

# The Journey Home - Guiding Intangible Knowledge Production in the Analysis of Ancestral Remains

An Intellectual Property Issues in Cultural Heritage Community-Based Initiative

## Final Report

by

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## INTRODUCTION

This Intellectual Properties in Cultural Heritage (IPinCH) case study focuses on issues of intangible intellectual property rights and knowledge production associated with the repatriation and analysis of Stó:lō ancestral remains in British Columbia, Canada. It contributes to the IPinCH project theme of bioarchaeology, specifically. Including associated burial goods in this project expands its scope to the treatment of tangible as well as intangible cultural and intellectual properties. The Stó:lō Nation and Stó:lō Tribal Council, via the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC), worked with the Laboratory of Archaeology (LOA) at the University of British Columbia (UBC) on the Journey Home Project, which was a repatriation of their ancestral remains <sup>66</sup>(Rowley and Hausler 2008). This project was motivated by LOA asking the basic question “What does the community want to do with the remains of their ancestors held at the institution?”



Ancestors in Boxes (2010 David Campion)

Bringing ancestors home is important cultural work in which the Stó:lō have actively engaged for over a decade (Gough 2004; Schaepe and Joe 2005). It has also been recognized internationally as one of the rights of Indigenous Peoples throughout the world. Article 12 of

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<sup>66</sup> The Laboratory of Archaeology at UBC Journey Home Project was started by Susan Rowley in 2004 in order to engage with communities and discuss, through action, proactive repatriation. This project is carried out in the Canadian context where repatriation is seen as a moral and ethical expectation of museums based on the 1992 Task Force Report: *Turning the Page: Forging New Relationships between Museums and First Peoples* (Hill and Nicks 1992).

the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples specifically identifies the “right to the repatriation of human remains” noting that

“2. States shall seek to enable the access and/or repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains in their possession through fair, transparent and effective mechanisms developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned” (United Nations 2007).

In many cases, the repatriation of ancestral remains has resulted in the interment, without further research, of the ancestors in their traditional homelands (Rowley and Hausler 2008). In other cases, especially in the United States, the courts have been asked to determine the rights of scientists to carry out research on human remains, most famously exemplified in the Kennewick Man controversy (Burke et al. 2008). In still other cases, authority has been given to the community to determine what tests can and cannot be run on the remains prior to repatriation.<sup>7</sup>

In 2006, LOA representative Susan Rowley asked the Stó:lō what they wanted to do with their ancestral remains being cared for at LOA. This essential question stimulated years of discussions over the process for returning these ancestors to their home(s). Dialogue on this took place and continues to take place at numerous levels and among numerous Stó:lō First Nations, including those associated with the Stó:lō Nation (SN) and Stó:lō Tribal Council (STC), and those between organizations, including a Stó:lō cultural advisory body *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S’olhetawtxw Sq’éq’ip* (The House of Respect Care-taking Committee), the SRRMC acting for SN and STC, and LOA. At issue here was not the question of whether the remains should be returned. Instead, the central community-based concern was one of *doing things right*, regardless of time frame.

We discussed issues of protocols surrounding inter-First Nation interests and involvement, community-institutional relations, research, and intellectual properties derived from potential scientific analyses of these ancestors. Control, authority, and process were raised as substantial issues surrounding research



questions. What range of analyses is applicable? Metric? Isotopic? Strontium? DNA? Radiocarbon dating? Even the simple act of establishing a radiocarbon date has important cultural considerations. Whose interests does it serve? If a community knows they lived in the land “since time immemorial” what is the purpose of the radiocarbon date? Is it a

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<sup>7</sup> For examples, see Agnaiyaaq (Zimmerman et al. 2000), the ancestor from On Your Knees Cave (Sealaska 2005, Kemp et al. 2007), and Kwaday Dän Ts’inchí (Richards 2007).

requirement for repatriation or could it alter a determination in favour of repatriation? Who analyzes the data and who controls the results? What real or perceived impacts could such “scientific” information have on the community, considering their situation as Aboriginal peoples without resolution of rights and title issues in British Columbia? <sup>8</sup>

This case study thus focused on providing information and developing research guidelines useful in informing community-institutional relations, the application of research, the identification of intellectual properties issues, and the sharing of knowledge. An objective of this work was to provide practical guidelines and protocols serving to identify and navigate points of common interest and points of contention between scientific and cultural communities in bioarchaeological analysis and the production of intangible knowledge derived from the analysis of ancestral remains. Through the identification and clarification of these issues, the outcomes of this study promise to inform and strengthen this sometimes-awkward relationship on a broader scale.

We especially wanted to present words “as spoken” in this report. Therefore the bulk of the report consists of verbatim, or lightly edited transcripts of presentations and meetings. There are four sections. In the first, Project Methods, we outline about the process followed in this case study. We also discuss the project timeline, the repatriation from LOA, and decision to undertake non-destructive and destructive analysis.

The next section, The Journey Home Project Community Presentation–October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014, is an edited transcript of a presentation made to Stó:lō community members. During this presentation, the process of the project and the biographies of the ancestors, illuminated through the research of bioanthropologists guided by the Committee and the ancestors, were shared. The evening began with a meal. Next, Herb Joe introduced the Journey Home Project, and Dave Schaepe presented the biographies on behalf of the project team. Afterwards, community members asked questions and the representatives attending from the Laboratory of Archaeology and the Museum of Vancouver were offered an opportunity to share the meaning of the project both personally and to their institutions.

The two final sections of the report are *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S’olhetawtxw Sq’éq’ip* (*Stó:lō House of Respect Caretaking Committee*), which is a transcript of a portion of a committee meeting held on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013 and *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S’olhetawtxw Sq’éq’ip* (*Stó:lō House of Respect Caretaking Committee*), a transcript of portion of committee meeting held on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015. These verbatim records provide the reader with a rare opportunity to hear the words of community members as they reflected on the process, the knowledge gathered, the relationships developed and the project as a whole.

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<sup>8</sup> The vast majority of what is now British Columbia is unceded territory of many First Nations. The land was simply taken over by the Crown and settlers without discussion or treaties.

## PROJECT METHODS

Due to the nature of this project and the sensitivity of the subject matter, our project design remained flexible and fluid. Primarily, we engaged in a long-lasting dialogue among the members of the project (Dave Schaepe, Sue Rowley, and *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip* Committee). The IPinCH-based project joined with a longer-standing discussion of repatriating *Stó:lō* ancestral remains from LOA. A fuller description of the overall repatriation, coined The Journey Home Project, is provided below.

### ***Discussions and Dialogue: Consultation between Cultural / Spiritual Leaders and Bioanthropologists***

Over the course of the project we engaged in an on-going dialogue among the project members, including community-based researchers, cultural leaders, practitioners and *shxwlá:m* (“Indian Doctors” / spiritual practitioners) from a broad cross-section of *Stó:lō* tribes and organizations, together with anthropologists (archaeologists and bioanthropologists from LOA), to discuss protocols surrounding access, research, health and safety of researchers and community members, removal and processing of samples, and appropriate disposal of any samples remaining after analysis. We met on a regular, nearly bi-monthly basis between 2011 and 2015. Questions mentioned above, derived from prior meetings between these groups, were the focal points of this ongoing dialogue. Meetings were held both at *Stó:lō* Nation’s *Stó:lō* Resource Centre and at UBC’s Laboratory of Archaeology. The parties worked together to define options for recording, transcribing, and drafting outcomes of our dialogue for the purpose of sharing knowledge at various levels ranging from private to public viewership. Permission was also given by the parties for photo documentation of some of these meetings by professional photographer David Campion for potential use in this project.

The desire expressed as “doing things is a good way” superseded timelines throughout the project. Therefore, we were able to have many lengthy candid conversations where learning took place around the table. Committee members would share their knowledge, each listening carefully to the other, and

building on each others’ words, as they wrestled with thinking through the repatriation and research process and reframing it in a *Stó:lō* way.



The on-going dialogue and relationships that developed over time with the researchers provided an opportunity to discuss issues until a consensus could be reached. Some of our earliest conversations were information-sharing sessions. What questions did committee members have about their ancestors? The responses we received included: Who were they? What family did they belong to? What did they eat? How long ago did they live? Are they our ancestors? We would rarely respond immediately. Instead we thought about the questions and the different methods required to answer them. At meetings that followed, the researchers would share information about the techniques that could be used, both destructive and non-destructive, to assist with answering their questions.

The difference between non-destructive and destructive analysis led to lengthy discussions within the committee about cultural protocols. Many members remembered the words of late Grand Chief Archie Charlie, who said that he would be willing to “give up the tip of his thumb” to prove his fishing rights. Additionally, committee members communicated directly with the ancestors, which was accomplished through a burning ceremony, overseen by shxwłá:m Steven and Gwen Point. After these conversations and lengthy deliberations, the committee decided to go ahead with destructive analysis of the ancestors’ remains to the extent needed for both radiocarbon dating and isotope analysis, but only after the ancestors were resting at home. The committee’s later reflections of this decision can be found in portions of the transcripts of the *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S’olhetawtxw Sq’éq’ip* meetings held on March, 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013 and April, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015.

### ***Timeline***

Discussions about the journey home of the ancestors commenced in 2006. The formal notice of intent to repatriate was sent to LOA in September of 2009. A Community Notice discussing the ancestors returning home was distributed in April of 2011. In September of 2011, LOA sent faxes to relevant First Nations outlining the *Stó:lō* request. Several First Nations responded to LOA with questions about the ancestors. One community objected to the return of a number of the ancestors and so, under LOA policies and with the understanding of the *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S’olhetawtxw Sq’éq’ip*, these ancestors were not included in the final repatriation request. LOA met to discuss and agree to the repatriation in October of 2011. The transfer agreement documents were drawn up and signed by UBC Legal Counsel in the spring of 2012. The repatriation occurred on October 19, 2012. Only once the ancestors were housed at the SRRMC, did the detailed analysis and removal of samples for destructive analysis take place. Sampling and analyses were carried out by Dr. Darlene Weston and Dr. Michael Richards, faculty members of the UBC Department of Anthropology. Samples were respectfully removed by Dr. Weston, observed by *Stó:lō* Nation-SRRMC Cultural Advisor Albert ‘Sonny’ McHalsie. She also carried out the non-destructive analysis. Dr. Richards was responsible for submitting the samples for both radiocarbon dating and isotope analysis. Results of the analysis were presented to the community on October 23, 2014.

## RESULTS

### ***Journey Home Project Community Forum Presentation by David Schaepe – October 23, 2014***

(see Appendix A)

In 2006, the *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip* Committee was formed as a committee comprised of individuals from the Stó:lō community throughout S'ólh Téméxw. Members were selected for their knowledge about Stó:lō culture and traditions. Committee members since 2006 to the present (September 2015) included: Farley (Natch) Antone, the late Ivan McIntyre, Allan Williams, Helen Joe, Herb Joe, Dalton Silver, James Leon, Jeff Point, Darwin Douglas, Patricia Raymond Adair, Frank Malloway, Mabel Point, the late Joe Aleck, Betty Henry, Rhoda Peters, Rose Peters, Shane John, Alice Thompson, Josette Jim, Andy Phillips, Wendy Richie, and Amy Victor. Stó:lō First Nations represented by committee-members include: Kwantlen, Seabird Island, Scowlitz, Tzeachten, Sumas, Sts'ailes, Chawathil, Cheam, Leq'ámel, and Skowkale, along with the Stó:lō Nation House of Elders and the Coqualeetza Cultural Education Centre. The committee was facilitated by staff including David Schaepe (Director and Senior Archaeologist) as the Chair, Sonny McHalsie (Cultural Advisor and Historian), and Tia Halstad (Archivist and Librarian).

The purpose of the *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip* Committee is to take care of everything that belongs to us. This is a principle and a teaching among the Stó:lō, and in Halq'eméylem the saying is “S'ólh Téméxw te íkw'élò. Xólhmet te mekw' stám ít kwelát.” This can be transliterated as “This is our land, we have to take care of everything that belongs to us.” This key statement provides guidance and direction for the committee’s work in bringing back or returning things, and undertaking repatriation. The committee also oversees and provides input into the implementation of the Stó:lō Heritage Policy. Part of this policy looks at the caretaking of Stó:lō heritage, including ancestral remains, cultural objects and intellectual properties held in institutions outside the Stó:lō community. Taking care of things and curating things is linked to the Halq'eméylem term xólhmet, pertaining to Stó:lō heritage, including the development and implementation of cultural protocols, organizational frameworks, and other things as needed. The committee also supports the administration and on-going development of the Stó:lō Heritage Policy and legislation, again, particularly as it pertains to aspects of repatriation of Stó:lō culture and heritage and to the interpretation and public presentation of Stó:lō culture and heritage—in large part linked to our relationships with museums.

The Journey Home project began in 2005, through collaboration with UBC’s Laboratory of Archaeology, which at the time was holding a number of Stó:lō ancestral remains, taking

care of them. LOA was involved in a major project with the Museum of Anthropology called the Partnership of Peoples Project. Stó:lō Nation and Stó:lō Tribal Council were partners in this project, through the SRRMC. When LOA needed to move the ancestors owing to construction involving the UBC Museum of Anthropology and LOA repository they reached out to First Nations including Stó:lō about appropriate ways of doing that. This was the first step that led to the repatriation of 11 ancestral remains from UBC.<sup>9</sup> The outcome of this initial discussion in 2005 led to the formation of the *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip* Committee as a group of cultural knowledge holders who could inform and advise UBC on, first, what steps to take for the interim relocation of the ancestral remains, and second, on the type of housing to bring them back to as part of the renovation. Two additional—and very significant—questions posed by LOA were what do the Stó:lō want to do with the ancestral remains, and would they be interested in bringing them back home and having them repatriated? The clear answer to that question was “Yes.”

And so, from 2006 onward, the *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip* Committee became an officially formed entity supported by the Stó:lō Tribal Council and Stó:lō Nation. The committee reached out to LOA with a formal letter requesting the return of ancestral remains being held. The 11 ancestral remains from UBC were returned to the Stó:lō through the oversight of the *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip* Committee. This took a very long time and significant amounts of work and involvement and discussion around how to do this, both in terms of addressing questions linked to matters of bioarchaeology and in terms of analysis and finding out who these individuals are. Ancestors from the Lower Fraser Canyon who were initially included in the repatriation request to LOA were not able to be returned due to internal relationships amongst Stó:lō communities. As a result there wasn't agreement on bringing those ancestors home. This remains an outstanding issue still to be addressed, and there is a developing relationship between *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip* Committee and Yale First Nation. We hope that these ancestors will return and be a continuation of this work.

Five additional ancestors were repatriated from the Museum of Vancouver. This was accomplished very quickly thanks to the protocols and process developed and established by the *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip* Committee in their long and detailed consideration, prior to the repatriation of ancestors from LOA. In addition to the five ancestors repatriated from the Museum of Vancouver, and the 11 ancestors recovered from LOA, there were 11 ancestors already at the Stó:lō Resource Centre. Some of these were returned from the coroner's office, some from non-Stó:lō individuals who had them in their possession, and some from archaeological recovery carried out through Stó:lō Nation in Stó:lō Territory. All of these individuals were included in the analysis carried out as part of the Journey Home Project.

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<sup>9</sup> These ancestors are now in their temporary housing here in Chilliwack at the Stó:lō Resource Centre.

A key question that guided the committee's discussions was: Who are these individuals? This was an important question in formulating the final step of the journey home since such knowledge informs us about how to put these ancestors away in a respectful way and in a good way. So the key question was oriented



to the individuals—Who are they? What can we say about them based on their physical skeletal remains? Whose family are they a part of, what community are they a part of? Where do they come from? And what do we need to do to bring them back and accommodate them as individuals, returning them to a final resting place?

Working with the ancestors was done under strict cultural protocols as determined by the *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip* Committee. These included burning ceremonies and other ceremonial practices to address the ancestors directly and bring them in the conversations to get their input in a direct manner.

We also wanted to build biographies for each of these ancestors so we can talk together about who they are, how they should be put to rest again, and where their final resting places should be. The committee chose to use certain bioarchaeological methods to help with this task. Radiocarbon dating provided information on how long ago someone lived. Isotope analysis gave us insight into the kinds of diet people had. Measurements, x-rays, and visual analysis helped us to learn about some of their physical attributes, such as height, sex, physical condition, and health. Additionally, the records associated with these individuals informed us about where they came from, in some cases quite detailed locations; in other cases, somewhat more general.

## Results

In total, we worked with 27 individuals. In terms of age and sex, there were 13 adult males or possible males; 9 adults females or possible females; one infant of an unknown sex; two children of unknown sex; and two adults of unknown sex. The dates give us a range of ages for these individuals from 500 to 5,500 years ago. And the locations they're from are all throughout the central Fraser Valley, in large part up the Chilliwack Valley, from areas around Scowlitz—communities that are associated with what now would be the Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribe up in the Chilliwack Valley, and along the Fraser Valley along the Chilliwack River in the vicinity of Yakwekwioose and Skowkale reserves and bands, Sumas reserve, the main reserve at Sumas Mountain along the River, the Fraser River, the

community of Scowlitz, along the Harrison River in a few places, the Agassiz area, the base of Agassiz Mountain, Chawathil in Hope, Chawathil First Nation, in the vicinity of Hope (see final slide in Appendix A).

Below we share what we learned about these individuals relative to the questions posed above—Who are these ancestors?; and What did they eat?—to illustrate the type of rich information enabled by this community-informed approach.

### ***Who are these ancestors?***

So who are these ancestors? What can we find out that describes them as people? We carried out work in collaboration with UBC researchers, Darlene Weston and Mike Richards, to create biographies for these individuals. These were based on the following information: a description of physical remains (including age, sex, size or stature, and physical condition); an analysis of bone chemistry to provide information about diet at the level of a marine or terrestrial diet; a determination of age by using radiocarbon dating to find out how long ago they died; and information on how and where the remains were recovered. None of the ancestors were complete: some are only represented by a single bone. Some information, such as sex or height can only be determined with particular bones, meaning that the biographies vary in detail. What follows is a brief biography of each individual, organized by the area where they were located:

#### Líyómxetal

From Líyómxetal<sup>10</sup> also known as Devil's Run, there are three ancestors. The first individual dates to about 2,579 years ago. He was an adult male with large muscle attachments on his arms, meaning he was very muscular.

The second individual, whose remains included a skull and foot bones, died about 2,397 years ago. He was between 36 and 45 years old when he died. He had a shaped skull, a flattened forehead from the use of a cradleboard. This man's remains were identified and recovered through archaeological work carried out in 2002 by Stó:lō Nation (Schaepe et al 2002). He was reburied at the Sumas cemetery on the eastern point of Sumas Mountain in 2002. Samples of bone taken in 2002 and housed in the Stó:lō Repository since then for the purpose of future study were processed as part of our analyses.

The third individual is represented only by one right lower second molar. These teeth erupt when a child is between 7 and 9 years old. While we do know that this child lost a tooth we do not know if she/he lived or died as it is possible to lose a tooth and live.

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<sup>10</sup> Borden Number DgRm-1 (Borden Numbers are a Canada-wide numbering system for archaeological sites).

### Abbotsford Area

From Sumas Reserve on the south side of Sumas Mountain<sup>11</sup> we have a skull from an individual who passed away about 989 years ago. He died as an adult male when he was about 30+ years old. He also had a shaped skull, flattened from the use of a cradleboard. A second individual from the Sumas Mountain area, near the Sumas Reserve for whom we had a skull only, dated to 1,413 years ago. This person, possibly a male, was between 36 and 45 years old when he died. The skull was purposefully shaped with a flattened forehead from the use of a cradleboard.

From the Abbotsford area west of Sumas Mountain, we have the remains of an individual that included a skull, arm bones, rib fragments, and parts of a spine. This person passed away about 679 years ago. He was an adult male between 26 and 35 years old, and was about 164 cm (5', 4.5") tall. He had a cradleboard-flattened forehead. The muscle attachments on his arms indicate that he had powerful arm muscles. There is evidence of some arthritis of the spine. His teeth were extremely worn and there were indications of dental disease: a pulp cavity had become exposed resulting in two abscesses.

Also from the Abbotsford area was a skull fragment from an adult of unknown sex, dating back to 849 years ago.

Another individual was a child between 4 and 5 years old who passed away about 884 years ago. There is only a jaw fragment from this child. Also from the Abbotsford area is an individual who was returned from the coroner's office. There are only jaw fragments from this individual. This ancestor is a child who was about two years old and died about 620 years ago.

The last from the area is individual returned from the coroner's office as found human remains including a skull and long bone fragments. This is an adult, possible male, between 36 and 45 years old. This person was 156 cm (5', 1.75") tall. The teeth were extremely worn. This person passed away about 2,840 years ago.

### Scowlitz / Harrison Mills Area

From Scowlitz<sup>12</sup> there are two individuals. The first is probably an adult female who passed away about 213 years ago. She was 153 cm (5', 0.23") tall. The second is an infant. The few teeth we have tell us that this infant passed away at an age of 3-6 months.

Two people were recovered from burial mounds in Harrison Mills. From them we were able to determine longer biographies. The first lived about 1,292 years ago. He was an adult male who passed away when he was older than 46 years old. He had poor dental hygiene, as revealed by lots of tartar on his teeth, which were very worn. In addition he had severe osteoarthritis; the upper six vertebrae of his neck were fused to his skull and he would have

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<sup>11</sup> Borden Number DgRn-2.

<sup>12</sup> Borden Number DhRI-16.

had mobility issues. He was buried with dentalia shell beads; copper staining inside his lower jawbone also indicates that he was buried with copper in his mouth.

The second person from Harrison Mills was an adult female who lived about 1,189 years ago and was 36-45 years old when she passed away. Her skull had been shaped by flattening the forehead with a cradleboard. Her teeth were very worn. She also had copper staining on the inside of her mouth and on the outside of her face indicating her status and high respect paid to her.

### Agassiz

From the Agassiz area there is one ancestor, an adult female who passed away about 793 years ago. She had a shaped skull from the use of a cradleboard to flatten her forehead. Her arm bones indicate that she had powerful arm muscles.

### Chilliwack

From the Chilliwack area there are four ancestors. The first was possibly male and died between the ages of 26–35 years old. Some of his teeth show heavy wear. He died about 873 years ago.

The second was an adult woman who was between the ages of 26 and 35 when she died. She lived about 907 years ago.

The third ancestor is known only from leg bones. We know this person was an adult who died about 887 years ago. This person had a condition known as osteochondritis desiccans. This means the blood flow to their knee joint was disrupted at some time due to trauma, circulation problems, developmental problems, a genetic condition, or a combination of all these factors. In addition, this individual suffered trauma just above the ankle causing bone spurs to grow.

The fourth individual is an adult woman who lived about 1,019 years ago. Although we only have a leg bone from this woman, much can still be learned about her life. For example, she had a long-lasting bone infection with a small hole in her lower leg bone (which allowed the body to drain pus). She would have required long-term care because of this condition. An x-ray revealed that her infection was not caused by a broken bone.

### Chilliwack River Valley

There are four individuals from caves in the Chilliwack Valley. These are the oldest individuals in terms of how long ago they lived. The first was recovered from Sepulcher Cave.<sup>13</sup> He is an adult male who had lost all of his upper teeth by the time he passed away and an age of over 46 about 5,173 years ago.

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<sup>13</sup> Borden Number DgRk-8a.

The other three individuals were recovered from Renaissance Cave.<sup>14</sup> They are three adults. One is an adult woman who was between 26 and 35 years old when she passed away about 5,286 years ago. She still had her baby teeth at that time. Another is an adult male who died about 5,318 years ago. The last is a young adult woman who died when she was between 18 and 25 years old. She was 151.7 cm (4'11.6") tall. Her teeth were worn from use. Dating lets us know that she died about 5,259 years ago.

#### Hatzic

A single individual comes from Hatzic. She was a woman whose forehead had been flattened using a cradleboard. Her skull also showed signs of a possible well-healed fracture. Her teeth were very worn. She passed away when she was between 26 and 35 years old about 2,054 years ago.

#### Whonnock

This ancestor was a young adult between 18 and 25 years old when she died about 889 years ago. Her skull had been shaped using a cradleboard. Around her eye sockets the bone shows signs of something called *cribra orbitalia*, which is an indication of a nutritional deficiency in her diet.

#### Hope

A possible male, aged 25-36 was recovered from the Hope area. This individual died about 891 years ago and had very pronounced skull shaping from a cradleboard. Several stone tools were found nearby, which may have been buried with him.

#### Lower Fraser Canyon

From Xelhálh is another ancestor, a possible male who was over 30 when he passed away. Only skull fragments were recovered. He lived about 1,212 years ago.

#### "Fraser Valley"

One individual has a very general location. All we know is that this individual is from the Fraser Valley. This ancestor is a possible male, aged between 26 and 35, who passed away about 761 years ago.

#### ***What did these ancestors eat?***

All but one of the ancestors had a diet of 75% or more marine protein. Marine protein in this region come from from salmon. The isotopic analyses we carried out show that these ancestors had a similar diet, including the most ancient of the individuals dating to about 5,400 years ago, and who were from the Chilliwack River Valley.

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<sup>14</sup> Borden Number DgRk-8a.

One ancestor—an adult female from Scowlitz—had a diet that was terrestrial in nature and showed no signs of eating salmon. As is the case now, individuals have particular dietary, patterns, and so this is a point of interest. Why did she not eat salmon? In her case, having such a distinct diet, this information helps determine what is appropriate in the process, protocols and ceremonial requirements needed to bring this individual home and put her away for good. In her case, we wouldn't be providing salmon in the ceremonial burning of food. This is a consideration relating to decisions about their final return and commitment to resting place. For all of the other ancestors, burning salmon in the fire and feeding them salmon would be an appropriate type of meal that they would be familiar with and appreciate.

At this time (July, 2015) all of these ancestors have been brought back to the Stó:lō Resource Centre as the next step in the Journey Home. The information from these analyses now can inform the communities about what they want to do in taking the final step in bringing the ancestors back to where they need to be put away for good, final resting place. Still to complete the journey are seven ancestors from the lower Fraser Canyon, the remains of those whom are still in the care of LOA. Accomplishing this requires working together with the *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip* Committee and Yale First Nation to bring them home.

### **Post-script to the Presentation**

As a result of the community presentation in October 2014, a positive connection was established between groups attending the gathering, leading to a suggestion to sit and talk and work out ways in which the individuals from the Canyon, like the others, could be repatriated back home. The final steps of the journey home are to be completed soon for the 27 individual who have been repatriated and for whom we created bioarchaeological biographies. Based on input from the *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip* Committee and the Stó:lō communities at large, as well as the ancestors we're dealing with, the work that was carried out was done in a very good way. This work has resulted in the creation of new information that has informed this process as it progressed. This information has also proved useful to the Stó:lō communities, community-based researchers, and academic researchers in a variety of ways.

### **Taking Stock of Accomplishments**

The interaction and relationships among the researchers, the *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip* members, and the communities at large led to a set of questions being asked. Information was then gathered around the context, the life and biographies of the individuals, and the information coming from the skeletal remains of these ancestors, not only pertaining to them but also to the larger population of individuals in this area. This knowledge was derived from questions and interests that were developed collectively by

community members and researchers. The relationship ultimately led to a greater gathering of information than would have been possible with either group working in isolation. The process of including intangible knowledge and intangible heritage, and also of creating knowledge through the process of addressing and dealing with ancestors and applying archaeological methods and analyses, has been transformed by the relationship between community-based and academic researchers, Stó:lō community members and the individual ancestors themselves. These parties stimulated each other's thinking in ways that went beyond the initial framework of each of those groups.

To demonstrate this important outcome, what follows are the transcripts of two meetings of the *Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip* Committee. The first was held on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013, during which members discussed the process to date, the second on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015, when the committee reflected on the Journey Home.

***Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip***  
***(Stó:lō House of Respect Caretaking Committee)***

***Transcript of a portion of a committee meeting held on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013<sup>15</sup>***

Present at this meeting: David Schaepe, Tia Halstad, the late Ivan McIntyre, Allen Williams, Frank Malloway, Jeff Point, Mabel Point, Patricia Raymond-Adair, Andy Phillips, Albert (Sonny) McHalsie, and Lou Hall.

**Dave Schaepe (SRRMC; Committee Chair):** As we write this up, it would be helpful if everyone is okay, with recording this conversation—as we talk about questions—as a group interview. We'll likely also come back to talk about this individually with folks—some of these points as we work up more questions. Does anyone here have any concerns with being recorded? Is everybody okay with being recorded today?

**Tia Halstad (SRRMC; Committee Support Staff):** I'll get people to sign this [consent form], please, and I've [started] the recording. So I'm just going to pass this piece of paper around to be signed. [Consensus was that it would be okay to record and everyone signed the consent form.]

**Ivan McIntyre (Seabird Island First Nation):** Just wanted to mention about what Frank was talking about [in an earlier part of the meeting]. I was kind of concerned about it too, [about] ownership of these ancestors and information that we can use. Because today they tell us that we don't own nothing and all this information that we're gathering here, like what Frank said, he wants to use it with the treaty. This would be something it would be good for, real helpful, for trying to get our rights back for our children. It won't really benefit us, but would benefit our children. This is something we should be thinking about: using this information. Especially if it is over 5,000 years old—that proves more ownership than anything. We should go a little bit farther with it, especially the information that we can use.

**Allen Willams (Scowlitz First Nation):** Not knowing our history, this [new information] would be really good for teaching our young ones too if we get this maybe put on paper or something like that.. My nephew works in the school district in Mission; they really want to know about our people, especially the young Natives that are there. Because it's not being taught at home anymore. The only real people that know about our history and everything is our elders, like we had to learn through the *sxwó:yxwey*, our mask; and everything we need to know we had to go back to our elders and learn. A lot of our young children nowadays, they get to learn a little bit of the language in school. They have a few people that go in and teach them for a while. It's just like everything else that we learned—they teach us for a

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<sup>15</sup> Transcribed by Tia Halstad, SRRMC, Archivist & Librarian. When a section of the tape is inaudible it is indicated by "...". The transcript has been lightly edited for clarity.

while and then they quit. A lot of things that come to us are taught to us a little bit and all of a sudden there's nothing there. And where do we go? We've had our language, our culture taught to us to a certain extent and [then] all of a sudden there's nothing, nobody there to teach us anything anymore. But it breaks down to them dollars. A lot of our people put their hands out before they want to bring different stuff. ... When I was on chief and council, they had information that they wouldn't bring forward that they got from different places. Unless the people brought them money, they hide that information. Don't know whatever happened to it; a lot of it was language, a lot of our place names were written in native and stuff like that. I don't know where it disappeared. I just hope we can find some way of passing all this information that we learn on to our young ones. That was the reason I brought up saying our prayer in our native tongue. That will help us to learn it; maybe we can pass it on to the younger ones, our younger ones. You know, we got a lot of learning to do ... our language, a lot of us know a bit about our culture but [it] seems every time we talk something comes up that we're learning more. O Si:yá:m.

**Dave:** Great. There's a couple of big questions, one of which is, What are the benefits? This is new information coming from your ancestors' bones directly, provided by their bones. It's new information; we get at it through analysis. One of those questions then is of this new information, What benefit is it to you? How can it be used in a way that's useful, in a positive way? Another question is what are the concerns around bringing this new information out? So I think there are two major questions in my mind that I'm hearing you speak of, both of you, Ivan and Allen, speaking to parts of the usefulness of the information, the benefit of the information... What are the benefits of this new information that we have now coming from the ancestors? I'll put that out there for others to think about and talk to... if anyone else has anything else to share.

**Frank Malloway (Yakwekwioose First Nation):** Couldn't we have a press release on the age of that skull that was found?

**Dave:** Certainly, that's an outcome.

**Frank:** Wouldn't mind seeing it in the Chilliwack paper. But it's something that we've been trying to prove for so long. That's where we come from, the Chilliwack Tribe.

**Dave:** So that would be useful—to let the public know.

**Frank:** Yeah, they always say, well, "You don't belong up there, you got no reservation up there"... just...my ancestor.

**Dave:** Certainly, we can do that. That information allows us to put a piece together that we can put out in the press to let people know that there's this evidence that goes back now 5,000 years, at least, if not possibly 7,000 years of occupation in the Chilliwack Valley. What I'm hearing you say is that's useful to you, useful to the Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribe in bringing attention to that long-term occupation and use... that physical evidence of long-term

occupation of the Chilliwack Valley, [because] there isn't an understanding of that history [at present].

**Frank:** I'd like to see a write up so we can have it on file in the Chilliwack Tribe office. You know, you'd see how they can use it.

**Dave:** What do you think, Siyémches [aka, Frank], in terms of how you see this information being used generally? How could it be used by the tribe to benefit the tribe?

**Frank:** I think it would have been really useful when we were trying to protect Sweltzer Creek to know that was a cultural site.

**Jeff Point (Skowkale First Nation):** And the army base.

**Frank:** Yeah, the army base up there. The forestry... you know we've got pretty well mostly control in the forestry now but, you know, there's a lot of work to be done yet. I think Matt Wealick said we've got control of 85% or something of the forestry. Pushed two logging companies out. Only got one to deal with because of pushing our tribal territory. They sold their logging outfits just to get away from fighting with us. And I think that using that information we could prove that our people were there, long before Columbus came.

**Jeff:** Long before they made reserves. That's what the court would say.

**Ivan:** I think it would be useful to all of our people, not just certain tribes...all over North America.

**Jeff:** I wonder if it would be a good idea to get permission, or some sort of permission from the others if we're going to use this information publicly. Do we need their right to do that?

**Dave:** Whose right?

**Jeff:** The individuals that belong to different bands.

**Dave:** That's a good question. Putting this out there publicly, using the information, brings up the question of how can we use the information? Who, what do you need for consent? Do you need anybody? Whose consent do you need to put this out there publicly? That's a question to the board, [to] you guys really. What do you think? I mean, you've got... let's look at some examples. We have ancestors from Scowlitz, clearly they come from the area. Scowlitz, come from the area of Semá:th, come from the area of the Ts'elxwéyeqw Valley. What are your thoughts? Is there a need to get permission to use information from the ancestor from Semá:th from the Semá:th community or is it just generally available for people to use?

**Allen:** That's a toss-up because we were all one people at one time, we were all Stó:lō ...[including] Yale [First Nation].

**Mabel Point (Sts'ailes First Nation):** We just got broken up when they made the reservations.

**Dave:** [...] How would you look at this to decide that? Is there a way to look at this where there's any kind of principles behind it? Anything you can relate it to today that works? Where you know clearly that you have to go talk to somebody about using information? Is there something you see as a similar process or something similar to what we're looking at here with ancestral remains?

**Jeff:** I think we have to. We learned something here when we first started, like Yale pulling out. I think that's a very touchy situation that we're in and I know Siyémches, he would have probably [have needed] clearance from the tribe just for the information to be brought out front for the treaty process. Whether I want to use any of Semá:th's information is another thing. I mean, do I need their permission to do it? So we went down this road already and we got stopped. I assume, that just to be on the proper road, this information is, right now, is concealed, right? It's not exposed, it's just to us right here.

**Dave:** At this point, it's private, so the question is, then... can it be made public, how can it be made public?

**Jeff:** I think the rest of the Bands that's involved will have to sign up to say it's [ok]... Well, I'm sure it's going to go into the archives here for others to use at some point right?

**Dave:** The information could come and we could house it in the archives, however the archives is generally a public thing unless it's identified as confidential or restricted.

**Jeff:** And that's where it lies, right?

**Dave:** Yeah

**Tia:** But I would need direction from the committee or from the bands that *yes, this is public information, I can share it with researchers* or *no, this is private information for your band only*. So that's a decision that would have to be made at this level. I wouldn't feel comfortable doing that as the archivist.

**Jeff:** I like what Allen said. We were all one people before. A lot of people don't think like that, a lot of bands don't think that way. We've been down that road so, I mean, if we can get a clear direction from each one that signed up for this repatriation committee that information is educational and can be used as a public...

**Allen:** It's pretty tough right now—anybody's on the other side of our reserve boundary, you're not part of us, you can't have any say in what anybody does on this side of that line... kind of thing. How do we bring everybody together to work on something like this? It's even hard getting information out to the people that we have already.

**Jeff:** I think our committee here wasn't blindfolded when we came into this. We knew it was going to go into the archives and be shared with the people for education.

**Dave:** Right, I've heard you say that clearly, that this group wanted these biographies to be written, to be shared with the youth particularly, as part of the process, part of bringing these ancestors home, and what you had envisioned as part of the next step, of launching the next step. When we get everything together we'd have a celebration of sorts, [...] or at least a gathering, where we would bring out these biographies and share them with whoever is in attendance, so in a public forum, at least orally, for the sake of educating people and particularly the youth. I guess the question would be what makes it private vs public to begin with. I'm hearing you talk about a community's relationship to an ancestor and the information that comes from the ancestor. Is it a matter of where the ancestor is found, where they're buried, so where that ancestral remains come from? Is it a matter of the age of the ancestor? Or is it a combination of things like that? So you have, you can take for example, [...] those skulls from those ancestors in the Chilliwack Valley, found in those caves, we know definitely that's where they're from. We know their age is at least 5000 years old. [...] We know where they come from, Chilliwack Valley—it's a link to the Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribe. Does the age then matter – 7000, 5000 years old? Does that make a difference in whether you see it as linked directly to the Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribe or is that something that's a factor, that makes it more broadly connected to the Stó:lō as a whole? How do you determine whether something is individually owned, or family owned or tribally owned or [owned by] everybody?

**Jeff:** I think that the Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribe would want it to be known as theirs, from the way that they're moving their tribe along, how they're situated. So they'd want this information for themselves, but if they wish to share it. It's a real sticker, isn't it? Especially when we got stung by Yale already. I don't think anybody else would do that but ...

**Dave:** So what is it about that? What do you see that makes it a sticking point? Can you talk a bit more about your thinking when you say "the Yale issue", what [is] in that issue that you don't want to repeat or that you'd want to avoid?

**Jeff:** Well, they didn't want us taking their private information that was all theirs; they said, stay away.

**Dave:** Why do you disagree with that?

**Jeff:** Well, if we're all one people we should have been able to do this, right? If we think that way? But somebody drew a line because it is an Indian Band.

**Ivan:** Myself, I kind of see it ... everybody, one people, one family.

**Jeff:** Hopefully we still see it that way.

**Ivan:** But this is partly the fear you're talking about. They wonder: where are we going? That's out there too. So it has to be brought out to the Bands to get their support.

**Dave:** Can you talk to us more about the fear side? What is it that's behind the fear of this information? Of what we're doing?

**Ivan:** Well, just like, something like the ownership, the way Frank's talking about the Chilliwack Tribes, or Yale's. Little bit of talk out there about "what are they doing?" This is the information we've got to get out to the people to get them onside because I see this benefitting everybody. If we go to the government now they tell us we don't own nothing. So this information ... that we were here before anybody else was around, if that's not ownership what else is? You see, in the past, before contact, we had laws too. As far as I'm concerned as an elder, our laws should supersede anybody else's laws—this is the way I look at it. That's been coming across spiritually through the ancestors. Right now, today, we're getting back our ancestors...

**Dave:** So part of the fear is people not knowing what's going on

**Allen:** Yeah, that is the biggest fear out there I think. A lot of the bands that don't participate in this table don't really know what we're doing. It's like when we tried to send that letter out nobody responded. "What is this?" they were probably saying. So it hit somebody's desk and it stayed there.

**Ivan:** They don't even know where to get it.

**Dave:** So, we have this thing where new information is coming out that causes some fear in communities because they don't know, they don't have the information about what's happening with this new information. So new information requires communications to inform people what's happening.

**Patricia Raymond-Adair:** I think that's what the idea of this committee was too. Each of us is responsible to share that information out into the community and the bands, where it's not just two people that are doing that, but that we all have a responsibility to share what we've been working on the past number of years, to bring it out too.

**Ivan:** But we also have to careful what we bring out—can't just go out there and talk about it.

**Patricia:** Nope, but if people are asking questions, that opens the conversation too. If they're making comments or statements, that then engages us to making the discussion, opening discussion.

**Dave:** So, if there's a need to be careful, there's a need to bring information out, but there's also a need to be careful of what information is brought out, what's the part we need to be careful [about]? Is there something particular that you see as the careful part?

**Jeff:** Well, I think being careful about the whole thing, is that... Chilliwack Tribes has the right to that information, to share it the way they want to, but somebody from Semá:th maybe don't have that right, or from somewhere else, unless they say it, give that right to them to use. Especially the 5,000 year thing. We all need to hear that. It's all information for everybody to share that, that is a big moving stone right there, a big stepping stone for us, to know that over 5,000 years ago this whole valley belonged to the First Nations because of that one. It's very important but I believe that lies with them to share that.

**Andy:** So it sounds like what you guys are saying is that you want to have this information out there, but you're afraid [that] if some people get a hold of it they're going to claim it as theirs and then use it as a land claim. That's what I hear from that, you're...

**Jeff:** And which is totally their right because it belongs to them; if they're willing to share that with the rest of us that'd be good. Like we're saying, we're all one people.

**Ivan:** Because it should benefit everybody.

**Allen:** Yeah, we're trying to be one people but we can't quit making lines. There's always them lines—"there to there, that's his, that's mine, that's yours" kind of thing. Whenever we can wipe those off and be one people again that's when we're going to start really working together.

**Frank:** I don't think we can ever erase those lines because they've been there from time immemorial, because you know, we're all one people, we're Stó:lō, but you know we still held our tribal territories. You can go read in the archives, there are stories told by our elders, maybe 75 years ago, that the Sumas and Chilliwack Tribe had a war. You know the Sumas tribe were fighting for more territory and the elder that was telling the story, he said: "he was your own cousin, he was related to us but he come up here raiding us." You know, but the coast tribes, they come together as one and they fought the coast tribes. But you know, you get home, and you put that line there—*that's my territory*—because we recognized each tribe, and I'm glad they did because we wouldn't [know] who the hell are we today if they didn't do that, you know. There's a Tait, or Tít, we're proud of that. I'm Ts'elxwéyeqw and I'm proud of that, and he's [Jeff Point] Ts'elxwéyeqw and Sumas—he's fighting himself. But just for the ones that are sitting here and listening, coming up with different names... the Chilliwack Tribe, you know, we weren't really organized until Steven Point brought us together about 30 years ago because the Department of Indian Affairs were

leasing out land that belonged to all the bands, seven Chilliwack Tribe Bands and two Pilalt. And he brought us together to discuss things that the Department of Indian Affairs was doing, leaving us out of the decisions. So we started with the Grass Reserve, started as committee, and kept going, getting more things done here. But even our Chiefs at our circle... we had a chief from down below, you know, we were talking about, Chilliwack Tribe members were going to back out of the Stó:lō Nation, Tribal Council. One of the chiefs from down there said if Chilliwack Tribe wants to jump out, jump out. And we're looking around.... there was nine members, or eight members, or seven members in the Chilliwack Tribe. If we all walked out the door [there would be] only two at the table, two chiefs at the table, or three with Popkum. There was Sumas, Matsqui and Popkum, that was the only ones would have been left at the table if the Chilliwack Tribe walked out. So there was a lot of education to do, [about] who is Chilliwack Tribe—there's seven Bands and I don't like to use the word Band. I know Tia was just finished talking about Bands. I'm trying to educate everybody - *tribal members, tribes*. But you know, those lines, those tribal lines, they're important; even when Kenny Malloway was doing specific claims, he knew where the Sumas line was, and it's before you get to Vedder Canal. A lot of people thought the Vedder Canal was the boundary, and Kenny said no, it's before you get to Vedder Canal; the canal's in Sumas territory.

**Allen:** Leq'á:mel, supposed to be.

**Frank:** Leq'á:mel, well at one time they were just one—Sumas—then old Sam Kelly told me it was around 1924 the Department of Indian Affairs split them up. Leq'á:mel got most of the land on this side of the river, three reserves, four reserves right in Bowman's area. That was what I wanted to express you know, that those tribal territory lines are good, and I hope they never get moved. Because we all know we're Stó:lō, but we still have our own tribal territory to protect.

**Dave:** Question then is, if I could ask, when does it become a family matter? I'm hearing you say there is a tribal relationship for where an individual comes from and within a time frame going back 5000 years. At what point does it become a family—move to the family to become the group—the people who decide whether the information can be shared, how and if it can be shared?

**Frank:** I think that when you're talking about family you're talking about a really extended family. When T'xwelátse was moved here, we had people from the United States, way up island, the grandmothers. That's a large area to cover, [to] talk about family.

**Jeff:** If we only can tie that to one family. If you can do that, you've got something going there.

**Patricia:** ... DNA ...

**Mabel:** I think family rights become spiritual rights, that's where we're kind of dividing the line there.

**Albert (Sonny) McHalsie (SRRMC, Cultural Advisor & Committee Support Staff):** I think what we need to do is look at how: how do we do, when we lose a loved one now, what happens now? So we talk about family. To me it seems like ancestors from thousands of years ago, if they're in Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribe, it seems like the Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribe would be the family. Because you're not going to be able to go and say, okay, it's a Point ancestor, it's a Malloway ancestor, or whatever; it's probably all of them. I'd see them as the family. And so, today, when we lose a loved one, then it's the family that decides what they're going to do, how they're going to take care of their loved one. And everybody, you have people that will go to visit the family, and try to guide them, speak to them, telling them this is how we should do it, but in the end, the family is the one that decides what they do with a loved one, how they're going to deal with it, whether they're going to cremate them, whether they're going to bury them, whatever. You can go and talk to them as much as you want but whatever they decide it seems to me that the family has the ultimate authority to decide what they're going to do with it. But, it still crosses over; because family [is] still is obligated to recognize that in their mourning, they can't take care of everything themselves, and that's why today you have all these other relatives from other places coming to the home and helping out, and same with the funeral. The family backs up and lets all these other people ... the family sits there and watches the other people bury their loved one. So I think that's what, that seems to me what should happen now—so we look at that ancestor from Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribe, they're the family, they decide what they're going to do, but in the end they step back and they count on the rest of the relatives from all over to come over and help them do their work. That's the way I see it.

**Lou:** This committee that you have here right now, you're helping all these other tribes, you're trying to get information out there as best as you can, learning more knowledge, and hopefully it'll get back. So that's kind of like the same thing you're saying. This is what you're doing here, you're educating the people which is a good thing. Too bad border lines are there, it's really touchy.

**Sonny:** Because that's how I look at it with the Yale ancestors. I think it's the Tít, the Tít is the family not the Yale Indian band and the Yale Indian Band shouldn't have been able to stop us taking care of our ancestors because those ancestors... that's where my great-great-great-grandfather was buried, in the same spot where they found that [ancestral remains], and I have ancestors all over, relatives all over in Seabird and Popkum, Chawathil, Ruby Creek, all over the place. So all those, all my relatives, go right back to that same place where those ancestral remains were taken from. And yet, to have some of my relatives—because the Yale members are my relatives as well—being able to stop that, it's not right to me.

**Jeff:** That's the way I thought, because I've got uncles up there. I thought that very strange how they could do that to us. Don't want to repeat it again. We've done that. It happened to us already so we've got to be very careful how we move ... the information.

**Allen:** That's our relatives up there too.

**Mabel:** And yet we have no say on what's going on up there.

**Jeff:** And you see where the stone lies, could end up in the same problem again. Hope not. Got to have the best thoughts we can about the whole thing.

**Dave:** So is it important then if the tribe is acting as the extended family, taking care of these ancestors, making decisions, deciding what to do, that they're also considering the effect on others? Is that an important consideration?

**Jeff:** Each member tribe should be that way.

**Dave:** One question, maybe it's a question for another time, but talking about the importance of having the information, the importance of sharing the information, the importance of proper decision making around the use of that information ... why was it important to gather the information to begin with? We talked about that there wasn't a need to do this. It wasn't a requirement in bringing these ancestors home to gather this new [knowledge], to do the work that resulted in this new information. Having done that, it triggers all these other questions. To go back to the original decision to gather the information, can you talk a bit about why that was important? What was it that caused you to decide that we needed to do that, to do the work to gather this information about those individuals?

**Jeff:** I think Allen hit a nerve there about teaching, our ways, of [how] our people used to live this [way], and I think that this sheds a lot of light on what did they eat, where did they travel, are they originally from there or did someone just bury somebody there or put somebody there because of a war or something, or passing through? It's real good information to find out [about] the Chilliwack tribes -- that's a real important thing there; they can relate to that, to how far back they [go]..., to me it's real good information for them to come together as a family and say look, we've been here over 5,000 years.

***Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip***  
***(Stó:lō House of Respect Caretaking Committee)***

***Transcript of portion of committee meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup>, April, 2015<sup>16</sup>***

**Present at the meeting:** David Schaepe, Jeff Point, Herb Joe, Dalton Silver, Rose Peters, Rhoda Peters, Jeffrey Point, Herb Joe, Siyémches (Frank Malloway), Tia Halstad, Naxaxalhts'i (Sonny McHalsie) from Shxw'owhamel, Patricia Raymond-Adair, and Susan Rowley

**David Schaepe:** This is Dave Schaepe, it's April 23<sup>rd</sup>, here with the House of Respect Caretaking Committee, and we are with Sue Rowley [and] myself, as co-directors of the IPinCH Journey Home Project, carrying out a wrap up interview with the committee members. We're going to do a verbal consent to being interviewed, recognizing that the information provided by any of the individuals here in this group interview will be maintained by those individuals and that everyone will have a chance to review a transcript of the interview, make comments on it, edit it and exclude any information that they feel is inappropriate to be put into the public realm. The goal today is to do a wrap up summary interview to conclude the Journey Home project—the IPinCH side of the project—and to get the views of the members who have been involved in this as key to the whole process from the very beginning, and to use that information in the final report which will be put out into the public realm to inform everybody out there in the world who is interested in this work, particularly other Indigenous peoples who have similar interests in working with ancestors and ancestral remains. So if there's any concern with that, please express that concern at this point, and if there isn't any, we'll carry on.

Okay, so we've got a 'Stó:lō nod' [i.e., silent approval] from around the table: all in agreement with consent to carry on. We'll start with ... I'll put some questions out there, some thoughts for conversation. To begin with, this one:

What were your biggest concerns moving forward with the idea of doing analyses on your ancestral remains for the sake of gathering information about their diet, their age, and so on? What were your biggest concerns when we first brought this up and introduced the idea to you?

**Jeff Point:** Exactly what Siyémches (Frank Malloway) said about disturbing the remains of our ancestors, that something would come back on us. But after we kept on going through it, it felt like, when we went out there to see them, every time we went there, they were comfortable with our ideas. That's what I gathered. And so, then we had a burning, [...] it made it more obvious that they were okay with us doing this. It's not like we went in there intentionally and started chopping them up. I think our minds asked if we could do it somehow or another. But that was my concern.

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<sup>16</sup> Transcribed by Robby Smoker-Peters (SRRMC, Research Assistant) and Tia Halstad (SRRMC, Archivist & Librarian). The transcription has been lightly edited for clarity.

**Herb Joe:** I think my main concern was not so much about us on the committee participating and working towards having our ancestors back home. I was more concerned about our general Stó:lō population and some of the beliefs that they have about being involved with the ancestors. Mostly fear mongering, and that kind of issue in the community. And again, once we got going, and we had a couple of instances to inform the communities of what we were doing and how we were doing it, that concern of mine was cleared up pretty quickly. When we didn't get any real negative feedback from our communities ... other than Yale refusing to participate, I don't think there was any negative feedback at all. So at that point, I was completely okay with what we were doing and how we were doing it. Like our House of Respect, that whole, I guess, concept of what this committee was put together [for], and how we were going to do the work, and it was based on respect, universal respect. Respect for our communities and their beliefs, as well as our ancestors. The two elders here were talking about our belief systems with regard to how we respect and treat the ancestors. There are potential negative consequences if we don't follow that traditional way of approaching our ancestors—and of course that is with respect. I'm okay with that.

**Dave:** What kind of consequences could there be if things aren't done properly?

**Herb:** Well, like Siyémches was saying, it's like if you don't respect the protocols and traditions and customs of the people with regard to taking care of our ancestors. Like a simple thing—like you lay them to rest and you leave them there, and you don't disturb them and if they're disturbed, there are negative consequences that could happen. The ancestors might misinterpret what was going on, and negative things could happen to the ones who [work with] the ancestors. Siyémches just described one of the things that could happen to families, and in talking to my wife's family not too long ago, because we did a memorial for my wife's nephew, we had occasion to bring a very large portion of her biological family together, extended family, and that was one of the issues that were talked about: about the negative things happening to those who choose to disturb or disrespect the ancestors. And one of the stories was, " Oh yes, there's this one family went in and they were all drunk and they went into a cemetery and they were sitting on the graves drinking, and they actually ended up pushing over one of the headstones, and they were all partying. And within a year, two, I think it was two. Two of those young people were dead. They joined the ancestors." So that's the kind of really, really negative stuff that could happen. But, other than that, like Siyémches was saying, a series of really bad luck, what we today would call bad luck, happening to a single family that isn't happening to everybody else in the community. So our ancestors tell us, our elders tell us, that there has to be a reason why it's just this family that's experiencing all of this bad luck. So, those are some of the things that I remember being told about what could happen if we disrespect the ancestors.

**Dave:** Just to follow that for a second, is there then an existing spiritual connection to the remains of these ancestors, or are they just bones?

**Jeff:** There is a spiritual.

**Herb:** Yeah.

**Jeff:** The ones that cross over to the other side, from this world to the other, that's the spiritual connection. And it will always remain that way, no matter what. Even if it's just a fragment left of that one ancestor, there is still that connection. But it's the ones on the other side [who] don't like you disturbing them no matter how old that is. And if they don't get you in this world, they'll do it in the other one. They won't accept you—you or your family. That was the worst thing that could happen, and that still rests on our shoulders. But after the burning, I felt that was a relief—that you go follow through with what you're doing [...], let the people on this side rest from where they come from, and find out what you can find out. That's one of the dangerous parts because, well, I don't want to go that [too] far. And sure, things will happen physically. My mom's great aunt passed away and her daughter went into the box that they had her in, and cut a piece of hair off of her head to keep it. And that young girl, they didn't know what was wrong with her because she just went into a kind of coma and started shrinking, wouldn't eat or anything. Just about passed away until her uncle came from up Shxw'owhamel, came in and went into her room, and lifted up the bed and found that hair and brought it to where it was supposed to be. Then that girl started waking up. This is what was passed down to us: to not to take anything, and if you put something in there, you leave it there. Or you don't take their thought and write it in your mind. Anything, those kinds of things, we really kind of pay attention to. That story stuck in my mind when we were doing this because we don't want to take anything from them, no matter how long it's been sitting there. Anyway.

**Dave:** Is there a difference ... so this is interesting around taking things from the ancestors. The work we've done, do you think, have we taken anything from them? Or have we asked them to contribute to what we're doing?

**Jeff:** [That's] kind of that we asked, when we did the burning. Because that was what was focused on. I think it was Steven and Gwen [Point] did it?

**Dave:** That's right.

**Jeff:** At that time we were feeding them, but at the same time we were asking them if we could do this.

**Dave:** Is that a critical difference?

**Jeff:** It is a critical difference. Even if that one—those ancestors that we have there—didn't answer us, it was the ones on the other side that owned them. And it could go thousands of years back.

**Dave:** So, the information we're gaining, who does that belong to?

**Jeff:** It belongs to whoever that we took the information from, that sample from. Maybe it never belonged to us, but it's information that I believe that we need to know. And they were quite comfortable with that to settle our minds [about], like, where they come from, you know, many things, you know, what they ate, those kinds of things. That will tell you where they came from, kind of described by going through this process. If they ate a lot of shell food, it might have been somebody from way out that way that came through here and passed away.

**Dave:** So, the need to know if the ancestors own the information. Are they also the ones who need to give permission to use it?

**Jeff:** Well, they have given us permission to use it. From that burning that Steven and Gwen did, from what I understand. I don't know if they said anything to you guys, but that's the way I see it. And we approached it that way.

**Herb:** Yeah, I agree with what Jeff said. What Steven and Gwen did, I think, the way it was worded, was it was to prepare the way for the work that was going to be done. And, all that that means, and in this particular case, I don't remember Steven or Gwen talking anything about ownership, but ... if I can use the example of Steven saying that this ground was sacred, our ancestors walked this ground. And when we put up permanent buildings on top of that ground, we need to inform them that this is what we're doing. And when we prepare the ground for construction on that ground then what you're doing, as Steven explained to us, what you're doing, is just that. First, of course, you feed them, you invite them to the table with a burning, and you feed them, and once the feeding is done, you inform them that this is what we're going to do. We don't mean any harm. We don't mean any disrespect, but this current generation of people need to have this land for use for today. It's informing them about the use so that they don't get upset about using something that is sacred. And I think the same thing applies to the work that we were doing. As Jeff was saying, we informed them that this is what we're doing, and there was no negative feedback, so we can assume that they gave us permission to do the work, and to follow through with the work that we were doing. That's the way I interpret it.

**Dave:** Who was here at the burning, of the [committee] members? Most folks. Before we go any further, if you could start [by] introducing yourselves for voice recognition for when we are transcribing. Who you are, where you're from. Let's go around the table.

**Lemxyaltexw** Semá:th,, Dalton Silver, Chief of Sumas

**Rose Peters** from Chawathil

**Rhoda Peters** from Chawathil

**Jeffrey Point** from Skowkale

**Herb Joe** from Tzeachten

**Siyémches** (Frank Malloway) from Ts'elxwéyeqw

**Dave Schaepe** as Chair of this group

**Tia Halstad**, SRRMC Archivist and Librarian

**Naxaxalhts'i** (Sonny McHalsie) from Shxw'owhamel  
**Sue Rowley** UBC Laboratory of Archaeology  
**Patricia Raymond-Adair** Manager Coqualeetza Cultural Education Centre

**Dave:** Thank you. I recall this at the burning, that what Steven recalled, recounted to us was that the ancestors said that they would be returning or providing some gifts to the community because of the work that was being carried on. And I always wondered what kind of gifts those might be.

**Jeff:** They're actually telling us that in a way like you give a Christmas present away to your kids because they're doing a good job, or they behaved well. And we're behaving in a good way of what's supposed to be done here. So, somewhere along the line, our people, doesn't matter if it's from this group or where, gifts could be anything.

**Herb:** What comes to mind for me is the gift of knowledge [and] awareness that is happening for us, and working with the ancestors. The amount of knowledge that we're acquiring and will continue to acquire with the DNA samples and all that, that's going to be a gift to the Stó:lō people. They're going to know more about their ancestors and, of course, once they know that then they'll have a better of idea of how our ancestors lived. That old saying about you have to know where you've been in order to know where you are, so that you know where you're going? I think that applies to our following generations, our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. They're going to be healthier people with the gift of this knowledge about who they are and where they came from. So that's a gift as I see it.

**Frank:** Ask Rhoda.

**Rhoda:** I agree with Herb but the other thing is also that we are bringing back to our communities the knowledge that you're talking about, but also the traditions. And we're working to do this work in a good way, in a cultural way. And I think our people are maybe moving away from that and I really feel that that history is important. And when we had the gathering, that was a real eye opener and it was something that we wanted, was to find out where these people were from, if they were our own, if they weren't just explorers going through or whatever. And that was one of the questions that we had—that I had—when I went back and reported at one of the meetings, was that how do we know that it's our Stó:lō people? But we did know because of the forehead, the slanted forehead. So, leaving that meeting we felt a lot better about the work that we were doing. And when we were doing the work and we went down to get our ancestors in Vancouver, we had asked some of our men to carry the boxes. And they jumped at the chance. They were really interested in the work that was taking place. They wanted to know more about it, and, if we were doing anything else, they wanted to be involved. So, that told us a lot: that they are interested, that they will be involved, and we'll take direction and do good work.

**Tia:** Yale came to the meeting<sup>17</sup>—I think that’s a gift. We’re seeing some progress there.

**Dave:** Jeff you mentioned earlier that we need to know ... why? I guess that’s two questions: Why do you need to know—what’s behind the need to know? And what is it that’s the most important to know about these ancestors?

**Herb:** I think Rhoda just hit the nail on the head. It’s for the benefit of our future generations to know who they are, because if you don’t know who your ancestors are, and the land that they came from, then you don’t know who you are either. You’re one of those lost souls who wander around lost. And in our traditions, you lose all of your value— your self-value, your community value—if you cease to be a part of.... Having someone kicked out of our villages, it said to all of the other people: these people are of no value, that’s why they are no longer with us. So if they don’t have any value then everyone’s going to look down upon them negatively. I think that this is one of the things that comes to mind immediately when we start talking about what’s the value to it all. I think, like Rhoda was saying, our people today are losing their way. We’re separating ourselves from our traditions and our customs that identify us as being Stó:lō. And if we lose that, then who are we? So, this project can help to solidify that history. I think that’s good.

**Jeff:** And also that the ones [the ancestors] on the other side, you know they know they’re not in the right place. They shouldn’t have been down there.<sup>18</sup> And it’s not our fault here that they’re there. And so they wanted us to know where they belong, and if this is one way of doing that, then maybe that’s the answer to this. That’s why we needed to know—it’s because they’re the ones that are saying those people shouldn’t be down there, our ancestors shouldn’t be there. Bring them home, put them where they belong. And that’s where the disappointment from Yale came from, because they were in that. We were talking about them at the time, that’s the scary part that [the ancestors are] down there still.<sup>19</sup> But now, it’s going to be settled. They’re here. They might be coming home now. Or there is a chance for them to be here.

And that’s, you know, our people here even though there was a war<sup>20</sup> on, and some of them got left over in Europe, some of our people went over there to put their minds at rest—the rest of our people here, their minds—because we’ll never see those people again. So a lot of our spiritual people went over there and did some offerings to the ones that were over there—could not identify them—but they’re laying over there somewhere, scattered all over the place, because they were hit by bombs. But that settled our people to believe, “Okay, that’s okay now.” But if the other side is still disturbed because their remains are down there, then things will always be shaking like an earthquake to our people down here. That’s why we need to know.

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<sup>17</sup> Refers to the Journey Home Project Community Meeting of October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 presented in its entirety above.

<sup>18</sup> Meaning that they shouldn’t be at the UBC Lab of Archaeology (LOA) or Museum of Vancouver (MOV).

<sup>19</sup> Refers to ancestors from the lower Fraser Canyon that weren’t repatriated owing to the disagreement.

<sup>20</sup> World War II

**Dave:** [...] What I've heard you talk about, is who they are, where they're from. So then, is that the work we've done? Is that accurate to say it's been about trying to find out who they are as individuals?

**Jeff:** Yep, yep. I know that Chawathil has stepped forward to bring [them home], once they're ... well they're here right? They're going to take them—that's a good move, because they know who they are and where they come from. Then the ancestors will start settling down more. And the longer, I mean, the longer the people—the ones that were supposed to be over there, that are down in Vancouver — the longer they stay there ... like you say, I think Herb hit it right on the head there, you know, we're losing a lot of young people, all over the valley. Even our elders, but more younger people that shouldn't even be leaving. And, this comes to my mind every time I hear, because we haven't fulfilled this promise that those ones [our ancestors] were going to come with us. That's the way I thought it.

**Sonny:** I have a few things to mention. This is Sonny, or Naxaxalhts'i. I know when we're talking earlier asking about the communicating with the ancestors' spirits, I know there's a number of ways that we do that, and one is through—for those of us that can't directly communicate with them—we have our *shxwłá:m*, our Indian doctors that can provide us with messages from the ancestors. Or else our lhálhewels people that do our burnings, provide messages to us from the fire. But also, there are dreams too; if you dream about ancestors or deceased people and whatever messages they tell us in our dream, to us, they are considered to be a real message about what we have to do. The other connection is through our *shxwelí*. The late Rosaleen George explained *shxwelí* [as] within us and our parents and grandparents, great grandparents, great, great grandparents, and the rocks, and the trees, and the grass, and the ground. And so that's a connection that we have there with all of the ancestor spirits. Also, it is our belief too [that] our ancestors' spirits are still out there on the land wherever they've been, wherever they fished, wherever they hunted, wherever they gathered berries, they're still out there. And when we go out to those places to do those different activities we're with our ancestors' spirits, we're there with them, they're watching over us as we take care of those different places. So to me then, that's the feeling I get when I think about, specially the ancestors from Floods because of my close connection to Chawathil. My mother was from Chawathil, Rhoda is my sister, Rose is my first cousin, and so on, right? And I know the oral history of the people from Floods. There's no reserves over there right now but there's at least three different village sites that were situated over there, according to the archaeological records anyways. There might be more, but those three villages, they'd all been wiped out by smallpox. And the few survivors [...] were there moved into Hope, to Ts'qó:ls. And so they became part of Chawathil because that's where Chawathil First Nation was. That's why our ancestors all come from Hope [...] Valley, Welqámex.

So to me, I feel a close connection to those ancestors, and I feel there's some obligation to take care of them. And of course the other ones are the ones that are still sitting down there, you know the ones from Aselaw—that's where three of us ... our great, great grandfather

comes from that place and our great, great, great grandfather is buried in the cemetery there at Aselaw. It's now known as IR 21. So I feel a close connection to those ones as well, and I'm really glad that Yale is stepping forward because they're the ones that are kind of holding those bones back, holding those remains back down there. I'm glad we can do something with that.

Another thing too, I think, when we start talking about gifts—what is it that we're getting back? To me, I can't remember which elder, one of our famous leaders, talked about the hole in our heart, the hole in our hearts, and to me what that represents to me is all of the loss of culture and traditions that we had through the smallpox epidemic, the residential school experiences, assimilation policies of the government. There's a lot of stuff about our culture that we lost, and it's still there, we just need to get it back. To bring it back. And to me, the more we learn about the stuff that we're doing, it fills in that hole that we have in our hearts. That's how I feel. The stuff that we're doing, we're actually filling that hole, learning more about our culture and about our traditions, about our history.

You know, in the beginning, I shared the same concern that Jeff and Herb talked about, and Siyémche's. That was my first concern—was if we do something wrong, is something going to come back, come back on us because there is a big connection that we have. And when I was talking to the late Rosaleen George, or Yamelot, she doesn't just talk about us as individuals. Like, to me, if we did something wrong with what we're doing, it wouldn't just come back on us, but also come back on family, extended family. Because of that shxweli, I think that's what it is that connects us all. Because when the former anthropologist that worked for us had his ancestral remains, he got these ancestral remains, he didn't take care of them, he just left them. There was a canoe shed out here and he just put them inside that canoe shed, and they were sitting there for a couple of years before I finally started consulting with the elders, asking them what to do with those ancestral remains. The story that Rosaleen George, Yamelot, talked about, really gives a good example of how connected it is, how connected we are. So she said that what was happening was, at night time she was dreaming of these, of little people, coming through the walls, walking through the wall of her house, and coming up to her while she's sleeping, poking her at her sides and grumbling at her, mad about something, right. She didn't know, and after she'd wake up and they'd continue walking, walk out the other wall. And so then she talked to one of her cousins down in Musqueam, and the same thing was happening to her cousin down there. She phoned her cousin down there and they talked about it, and then she said she called one of her cousins up in Chehalis, and the same thing was happening to her as well. They were having these little people visit them, grumbling, poking them in the side. Then not long after that, that's when she heard about the ancestral remains that were sitting there, and she was instrumental in helping us get those remains reburied. She said that after the reburial of those remains, she said that those little people quit coming around, and quit bothering her, quit bothering her cousin down in Musqueam, quit bothering her cousin in Chehalis. So you look at the huge area there, right. There's spirits everywhere; it's all connected. We don't just have to worry about ourselves; we have to worry about all our family too, to make sure that what we do, we have to do in the proper way. And I still feel bad because I haven't

found that one phrase that Rosaleen George expressed in Halq'eméylem, the importance of bringing the ancestors back home to where they come from.

I always use the two examples, our great grandfather, Dennis Peters who passed away back in 1945 down in Yakima, and it was really important to bring him back home, you know, and I still have the paper showing a list of names and the amount of money. I'm quite sure that list is the people who contributed money to bring their great grandfather back home so that he can be properly buried at his home. And even more recently, our niece who passed away down in Mexico a few years back, and it was really important to bring her back too. I know the family spent quite a bit of money to bring her back home. So it's still something that is still alive, it is still something that is important to us when you lose someone—to bring them back home. I'm looking to find that ... I've been through a number—I have 25 or 30 notebooks—going through my notebooks trying to find that phrase. There is a Halq'eméylem phrase that Rosaleen talked about. I think it would be an important phrase for us to have.

**Dave:** What I'm hearing is that there's a whole bunch of relationships that you have to deal with to make sure that this work gets done in the right way. And what I'm hearing you say is that there are relationships with the ancestors themselves, and there's relationships with the community, with the families. And in the community today there's a relationship that leads to the youth, and one of the needs is to inform the youth about culture and their heritage. There's the relationship with the community as a whole to try to maintain the value of the individuals in that community and the value of the community as a whole. So there's a whole bunch of relationships that I'm hearing that are important to be aware of, that need to be taken care of throughout the process. There is a relationship that I want to introduce which is the relationship with the researchers. To do the work that we've done, we've been dependent on the researchers at UBC, the bioanthropologists, the people that do the sampling and the analyses, and [that] interpret the results and come back to us with information that makes sense to us. Can you speak to ... what about that relationship? We're dependent upon those people to do this work. Were there any issues or concerns about that relationship? About their interest in the information, about their use of the information, that was all a big part of the work that's been done over the past few years?

**Sonny:** To me that seems to be like, that's our way. That's how we do things. When we have gatherings or a naming ceremony or whatever we're not supposed to use our own speaker, not supposed to use our own family members, we have to reach out and humble ourselves, and reach out to other people throughout the valley to come and help us do the work that needs to be done. Same with funerals, immediate family members can't be helping with the funeral, putting away our loved one. We have to reach out and ask for other people to come and do that sort of work for us. Anything like that seems like we always have to humble ourselves and reach out for other people, so to me it makes sense that we reach out to our friends down in the universities. We're collaborating a lot with them now; it's really important for education purposes, I guess, to collaborate with the universities. To me, I think it's the right thing to do.

**Herb:** There's an old teaching that goes along with what Sonny is talking about. When human beings were first created, Chíchelh Siyá:m gave each of the human beings a special gift that differentiated them from their brothers and sisters and made them unique and special. The teaching is that if we each exercise that special gift, make it strong, as you exercise a muscle ... and once that gift is strengthened, then you're taught to share it with everyone else. And again, that goes to the whole concept of family, of interdependence, and if we don't have that gift in our little family that we have here at the table, then we have to depend on [an]other family to help us out. And that's what Naxaxalhts'i was talking about. We accepted these people as part of our committee, our group, our family, in order to get the work done, because they were given a special gift by Creator. It's a gift that wasn't given to anyone of us as individuals. So we each have our own different gifts that we contribute to our families, to our communities. Like the Chiefs sitting here at the tables—they're here, contributing their expertise and their knowledge, their strengths. And there's others of us that are community workers, that know the people of the communities, and we're here to share that. So I think that the relationship that we have with these experts has been a good one and the only concern that I can recall being talked about was how are they going to use that information other than to give it to us? That was the only concern I could remember being talked about.

**Jeff:** When you bring up that, at the burning, that they were going to give us gifts, and that relates to that word, doing ... okay, [the ancestors] are going to give us something. We're on the right way. We're on the right path. Otherwise, they would have said, "we're going to take something from you." You're on the wrong path then. But no, they're pleased with us! They're going to give us something in the future. And the only reason why they're going to give us something is because we're going in the right direction. And what we do—they're pleased with what we're doing. And there's no harm going to come to anyone; they're going to give us something at the end when this is all ... whether it's five years down the road, maybe our great grandchildren will benefit. This is the thing that we don't look forward to anyway, I mean a gift is a gift. To whom it comes to, that is another thing. But one day, good things are going to happen to our people; now it's kind of shaky. But according to them, they're going to give us a gift for the way, for what we've been doing, and it's all voluntary, that's the best thing about it! And the minds that ... we have to keep on going, we have to do it in a good way. So they accepted the way we done it up to this point. Now, once we get those other ones, that's when we have to do the same process, have another burning, to see what the outcome of it is.

**Dave:** [...] Darlene Weston was doing some of the analyses for us. Her interest, as we talked about it with her, as we understood it, is quite different than your interest; your interest being in the individual, who they are, where they're from specifically. That wasn't helpful to her in her academic work and research. Her interest was to take the information from the individual and put it into a much, much larger pool of, of a population, and that's what she was interested in doing. She explained that, and you guys were okay with her using the information that way. Again, was there anything in particular that you that was key to your being comfortable with her using that information?

**Rhoda:** Well I don't know so much about the information, but to get back to the people that we've been dealing with down that way, I think the work that we've been doing has been really good and we're moving forward, I think because of their respect for [...] the work that they do, and for the work that we do, and for our culture. They're respectful in allowing us to take the lead when, you know, they came to us and wanted to know how we wanted the process to go, I mean when we took our ancestors back. And I think respect is a real big area that we have to keep in mind when we're working with people. [...] are they respectful? Do they have good hearts? And I feel that all the people that we've worked with ... I was comfortable with every one of them that we've met, and we didn't know them. They're doctors, they're intellects, and you know, and we were treated as equal. So I was really happy with that. It made the work, I think, move along smoothly.

**Dave:** So Darlene had the same interest, the same question: can I use this for my purposes, being included in my big study. If she were a nasty wicked person, came here and like, *ARRGH* [pirate noise], ugly, disrespectful, would that affect your decisions?

**Various people:** Probably would. I think so. Yeah! Oh, yes.

**Rhoda:** Why would we want to work with somebody like that?

**Sonny:** You always have to have a good heart.

**Frank:** You're just describing somebody I know.

**Dave:** But, is he in this room? You were looking at me when you said that.

**Rhoda:** You're blushing Dave!

**Sonny:** I just want to follow up on Chief Peters' comment because I think we need to mention that we have come a long way since. We look back on the days of Herman Leisk and the work that Charles Hill-Tout did and those guys, and you know, we've come a long way since then, you know. I know [...] only like 15 years ago or so now, when I was asking Rosaleen [George] for a Halq'eméylem word that we could use for an archaeologist. Because we didn't have archaeologists, we didn't have people who go digging in the ground, pulling up artifacts and kind of understand our histories, since we had historians that knew that and passed that down. So we didn't need archaeologist. But the closest word she could come up with—or the word that she came up with—was a word for thief. That was her view of an archaeologist.

**Herb:** Uncle Vince called them "dig-ologists."

**Sonny:** I know, even our Elders ... like I know Evangeline Pete used to go and stand at the ... watched the work that was done there at east end of Chawathil; it wasn't really approved of,

didn't have any approval of the work as well. And I know the same with Howard Paul from Skwah when the archaeologists were doing that work down, just below New Westminster. What's that place called just above the Alex Fraser Bridge?

**Dave:** St. Mungo.

**Sonny:** Yeah, that site. They were doing their work down there, he was going down there every day, grumbling at them too because of what they were doing.

**Dave:** Or Glenrose Cannery, in that area.

**Sonny:** Come a long way. I remember even when I was involved with the Hope archeology project, Coqualeetza elders came out to visit the site as we were working. They weren't grumbling at us but they seemed supportive of the work.

**Dave:** So what's a thief?

**Sonny:** Oh!

**Dave:** What do you understand that to be? If that's the word, that's important to understand—that's the description of archeologists.. that was put up in the past. What you understand to be a thief ... Rhoda?

**Rhoda:** When you're working on the island [Greenwood Island – Welqamex/DiRi-15] like four years ago? [...] The students, they discovered that longhouse and the [ancestor's] remains that were there. And if Anthony [Graesch] and his crew had just taken the bones, and uh, not said anything ... but they're very respectful, they let us know. And we had the burning on the island early that morning. The students were there and we had some of our youth there. You would have been a thief if we weren't [made] aware of [the bones]. And I remember them putting the cloth, all the remains they had taken, out back in there and just seeing the remains was really ... you know, you ask: is there a connection to the spirit? I think we felt it that morning, and we were just elected the night before. So, that was my first I guess, duty, as a chief, that next day, and I remember we came away from that and although we had to be there at a godawful hour, to get over there, the burning and everything. But it was good and we had the breakfast and everything. And I think that was a really good experience for our council, and then when we all got to speak, the emotions that were going around, because we felt good about the work. And we said: put the remains back, we don't [want] them disturbed. And I remember everything going back in there, every bone, every part that was taken out.

**Herb:** The same thing happened over at Scowlitz [DhRI 16], it was done with the utmost respect. For instance, [...] they, the students and the professors that were heading that archaeological dig, they asked for the expertise from the community, from the family. And the family at Scowlitz, of course they're connected with an elder down in Musqueam— his

name was Vincent Stogan—so they immediately went to him and invited him up to help with, first of all, the opening up of the ground, and then the closing of the ground, and then taking care of the ancestors. That part I know a lot, well, because Uncle Vince invited my wife and I to go over and help him with that work, and ... I think Kat [Clarence] Pennier was chief then. He was there, or he had other people there to observe all of the work that was going on. And it was done with the utmost respect. I think that would take away the title, the label of thief.

**Dave:** Are we thieves if we're taking this information from these ancestors without their permission?

**Jeff:** I think that we got their permission.

**Sonny:** I think that word comes from the earlier days of the archaeologists like Gus Milliken for instance, right? They named the Aselaw site after him, the Milliken site, but yet he was one of those people who used to go and raid. Annie York said that they caught him right there, right at I:yem Memorial, digging at the back. You can go to the back and still see that little hole he was digging. He got caught. I can't remember who Annie York said caught him but they told him to get out of there. He was digging there looking for artifacts. He did have quite a huge artifact collection. I'm not sure ... I think it is in the Hope Museum collection now?

**Dave:** Or Yale [Museum].

**Sonny:** So the way he acquired that collection—I don't think he did it through archaeology. I think he did it through grave digging and grave robbing and that sort of thing. And so I think that's what that refers to. Now those archaeologists that just went in there and took things ... like Herman Leisk was another one, down in Vancouver, just going in there.

**Patricia:** And that's all our people saw and experienced was that, so they associate that with...

**Sonny:** Because the other thing too is, I know when I first started this job back in 1985, we went to meet with the Coqualeetza elders to ask them because we were working on the Twin Tracking court case. And we knew that the proposed CNR twin tracking was going to interfere with a lot of the archaeological sites, and so we went to ask them what to do with these artifacts. We were surprised because the response that we got back from them was to leave them alone and [they] said that "they're not yours." They're not ours. And of course you know, from the sense, from an aboriginal right and title perspective, when you look at it, anything that our ancestors left out there is ours—it belongs to us more than anybody else, right. So we were kind of surprised they said: leave it alone, it's not yours, it's not ours. Until they provided some context to it, and what they meant was that the person that owned that artifact still owned that artifact, still owned that tool. Their spirit still owned it. So because we told them, you know, we wanted to use these artifacts as an opportunity or a way to

teach our young people about our culture and about our history. And so what they said was then, “Okay when you go out there and you grab these artifacts, when you pick them up, say a prayer to the person that owned it. Speak to the spirit of that ancestor that owned it. Let them know that it’s still theirs. You’re not taking it away from them, it still belongs to them, and you’re only going to use it as a way to teach our young people about our culture and our history.” So, that’s what the elders at that time expressed—this was back in 1985. And the other thing they said at that time was really important; they said “By no means, do not let children handle these artifacts. Do not let children handle them.” Right, so, that’s basically what they were getting at, was that the owner, the spirit of that person who made that tool, who used it, is still the owner and we all know that when we lose a loved one, the things that they own, the material things are passed over the fire so they can ensure that they can take those things with them.

**Dave:** That seems to be key, and you’re talking about that around material culture, and then, this whole project is around intangible, so intangible culture, intangible knowledge. The same principles then apply, to not take what doesn’t belong to you, to pay respect to the owner of that information. And Jeff, as you mentioned, as we’ve done, the burning then seems to be a critical piece to that communication, that relationship, to maintain the ownership and respect that, but to be able to use that information in a good way, and not be seen as thieves. It seems like the critical piece there is that relationship, spiritual connection to the knowledge, tangible or otherwise. And it still belongs to another person, somebody else, but it’s here potentially to be used for specific reasons. And sharing it is another thing. So the collaboration, the aspect of sharing within what you’re saying, I’m hearing, is that an important principle? We’ve talked about that in the past, it’s an important principle: to share, not to keep it to yourself. So, I just want to put that out there. That goes hand in hand with what you’re saying and what I’m hearing.

**Sonny:** I keep mentioning Rosaleen George, but she had so much stuff that she left, and one of the things she said again was, she said, “Knowledge means nothing if you don’t share it. You could be the smartest person in the world but if you don’t share that knowledge it’s nothing.” So, she said, “The more you share it then that’s when it becomes ... when it makes more sense,” or “more meaningful,” I guess.

**Dave:** So that applies to Darlene’s use of the information, her sharing it? Your use of the information, your sharing it. I know it was important, and the reason why we did that October 23<sup>rd</sup> presentation was to share the information once we got it all put together, share that with the communities and to make that available. Some of our obligations as people working on this ... certainly we understood that obligation and worked to put that together, and we’ll continue to do that. I think it’s interesting the way this has been used already. I can point to a couple of examples of the information and its use and in a couple of very good ways. I know recently, Siyémches, your biography—film documentary about you and your life—I went to see that opening [...]. I thought it was very cool—one of the first things that’s in that is you making reference to this [Journey Home] project and the ages of the ancestors from the Chilliwack Valley that we now know go back 5,000 years. So that’s, that right there,

that's one example of the way in which this information was used, and clearly that made sense to you. And you're putting it out there, and that's now in the system; it's now out there for everyone to hear. You've shared that with everybody in that audience, including all the youth, and that information is out there. It's something we didn't know before. It's something we know now, and you've been able to put that out in a public way to share that information. That was great. And secondly, it has been used in a land claims case. So something as a foundation for supporting the occupation and use of the area. And it was ultimately something that led to a positive outcome. But you know there are those aspects of its use already, of where it's useful and affected the community in a positive way. Frank [...] what was it about this ... did you have a reason for putting it out there? Was there something you thought about this information, why you spoke about it in your documentary?

**Frank:** I think it's important for, like, general public to know how long we were here. A lot of people, they wondered why we're in land claims you know, they felt they defeated us in war you know; they get their Native education from the movies. I don't know. We were all defeated, you know. Because we never had any wars; they just moved in, and because we were decimated by diseases, we never had the population to really fight back, you know. I think it was proof how long we were around this area, you know? And especially the Chilliwack River Valley—when they gave us reserves they never gave us any land in the Chilliwack River Valley. You know, [...] when I give the history of our tribe to the BCBC,<sup>21</sup> you know, they controlled the British Columbia land, or the government land, and I told them at that time, when they gave us reserves our people were down in the valley here. They didn't know whether we came from up Chilliwack River Valley. This was really important for me to express that to them, that our people were there 5,000 years ago and yet we didn't get any land in that area. I made that presentation to BCBC, and I never really thought it would go anywhere, but they came back and said, "you can have that land for a dollar." That's what I offered them, I said, "Just to make it legal; I'll give you a dollar for that piece of land." They came back, accepted my dollar, then they turned around and gave me three million dollars—renovated, renovated the buildings.

**Dave:** You can do the negotiating for me then.

**Frank:** But that was, and they— what's her name?—Sandra Bonner-Pederson. I didn't know she was going to insert that part in the autobiography, biography, whatever it was, but she had Premier Campbell in there, giving us a certificate for the property. That was something. I didn't know she was going to do that.

**Dave:** Here's one thing, too. In our meeting minutes, there's an expression of concern that municipalities might use the map we produced to present [...] in our October 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting—the one that shows all the locations of the ancestors, where they were found, where they're

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<sup>21</sup> British Columbia Building Corporation.

from— that that might be used against us. That's the quote in our notes here. What is that about? Is that a concern that was shared? Can anyone speak to that point of that concern?

**Jeff:** Where did that question come up?

**Dave:** I think it's come up a couple times—[...] that expression of concern that municipalities might use such a map against us. I do recall that being brought up at the very, very early stages, before we knew what could be coming of this; this could be used against it because of the land claim issue. So I mean, I just wanted to touch on that, to revisit that. I know it came up very early on, it was sort of touched on at the later stages of the project. Is that something that really was a concern? Is it still a concern in any way? What are your thoughts about that? Anybody thinking about that? I guess the way I'd put that into context: [...] it's very clear that it's important to understand your history, where you come from, and that these ancestors are providing more information about that. Is there a concern that information could come that could somehow, you know, not have a positive impact but a negative impact on people's understanding of history?

**Jeff:** Well you know, if there is sites up there that, you know, like, contain burial mounds or anything like that, they could turn around say and refuse us, maybe? And say, well, send someone up there and plough them all over and say there's nothing there or whatever. And deny us the right to enter. I don't know, maybe that's a possibility. And not recognize us and not allow anybody to go in there to do anything, to show that there is burial mounds here and remains here.

**Dave:** What about DNA? DNA is something we've talked about. We haven't done it. It's something we're going to talk about [...] shortly with our other guests who have just arrived. Are we good to go with that or are there concerns you have around the finding of information, about the findings of DNA analysis? Or, just put it out there? I'm just trying to explore this piece; are there concerns about the use of the information or the nature of the information? Or is it more the concern about the process by which you go about gathering that information?

**Jeff:** Well, if we can get a DNA sample from, let's say, Frank, you know, find out who's connected to those remains, hey? And same with people from Chawathil. Those remains there, might want to know who directly they come from. Could be a DNA sample for that; if you want to bring it that far. But you got to get the people to volunteer, eh?

**Rhoda:** I think it's interesting, I really do. When I think of the remains and, Tel-tít, I'm sorry, off of Tel-tít on the island there [Welqamex], I wish we had thought at the time to keep [...] something and look at DNA. That would have been interesting. But I think there is interest regarding DNA because we spoke at some of the other meetings ... I don't think it would hinder the process taking place, I think it would add interest. Give people a real connection? I think it would just strengthen all the work that's taking place.

**Jeff:** Yeah, that ice man that found what 10 years ago, or something?

**Dave:** Up in northern BC.

**Jeff:** They connected [him] to DNA, right?

**Dave:** Kwaday dan Ts'inchi. Yeah, they did genetic work.

**Dalton:** Connected [him] to Dave Joe's community.

**Dave:** That's right, Champagne Aishihik. Given, this has been excellent. I think we have, we'll just...

**Dalton:** I'm sorry I didn't ... I kind of clamped up here when we started talking earlier [about] things of a spiritual nature. I'm not comfortable talking with in ... I might be kind of old school or something, but even listening to Siyémches, Naxaxalhts'i, T'xwelátse, and Ey:ilí:seleq ... I feel sometimes I'm a little young to be talking about some of these things. Some may not think so, it's ... some of the things of a spiritual nature ... I was taught fairly young we keep these fairly close, but I hear what they're saying you know, and we need ... And all this work that we do in concern with our ancestors, I just say we need to move forward carefully, and we have been. And someone talked about the repercussions and things like that that could happen. I was taught, you know, you need to be careful. The ones you really need to be careful about are your loved ones. It's the ones closest to you that may be affected unknowingly. That's something my grandfather taught in the past, that anything of a spiritual nature you really have to be careful of, and look after in a good way. I think, too, the information that we gain from this ultimately belongs to our people, to educate the young ones about our histories. And I wonder too, how it's used by others. It has to be done with a lot of respect and acknowledgment of our people.

It's all been pretty interesting. I said back, I'm really reluctant to say anything sometimes, especially when it comes to things of a spiritual nature, right? I hear what Naxaxalhts'i is saying, that there are times when some of the things that we've been taught, that we do need to share, we need to pass these on, and there are certain places that we do that amongst ourselves. It's just ... it's good though, I think. You know, well you and Sonny were there, I was there with you when we went and got the remains of our ancestors from Láyómxetel, and I think it was good to look at the carbon dating and things, you know, to look at how far back our ancestry goes in that place. I kind of wonder a little bit about the DNA thing; I am kind of reluctant there, because I think about, amongst our Coast Salish people, when you talk about over 10,000 years of history, and how much our people moved amongst each other ... and you know, in thinking about that, some of the ancestors here are that—are thousands of years old. We may have somebody, say at Lummi or as even as far down as Skokomish or over on the island, at Halalt, or Cowichan or something, that the DNA may be closer to some of these ancestors than some of our own people that are right here in the

valley now. Because of how extensively we moved amongst each other in the past, you know, and how connected our people were.

**Herb:** Sepass family, like the Sepass family—old man Sepass came over the mountains.

**Frank:** Yeah.

**Dalton:** Just some thoughts, I just wanted to say why I just kind of sat back and listened to what was going on, a little bit reluctant to say something about the subjects we're talking about this morning.

**Herb:** Maybe I can respond to what Lemxyaltexw [Dalton] was saying. For a number of years, I too, [I] can empathise with you. I've been very reluctant to say a lot, but then, over the past couple of years, I've been reminded a number of times that, "You're in your fourth cycle of your life." That's the cycle of the sialeqwas where the expectation, the historic expectation, was to share all of the gifts of knowledge that was shared with you during your lifetime, during this fourth cycle of your life it's time to give back. And, Lemxyaltexw, I'm going to say that you're getting towards the edge of that, the beginning of that stage where it's going to be your turn to give back. And you have much to give, I think. In talking with your mom and, of course, your grandpa, through the years, I know the training that you got from your family, from Siyémches' family, from Th'elachiyatel. So I would say to you that the knowledge that you carry, while it is precious, as your teachers told you, I think, when you get to this fourth cycle of your life you're supposed to have gained enough wisdom by that time to know how to appropriately share the knowledge that we've acquired. Being careful about how you share that is, I think, the way it was meant to be. It's been very recently that I've been able to get comfortable with sharing a lot of things, particularly about the spirituality part. The lives that we live from our Smokehouse life. When we first joined that life, in 1969, we were told you don't talk about this to anybody, nobody! I remember your grandpa saying, if they really want to know, you send them to see me, I'll initiate them.

**Frank:** "I'll put them in."

**Herb:** He'll put them in, yeah. So, I think that sharing of knowledge that you have, you'll know which part of it is appropriate for you to share. Don't be afraid. Hoi'ch ka.

**Sonny:** I just want to express my own ... I think I've seen my own personal growth in this as well, because I know when I first started this job back in 1985, and Gordon Mohs had these photographs of burials and ancestral remains, I couldn't even look at them. He was trying to show me that, and I'd say, "No, I don't need to look at them," because I just thought—it's so disrespectful to look at pictures of ancestral remains. And I [still] think that, but as the years have gone by, and with the work that we've done here, the better understanding, better respect for the ancestral remains, for the things that we need to do, I surprised myself when

I was invited to sit with Darlene and witness the work that she was doing<sup>22</sup>, you know. Twenty-five years ago I would have said, “No way, I’m not even going in there.” But to me it felt like somebody had to be there. And so I felt, I guess, it’s me ... so I sat in there with her—this is when she was breaking teeth off and cutting chunks of the bone out and doing all that stuff—but to me I felt like I needed to be there, needed to be there with that ancestor. It’s a way of supporting, you know, paying respect to the ancestor as this worker was taking all the different pieces off.

**Frank:** There are a lot of things you’re taught not to share, but I think in this circle, because it [the knowledge] is not going too far away, you know, I could share things that you all thought was private, you know, but there’s other things that were talked about in the circle today that I wanted to comment on and I didn’t know what part of the meeting I should. But Dave was asking questions about, you know, the handling of remains and the discovering of remains. When the Scowlitz Band asked [an archaeologist] to unearth those mounds to see what really were there, because they were all told they were burials, and they were trying to protect that part of the land, [he] said, “I’m not going to do that myself.” So he got the UBC and Simon Fraser University to come in and ... but what happened you know when they discovered that skeleton, [name] traded things with that thing you know. He took stone beads, and he put glass beads there. And then a copper bracelet and he put another bracelet there, you know and after a while, he started talking funny. He was making weird comments all the time. The late Herman Peters, Chief Herman Peters, I said [to him], “I wonder what’s happened to [name]?” He says, “The spirits got him. The spirits have twisted his mind around. He shouldn’t have been fooling around with that stuff that he did, taking away from the grave, you know.” But, anyway, I learned a lot from [name] and I, you know, I shared a lot that I had learned with him. When he did his thesis he dedicated it to me, you know, because my dad and myself helped him out in gaining all that knowledge. But you know, there’s other things that we didn’t tell him, you know. And that was our mistake I guess, not to get ... to remove things from the grave. I have, you know, something Melvin Malloway told me about this in the Fraser Canyon. One of the boys that live up there, he used to discover old graves up there in the canyon, and he’d dig them up and he’d do that—he’d take the beads out, a lot of the other stuff. Nothing happened to him yet I hope. But he was one of the [name] boys you know, the younger boys. Melvin used to say, “That guy’s a grave robber, something’s going to happen to him.” But that was a long time ago, and I don’t think anything happened to him.

**Sonny:** I know who it is too because he was actually selling some of those beads quite a while ago—ten years ago or something.

**Dave:** If I could ask a question, sort of towards closing things up which is, I think, Siyémches, what you’re talking about, Dalton what you mentioned: [...] what kind of person does it take to do this kind of work? What does it take to do this kind of work? And I’m hearing all kinds

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<sup>22</sup> Darlene Weston took all samples for testing. Samples were only taken after the ancestors were repatriated. A community member would accompany her while she undertook this work.

of cautions around doing this kind of work, and I kind of ask this as part of, what advice you would give to other communities? We got this group together out of need. [...] What does it take to do this work properly? What kind of person does it take to do this kind of work properly?

**Frank:** I don't know how this person is chosen or I don't what training he gets but my grandfather—my dad always told me—my grandfather, Julius, that was his job. You know, to open the boxes and change the blankets. They used to do that every four years, and he said, "It was my job, my dad's job to do that." Or when somebody died, it was his job to bathe the person, get them ready for burial. And that was my dad's job. What he inherited was to make the box, but he never told me how they trained or what gift they have, you know. Whether he was born into it, some families, you know, are born into doing things, you know; no other family can do it except the descendants of that person. Maybe it comes in the bloodline, you know? They're not chosen by what they can do, but they're chosen because they belong to that bloodline. It's the same as the [unclear word] ceremonies in the East Saanich, you know. Victor Underwood, the late Victor Underwood.... his boys or girls, daughters, you know, used to spread the feathers when they were going to stand the dancer up, and the last trips I was making over there it was his grandchildren, Victor Underwood's son and daughter. And they had to spread the feathers because it just ran in the family. They didn't get trained. They were just told by their parents, you know, "You watch what they're doing and you better do that." So, I think it just comes in the family line.

**Herb:** The one thing, one word that comes to me if I were to give advice to an anthropologist or archaeologist that came here is *honorable*. If you are an honorable person and you do things in an honorable way, then the people are going to reciprocate. I think that's to me the most important thing.

**Dave:** What about you guys? What about other Indigenous peoples, communities? Are there qualities [...] how would you describe the qualities of the people from the community itself? Hearing that others coming in, yes, being honorable, being respectful, that's key. What about you guys?

**Herb:** I think that the word Siyá:m tells it all. The old Si:yá:m [plural]. How did you become a Siyá:m? Well, what Th'elachiyatel told me was the people chose you, the people chose to follow you. The people knew you were the Siyá:m, so that's the title they gave you. So I think that's ... from our communities' perspective, you have to—like Siyémches says—if you're born with a gift, it's a gift you have to exercise, and by exercising that gift, the people will become aware of it. Like Naxaxalhts'i was saying, the people who do the burnings—people recognise them. And there are many that are pretenders in this age. And you know, they always will tell us, "How do you stop that?" Well, the people will take care of that, they just won't go to them anymore. They won't hire them to do the work, so they'll just fall out of sight, and the ones who are recognised, like a Siyá:m, they'll continue to be sought after to do that particular work, like burnings, like spiritual work, shxwlá:m, those kind of things, people know who they are.

And it's, I guess, by experience and by word of mouth, that that knowledge gets spread throughout our peoples. For instance, if I was a young person who wanted some help with a burial, I would ask family and they'd say, "Oh yeah, you go see so and so." So, I would follow their advice, and then when someone asks me, [I would say], "Oh, my elders told me to go see [name], you go see them they'll help you." That's how the natural selection process happens in our communities as far I'm aware. You know, we're told that we're all born with specific gifts, and it's up to us to exercise those gifts, and it's up to our elders and our family to support us, and teach us how to exercise those gifts so that that gift can get strong. And once that gift is strong, of course then the elders teach us that you need to share that gift with your family and with everyone who's in need.

It's just like Th'elachiyatel told us—once you commit to being a helper, we commit here and we commit here, you lose all right to ever say no again. So that's again part of the approach from our communities about selecting the people that we want to work for us, do work for us. It's a natural process of selection. Does that make sense?

**Others:** Yeah, yeah.

**Frank:** That's the same like when Steven Point was Lieutenant Governor, is that the right term, *Lieutenant Governor*?<sup>23</sup> That, you know, he couldn't give up his spiritual life because the people demanded his services and, like Herbie said, he couldn't say no. So five years working seven days a week, you know, weekends for his people, you know...

**Dave:** I could ask questions all day, and would love to do that.

**Frank:** We could talk to you all day.

**Dave:** I'm all ears, I'm all ears.

**Dalton:** We were talking about one thing, showing the map of where the remains ... [microphone static]. I think there's a worry that some people may use that against us and say that, well, your people were here, your people were there, and they'll try and pinpoint, and say, "Yes, there's evidence that shows that your people were there." And that's what's happened in some court cases and in title cases, but there's one thing that I think that needs to be shared, and it was reminded to me by Xwelixweltel [Steven Point] at a burning we had at Semá:th. And the message was that we could use this. We need to use this. And what it was that, you know, we talked about—Siyémches talked about, and others—about taking the bones of our ancestors and rewrapping them. And, you know, when we lost loved ones in the past, and it was widely practiced that they put them in cedar boxes and put them in the trees, and at the time the boxes weren't air tight. And the remains were put in those boxes, and, you know, we're mostly made up of water. So the remains of our ancestors

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<sup>23</sup> Steven Point was Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia from 2007–2012.

would dissolve there. And run down those trees and into the ground. Until such a time as the bones were dried out, and then our people would go back and rewrap them, right? But it was reminded us that through that practice, over thousands of years, that the very flesh and blood of ancestors run down those trees and into the ground that we live on. It's throughout our territory. All the vegetation, everything that grows on our lands, we harvested all that. We harvested it for foods; we harvested for buildings, for everything. The animals ate the grasses and things that grew, and how they grew. You know, you think about it—the flesh and blood of our ancestors is throughout the territories that we live on. And we're a part of that. We think about that and that's how we talk about how close we are connected to the land itself, S'ólh Téméxw. You know, Xwelixweltel and I talked about that, and he said, you know, that we need to use this, when we talk about the land and how connected we are to it. I just think that that's something that we should remind ourselves of. It's something that, you know, we need to pass on. And they can't pinpoint us to little small areas within our territories and say, "Oh, we found some of your ancestors buried here or some ancestors there," because we know it's more extensive than that. I just felt that that's something that needed to be shared. Thanks.

**Herb:** Ey Siyá:m.

**Dave:** Thanks.

**Sonny:** That's a good example of how, I think, how teachings that Elders express sometimes doesn't seem to make sense to you? And then as the years go by all of sudden it makes sense. To me, Rosaleen George, or Yamelot [her Halq'eméylem name], was talking about the burial ground across from Yakweakwioose there. She said they were in big maple trees, and she said the boxes were tied only to the branches that touched the ground. And I often wondered why? And then you just expressed why. I didn't know why they had to be on the branches that touched the ground.

**Dave:** And some of these ancestors are from that place. I think as much as I hate to do this, this is probably an appropriate time to conclude our interview. Does anybody else have any final thoughts they'd like to share, before we wrap it up

**Rose:** I just wanted to say it's been a learning experience for me, and since I've been coming to these meetings—I've only made a couple of meetings—and I thought the gathering was really good and I ... it's an honour for me to sit amongst our elders with so much knowledge and stuff. I was kind of, like, hesitant to, like ... felt kind of wary, you know, about talking or giving answers about ... listening to the answers that were talked about today. And somehow, somehow I feel that [the ancestors are] here because we talked about them. And they're waiting because there's one item, it's still [an] action item and it's not done yet. It's the wrapping, the cutting and the wrapping and it's ... I have a lot of respect for everybody that sits at the table. I brought a couple youth, and I was thinking about those youth and what they learned and how excited they were. The respect they showed for our elders and stuff, you know, getting up and shaking everybody's hand. Where they are today—one's on a

good road, and the other one's kind of, like, in between there. And our people really need to know, like Chief Rhoda said about the loss of identity and the respect and our culture—stuff that's coming back to us. But yeah, I just wanted to say that it's been great being part of this committee and I think the name suits everybody that's here and the people that I saw brought in, like the experts, the caring and respect that they showed for what our people are trying to do for our loved ones was there. And when you talk about the map and maybe the fear of how it's going to be used against us, all we can do is just stand as a group and somehow turn that around where it's going to be against them. So, it's been good; so, thank you.

**Dave:** Thank you Rose. I just want to thank everybody for their contributions, and we'll conclude this interview. Of course, the work will continue. Sue and I will take this and write this up into our work, and share that back with the group here. So I just want to, on behalf of Sue and myself particularly, and this piece of the project, I just want to thank you all for your wisdom, for your sharing of your wise words, thoughts, and feelings. It is tremendously valuable and I appreciate that greatly.

**Sonny:** Before I forget, Dave, you forgot to say the year, so its April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015.

**Dave:** Right, because this did start about 2006, so the years have slipped by pretty quickly. 2015, April 23<sup>rd</sup>. House of Respect Committee signing off.  
[laughing in background]

### **Post-Script to the Committee-meeting Transcripts**

This is reality. The transcripts of the Journey Home presentation and Committee meetings shared above are insights into the conversations held between 2006 and 2015; into the reality constituting the heart of community and bioarchaeological relationships in this instance. They provide only a glimpse of the depth of dialogue held among Stó:lō communities, community members, community-based researchers, and bioarchaeological experts over that course of time. These transcripts do not do Justice to the range of topics or depth of interactions and sharing of knowledge addressed and shared throughout those prolonged conversations. The full transcription of our conversation over the decade of discussions would be result in hundreds of pages of content. This is prohibitive and impractical as an outcome to this aspect of our work. In light of the need to provide concluding remarks we defer to the words of Siyemches that the young people must “listen and learn.” We can only encourage those with interest to read – in lieu of direct participation – and re-read the passages presented above. Struggle through the language. Try to understand the meaning. Extract whatever may be possibly gained as helpful conclusions drawn from the knowledge shared by the participants in this work. In our pursuit of bioarchaeological interests and production of knowledge, we are all in many ways ‘young people.’ This is our reality.

By its very nature, our dialogue allowed for the comprehension and expression of community-base, individualism – a multiplicity of perspectives without contradiction. We all engaged in and accepted a process of ‘listening and learning’ as a means of sharing and understanding; by which knowledge emerged. To ‘listen and learn’ is a person journey of knowledge production that we realized as an outcome of the Journey Home. Inherent in this process is a balance between knowing and not knowing -- in what people say, mean, believe, perceive, intend – and the resulting dynamic, founded on trust and openness, of learning. The dynamics of our dialogue opened avenues of knowledge production, based on bioarchaeological processes that emerged from of intersections of our participants. The outcome was a creation of knowledge that vastly exceeded the scope of results of our radiocarbon, isotopic and descriptive analyses of the remains of these 27 individuals. The participation of those ancestral individuals, themselves, was a particularly poignant revelation among the bioarchaeologists involved in this work. They became part of the dialogue.

This is an emerging relationship. One in which none of us, of any party involved, cannot presume to be the ‘elder’. Rather, it is by way of creating a forum for personal engagement, expression and open dialogue that we open a doorway to creating trust, sharing and building a foundation for expanding our knowledge base – particularly one that is beneficial to all. A fundamental element of this project is a question about the production of knowledge through bioarchaeology. Based on the results of the Journey Home Project, the fullest possible production of knowledge results from an inclusive, respectful, honorable and deep commitment to dialogue. Our primary conclusion is that stepping through this threshold of dialogic process treads down the pathway to the expansion of knowledge, relative and meaningful to each community of engagement.

### **A CONCLUDING THOUGHT**

As a concluding thought, we present an over-arching principle fitting to the Journey Home repatriation process provided by Herb Joe at an earlier House of Respect Committee meeting:

*The work needs to be done. There is no right way to do this work, there is only a good way. We have to work together in a good way to do the best we can.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people assisted in many ways in this project, too many to fully list here. We specifically want to recognize the Stó:lō communities and leadership associated with the Stó:lō House of Respect Caretaking Committee-members (as identified above); George Nicholas and the Steering Committee of the Intellectual Property Issues in Cultural Heritage (IPinCH) Project and SSHRC for providing the funding supporting this project; UBC Lab of Archaeology (LOA) members including Patricia Ormerod and LOA work-learn students - Naomi Goldman and Elle-Maija Tailfeathers; Museum of Vancouver Board and staff including Bruce Miller, curator Joan Seidl; Tia Halstad and Sonny Mchalsie from the SRRMC who acted as key support staff for the House of Respect Committee; shxwlá:m Steven Point and Gwen Point; Musqueam Elders and community members who assisted with these repatriations; Yale First Nation Chief Ken Hanson and Councillors Pedro Moreno and Vanessa Peters; photographer David Campion; our beloved Caterers; additional SRRMC staff particularly Tracey Joe and Rachel Anderson; Fidel Point; and all of our friends and supporters who helped in the repatriations and steps of the Journey Home completed to date.

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APPENDIX A

Journey Home PowerPoint – Community Presentation – Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014

# The Journey Home: Our Steps along the Path and Biographies from our Stó:lō Ancestors' Remains

Presented by  
the



Stó:lō House of Respect Care-taking Committee  
in collaboration with

David Schaepe, Sonny McHalsie and Tia Halstad  
Stó:lō Nation – Stó:lō Research & Resource Mgmt. Centre

Sue Rowley, Darlene Weston and Mike Richards  
Laboratory of Archaeology  
Dept of Anthropology  
University of British Columbia



Stó:lō Research  
and Resource  
Management Centre



a place of mind

## **Stó:lō Xyollhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip [‘Stó:lō House of Respect Care-taking Committee’]**

### **MEMBERS**

The Committee is made up of members from the Stó:lō community throughout S'ólh Téméxw. Committee members must be knowledgeable about Stó:lō culture and traditions.



### **2006-2014 - Committee members Present & Past:**

Natch (Farley) Antone; the late Ivan McIntyre; Allen Williams; Helen Joe; Herb Joe; Dalton Silver; James Leon; Jeff Point; Patricia Raymond-Adair; Frank Malloway; Mabel Point; Rose Peters; the late Joe Aleck; Betty Henry; Rhoda Peters; Darwin Douglas; Shane John; Alice Thompson; Josette Jim; Andy Phillips, Wendy Ritchie and Amy Victor

### **SRRMC facilitation:**

David Schaepe (chair), Sonny McHalsie and Tia Halstad

## **Stó:lō Xyollhmet S’olhetawtxw Sq’éq’ip [‘Stó:lō House of Respect Care-taking Committee’]**

### **KEY PURPOSES:**

**Xyollhmet te mekw stam it kw’elat.**

**To ‘take care of everything that belongs to us’**

- providing informed input, guidance and direction regarding:



(a) **qà:qwèl stexw** (‘to bring back; return many things; repatriate’) Stó:lō heritage (e.g., ancestral remains, cultural objects, intellectual properties, etc.).

(b) **xyollhmet** (‘taking care of’ / curating) Stó:lō heritage, including the development and implementation of cultural protocol; organizational frameworks, and otherwise, as needed.

(c) In general, the purpose of the Committee is to support the administration and on-going development of the ***Stó:lō Heritage Policy / Legislation***.

**Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip**  
[‘Stó:lō House of Respect Care-taking Committee’]

**THE JOURNEY HOME PROJECT**  
***2005 – present***

- Began as a collaboration with **UBC/Lab of Archaeology** re: taking care of Stó:lō ancestral remains during UBC’s museum renovations during the **Partnership of Peoples Project**;
- Led to the first step of repatriation of 11 ancestral remains from UBC through the House of Respect Committee to the Stó:lō, with temporary housing at the Stó:lō Resource Centre;

**Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip**  
[‘Stó:lō House of Respect Care-taking Committee’]

## **THE JOURNEY HOME PROJECT**

### ***2005 – present***

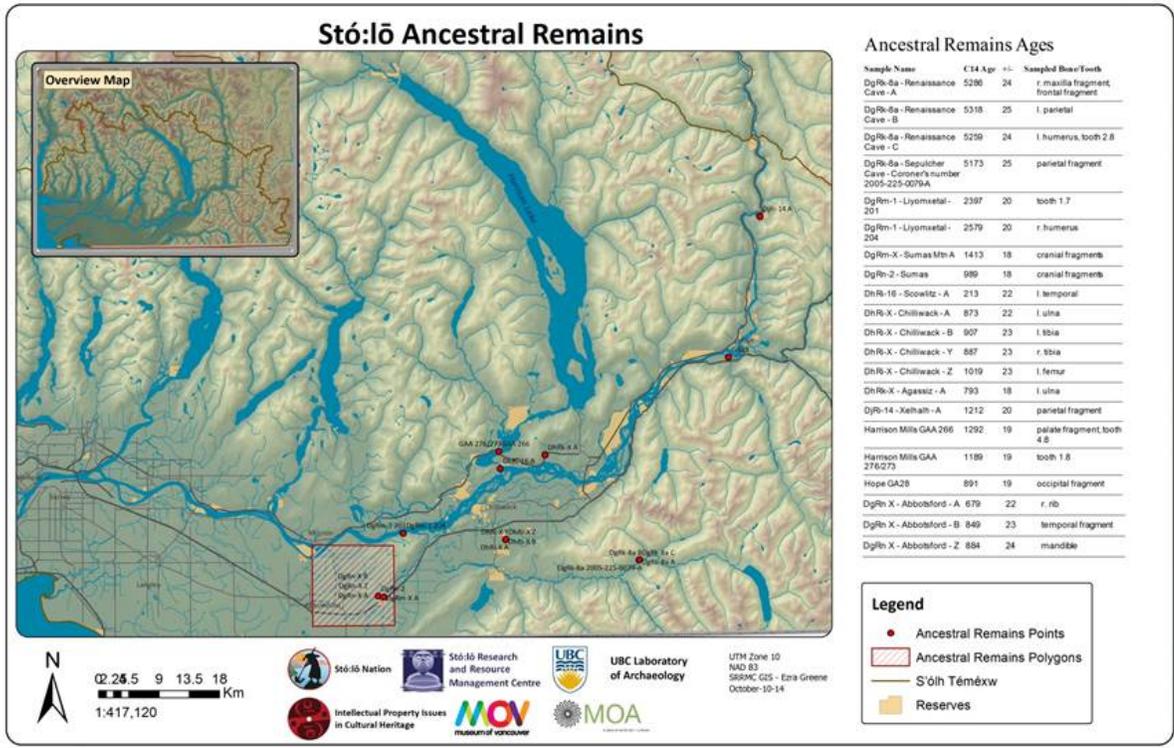
- Later involved the return home of 5 ancestors from the Museum of Vancouver
- Also included the remains of 11 ancestors recovered through the Coroner’s Office, individuals, and community-based direction to recover ‘found remains’.

**Stó:lō Xyolhmet S'olhetawtxw Sq'éq'ip**  
[‘Stó:lō House of Respect Care-taking Committee’]

**THE JOURNEY HOME PROJECT**  
***2005 – present***

- Included working on the ancestors’ remains – under strict cultural protocol - to help answer a key question ‘*Who are these individuals?*’ – this was important in guiding the final step of the journey home, putting these ancestors to rest respectfully and in a good way.

**Te sleq'álqel qelat la te téméxw tset.**  
**The journey back to our land.**



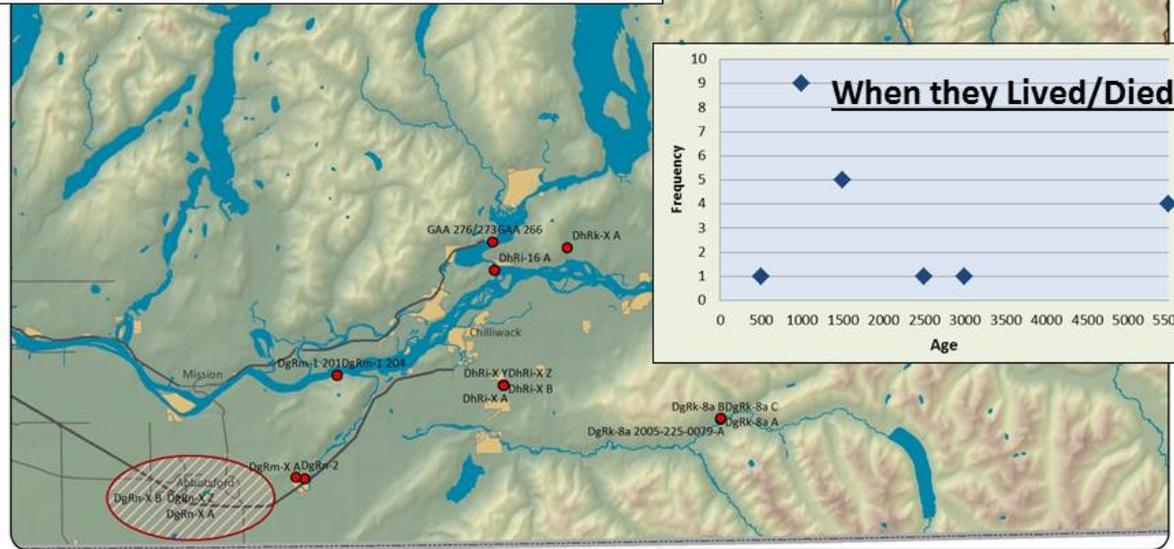
**Yalh kw'ses me to:kw' ye siyolexwálh.**  
**Our ancestors have finally come home**



## 27 Individuals

### Age / Sex:

- 13 adult males/possible males
- 9 adult females/possible females
- 1 infant (unknown sex)
- 2 children (unknown sex)
- 2 adults (unknown sex)



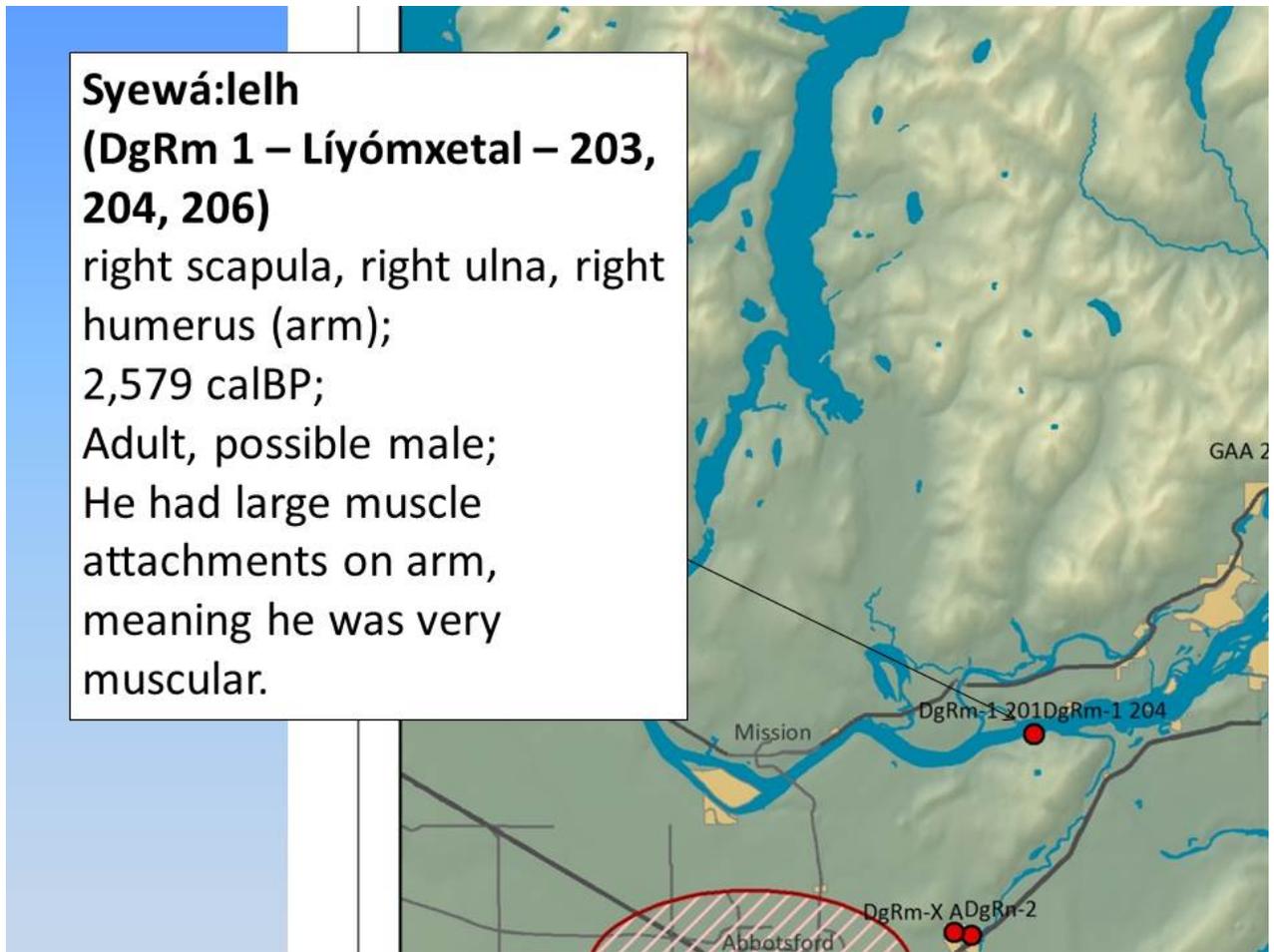
## **27 Syewá:lelh (deceased ancestors)**

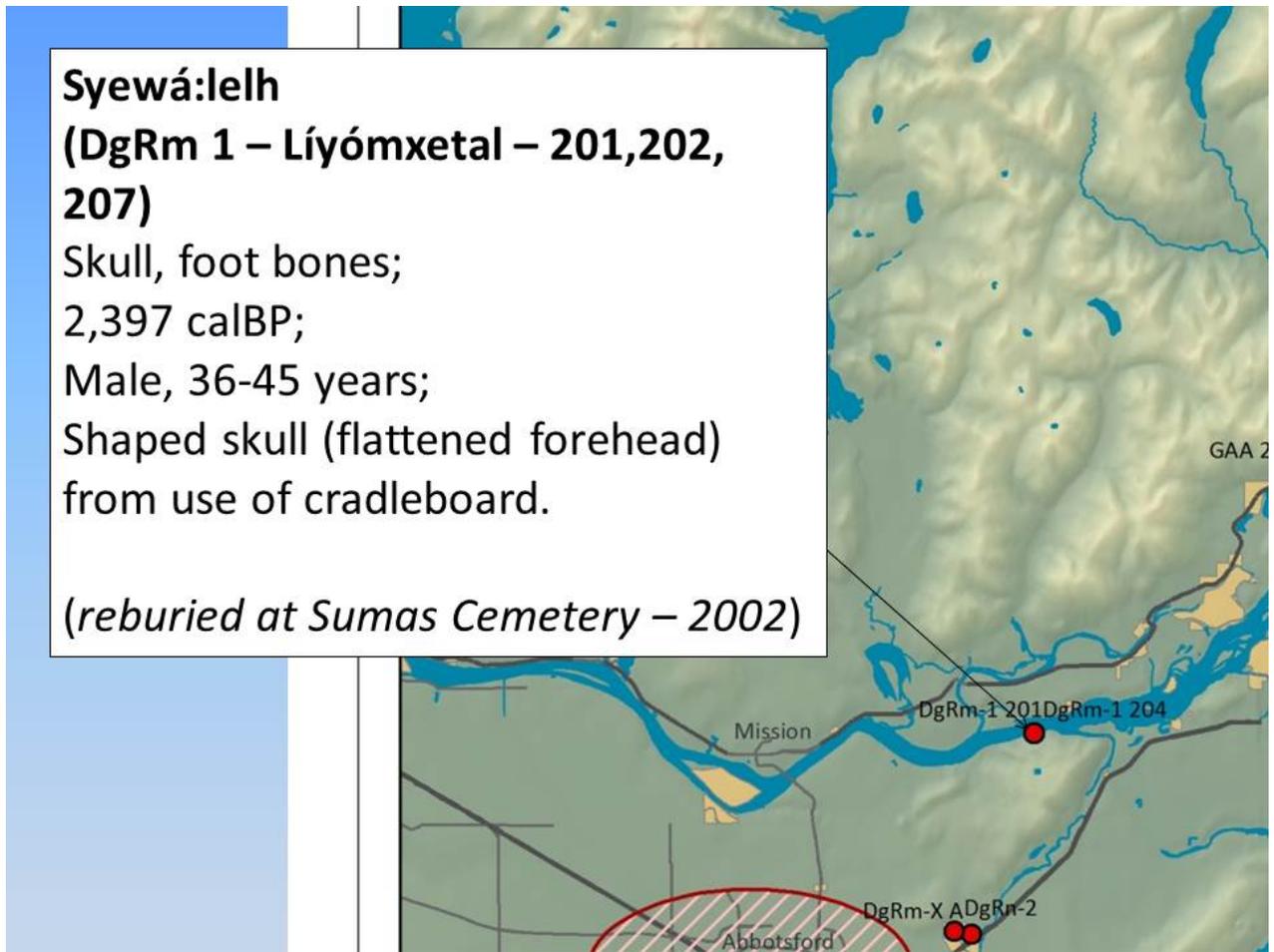
***Who are these ancestors? What can we find out that describes them as people?***

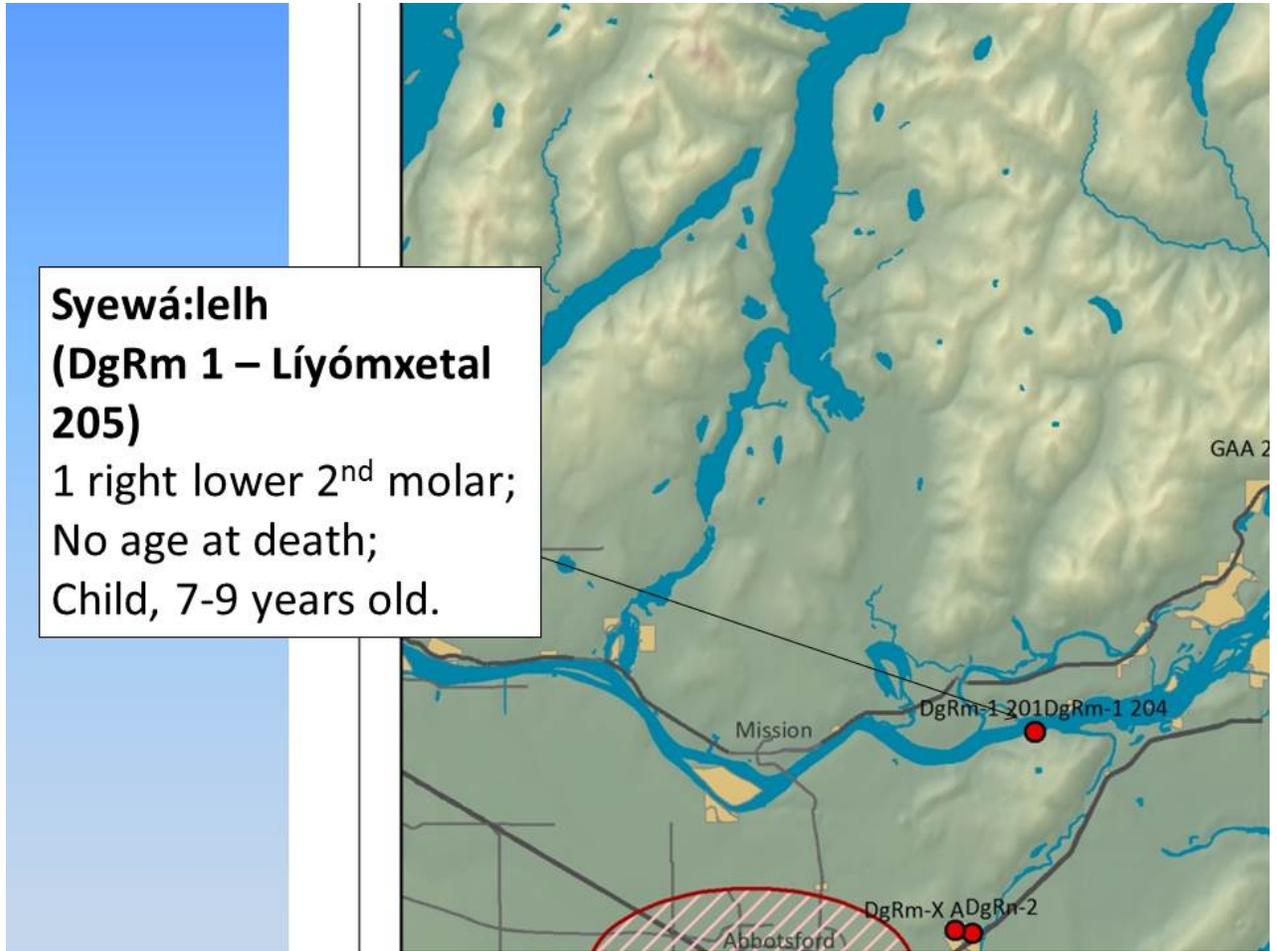
**We carried out work in collaboration with UBC researchers and created biographies based on:**

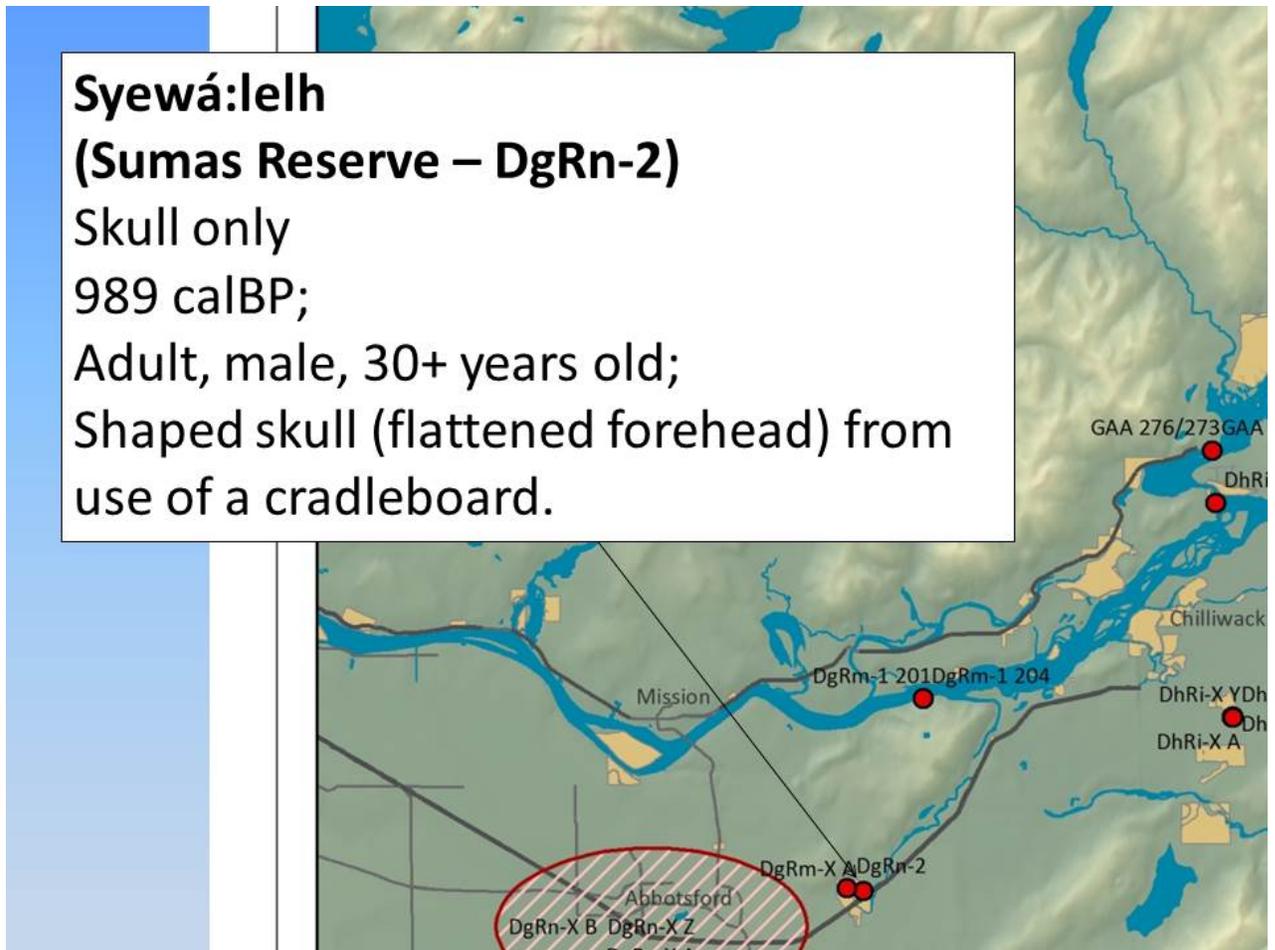
- Description of physical remains (age, sex, size/stature, physical condition);
- Bone chemistry (diet);
- Radiocarbon age (when they died); and
- Information on how and where their remains were recovered.

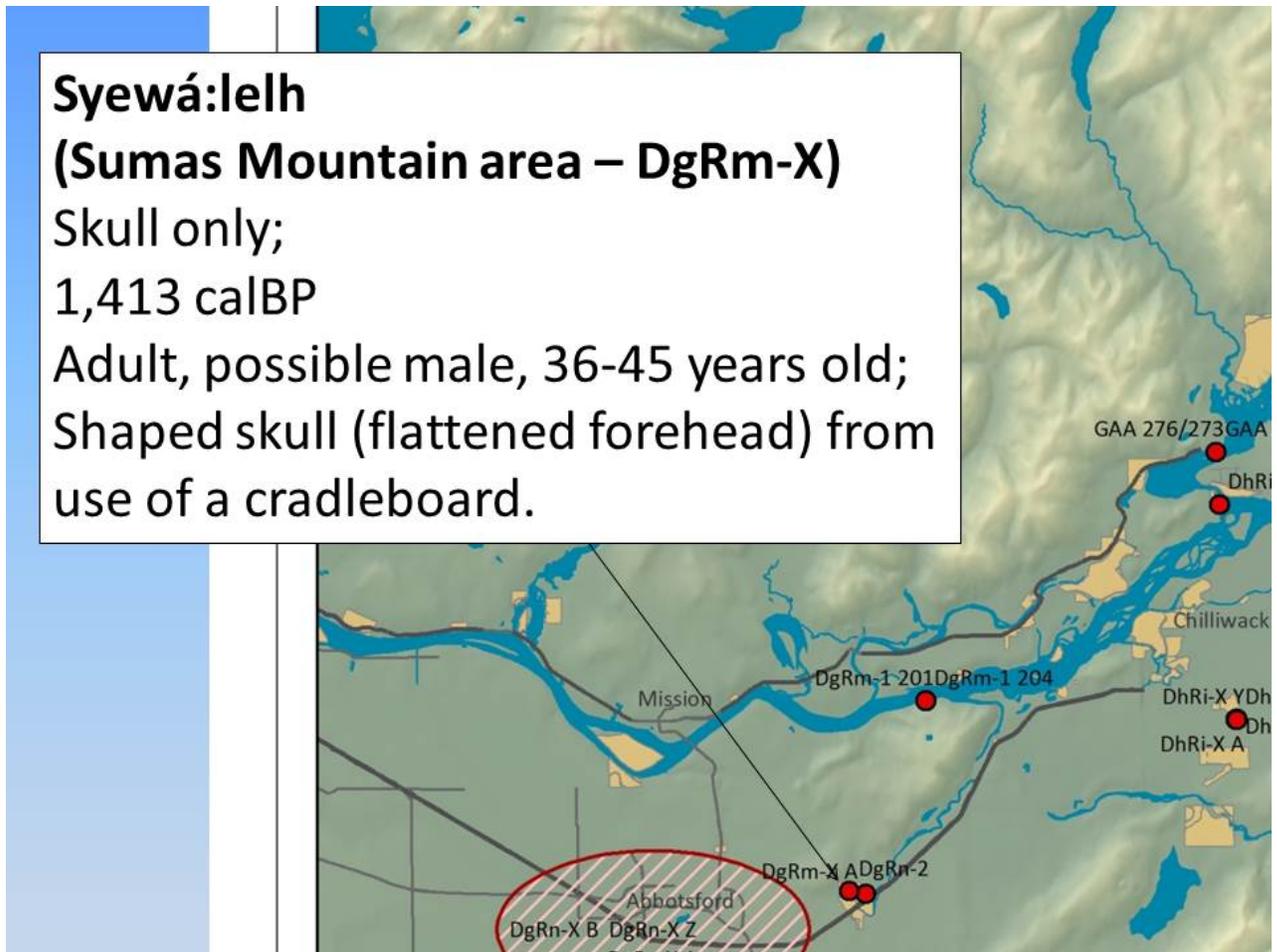
**We provide brief biographies tonight, as follows:**











## Syewá:lelh

### (DgRnX – A – Abbotsford Area)

Skull, arms bones, rib fragments, part of spine;

679 calBP;

Adult, male, 26-35 years old;

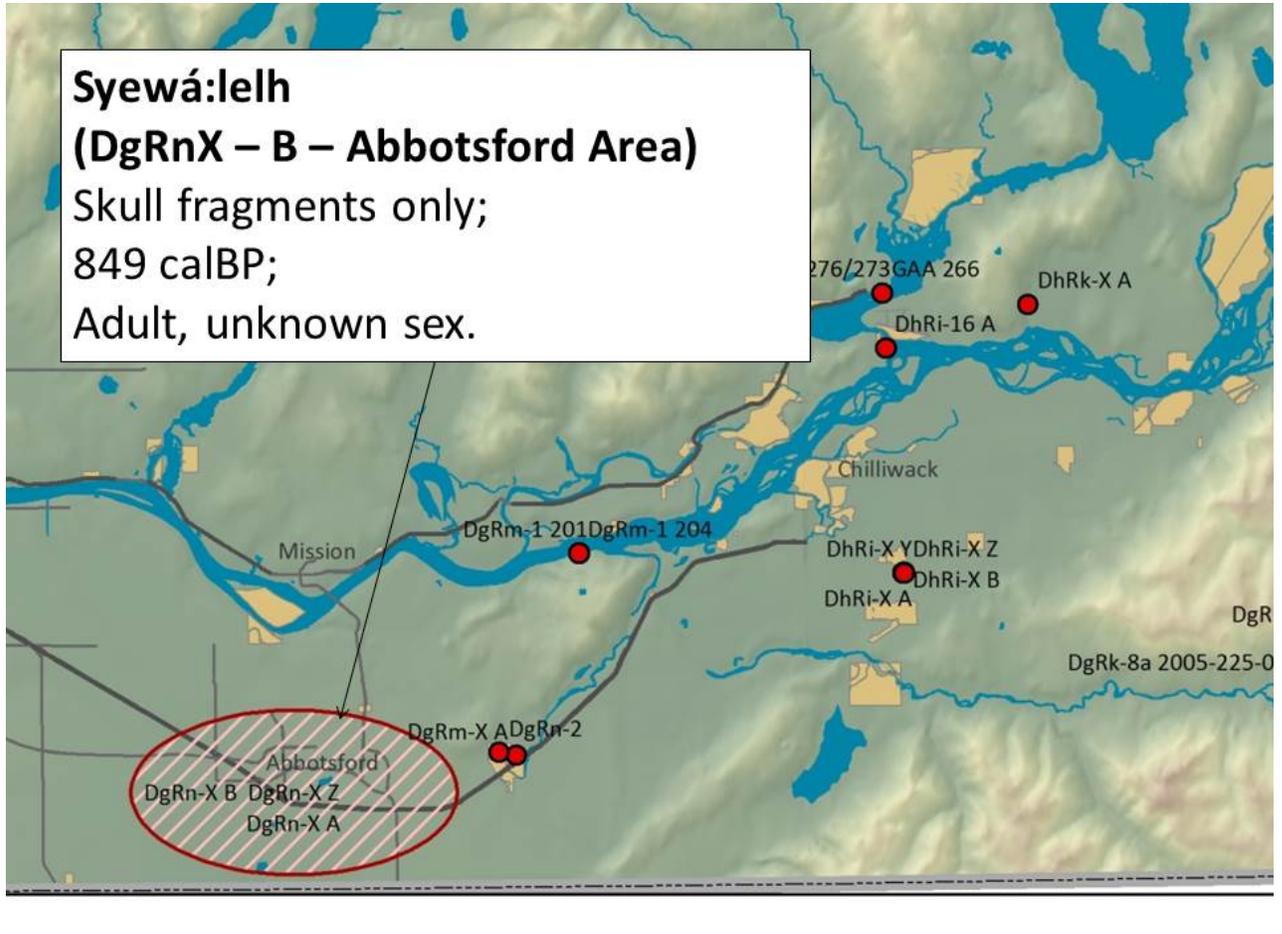
164 cm tall (5'4½");

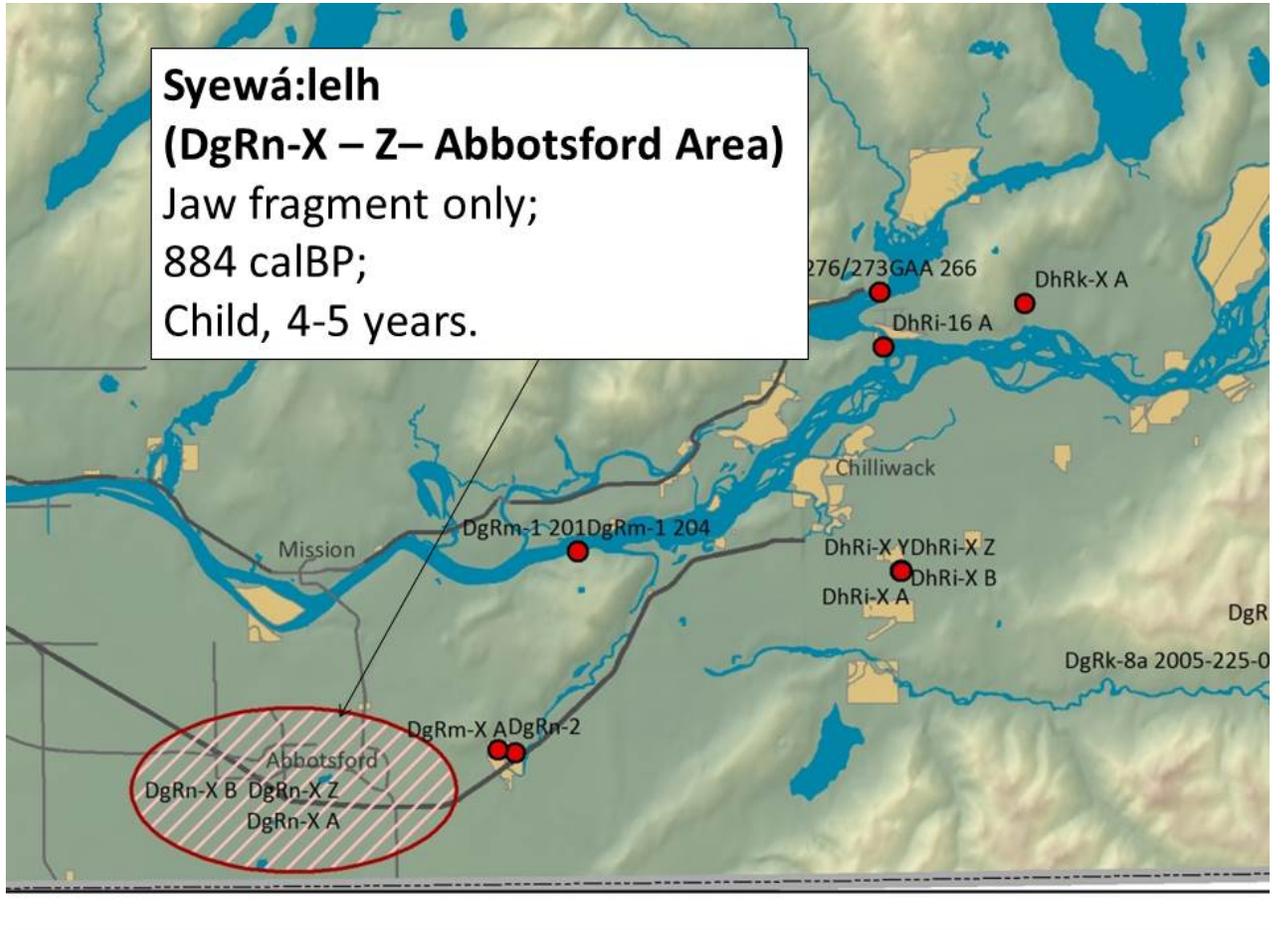
Shaped skull (flattened forehead) from use of a cradleboard;

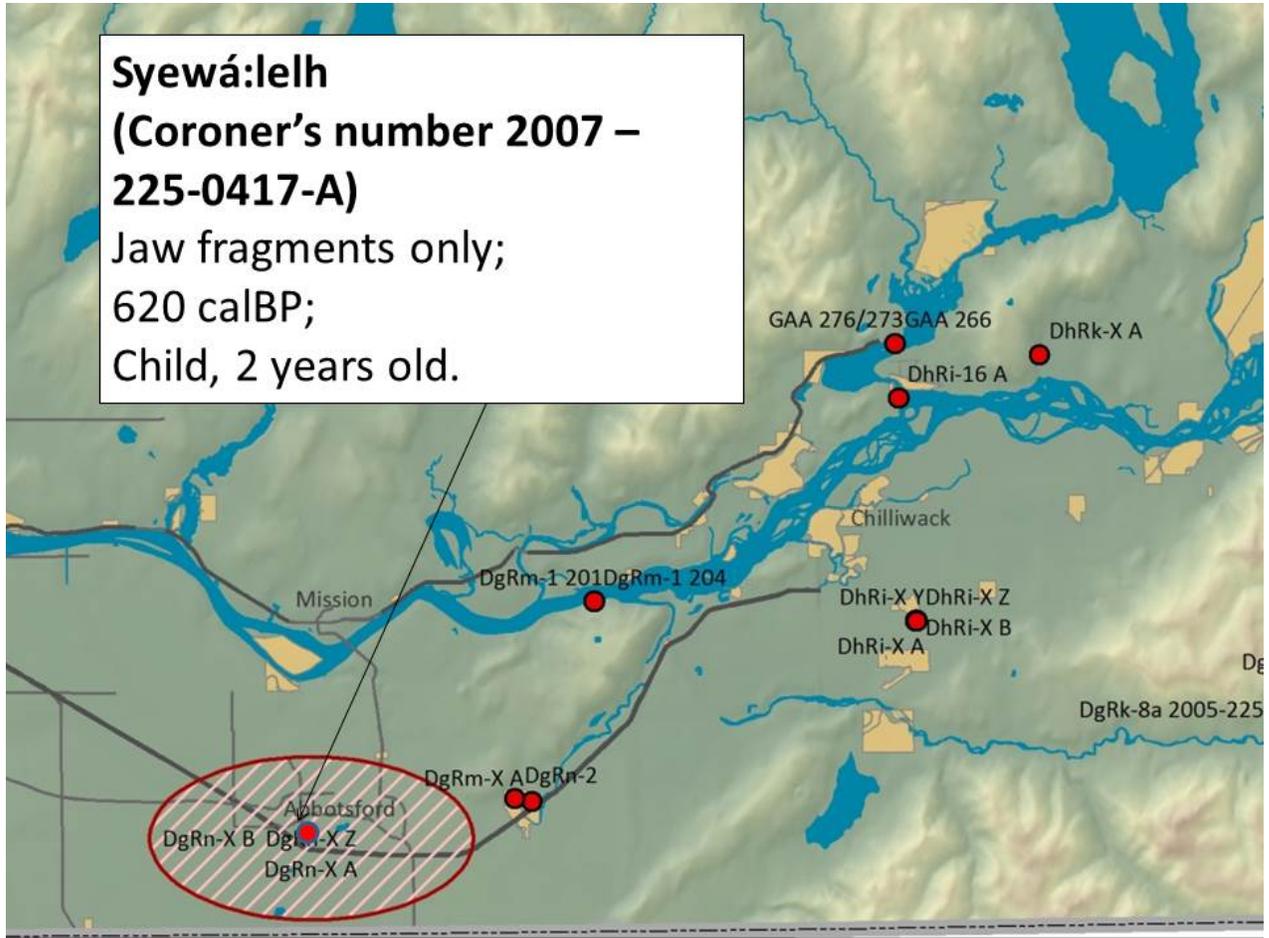
Some arthritis of the spine, powerful arm muscles,

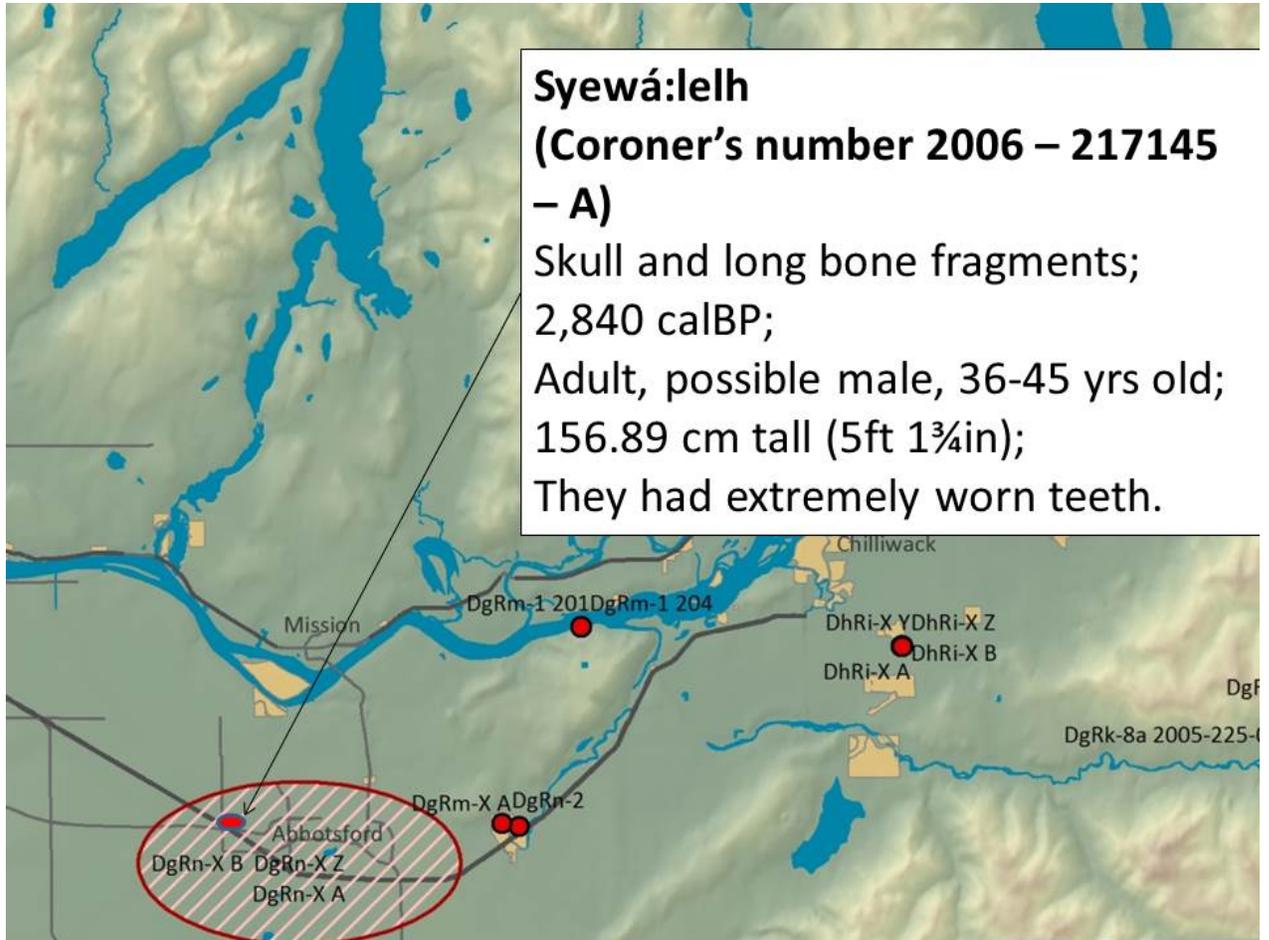
extremely worn teeth with dental disease - wear has caused pulp cavity to be exposed, resulting in two abscesses.

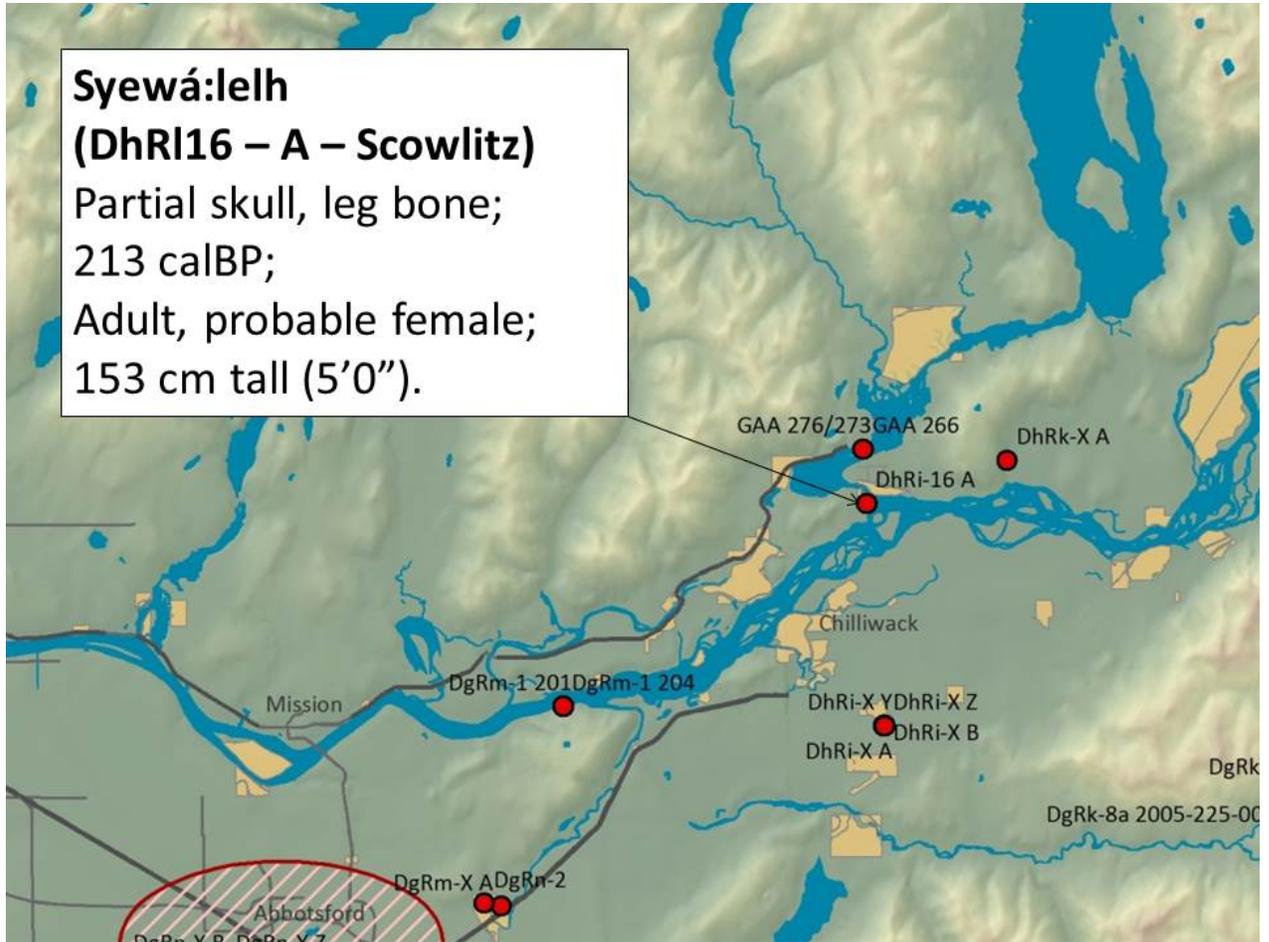


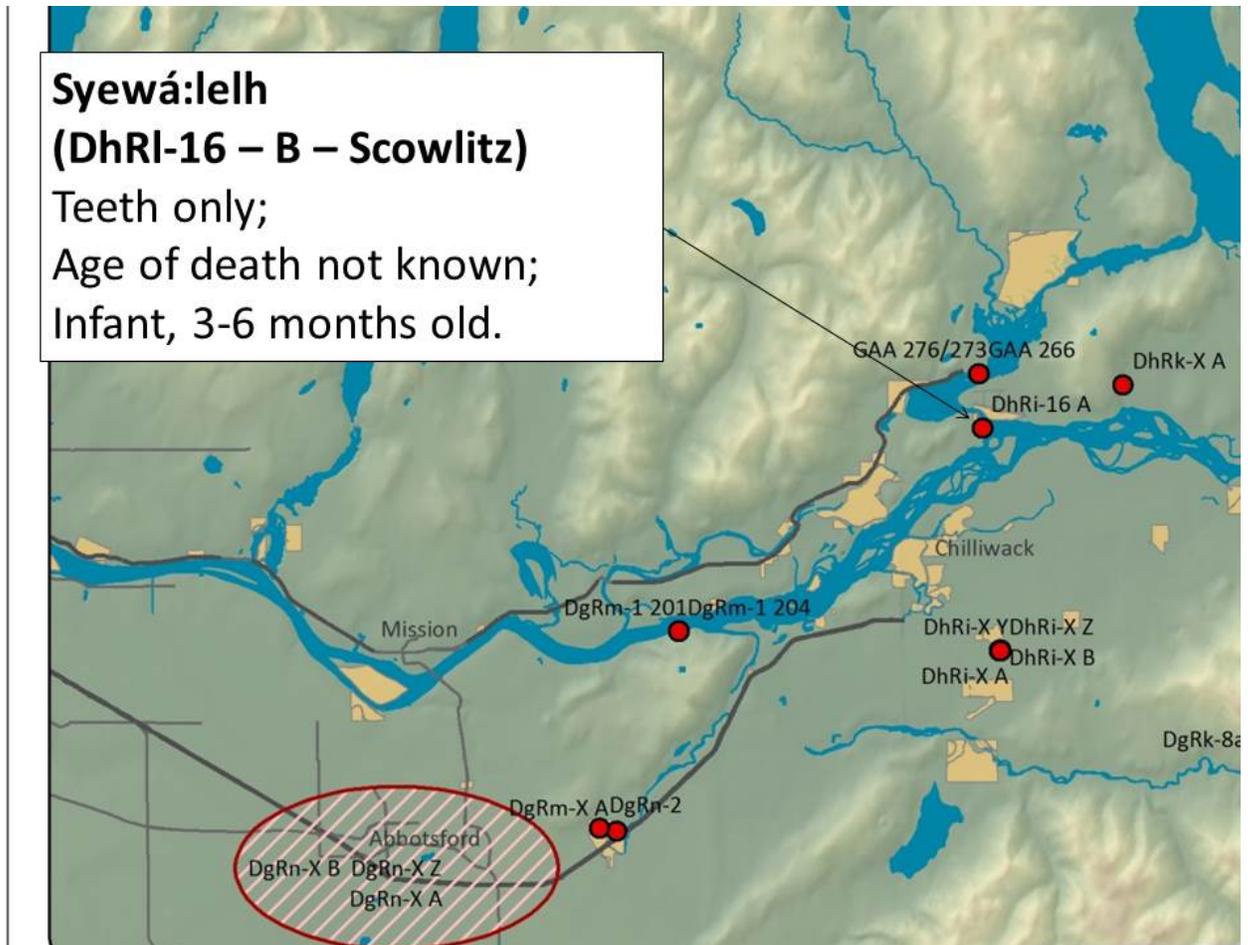












## Syewá:lelh

### (Harrison Mills GAA 26a)

Skull and upper vertebra;

1,292 calBP)

Adult, Male, 46+ years old;

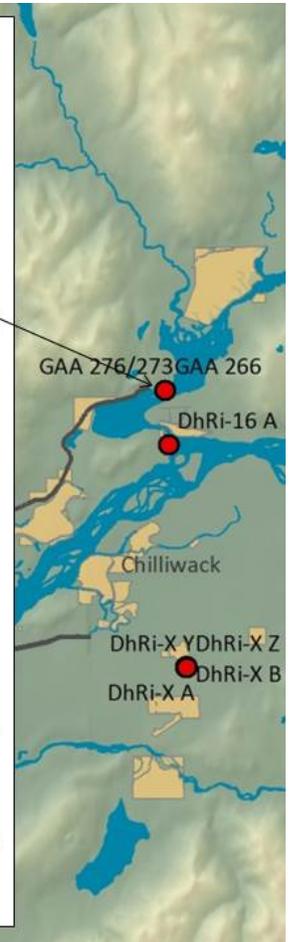
Had fusion of upper 6 vertebrae of the neck, including to his skull, due to severe osteoarthritis;

There was copper staining inside his lower jaw bone indicating that he was buried with copper in his mouth – a sign of high status and respect;

He had poor dental hygiene, with lots of tartar build up on his teeth. He also had very worn molar teeth, indicating that he used his teeth as tools.

He would have been quite handicapped / inflexible for a long time before he died.

- Burial mound context; he was put away with dentalia shell beads (returned with his remains).



## Syewá:lelh

### (Harrison Mills GAA 276/273)

Skull only;

1,189 calBP;

Adult, female, 36-45 years old;

Shaped skull (flattened forehead)

from use of cradleboard;

She had copper staining inside the roof of the

mouth and on the outside of the face,

indicating she was put to rest with copper in

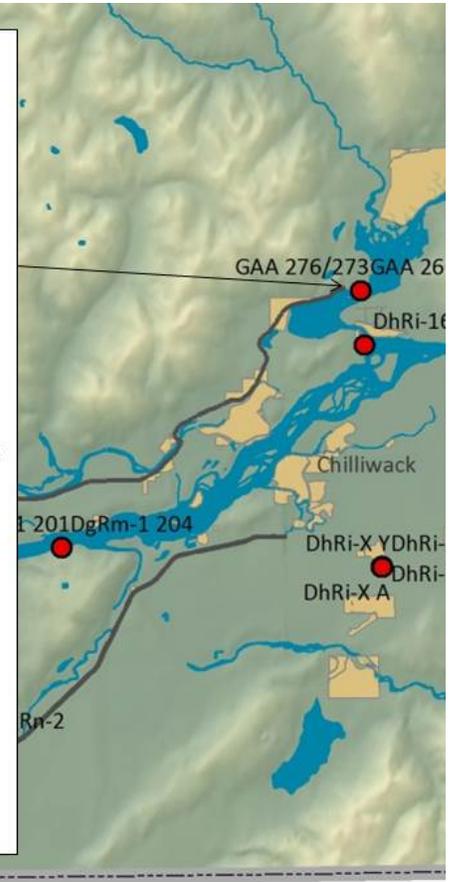
her mouth & placed on her face - as signs of

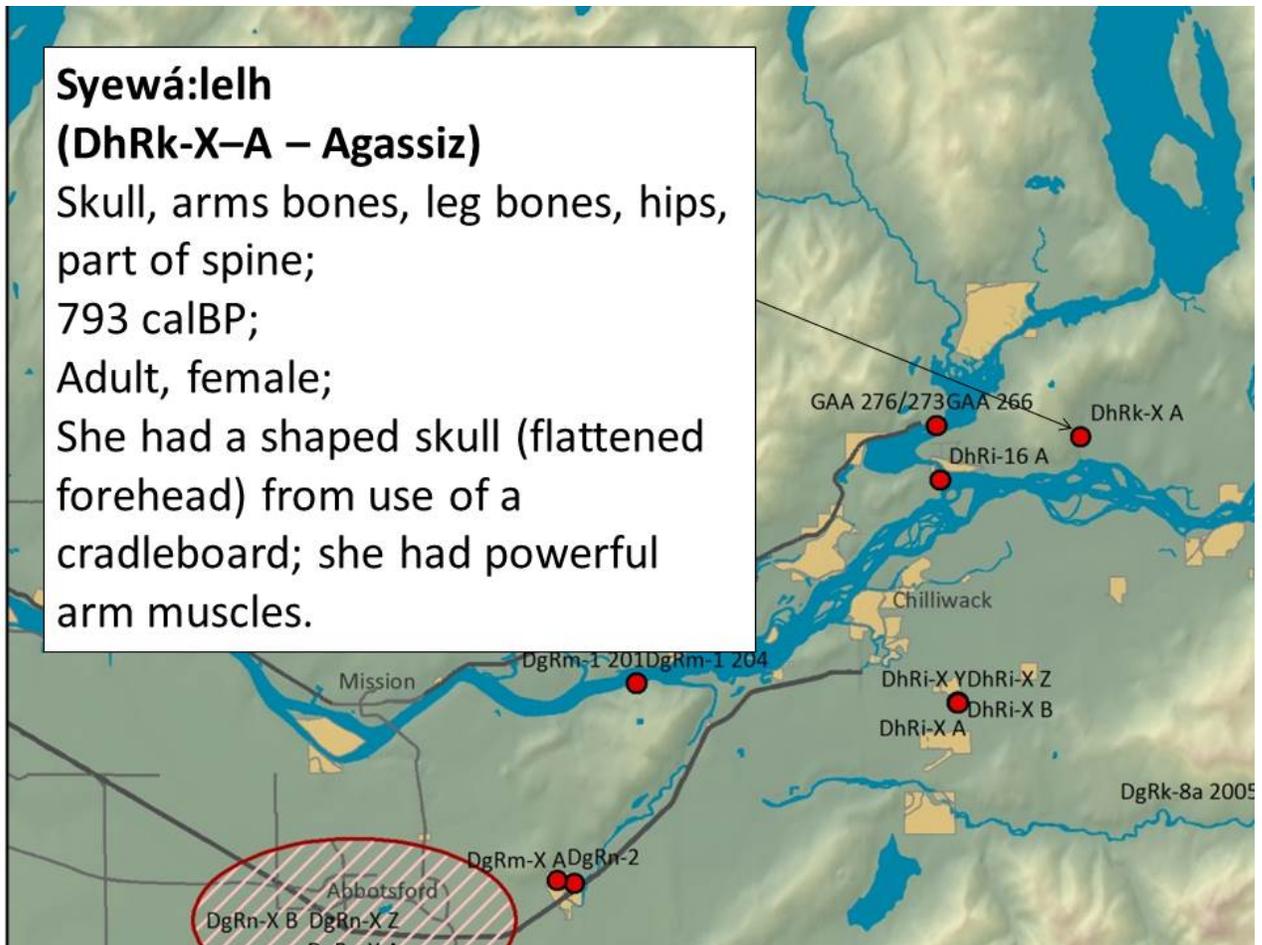
high status and respect;

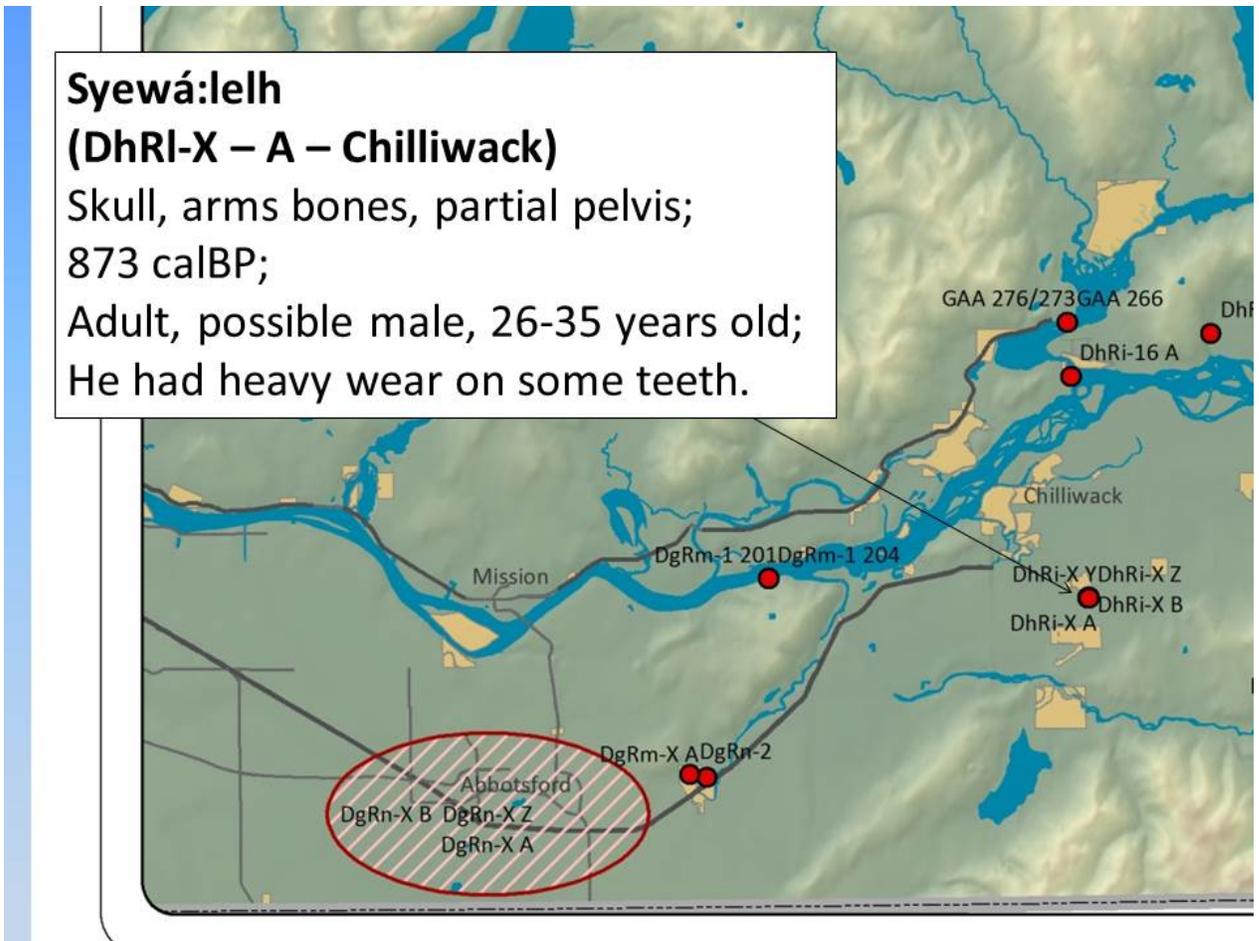
very worn teeth, indicating she used her

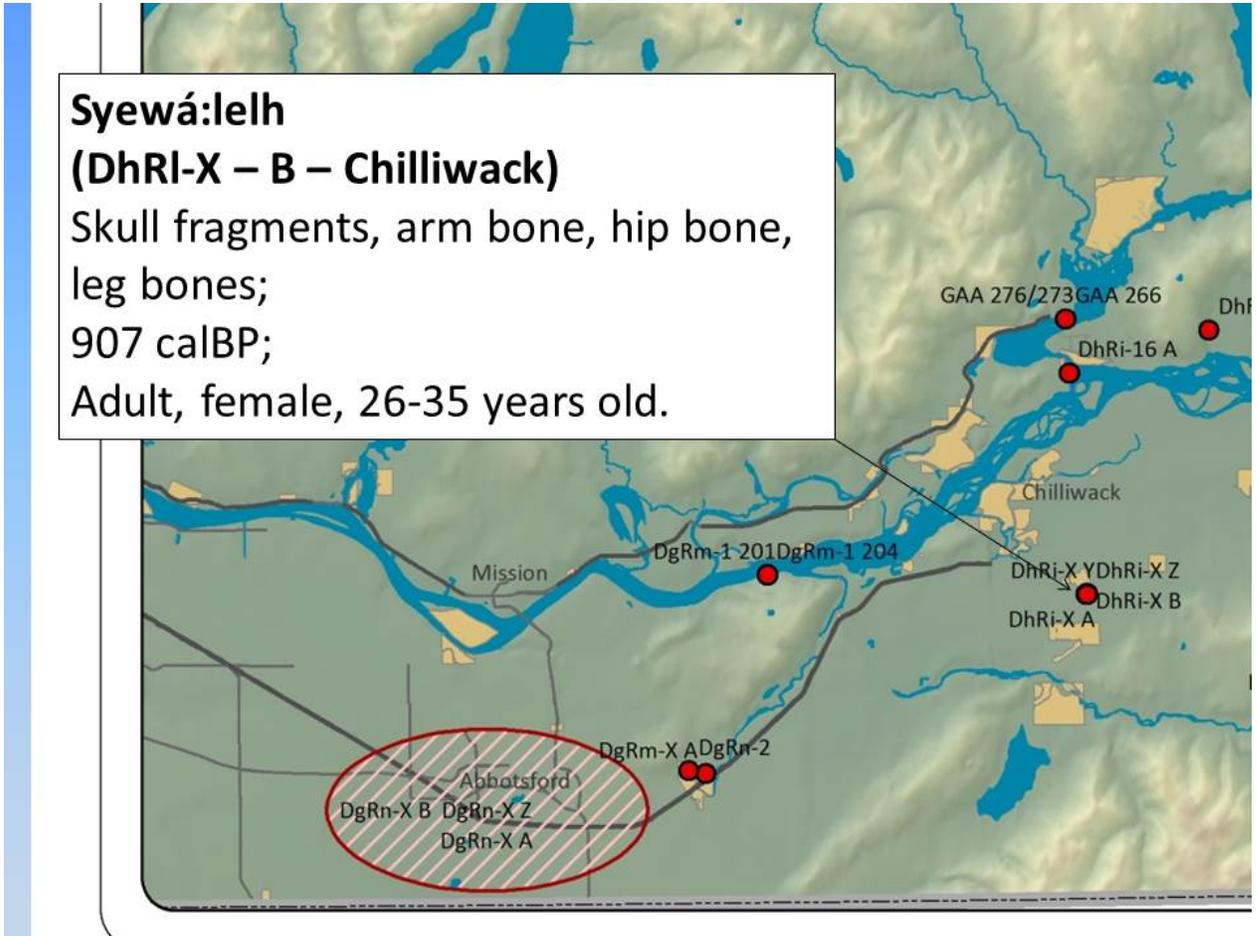
teeth as tools.

- Burial mound context.









**Syewá:lelh**  
**(DhRI-X – Y – Chilliwack)**

Leg bones only;

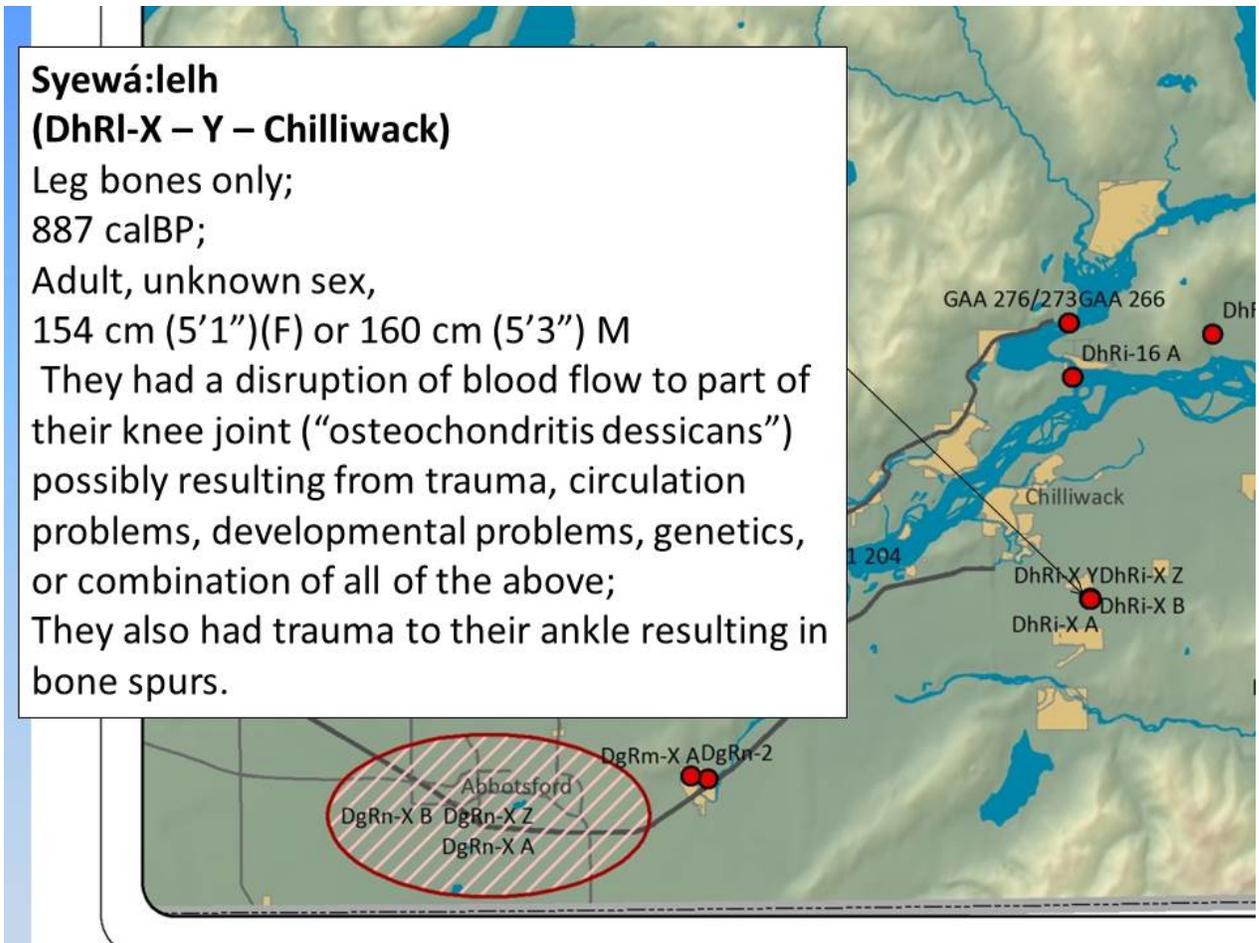
887 calBP;

Adult, unknown sex,

154 cm (5'1") (F) or 160 cm (5'3") (M)

They had a disruption of blood flow to part of their knee joint (“osteocondritis dessicans”) possibly resulting from trauma, circulation problems, developmental problems, genetics, or combination of all of the above;

They also had trauma to their ankle resulting in bone spurs.



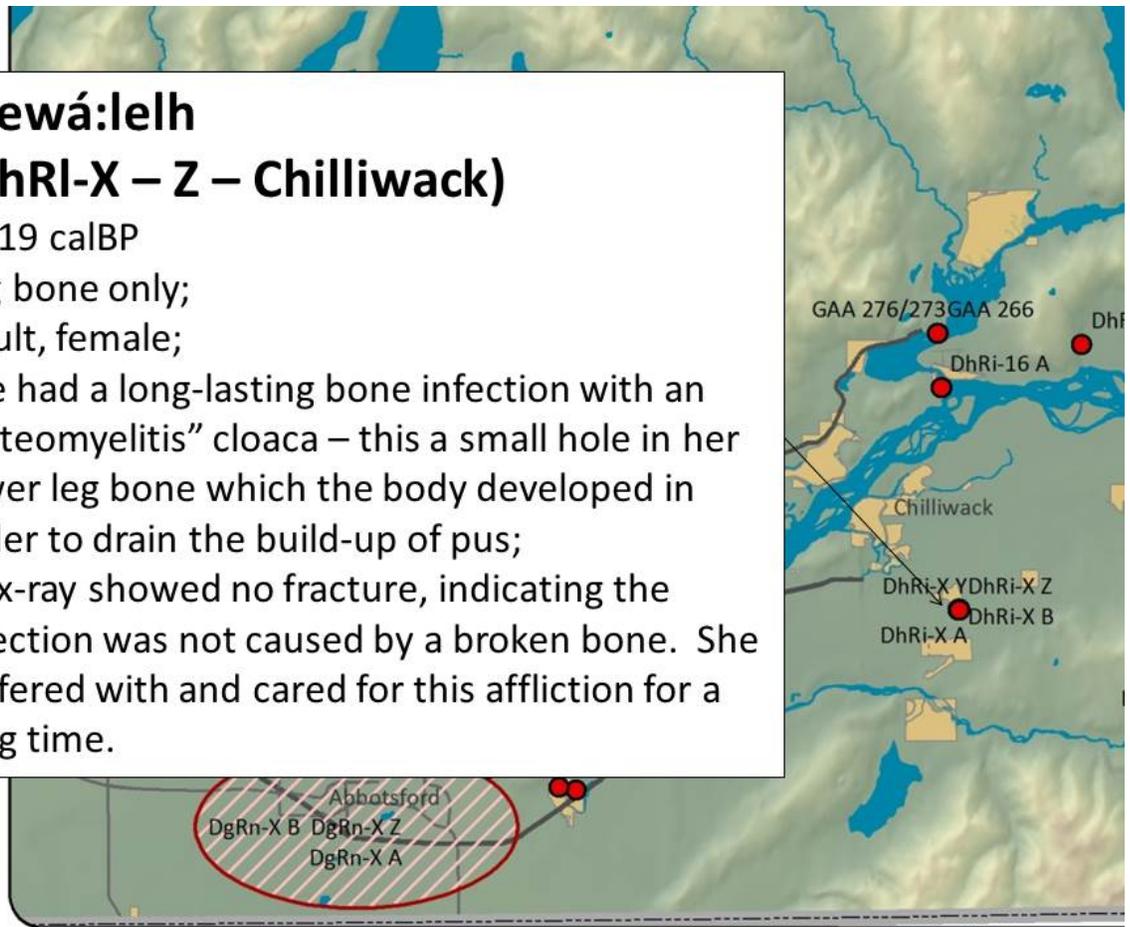
## Syewá:lelh (DhRi-X – Z – Chilliwack)

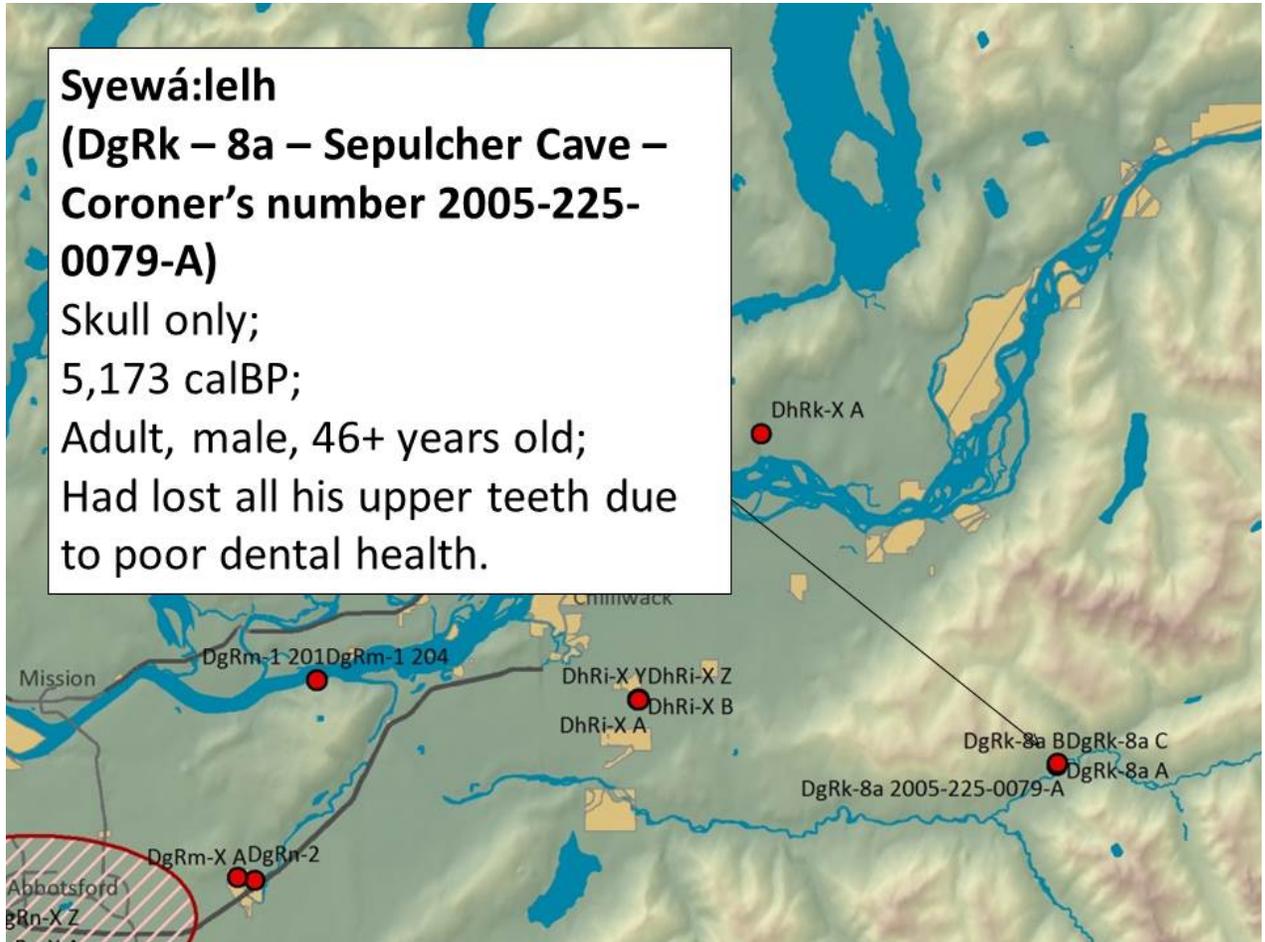
1,019 calBP

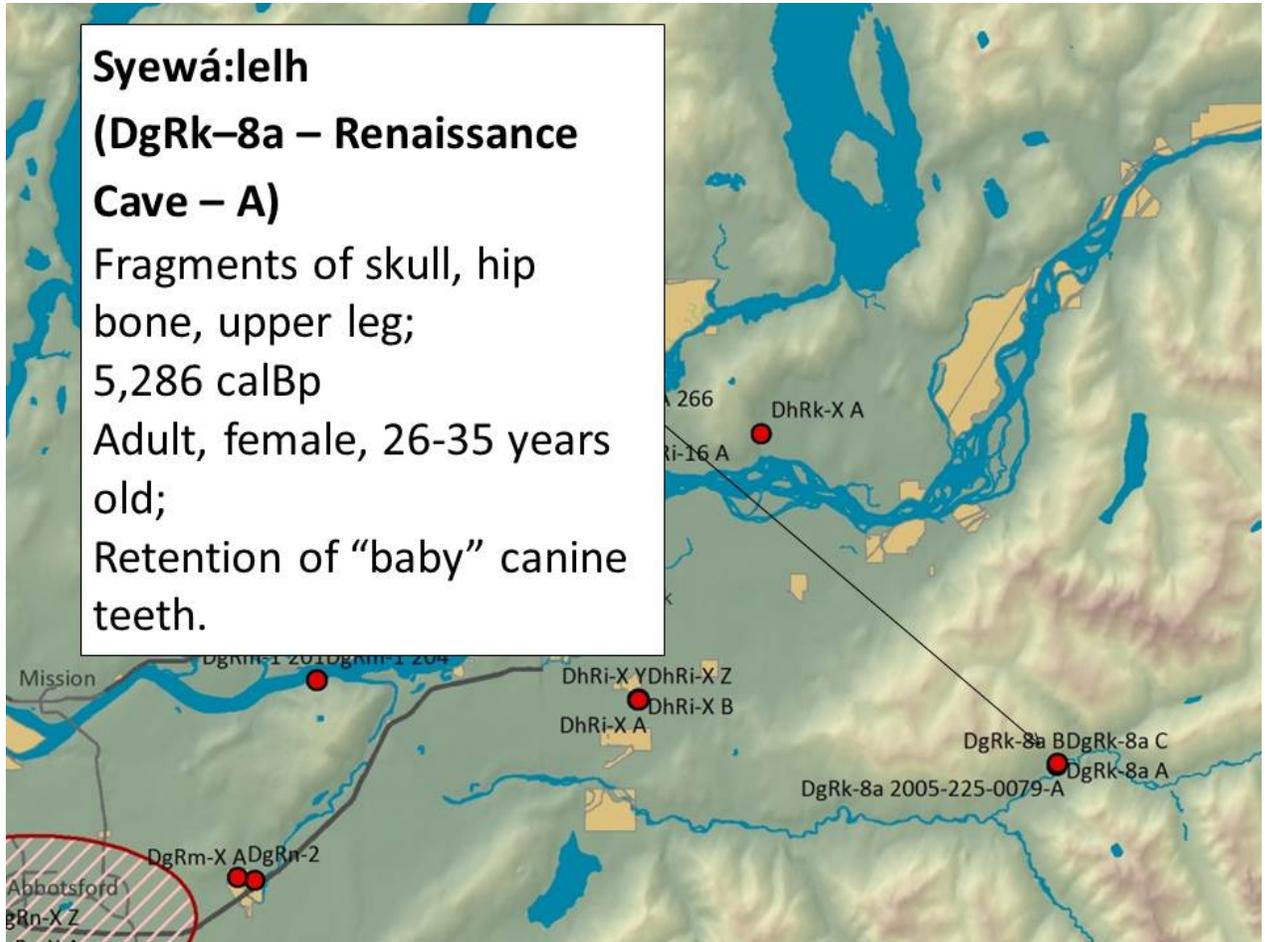
Leg bone only;

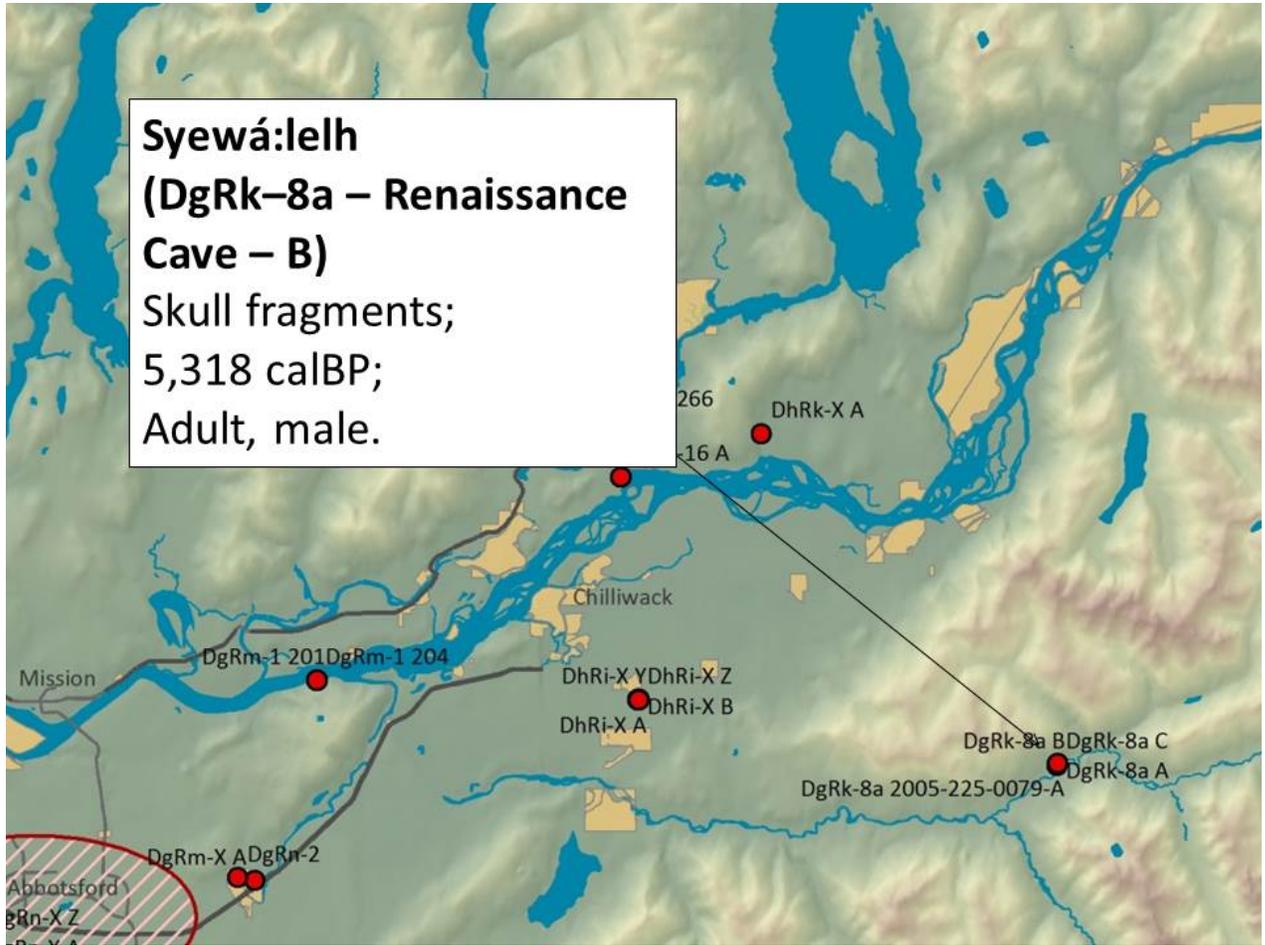
Adult, female;

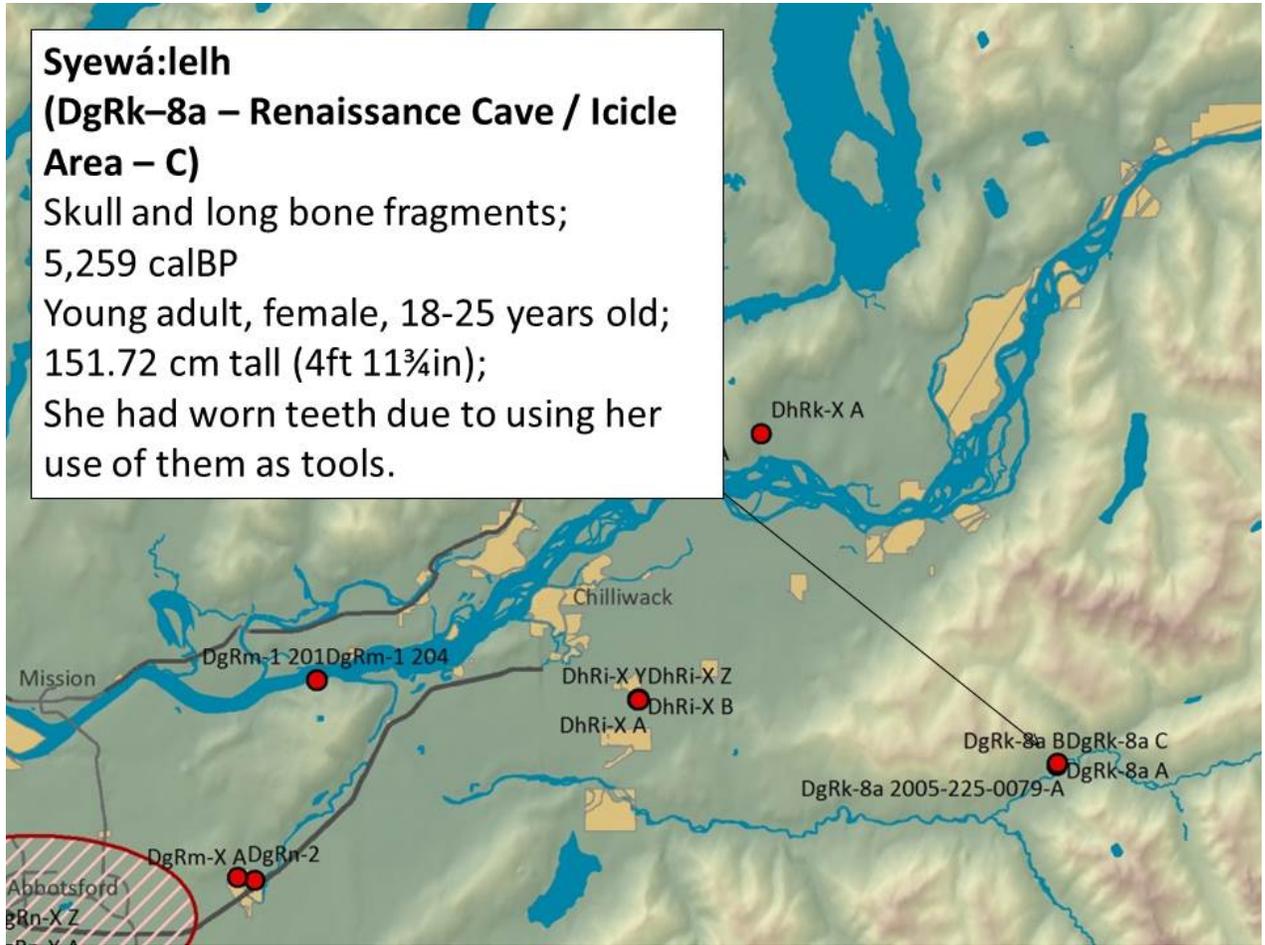
She had a long-lasting bone infection with an “osteomyelitis” cloaca – this a small hole in her lower leg bone which the body developed in order to drain the build-up of pus; an x-ray showed no fracture, indicating the infection was not caused by a broken bone. She suffered with and cared for this affliction for a long time.

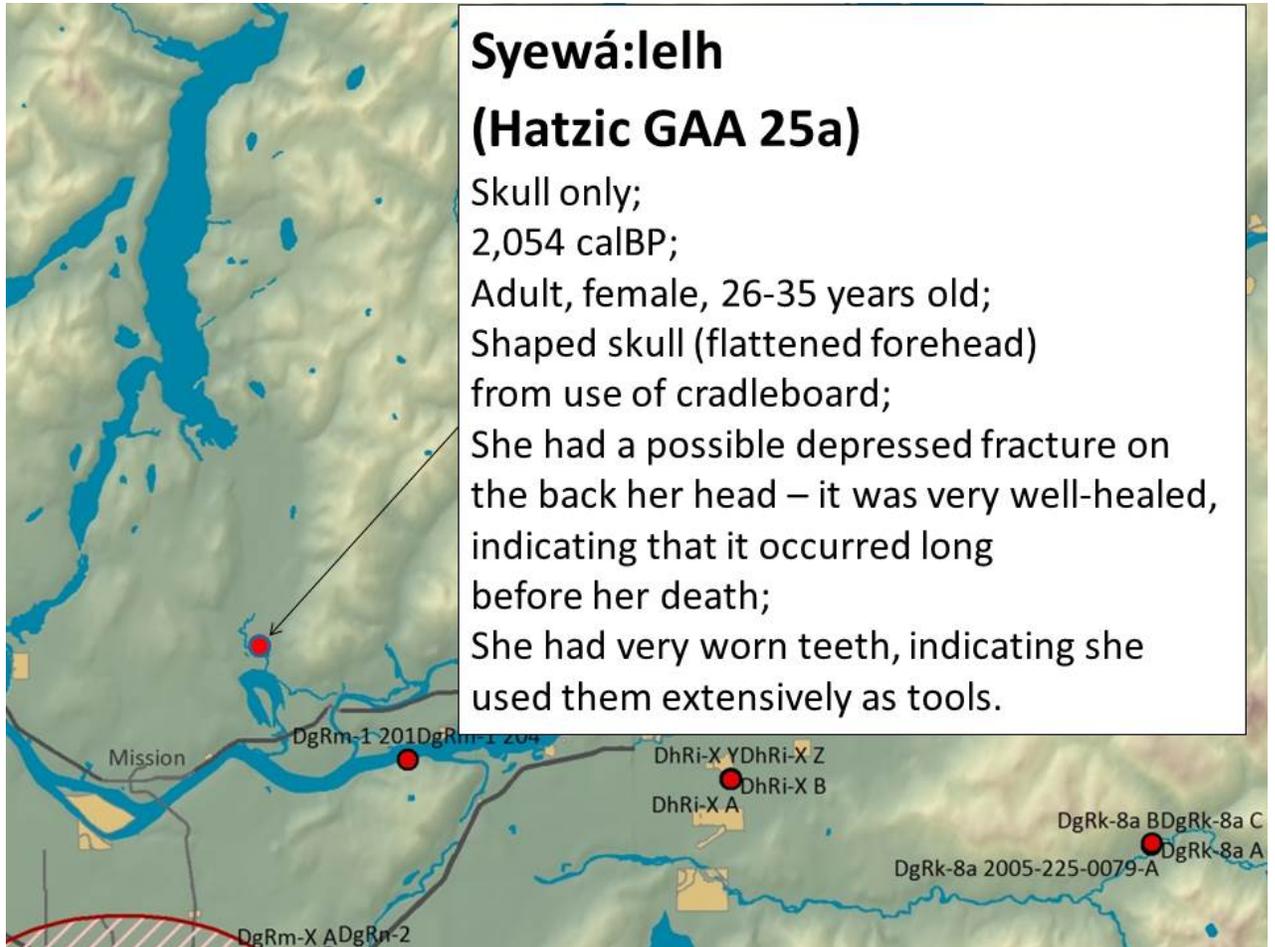


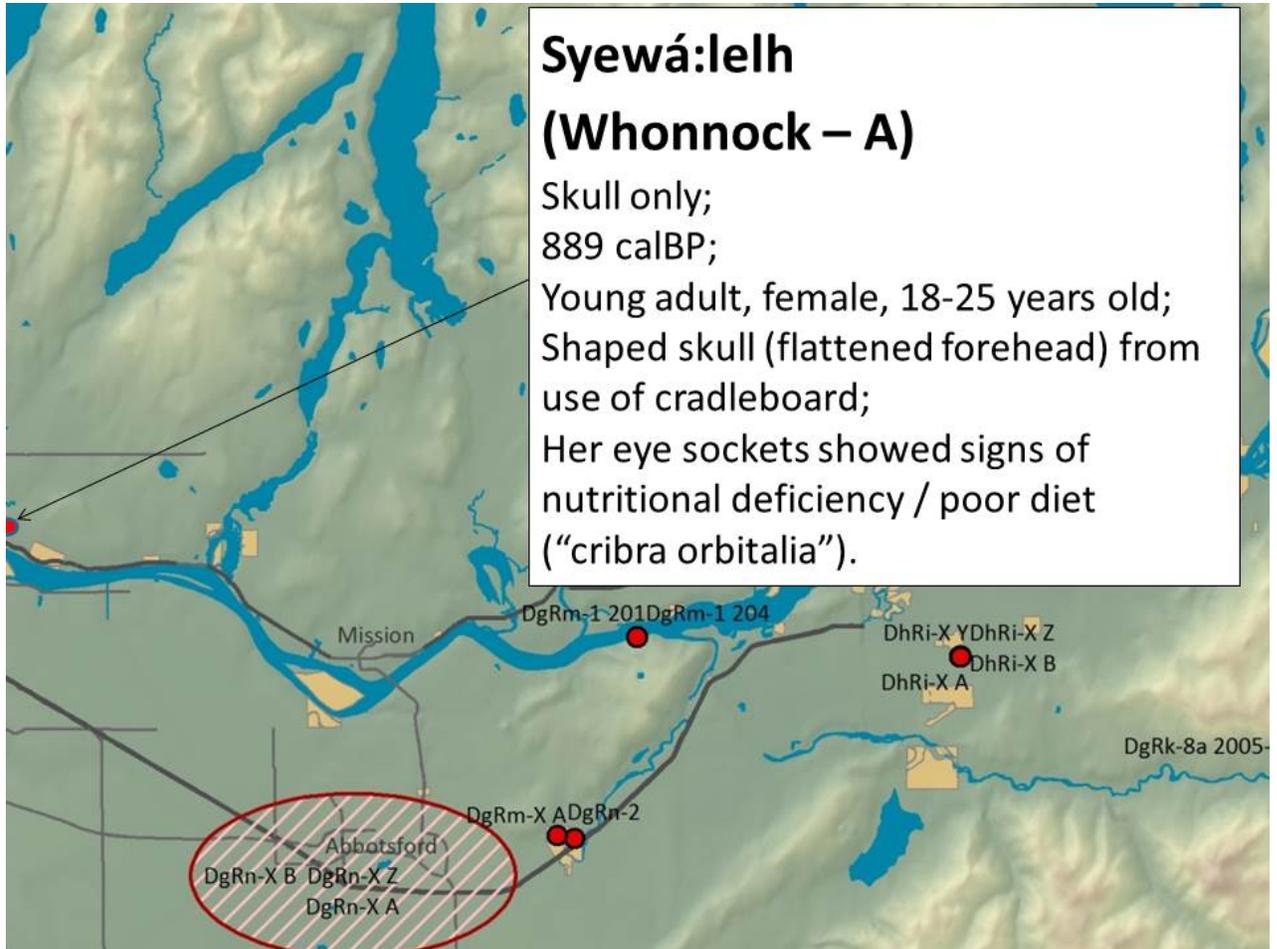


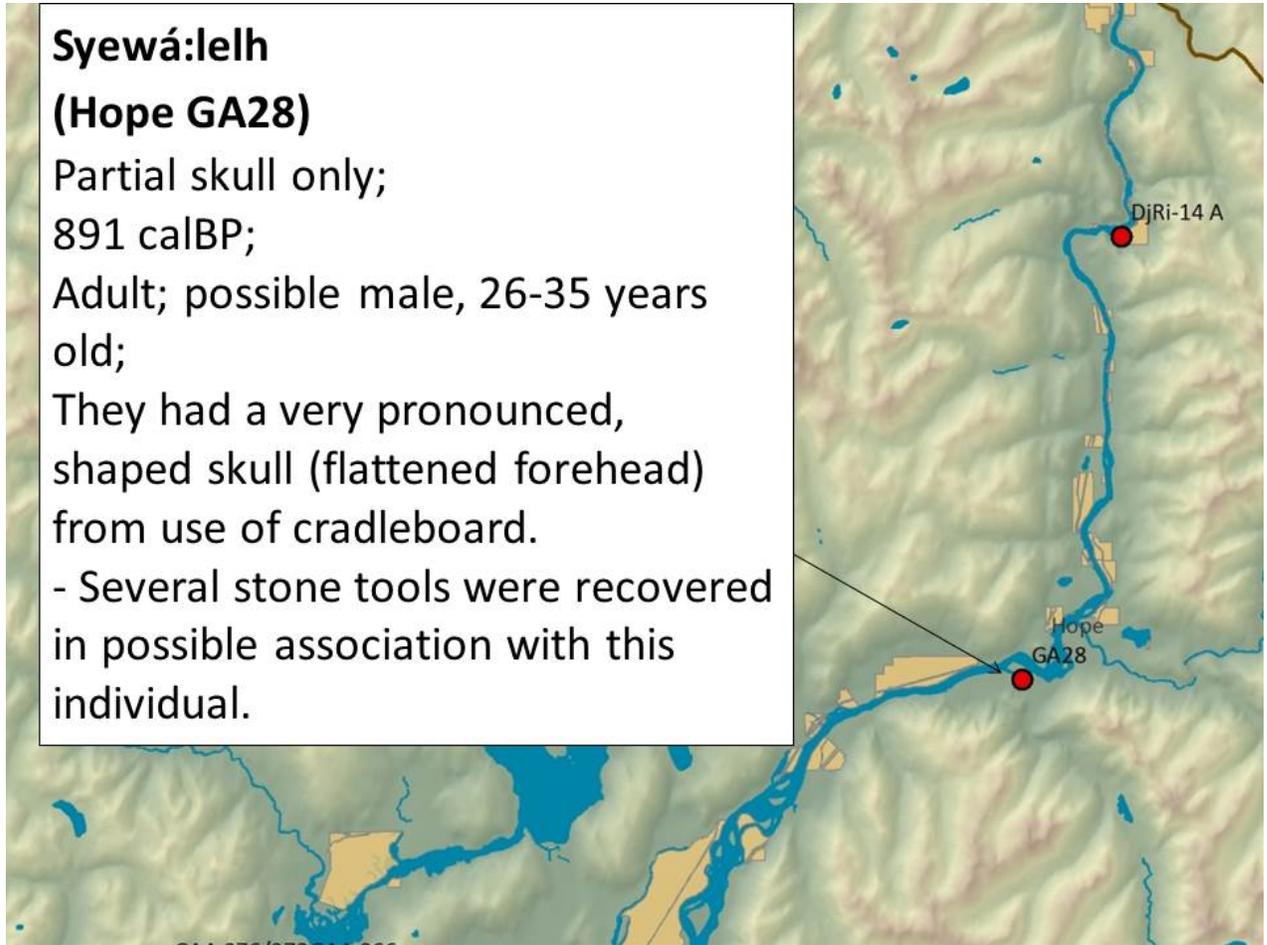


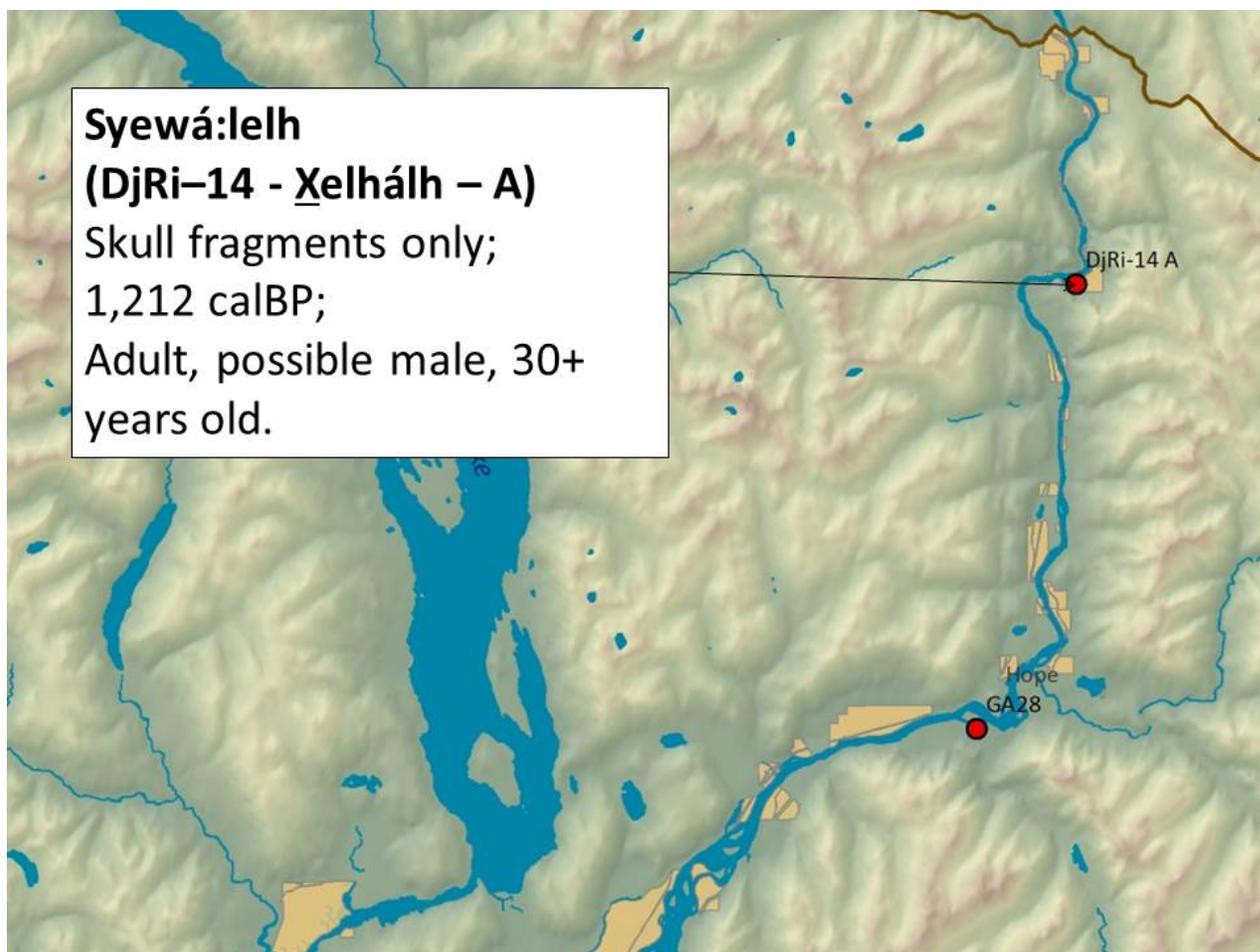


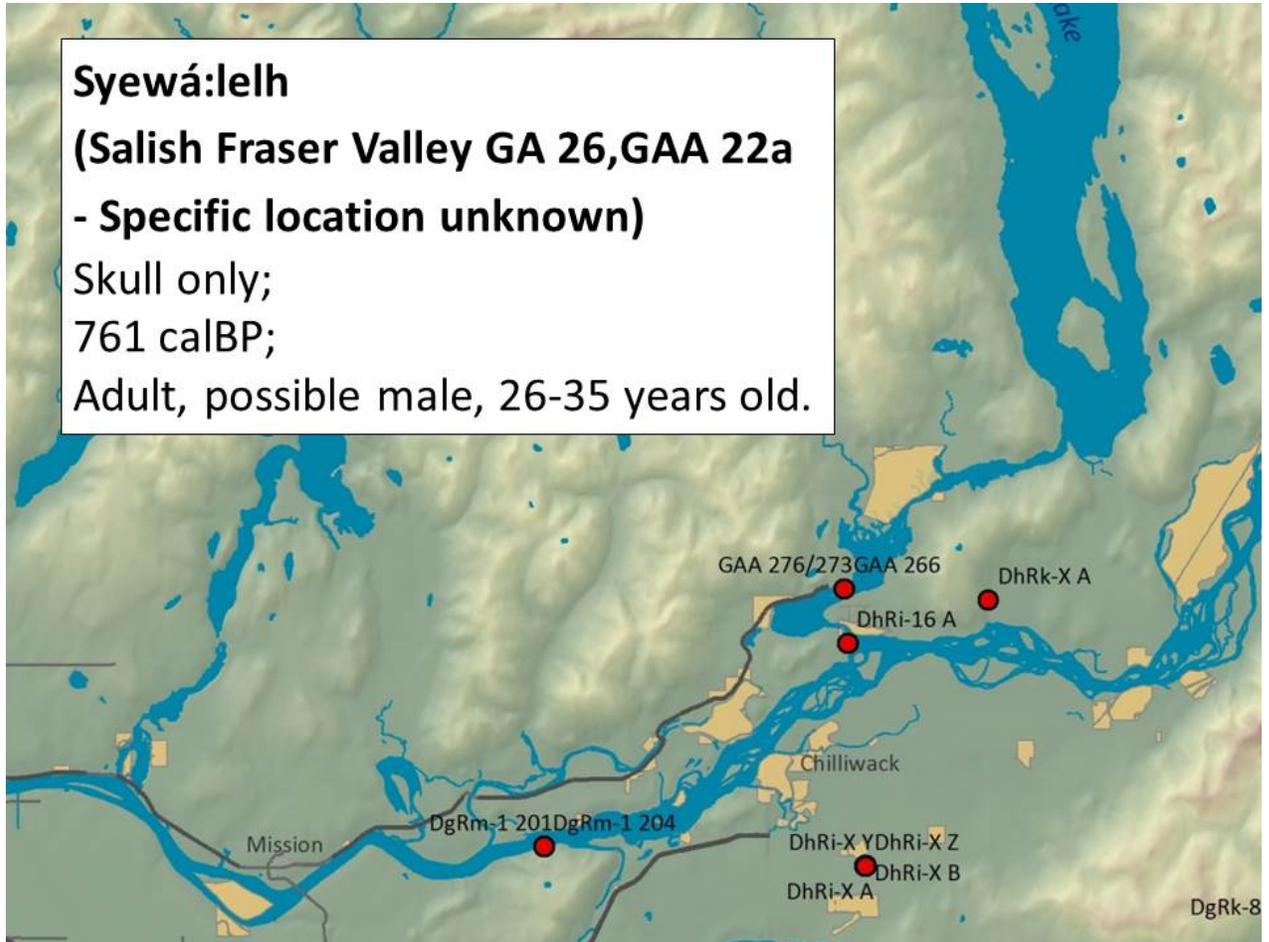






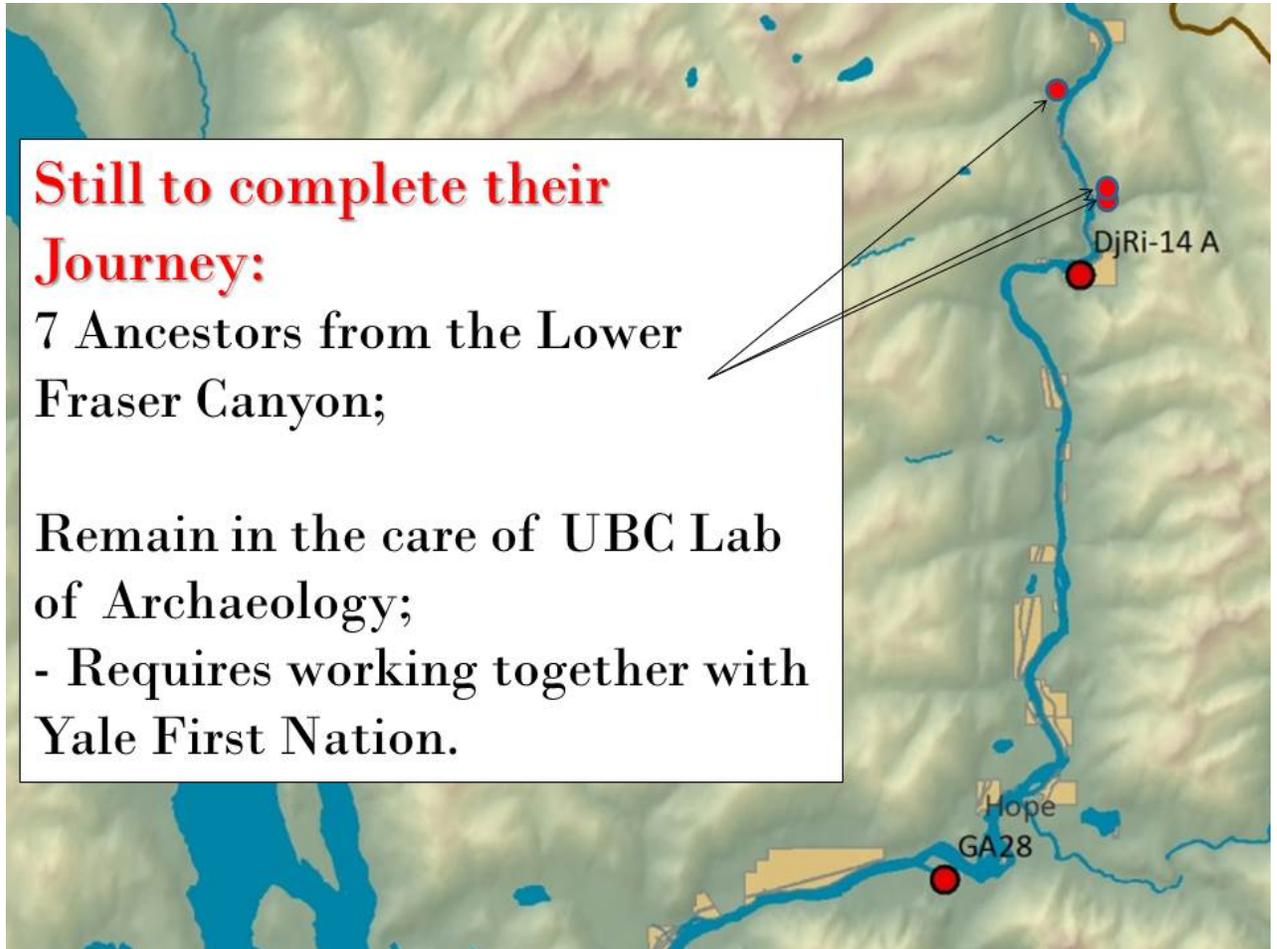




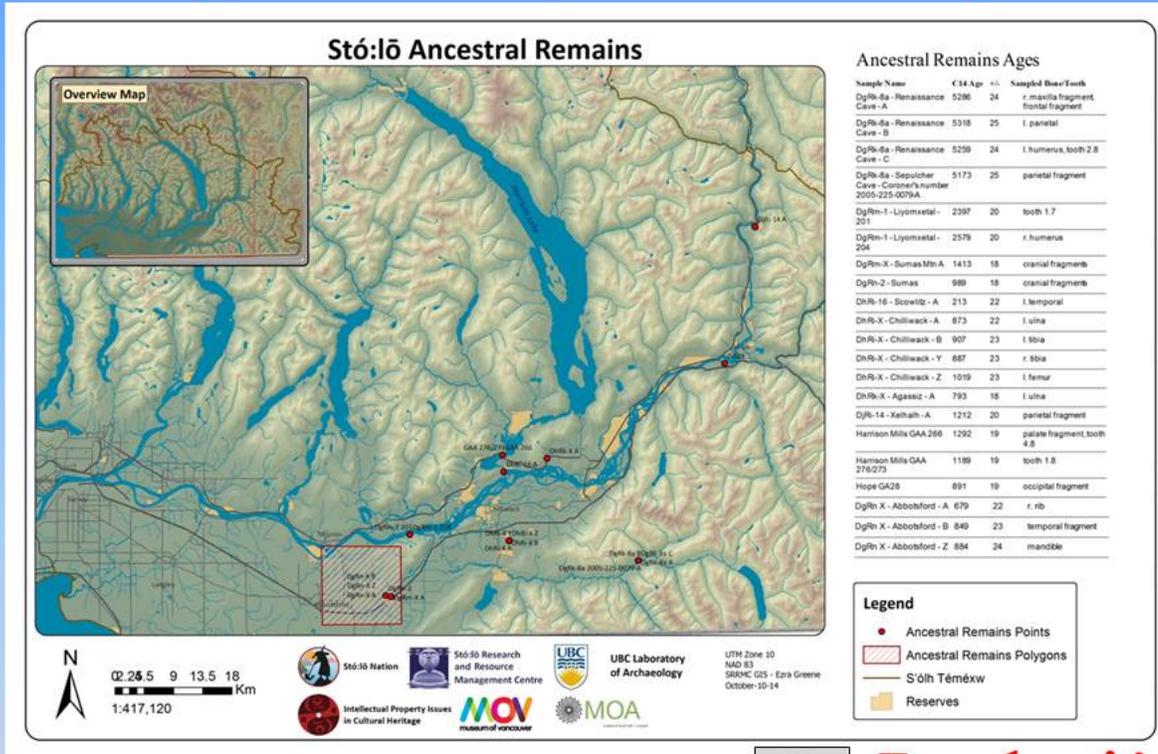


## ***What did these ancestors eat?***

- All but one of the Ancestors had a diet of 75% or more ‘marine protein’ / salmon, -- as far back as 5,000+ years ago;
- One ancestor (adult female from Scowlitz) had an diet that was ‘terrestrial’ in nature and showed no sign of eating salmon.



**The final steps of these Journeys Home are to be completed soon.**



**La hoi!**