

Hedley Reloaded

The BC Archaeology Forum 2009

Jim Pound



Wendy Hawkes leads visitors around the Chuchawaya Rock Shelter near Hedley, British Columbia. (photo by author)

In 2005, the BC Archaeology forum was held in Hedley, in southeastern B.C., 75 km northwest of Osoyoos, in the Upper Similakeen River Valley on November 28 and 29, 2009. Once again, we had the privilege of revisiting this wonderful part of our province. Wendy Hawkes and Chief Richard Holmes of the Upper Similkameen Indian Band opened the forum with a traditional greeting from the Smelqmx Syilx people at the Snaza'ist Discovery Centre. What followed was a weekend of sharing and exchange between all participants. So, to our hosts, "LimLimpt."

Wendy Hawkes, Saturday's first speaker, discussed indigeneity within a framework of inheritor communities as opposed to ancestral. She supported Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) as a force that binds people to place, acknowledging both the physical and spiritual worlds. This was followed by an informative presentation by Kristy Whitehurst on the culturally modified tree (CMT) work done by the Kwantlen Polytechnic University field school this past summer in the South Ainslie drainage; this was a project done in collaboration with the

Boston Bar and Boothroyd First Nations (see *The Midden* 41[3], "The Gold Rush, CPR, and Cedar: Applied Archaeology in the Fraser Canyon" for more information on this project).

Diana Cooper of Millennia Research rounded off the morning with an overview of some of the work being done by their group, revisiting the Williston Reservoir with its vast amount of artifacts accumulated, especially projectile points. She also discussed their work on the Nanaimo shoreline. What caught the attention of many was the use of LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) based predictive modelling with photo mapping and geomorphology at a metre optimal resolution.

After lunch Yumks—Rudy Reimer, Simon Fraser University (SFU) instructor and President of the ASBC provided the audience with an update and synopsis of many of the staff and events happening at SFU, within the ASBC. He also touched on his own research where indigeneity and science can be blended into a harmonious relationship to explore new pathways of understanding of time and place. Possibly the highlight of the meeting was Angela Clyburn's presentation

on Digital Enhancement of Pictographs through the use of DStretch software, an image enhancement algorithm especially developed for rock art applications—it was truly stunning. The afternoon continued with excellent presentations by Megan Fisher about work being done on Haida Gwaii; Brenda Gould discussing the challenges of rural archaeology and acceptance of cultural heritage protocols, stewardship, and monitoring even when there are Memorandums of Understanding in place; and finally Kimberly Christensen of Golder Associates Ltd. spoke of their work in Northern British Columbia and the diverse lithic assemblage with some ungulate fragments that seems to point to a tool kit that was more opportunistic than defined. The last presentation of the day was both moving and inspiring, following the lead set the last time the forum was held in Hedley. This time, however, it was by the Penticton Indian Band youth, Darius Kruger. In a video presentation, Randi Baptiste, a young Syilx teenager follows a path of questions and discovery, of what Wendy Hawkes spoke of earlier in the day, an understanding of indigeneity and that of being an inheritor of her rich culture.

That night we were treated to a dinner social at the Hitching Post Restaurant (and one of the best steaks every had by this reporter). On Sunday morning, the final day of the Forum was not to be outdone by the previous day thanks to Brenda Gould, Wendy Hawkes, and Chief Richard Holmes as guides. We visited the Chuchawaya Rock Shelter, a part of the Similkameen Spirit Trail and its pictographs finishing up with a site visit to the Ochre Bluffs in Princeton (see *The Midden* 37[4], "Pictographs in the Upper Similkameen Traditional Territory, a Guided Tour" for more information).

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