

Alaska Native Studies 401
Tuesday, February 3, 1987

Reginald and Louise Dangeli

Reginald is of the Wolf Clan, he is one-fourth Tsetsaut. His Indian name _____ is 'Fly like a bird, efficient in doing things' (If he decides to take the Tsetsaut name _____ "Strong Tree" He would have to give a feast. Then the chiefs will call him by that name three times, then it will officially be his name).

Louise is of the Eagle Clan, Beaver House. She speaks Nishqa Tsimshian. Her Indian name is _____ 'To sit in or to sit across, or oversee things'.

There are 3 Tsimshian Dialects: Coast Tsimshian, Nishqa and Gitksan.

Reginald's Mother is Nishqa, of the Wolf Clan. His Father is one-half Tsetsaut of Portland Canal, Tombstone Bay, Alaska, which is now Misty Fjord National Monument (Indian name is Land of the Dog Salmon) _____.

Tsetsaut people were nomadic inland hunters who came to the coast to be salt water dwellers.

Subsistence lifestyle was lived traditionally and now. They were not affected by the Depression because of the subsistence lifestyle.

Timothy was Reginald's grandfather who taught him to survive on hunting trips. He learned a lot from his grandfather.

Jane Dangeli was Reginald's grandmother. She was a storyteller.

Atauwak(q)(sp?) means it is said, it is told, oral history.

Reginald went to elementary school at Ketchikan BIA school, and high school at Wrangell Institute (established in 1932). During WWII Reginald went to the South Pacific and Philippines, returned in 1945.

When hunting, he saw fossilized deadfall traps, snares and steel traps. The Dangeli's have 3 daughters, 2 sons and 13 grandchildren.

Louise is a Licensed Practical Nurse, and is knowledgeable in Tsimshian Arts and Crafts, and oral history. She is a dance group leader.

When she first started a dance group in Juneau they did not have any traditional dance regalia, so a lady named Grace DeWitt(sp?), a Haida woman made cedar bark hats, and Louise bought several from her. Several trips to Nass River for research have aided in learning of the Nisqa traditions. Place - Litlax annex (sp?).

From 1964-1978 or 80 the Dangeli's were in Seattle at the V.A. Hospital for Reginald's injury. When they returned, they felt like it was a different culture.

The Coast Tismshian were interior people and pushed down from the interior to the River Mouths.

At the mouth of the Skeena are the Gitksan, fourteen tribes.

The Great Lakes are at the headwaters of the Nass: Bowser Lake and _____ Mitsee adden(sp?) Lake is very important to the people for historical reasons. Mitsee adden(sp?) means to squeeze in or force the fish to the beach to an area together so they can't escape. One summer a long time ago, there was not a salmon run as expected. The people rigged up a net of sorts with willows. Then they went into the middle of the lake and seined towards the beach forcing the salmon from the middle to the shores.

The sock eye salmon run was very big during one time of famine and saved the population.

(H)ooligan or smelt or candlefish or savior fish when the salmon didn't come one year, the ooligan saved the Tsimshian, Tlinget and Haida, thus called savior fish.

The Nisqa are famous for making oil from ooligan. Reginald told the story of catching ooligan and the woman with the net. Rakes were used before nets, to "catch" ooligan. Ooligan eating animals are: sea lion, eagles, seagulls, whales, and killer whales.

Trading by the Nisqa, Haida, Alaska Tlinget, and Inlanders to trade ooligan grease, smoked and dried ooligan.

Grease Trails at the Nass headwaters were from when the men would pack boxes of ooligan grease to camps. These trails were later used for modern roads.

Two other peoples made grease: Sanya Kwan Tlingets and the Chilkat River Indians in Haines. The Nass grease is superior.

Each clan still has it's own hereditary chief and subchief.

There is a Nisqa Tribal Council - the 4 chiefs have to agree. Traditions are still being carried out, for example,

the Tradition of the Swan's Down. Scattering of swan's down on arriving people means peace, unity and better understanding among people.

Traditional address still used from 2 or 300 years ago. Traditional lifestyle today, even though they have modern conveniences.

Reginald was punished at church school for speaking his Native language or talking of traditional ways. It took him several years to get his Native language back after being away 2 years.

Nowadays language and traditions are seen as valuable and are being preserved. There is a Nisqa High School, so that the students wouldn't have to leave the community. Nisqa are battling to keep thie fish and hunting grounds for subsistence, similar to Alaska land claims.