58, and 76 as the former Sto:lo village or settlement area of Xelhalh.”⁴⁷

The real village of Kuthlath, according to Ralph George, is behind the rock in the picture where the cemetery is.

Yeah, there’s a lot of pithouses there but they had some structural houses ... made out of cedar planks. My grandfather had pictures of them houses. When the white man first came through, they went through and took pictures of that village. But when he passed on, all of them pictures were taken right out of his house⁴⁸

Other evidence collected from interviews with various elders, suggests that the real village of Kuthlath was at the base of the mountain but was buried by a huge slide long ago.⁴⁹ Ralph George himself identifies this village site too and says, “If they even dug into some of these areas, they would probably come up with some bones, because this is about 300’ deep here where the village used to be.” Probably he is making a distinction between memories of ancient time and living memory.

In the mid-1800s, A.C. Anderson, former Chief Trader of the Hudson’s Bay Company, wrote a book and then an article describing the Fraser Canyon area for the benefit of potential American miners. He is clear about the ways that the environment is inhospitable but it is interesting to speculate on the lack of information about the local Indians; perhaps he wanted to protect the Indians from unprepared miners or he may have believed the Indians had nothing useful to offer the miners. There is a hint towards the former when he notes that Indians between Fort Langley and Falls are “not indisposed towards whites, and, considerately treated, will doubtless remain so.”⁵⁰

Despite detailed descriptions and a fairly detailed map, it is not clear whether there even was a village at Kuthlath at this time. Part of the problem is a lack of geographical markers other than the “Falls” which are described as a “series of rapids ... about three miles in length”⁵¹ that are 12 miles upstream from Fort Hope⁵² and 6 miles below Spuzzum⁵³ which is likely right at Kuthlath. It is interesting that the huge rock sitting in the middle of the river about ¾ mile above Yale (a.k.a. Lady Franklin Rock) that splits the river into two narrow channels is not mentioned even though it is such

⁴⁷ Gordon Mohs. Additional Information: DjRi 20, CN Rail Twin Tracking Project, 1989. Copy at SNA.

⁴⁸ Ralph George, personal interview, 11 June 2002.

⁴⁹ Gordon Mohs. Additional Information, 1989.

⁵⁰ A.C. Anderson, Handbook and Map to the Gold Region of Frazer’s and Thompsons’s Rivers (San Francisco: J.J. Le Count, 1858), 20.

⁵¹ Anderson, Handbook and Map..., 6.

⁵² Anderson, Handbook and Map..., 5.

⁵³ Anderson, Handbook and Map..., 6.

an obvious landmark. Could it be that the river did not go past the rock here as suggested by Ralph George?

On the accompanying map, he identifies the “lowest Couteau village” at Spuzzum and the “Upper Teet Village” on the right bank of the river at what is now Yale.⁵⁴ From such descriptions, it might seem that the “Falls” of which he speaks are almost a deserted, no-man’s-land but this is hardly the case. Although he mentions no villages in the three-mile long series of rapids called the “Falls,” he notes that,

during the summer season, the rocky shores of the “falls” are thronged by Indians from the lower country, who resort thither for the salmon fishery. A ceaseless feud, I may here mention, prevails between the Couteau and the lower Indians, who differ from each other widely in many respects.⁵⁵

He later describes the “first village of the Sachinco, or Teets, [as] a palisaded fort immediately below the Falls”⁵⁶ where the summer interlopers retreated as soon as the fishing was over. He has few kind words to say of the southern people: “cowardly and treacherous to a degree, these Indians possess all the vices of the coast tribes, while exhibiting none of the redeeming qualities of the interior nations [but], these lower Indians are ingenious and more industrious; hence comparatively rich.”⁵⁷ Again, his reference only to “the Falls” makes it impossible to discern if he was writing of Kuthlath.

Simon Fraser’s account of his journey down what was to become the Fraser River offers some tantalising hints at what may have been a village at Kuthlath but no certainty. On Tuesday, June 27th, 1808 he reached Spazum [Spuzzum] which he identified as the “boundary line between the Hacamaugh [Interior Salish] and Ackinroe [Coast Salish] Nations”⁵⁸ Unlike Anderson in 1858, Fraser remarks on several villages in this part of the canyon between Spuzzum and Yale. Having left Spuzzum at 5 a.m., they reached the first village of the Ackinroe nation at 11 a.m. after crossing a small river that the editor of Fraser’s journal identifies as Siwash creek⁵⁹ (which is on the left side of the river). At this village of about 140 people, they were treated kindly but by people of a nation whose language and manners were quite different than those they had encountered. At 1 p.m., they continued their “march” (i.e. not in canoes) and came to an “excellent house 46 by 23 feet, and constructed like American frame houses... The walls are 11 feet high, and covered with a slanting

⁵⁴ Anderson, Handbook and Map..., map.

⁵⁵ Anderson, Handbook and Map..., 6.

⁵⁶ Anderson, A.C. “Notes on the Indian Tribes of British North America and the Northwest Coast,” (The Historical Magazine, 7(3):73-81, March, 1863), 78.

⁵⁷ Anderson, A.C. “Notes on the Indian Tribes...”, 78.

⁵⁸ W. Kaye Lamb, ed, The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser 1806-1808 (Toronto: Pioneer Books, n.d), 97.

roof. On the opposite side of the river, there is a considerable village with houses similar to the one upon this side.”⁶⁰ Then at 4 p.m., they reached a camp of about 150 souls at a place where they “understood that the river was navigable from this place to the sea.” At this last village, Fraser describes a new tomb “on carved posts about two feet from the ground ... covered all over with bright shells, which shine like mercury, but the contents of the tomb emitted a disagreeable stench”⁶¹

In other words, he writes about 4 villages between Spuzzum and the head of navigation: three on one side of the river and one on the other. The editor identifies the last village as the site of Yale and Fraser writes that the natives showed them “indented marks” at the “bad rock, a little distance above the village”⁶² which the editor identifies as Lady Franklin Rock. It seems then since Spuzzum, Yale, and Lady Franklin rock are on the right side of the river, that the editor got Siwash Creek wrong and the little river they crossed was actually Sawhill Creek. It is possible that the considerable village on the other side of the river was Kuthlath but it could also have been Aselaw or Q’aleliktel. Actually, 4 villages seems like too few to have noticed along the river; we can only speculate why he wrote about so few when other sources identify many more settlements on this stretch of river.⁶³

One feature of older Kuthlath that brought about some interesting discussion is the rock wall fortifications that have been identified at the site. There seem to be three theories about this wall at Kuthlath. One is that it was part of a late-pre-contact defensive system that that was a “coordinated and co-operative multi-village effort aimed primarily at regulating river passage into and through the canyon.”⁶⁴ Another idea is that, while there were such rock wall defenses, the pile of rocks at Kuthlath were actually constructed as a path from canoe landing to fishing sites to smooth out an undulating and winding path along the rocky shore. Evidence for this is in the location of the wall and the fact that there is no void behind the wall.⁶⁵ Still another thought is that, while there is no space behind the wall, it is too high above the river at fishing time to have been a path. In this case, it may have been a platform for a longhouse and pallisade as reported by Anderson. This is in keeping with the village pattern at Shxw’ow’hamel, for example, where there was a longhouse by

⁵⁹ Lamb, The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser, 98.

⁶⁰ Lamb, The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser, 99.

⁶¹ Lamb, The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser, 100.

⁶² Lamb, The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser, 100.

⁶³ Carlson, Sto:lo Atlas, 25.

⁶⁴ David M. Schaepe in Carlson (ed.), Sto:lo Atlas, 52.

⁶⁵ Tyrone McNeill, personal conversation, 5 June 2002.

the river and pithouses at the back.⁶⁶ Probably, we will never know for sure and perhaps it could be that all three ideas are accurate at different times in history.

People of Kuthlath

In mythic time, there is a story that the people of Kuthlath were river monsters (see below) and this attitude may still be partially evident in Patrick Charlie recalling the people of Kuthlath as “not well to do people [who] wanted to keep to themselves” and wouldn’t go to war unless attacked. It was a solitary but “pretty big village, all by themselves. Same language”⁶⁷ (it is not clear if they spoke the same language as Patrick or if the language was limited to their village). He remembered the names of Dominic Wallace who was “the only one who lives from them now” and Harry Green who lived there for forty years, had horses and plowed all the land.⁶⁸

There are apparently at least two cemeteries on site, “one on the northeastern part of the Kuthlalath [sic] I.R.#3 (presently unrecorded) and one at the southern end of the reserve (DjRi80).⁶⁹ The southern cemetery has two styles of burial that are represented by mounds or depressions. The mound style is from older times when the deceased was wrapped in “deer-hide and bear-hide and all those different things they were wrapped up in and just placed on the ground and just covered over.”⁷⁰ Many of these mounds are marked by large (50-100 cm tall) iron crosses, some of which have names but none of which have dates.⁷¹ Ralph George says that the iron crosses came in to fashion when the miners started coming through, “they traded gold for those iron crosses that were put on the grave.”⁷² Later, the burial style was changed again and boxes were used: “it was just out of ordinary cedar planks .. they weren’t sawmilled planks, they were just split ... some of the crosses are made out of cedar and some of them are made out of spruce, too.”⁷³

Unlike Patrick Charlie, Ralph George referred often to the people of Kuthlath as “our people” and suggested that if one were to go to the elders in Coqualeetza and take the

⁶⁶ Sonny McHalsie, personal conversation, 7 June 2002.

⁶⁷ Patrick Charlie, recorded in Wilson Duff, Stalo Notebook #1, 1950, 70.

⁶⁸ Patrick Charlie, recorded in Wilson Duff, Stalo Notebook #1, 1950, 70.

⁶⁹ Mohs, Additional Information: DjRi20, August 1989.

⁷⁰ Ralph George, personal interview, 11 June 2002.

⁷¹ Names on iron crosses in DjRi80: SETLOMAS, WILLIAM, MARY ANNE, THERAZ, QUALEM TEN, ANNIE, JAMES, SABS LYAN GREEN, HARRY GREEN, EMMA GREEN.

⁷² Ralph George, personal interview, 11 June 2002.

⁷³ Ralph George, personal interview, 11 June 2002. Note: none of the wooden crosses remain although RG reports having seen them when he was young and passing through the site to the their fishing site near Siwash creek about 60 years ago.

list of names from the crosses in the cemetery they would know who they are because those ancestors “are never forgotten by our people and the elders will know those names.”⁷⁴ To him, Dominic Wallace and Harry Green are not “them” but “us” and they belong to Shxw’ow’hamel and Chilliwack.

There seem to be three main possibilities for what happened to the people of Kuthlath; agricultural displacement, employment dislocation, and disease. Government efforts to assimilate the Sto:lo revolved around policies to encourage them to shift to agriculture. The Fraser Canyon, although eminently suited to fishing and wind-drying, is narrow, rocky, and dry; that is to say, unfit for farming. For this reason, “people were first encouraged and then coerced to relocate to the fertile valley floor”⁷⁵ from Hope to the mouth of the Fraser River. This was not without controversy, even within the government structures itself - Commissioner Sproat himself had serious misgivings although he did ultimately believe in progress to agriculture:

To expect people so situated to abandon at once their old ways of life, to give up their hunting and fishing, and their dependence upon the products of these pursuits, would not be a wise nor kind policy. I am sure there are no Indians in the Dominion more likely to take steps to support themselves from the land than these Indians, but you must at least give them the time for effecting a great change of life which civilised men would require.”⁷⁶

There is an irony here in that he implicitly defines the ability to “support themselves from the land” as agriculture which represents “civilised men” as opposed to hunting and fishing which represents “their old ways of life” even though both are, in essence, supporting oneself from the land.

Closely linked to this idea of progress are the movements that surely came about with increased economic activity of the non-aboriginal kind - gold mining, railway construction, selling firewood to the steamboats and railways, guiding, working in the hop yards, etc. While participation in these activities was probably sporadic at first as a supplement to traditional ways, it seems that they were gradually incorporated into this system. Kuthlath became increasingly isolated in this new economy where railways, wagon roads, and settlements were constructed on the Yale side of the river. The construction of the CNR on the Kuthlath side in the early 1900s was too little too late

⁷⁴ Ralph George, personal interview, 11 June 2002.

⁷⁵ Carlson, ed, *Sto:lo Atlas*, 31.

⁷⁶ Sproat to Deputy Minister of the Interior, November 6, 1878. Copy at SNA.

although it did provide transportation to fishing sites by the way-freight until 1978, often in exchange for fish.⁷⁷

Sickness also contributed to the abandonment of Kuthlath. In fact, it may be that sickness is one of the main reasons why elders are reluctant to talk about Kuthlath; “it’s a big heartache for them because they knew the people that died in that reserve ...that’s a long time ago but they are still trying to deal with how many people were buried with that disease that killed them off.”⁷⁸ This is supported in the historical record that records that in 1862, a white man arrived in Victoria with smallpox. There were many Indians camped in Victoria but when smallpox hit, the camps were burned by authorities and the Indians forced to leave. As they made their way home, “the epidemic spread like a forest fire up the coast and into the interior; the details of its progress can be followed in dispatches sent to the *Colonist* ...”⁷⁹ The combination of disease, employment opportunities, and agricultural policy may have worked together to cause the abandonment of the village; however, there are other ties besides purely resource-based that transcend this abandonment and make the site significant despite nobody actually living there.

Kuthlath as Spiritual Site

According to the Sto:lo Atlas there are several transformer sites at or very near to Kuthlath: The’exelis, lightning bolt; Stsaletstel; man, mink-like canoe; two women, Q’awa, woman and children.⁸⁰ Transformer sites refer to *Xexa:ls* who were the three brothers and one sister who came into the chaotic world of the distant path. One way *Xexa:ls* made the world right was by fixing animals and people into permanent forms such as rivers, rocks, trees, and mountains. Beings were transformed either as punishment for wrong-doing or as reward for being a generous spirit. The transformer stories are often involved, confusing, and references to them are scattered throughout various sources, therefore, below are just a few examples.

The’exelis is a site on the Yale side of the river near Lady Franklin rock where several different events occurred involving *Xexa:ls*. Most of the legends explain the seat-like depression and the surrounding scratch marks as the place where *Xexa:ls* sat and scratched into the rock with his fingers although there are different versions of why he did this. One tells of him duelling a powerful medicine man named Kwiyaxtel who fought him from the opposite shore, at Kuthlath. Each tried to

⁷⁷ Sonny McHalsie, personal interview, 7 June 2002.

⁷⁸ Ralph George, personal interview, 7 June 2002.

⁷⁹ Wilson Duff, The Indian History of British Columbia: Volume 1, The Impact of the White Man. (Victoria: Provincial Museum of British Columbia, 1964), 42.

transform the other by powerful means but Xexa:ls eventually triumphed by scratching into the rock where he was sitting and so weakening his opponent and turning him to stone.⁸¹ Other versions have Xexa:ls making the scratches while waiting for his opponent to appear.⁸² Another site, lightning bolt, is an infusion of white granite in the bedrock across the river near where Kwi yaxtel was standing; it was created from thunderbolt fired across the river by Xexa:ls.⁸³

The Nlaka'pamux from upriver have a very different accounting for the scratches. According to this story, Xexa:ls felt sorry for the people he saw on the opposite shore who had no fishing utensils. To catch fish, they held the feet of boys and dunked them into the water from high rocks to catch fish with their hands. Xexa:ls sat down and with each scratch he made in the rocks, "a thought came into the heads of the people, and they gained knowledge" of how to fish.⁸⁴ Another story has Xexa:ls crossing the dangerous river to Kuthlath to visit Qe'lqelemas who was the powerful leader of the river monsters that inhabited Kuthlath. When Xexa:ls "saw the dreadful shapes, [of the people], he fainted. Qu'lqelemas took a magic substance out of his basket, sprinkled it over Quals [Xexa:ls] and revived him."⁸⁵

In addition to the transformer sites, there is resident *Stl'aleqem*. These are forces so potent that their sites are considered taboo except to "spiritually prepared" people such as *shxwla:m* (Indian doctors) who know how to act appropriately to avoid twisting up and dying. While some believe that *Stl'aleqem* are universally dangerous spirits, others believe that they are guardians of rich resource sites that only allow certain people access. In other words, only certain families know the proper way to deal with the *Stl'aleqem* so outsiders are discouraged from encroaching on resource sites.⁸⁶ Near Kuthlath is *T'litego Spa:th*, the underwater black bear.⁸⁷ This is not surprising because the waters here are rough and dangerous as well as a rich fishing ground.

Kuthlath is also rich in human spirituality. There are rumours of a large, stone altar smoothed out by human hands and used for different ceremonies in past times. People know about the altar but there is a strong tendency to keep it secret - "my Grandparents said not to expose that to

⁸⁰ Carlson, ed, *Stolo Atlas*, 6.

⁸¹ Gordon Mohs, *Spiritual Sites, Ethnic Significance and Native Spirituality: the Heritage and Heritage Sites of the Sto:lo Indians of British Columbia* (MA Thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1987), 91.

⁸² Mohs, *Spiritual Sites ...*, 92.

⁸³ Mohs, *Spiritual Sites ...*, 92.

⁸⁴ Mohs, *Spiritual Sites ...*, 93.

⁸⁵ Franz Boas, (translation by Dietrich Bertz). *Indian Legends from the North Pacific Coast of America*. (Berlin: A.Asher & Co., 1895), 41.

⁸⁶ Sonny McHalsie, personal interview, 7 June 2002.

⁸⁷ Carlson, *Stolo Atlas*, 8.

anybody so I just forgot about it altogether.”⁸⁸ In fact, there is a strong sense that there is much more to Kuthlath than can be found in the historical/archaeological/anthropological record.

They told me which ones not to tell stories about, so that I can't tell you what are our traditional ways, spiritual ways that we have, like all the mountains and everything like cedar trees, medicine plants and all these different things that belong to us spiritually. I can't explain why these areas are spiritual because it is ours not somebody else's. 'Cause when we sing our songs, our Si'yone (??) songs, we go to the mountains, we go and swim in clean water and all these different things that are sacred to us and we got to keep that to ourselves. That's our way and we can't let that be exposed or that's going to be gone like all the rest of our things that's going away... That's hard for our elders, right now they are crying for what they have in their heart and how they lived years ago. It's hard for them to keep it in here without hurting somebody.⁸⁹

It is here that the academics and the politicians fail to grasp the significance of the privacy of some knowledge. Academia is all about curiosity and politics is all about power. They both actively pursue and are completely dependent upon knowledge so they get frustrated when it is hard to come by - especially when it is intentionally with-held. Perhaps there is a need to examine our desire for knowledge and ask ourselves whether we pursue it for noble ends or for selfish reasons that could include everything from purely monetary to advancing a career. I do not know what constitutes noble reasons but there is a sense it relates to learning a way of life, either for basic survival or as a means of creating a connection to others. Maybe it comes down to the intentions - if the intentions are pure and good, the outcome will be successful.

In the end, there are many sources of information on Kuthlath that have been found and remain to be found. There are people who have information to share and might be persuaded to share it.⁹⁰ This investigation into, and paper on, Kuthlath is but a preliminary foray into a topic that some people within the Sto:lo Nation have identified as of interest to the community. The next step is for someone with more time, better connections in the community, and a personal interest in the story to go further. The result will not be a short treatise as there was too much information even to be included in this preliminary paper that has, I hope, opened up new questions and problematised some of the answers that were apparently already given.

The story of Kuthlath encompasses the much wider story of Aboriginal life before and after contact with non-Aboriginal through the lens of a single place. It is all the more fascinating for some of the hints and mysteries that are just beginning to come out. There are ethical questions to be

⁸⁸ Ralph George, personal interview, 11 June 2002.

⁸⁹ Ralph George, personal interview, 11 June 2002.

⁹⁰ Ralph George, the elders at Coqualeetza, Bea Harris, Roy Wells, James Fraser

considered, however, that revolve around the rights and needs of others to investigate a place and story that is not theirs. I hope that this project has been respectful of a “shift in methodology from information gathering, where the focus is on the right questions, to interaction, where the focus is on process, on the dynamic unfolding of the subject’s viewpoint”⁹¹ that has been identified in the ethnographic literature. There are many questions to be answered about Kuthlath but there needs to be the flexibility to let unforeseen and unimagined questions and problems come to the fore. We must not be blinkered by what we, as researchers, consider to be the questions; perhaps the ancestors and place itself has answers to questions that we can not even imagine to ask.

⁹¹ Katherine Anderson and Dana C. Jack. Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses, (publication info unknown), 23.

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