

**Report on Gitxaala Use and Occupancy of the Area Now
Known as Prince Rupert Harbour with specific reference
to the site of the Prince Rupert Container Port
Development.**

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Qualifications

I, Charles R. Menzies, Ph.D., am competent to testify and declare, under penalty of perjury, as follows:

I have been employed at University of British Columbia as faculty member since 1996 and have been a tenured Associate Professor in Anthropology since 2004. I have previously been qualified to testify as an expert on the subject of First Nations and Native American Anthropology. My CV is attached hereto.

I have conducted anthropological research on the north coast of British Columbia since 1988 and with Gitxaala Nation since 1998. Research with Gitxaala has involved extended periods of time residing in Lach Klan (Kitkatla) and Prince Rupert; interviews of community members, participation in community meetings and community research workshops, site visits to culturally and historically important Gitxaala places, and archival/library research in Prince Rupert (City Archives), Vancouver (UBC Library and Special Collections), Victoria (Provincial Archives), Ottawa (Museum of Civilization), and New York City (American Museum of Natural History and Columbia University Library). Materials at other sites have been consulted through UBC's Interlibrary Loan system and via online document databases and delivery services.

Since 2006 I have engaged in research specific to the area now known as the Prince Rupert Harbour in order to provide my opinion on any Gitxaala use and occupancy in the area. This research has involved individual interviews with community elders and hereditary leaders (June 2006, August 2007), four community research workshops (November 2007, January, May, June, 2008), and a boat tour of Prince Rupert Harbour (May 2008). Community-based research has been complemented by a review of archival materials. Caroline F. Butler, Ph.D. assisted in reviewing community workshop materials. Linda Mattson, Ph.D. assisted in reviewing archival materials on file at UBC Library and Special Collections. All materials prepared by Drs. Butler and Mattson have been reviewed and verified by me, Charles Menzies, Ph.D.

Throughout this document I refer to the people now living in Lax Kw'alaams and Metlaktala as Tsimshian and/or Ts'msyen and the people who are part of the Gitxaala Nation as Gitxaala. Academic and public writing has often grouped all of the people living from the headwaters of the Skeena and Nass and out along the coast as Tsimshian using linguistic categories as a gloss for social groupings. However, the people themselves use different names to self-identify.

Gitxaala –A North Coast Aboriginal People.

In my opinion Gitxaala was an aboriginal community and people prior to, and at the time of, European contact in 1787. Further, Gitxaala (variant Kitkatla) has continued as a community and a people up to the present day.

According to Gitxaala *adawx*¹ (oral record) the village of Lach Klan² has been continuously inhabited by the Gitxaala long before the arrival of Europeans on what is now known as the coast of British Columbia.³ Throughout *adawx* recorded by William Beynon (Canadian Museum of Civilization; Columbia University; American Museum of Natural History)⁴ and in contemporary oral accounts⁵ clear reference is made to the antiquity of the Gitxaala as an aboriginal community prior to the arrival of Europeans.

The *adawx* of the Sky brothers (see note 3) documents a series of atrocities and subsequent movements of one of the lineages of Gitxaala. In this *adawx* we learn of the trials and travels of Wudinux, a house leader of the Gitxaala Ganhada clan. This account took place before a significant flood event:⁶

“ . . . they went down along the coast farther south, until they reached Bank’s Island. Here they lived together as one household. Later they went to another place, until they came to the Kitkatla village at the end of Pitt Island known as Wilhahlgamilra-medik (where the grizzly plays along the shore), and they lived there. While there, the waters began to rise and come into the houses. The people anchored on a rock which the water had not covered. There they stayed for a long time; until the water went away suddenly, and they way they were on a mountain on Bank’s Island, Laxgyiyaks. The people went down to the water’s edge and they again move, and they found some other people at Laxklan, and here they remained until the present day” (Sam Lewis, 1916).

¹ *Adawx* is an oral record of “historical events of collective political, social, and economic significance, such as migration, territorial acquisition, natural disaster, epidemic, war, and significant shifts in political and economic power. . . . *adawx* are formally acknowledge by the society as a whole and collectively represent the authorized history of the nation” (Marsden 2002:102-103).

² Lach Klan is the contemporary village of Kitkatla, located on Dolphin Island

³ See, for example: The Origin of the Name He:l, recorded by William Beynon, 1916: “Then these men departed, and Tsibasa returned to his central village at Laxlan[Lach Klan];” The Tlingit Attack the Kitkatla, Nathan Shaw (Gitxaala), recorded by William Beynon, 1952: “. . . the Kitkatla had established a village at Laxklan for their feasts and winter ceremonials;” The Sky Brothers, Sam Lewis (Gitxaala), recorded by William Beynon, 1916: “The people went down to the water’s edge and they again moved, and they found some other people at Laxklan, and here they remained until the present day.”

⁴ In William Beynon’s unpublished *Tsimshian Geographical and Ethnical Material* (notebook 6)[New York: American Museum of Natural History] he contextually dates the existence of Lach Klan to the time before Ts’ibasa came down the Skeena River: “When T’sibaesae and his Gispowudada group came down the Skeena from T’amlax’aem they went to where there were already some of the laxsk’ik (Eagle) group in Lax K’laen. . . . This was a gathering place where these people had their elevation feasts and where they held their [?] feasts” (Beynon notebook 6, page 7).

⁵ See Oral History section of report. Throughout my field research with Gitxaala in various settings ranging from public meetings to general conversations the antiquity of Lach Klan has been clearly and consistently mentioned and discussed.

⁶ The ‘Flood’ or ‘deluge,’ as so named by many of Beynon’s early respondents, can likely be identified as a major earthquake event that occurred several millennia ago. New archeological evidence indicates a large flood or Tsunami event at some point prior to 2000 years before present. Andrew Martindale’s research team has found silt layers that can be understood as a flood event which—in the absence of direct dating are estimated to be between 3500 and 5000 years before present (Andrew Martindale personal communication November 5, 2007). A similar silt layer has been found in a core sample from Shawatlan Cove, Prince Rupert Harbour, by Morley Eldridge and Alyssa Parker (Fairview Container Terminal Phase II Archaeological Overview Assessment, March 8, 2007). These archeological data corroborate accounts of a significant flood event with the *adawx* and allow for the conclusion that *adawx* which reference the flood significantly predates European arrival.

Evidence for the antiquity of Gitxaala can also be found in the accounts of non-aboriginal merchants and traders who visited Gitxaala territory in the late 1700s. James Colnett, skipper of the British Merchant Ship *Prince of Wales*⁷, is acknowledged to be the first European to enter the Gitxaala territory. Colnett and his crew met Sabaan, a house leader of a Gitxaala Ganhada house, in 1787, at the south end of Banks Island, a portion of the Gitxaala southern territory. Some time after this initial meeting Colnett was invited to a *yaawk* (feast)⁸ in the company of the leading Gitxaala chief of the day in accordance with Gitxaala *ayaawx* (customary law). (Galois 2004; see also, the *adawx* of Sabaan⁹).

In 1792 the Spanish skipper, Jacinto Caamano, participated in a Gitxaala *yaawk* (feast). As described by Susan Marsden:

“Jacinto Caamano’s vessel, anchored near the south end of Pitt Island, was approached by Homts’iit, a Raven clan chief of the Kitkatla tribe who danced the peace dance for him. He and his people were invited on board. Homts’iit gave Caamano the gift of an otter skin and Caamano served refreshments, after which Homts’iit exchanged names with Caamano, making them allies. Three weeks later Caamano attended a feast at Tuwartz Inlet. Caamano described a series of feasting events in considerable detail, the first of which took place on August 28, when Homts’iit visited the ship to invite Caamano to a feast. Since the main elements in these ceremonial invitations are a peace dance and a *naxnox* demonstration, the feathers to which Caamano refers were probably eagle down, the symbol of peace, and his various masks probably represented his various *naxnox* powers” (Marsden 2007:179-180; for a translation of the original journal of Don Jacinto Caamano, see Wagner and Newcombe 1938).

In 1795 the American skipper of the ship Ruby, Charles Bishop, describes his meetings with Gitxaala people. Most notable in his descriptions is the repeated references to “Shakes” (*Sm’ooygit Seax*) the Gitxaala “Huen Smokett (Great Chief)”¹⁰. Bishop notes the importance of locating himself within Sm’ooygit Seax’s domains:

“As Shake’s dominions are very Extensive and Contain many good Harbours and inlets, the Principle business is to look out for one near the residence of the Chief as in the Situation you are shure of Procuring the Furs of the whole Tribe, and in this

⁷ See Galois (2004:2-4) for a brief description of James Colnett’s biography. Colnett was born in Devon, England in 1753. Colnett “spent three and a half years under the tutelage of [James] Cook” (Galois 2004:2). In 1786 Colnett left the British Navy and “signed on with Richard Cadman Etches & Co as captain of the *Prince of Wales* and commander of a two-vessel commercial venture” (Galois 2004:3).

⁸ The *yaawk* or feast (variant potlatch) is a central social institution amongst the Gitxaala. A *yaawk* is a public event that is linked to, among other things, the passing of hereditary names, recognition of people, declarations of ownership, and formalization of alliances and agreements.

⁹ Dorothy Brown of the Kitkatla. “Saaban” in Susan Marsden, ed., *Suwilaay’msga Na Ga’niiyatgm, Teachings of Our Grandfathers* (Prince Rupert: School District 52, 1992).

¹⁰ The Journal and Letters of Captain Charles Bishop on the North-West Coast of America, in the Pacific and in New South Wales 1794-1799. Edited by Michael Roe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967; see, especially, pages 65 – 72, 90-93.

respect the Season must be consulted, for they shift their Habitations often, we having fell in with several evacuated villages. In the Spring and Early in the Summer the natives are found near the outside coast for taking halibut and other Ground fish, but when the Salmon go up the Freshes to Spawn they shift to the narrows and falls for Procuring their winters Stock of this delicious food.”¹¹

These early visits by Europeans to Gitxaala territory occurred in the context of a preexisting social order. The Gitxaala people were in place and had clear ideas of laws, protocols, ownership, and rights of use. In both Colnett’s and Caamano’s logbooks and the *adawx* of the Gitxaala can be found descriptions of the Europeans attempting to take things from Gitxaala territory and being rebuffed by the Gitxaala.¹²

Archeological data in the region is sparse –not for lack of sites, but rather for lack of work in the region. To date most archeological work in the Ts’msyeen and Gitxaala world has been conducted in the Prince Rupert Harbour area (see review of archaeological data below), in the Kitselas Canyon area of the Skeena River, and most recently, on the Dundas Islands. David Archer conducted a field survey of Kitkatla Inlet and area in the late 1990s. Additional episodic work has been done as part of development and logging plans. Most such surveys are cursory in nature and tend to focus on surface features and Culturally Modified Trees (CMTs). CMT data indicates human presence and resource use dating back several hundred years prior to European arrival. Radiocarbon dates from archeological sites in the region extend back to nearly 10,000 years before present (Martindale 2007¹³).

Social Organization of the Gitxaala¹⁴

Gitxaala society (which anthropologically has been considered part of the wider grouping of Tsimshian peoples) is organized in a number of ways: clan affiliation, social class, housegroup membership, and village residence. For the Gitxaala each individual (with the exception, in the past, for slaves) belongs to one of four clans: *ganhada* (raven), *gispuwada* (blackfish), *lasgeek* (eagle), or *laxgibu* (wolf). Clans do not, however, exercise any specific political authority. That rested with the *sm’ooygit* and their housegroups (see below). Clan affiliation, reckoned matrilineally, does inform who can

¹¹ Journal and Letter of Captain Bishop, page 72.

¹² For Colnett’s journal, see: **A Voyage to the North West Side of America: The Journals of James Colnett, 1786-1789**. Edited by Robert Galois. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004; see, especially, pages 138-166. For Caamano’s journal see: *The Journal of Don Jacinto Caamano*. Translated by Captain Harold Grenfell, R.N., edited with an introduction and notes by Hen R. Wagner and W.A. Newcombe. *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*. July and October 1938; see, especially, pages 269-293.

¹³ Martindale is the lead research of a multi-year team project examining the archeological record of Dundas Islands. This area figures prominently in Gitxaala and Ts’msyeen *adawx*. The project web page can be found at: http://www.anth.ubc.ca/Dundas_Island_Project.10687.0.html. The radio carbon dates are listed in Martindale’s 2007 presentation and have also been communicated orally to Menzies.

¹⁴ This section on Gitxaala social organization draws upon Menzies (2006) “The Case of the Pine Mushroom Harvest in Northwestern British Columbia,” in Menzies (ed), **Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Natural Resource Management** Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press; 87-104 (see, pages 89-90), Menzies and Butler (2007) “Returning to Selective Fishing Through Indigenous Knowledge: The Example of K’moda Gitxaala Territory.” *American Indian Quarterly* Vol 31(3):441-462(see, pages 443-445), and; Marjorie M. Halpin and Margaret Seguin (1990) “Tsimshian Peoples: Southern Tsimshian, Coast Tsimshian, Nishga, and Gitksan,” in Wayne Shuttles (ed) *Handbook of North American Indians*. Volume 7 Northwest Coast. Washington: Smithsonian Institution; 267-284.

marry whom and, consequently, alliances between members of specific house groups.

Historically three or four classes can be identified: high-ranking titleholders and other titleholders; freeborn commoners without rights to hereditary names, and; slaves, those born to slaves or captured in war. Members of the title holding classes formed the hereditary leadership of Gitxaala. They are the *sm'gyigyet* (singular, *sm'ooygit*, meaning 'real people') or chiefs who held specific rights and responsibility with respect to other community members. The origins of a *sm'ooygit*'s right to governance can be found in the *adawx* and is often linked to an event in which an ancestor received a gift or privilege from the spirit world, through political conquest, or through an alliance with another community.

Titles, or hereditary names, were and are an important aspect of Gitxaala social organization. Hereditary names were and are passed along from one generation to the next through the feast system. Hereditary names are linked to, among other things, histories, crest images, territory, rights, and responsibilities. Not every Gitxaala person has a hereditary name, nor are all Gitxaala people eligible to take on a hereditary name. Hereditary names exist through time with different individuals holding or taking on the name. For example, from the time several millennia ago that *Sm'ooygit* Ts'ibassa (a high ranking Gitxaala hereditary name) left Temlax'am,¹⁵ through to the Ts'ibassa of the early twentieth century, this name has been inherited and has existed as a social role that has been taken up by a line of successors.

Ownership of, access to, and rights of use of resource gathering locations were and largely are governed by multi-generational matrilineages called *walp* or houses. Notwithstanding the prominence of a paramount *sm'ooygit* or leader at the village level, the effective source of political power and authority with respect to the territory laid with the house leaders. Membership in a particular house-group is determined matrilineally, by one's mothers' position. This social unit is the effective political building block of the Gitxaala and Ts'msyeeen villages. Each house owns and has responsibility for a patchwork quilt of resource gathering and social use areas. Taken in combination, the house territories, situated around natural ecosystem units such as watersheds, form the backbone of each village's collective territory.

Villages consist of groups of related and allied housegroups who traditionally wintered together in a common site. While there has been some changes following the arrival of Europeans (for example, Lax Kw'alaams consists of the members that were formerly nine separate winter villages clustered in the Prince Rupert Harbour and Metlakatla Pass area) the Gitxaala village of Lach Klan has been continuously inhabited before and after Europeans first arrived in their territories. Within the village there is a paramount *sm'ooygit* who is the house leader of the most powerful house group, in the dominant clan. While this person has traditionally wielded much power and economic wealth within the village it is important, nonetheless, to point out that his authority resided in the

¹⁵ Temlax'am (variant Temlaham; also Prairie Town) is an ancient village in what is today Gitksan territory. In the old times, long before European contact, the people found themselves dispersed from Temlax'am as a result of a series of disasters. Key Gispwada houses and lineages, which are now Gitxaala, had their origins in Temlax'am.

power and prestige of his house group.

In Gitxaala society the leading *sm'oogyit*, like elsewhere amongst the Ts'msyen world, "can expect constant and liberal economic support from his tribesmen" (Garfield 1939:182. As Halpin and Seguin note in their article in the *Handbook of Native American Indians*, "The village chief was the chief of the highest-ranking house in the village, and the other houses, in all clans, were ranked under him in descending order" (1990:276). Halpin and Seguin go on to comment that "traditional narratives report that the Southern Tsimshian [which would include Gitxaala] chiefs received tribute in the form of the first sea otter and seal caught by each canoe of sea hunters and other fur animals captured by land animals" (1990: 276).

The Continuance of Gitxaala as a Community and a People

Gitxaala has continued as a community and a people up to the present day. This can be documented through references to Gitxaala people contained in, for example:

1. Ships' logs (Colnett, Caamano, Bishop)
2. Hudson's Bay Company journals
 - a. Kitkatla sequence
 - b. Fort Simpson sequence
 - c. Frasier Tolmie's journal
 - d. John Work's journal
3. Indian Affairs Annual Reports (1864 – 1990)
<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/indianaffairs/index-e.html>

Ships' Logs: The Journals of James Colnett (1787), Jacinto Caamano (1792) and Charles Bishop (1795) all contain accounts of meeting with Gitxaala people whose behaviour and demeanor provides evidence of a people organized with a clear sense of social norms, etiquette, and laws. Colnett documents meeting with the Gitxaala *Sm'oogyit* Seax (a close brother of Gitxaala *Smo'oogyit* Ts'ibassa and head of an affiliated walp). He also encounters *Sm'oogyit* Homts'iit –though not under as positive a setting as Caamano does¹⁶. As described above Caamano travels into the heart of the Gitxaala southern territory and is, after a sequence of events, invited to participate in a *yaawk* hosted by Homts'iit. Bishop spends significant periods of time engaged in trade with the Gitxaala, particularly with *Sm'oogyit* Seax. These early European encounters document elements of Gitxaala society and social order that were extant at the moment of contact.

Hudson's Bay Company Journals. Subsequent to Colnett's, Caamano's, and Bishop's visits to Gitxaala territory the Hudson's Bay Company established Fort Simpson in 1834 near the spring camp of a Lax Kw'alaams *Sm'oogyit* (Marsden and Galois 1995¹⁷).

¹⁶ See Galois (2004) pages 163-164 for an account of the increasing hostilities between Colnett's crew and *Smo'oogyit* Homts'iit. See Wagner and Newcombe (1938) pages 288-293 for Caamano's contrasting experience.

¹⁷ Marsden, Susan and Galois, Robert (1995). "The Tsimshian, the Hudson's Bay Company, and the Geopolitics of the Northwest Coast Fur Trade." *Canadian Geographer* 39(2):169-83.

References to Gitxaala can be identified in the HBC Fort Simpson journal and the journals of men working for the HBC (see, for example: Henry Drummond Dee 1944, 1945; Tolmie 1963).

Donald Mitchell (1981) outlines the way in which variants of *Sm'ooygit* Ts'ibasaa's name (Sebassa, Sabassa, Dzi'basa, etc., Mitchell 1981:80) was interchangeable with the Gitxaala in the mid-years of the 19th century: his name "seems to have been employed as a synonym for Kitkatla, occasionally it identifies only the person himself, and in some instances it may refer to the house, lineage, or place" (Mitchell 1981:81).

References to the Gitxaala as a people continue through the period of the fur trade. The journal of John Work (b. 1792 – d.1861), for example, documents a series of encounters with Gitxaala people. Work's journals are held by the British Columbia Provincial Archives. His 1835 journals are of particular interest. Work notes weather, activities in Fort Simpson and about the HBC ship Lama, trade with indigenous peoples and references particular named people and groups. On March 24th, 1835, for example, he notes that: "Late last night a party of Sabassa men passed here, but did not come aboard."¹⁸ The journal's editor, Henry Drummond Dee, comments that: "Sabassa (sometimes rendered as Sebassa or Sebasses) seems to have been a collective term applied to the Indians of Laredo and Principe channels. The tribe was often named after the chief, who was given a hereditary name. The chief Sabassa is mentioned in Tolmie's Diary, entry for April 3, 1935" (see Dee 1944, page 229).

Traveling through Principe Channel April 9th, 1835, Work drops anchor on the south end of Banks Island where he had "expected to find the Sabassa Indians but not one is to be seen. Different old villages on both sides of the Canall as we came down, where they used to resort, are all at present abandoned." [Dee comments that the "only reason for abandonment was the usual seasonal one, when the Indians went from place to place for Salmon and the like."¹⁹] (Dee 1944:233).

Back at Fort Simpson, Work notes on July 10th, 1835, that: "Late last night two canoes arrived from the Canalls a little inland from Sabasses." Then again on July 20th, 1835: "A Canoe of Indians arrived from about Sabasses some where" (Dee 1945:50, 52).

William Fraser Tolmie's journal covers a similar time frame and also includes specific references to Gitxaala people and territory²⁰. Tolmie was based in the Hudson's Bay

¹⁸ "The Journal of John Work, 1835. Part II. Edited by Henry Drummond Dee. 1944. *British Columbia Historical Quarterly* Vol. 8(3)227-24; see page 229.

¹⁹ It should be noted that abandonment of village sites from about 1770 through to 1862 might well be indicators of the devastating effects of epidemics such as smallpox. Cole Harris documents the genocidal effects of a smallpox epidemic that swept through the lower Fraser River and Gulf of Georgia area. Traveling through the region a few years later Vancouver comes across many 'abandoned' village sites; one of which has the appearance of a mass grave (Cole Harris (1994) "Voices of Disaster: Smallpox around the Strait of Georgia in 1782." *Ethnohistory* Vol. 41(4):591-626). I have been told of a history in the Gitxaala area in which an island was used as a mass burial for a village that fell ill to disease. It is not possible at this time to accurately date the story, but it is likely an account of either the 1862 smallpox epidemic or possibly an earlier epidemic.

²⁰ See, for example, pages: 271, 272, 307, 311, 312, 314, in Tolmie (1963) **The Journals of William Fraser Tolmie: Physician and Fur Trader**. Vancouver: Mitchell Press Ltd..

Company post in Milbank Sound and, while in the employ of the HBC traveled between there and Fort Simpson. His journals note the passage of time, events at the HBC posts, and various people and ships that passed by.

The Fort Simpson journals of the Hudson's Bay Company, including the sequence identified as Kitkatla Journals, also make note of the business of the HBC post and its trade with Indigenous peoples. The arrival and passage of various native peoples are noted, including specific references to Gitxaala people in a manner similar to the references noted above by Work and Tolmie.²¹

Indian Affairs Annual Reports. An online search of the Indian Affairs Annual reports finds at least one reference to Kitkatla as a community and/or a location per year from 1881 through 1990.²²

Establishment of Reserves as an indication of Gitxaala's continued existence. The initial three Gitxaala reserves were established in a meeting between Gitxaala and Peter O'Reilly at Komoda (Lowe Inlet) in 1881. A second set of reserves was allotted in a meeting between O'Reilly and T'sbassa at Komoda in 1891.²³

Key Findings in Relation to Gitxaala Use and Occupancy with Specific Reference to Prince Rupert Harbour

In my opinion there is clear evidence of Gitxaala use and occupancy of the Prince Rupert Harbour, including the container port and expansion area, predating the arrival of Europeans on the north coast and continuing into the twentieth century. This evidence documents Gitxaala sites (such as but not restricted to villages, camps and places where significant historical event took place).

There are three sources of data upon which this conclusion is based: (1) archaeological data (2) archival data (2) oral history data. Archaeological and archival data corroborates the oral history data.

1. Archaeological Data

Archaeological evidence of indigenous use and occupancy of the entire Prince Rupert Harbour area is clear and uncontestable. Morley Eldridge, archaeologist and president of Millennia Research Limited, was contracted by the Prince Rupert Port Authority to conduct archaeological surveys of the Port expansion and harbour areas. As part of his contract he summarized the previous archaeological work in Prince Rupert Harbour. As they note (see Millennia Research 2008:8), archaeological work began with Harlan Smith of the National Museum of Man²⁴ in 1907. Philip Drucker of the Smithsonian Institution followed in 1938. In June of 1954 C.E. Borden of the University of British Columbia,

²¹ Post Journals [Fort Simpson (Nass)] B.201/a/1-7. 1832-1853. Archives of Manitoba.

²² Listed either as Kitkathla or Kitkatla. <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/index-e.html> Accessed September 13, 2008.

²³ GR 2982. Minutes of reserve allocations, Peter O'Reilly. BC Provincial Archives.

²⁴ The National Museum of Man would later become the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

assisted by James Baldwin, a local high school student, tested the Co-op site (GbTo-10) on the outskirts of Prince Rupert.

In 1966, George F. MacDonald, following his appointment as the West Coast Archaeologist at the National Museum of Man, initiated a seven year long Prince Rupert Harbour Archaeological Research Project. The Canadian Museum of Civilization continued to sponsor work in the Prince Rupert Harbour through the 1980s. Since that period, the primary archaeologists working in the Prince Rupert Harbour area have been Gary Coupland (University of Toronto) and David Archer (North West Community College). Millennia Research's two reports (2007, 2008) are the most recent archaeological work and refer specifically to the container port area. Their work largely informs the passages that follow.

A century of archaeological research in Prince Rupert Harbour clearly documents extensive Indigenous use and occupancy long before European arrival. What cannot be clearly discerned is whether these archaeological remains document an exclusive Tsimshian use and occupation, an exclusive Gitxaala use and occupancy, or a combined Tsimshian and Gitxaala use and occupancy.

Summary of Archaeological Sequence of Prince Rupert Harbour

George F. MacDonald and Richard I. Inglis²⁵ in an article entitled An Overview of the North Coast Prehistory Project (1966-1980) (1980-81: 42) write:

The archaeological sequence from the Prince Rupert Harbour area spans at least 5,000 years. It is seen in a series of developing technological traditions which have an accumulative effect through time ... New elements are appended to a basic pattern but do not significantly alter it. Changes that do occur are quantitative and likely reflect elaborations in the social and economic organization. Three periods are defined, the temporal span of each being based on radiocarbon dates.

Drawing upon the archaeological record, MacDonald and Inglis then outline the three periods they have been able to establish, beginning with **Period III** with a timeline of 3000 B.C.-1500 B.C.:

The earliest occupation of the Prince Rupert area so far known is characterized by shallow midden accumulations and restricted site areas. Surface species of shellfish, especially blue mussel, and a lack of variety in the intertidal bivalve species characterize the matrix.

²⁵ Richard I. Inglis is an archaeologist who was, in the 1960s and 1970s affiliated with the Museum of Civilization. He was subsequently employed as an archaeologist for the Royal Museum of BC.

Faunal and artifact inventories are small, and all tool forms are relatively few in number. Cobble tools ... Other chipped stone is present late into the period ... Bilaterally barbed bone harpoons with line-holes or bilateral line-guards and unilaterally barbed harpoons with single unilateral line-guards are characteristic of this period ... Geometric decorative motifs ... are first applied to utilitarian objects ...

There are few structural features in Period III components, but indications are that houses were considerably smaller than later in the sequence ... [MacDonald and Inglis 1980-81:42-45]

MacDonald and Inglis then proceed to describe the archaeological evidence that characterize what they define, based on radiocarbon dates, as **Period II** (1500 B.C.-A.D. 500):

About 1500 B.C. there is a rapid midden build-up, reflecting larger village occupations and larger house construction, and probably a substantial population increase. The subsurface bivalves of the intertidal zone are heavily exploited, as evidenced in the extensive shell deposits.

The basic tool kit continues. Chipped stone peaks in frequency in this period, and a new unilaterally barbed bone harpoon appears ... Ground-slate points ... and “pencils” now occur in abundance and several new artifact forms are found, including labrets and novice lip-pins; nephrite adze/chisel blades; pecked and ground stone tools; sea-mammal bone rods ... shaman mirrors. The first trade items are in evidence, including obsidian, amber and dentalia. Art objects become common. ...

A large sample of burials date to the last millennium of this period. Burial is generally in a tightly flexed position either in a shallow pit or a rectangular box. Grave goods, copper ornaments, amber beads ... are included with some burials reflect status differentiation in the community. Probable ritual use of skeletons ... and physical injuries that may be attributed to intergroup hostility (Cybulski, 1979) are encountered.

House features are considerably larger ... [MacDonald and Inglis 1980-81:42-52]

MacDonald and Inglis conclude their descriptions of the three temporal spans with **Period I** (A.D. 500-A.D. 1830):

...Massive and elaborate pecked and ground stone artifacts occur. Zoomorphic art flourishes ... Features from different areas of the site, such as house pit size and associated materials, reflect ranked village structure.

Cobble choppers and other chipped stone tools are still present. ... New artifact forms include bone scrapers, rare composite toggling-harpoon valves ... stone splitting-adze mauls ...

The upper layers are marked by the introduction of European trade goods, but the prehistoric pattern remains unchanged. ... [MacDonald and Inglis 1980-81:52]

As stated earlier, Millennia Research Limited undertook the most recent archaeological work in the Prince Rupert Harbour. Millennia's findings will be presented in the passages that follow, combined with the work of previous archaeological research whenever deemed appropriate.

The authors of Millennia Research Limited summarize their project, explaining that:

At the request of the Prince Rupert Port Authority, Millennia Research Limited conducted an archaeological impact assessment of the proposed Fairview Container Terminal Phase II Expansion, just south of Prince Rupert, BC. The proposed development is within the traditional territories of the Lax Kw'alaams, Metlakatla and Gitxaala First Nations. The Kitsumkalum have also stated an interest in the area. ... [Millennia Research Limited 2008:iv]

As a result of the fieldwork, two prehistoric disturbed shell middens and one recent CMT site were identified. Six previously recorded archaeological sites were identified. Six previously recorded archaeological sites were revisited and site boundaries were defined and often expanded. The historic military site of Fort Casey was recorded in detail. Three previously investigated but now destroyed sites are discussed in the report, as they are in or proximal to the overall project area. [Millennia Research Limited 2008:iv]

Millennia explain that during the archeological undertakings “[o]ver 250 artifacts were found.”[Millennia Research Limited 2008:v]. These artifacts demonstrate Indigenous use and occupancy of the area surveyed on behalf of the Port Authority. The 250 artifacts were:

... mostly lithic and mostly on the beach. Bone artifacts were more common than stone in test units in midden. An unusually high proportion of formed tools and ornaments were present compared to previous excavated archaeological assemblages. Very rare types included stone bark-shredders, bipointed stones, chipped bifaces, and labrets. A discussion of artifact movement on the beach concludes that part of the assemblage composition can be attributed to wave sorting and longshore drift, and partly to age-related characteristics of manufacturing. Erosion of supra-tidal shell middens onto the beach combined with deposition of artifacts from use of the beach as a special activity area is considered responsible for the presence of so many artifacts on the beach, rather than from the erosion of drowned terrestrial sites. The finding of a notable number of artifacts in the intertidal compared to previous regional archaeological projects is attributed to the intensive search methods used [Millennia Research Limited 2008:v-vi]

The Millennia authors continue, referring to specific archaeological sites:

The shell middens were found to date to about 3,000 years ago for the older component of GbTo-37, which may include wet site with preserved wooden artifacts. The other significant site with intact shell midden is GbTo-13. Radiocarbon dates from shell samples collected at one of the site components dates to approximately 1,000 years ago. The site had an inland/creek bank and shoreline areas now separated by CN tracks. Differences in faunal remains between the two sites, and internally within GbTo-13, suggest substantial information can be gained regarding the antiquity and emphasis of fishing, transportation or trade, and storage of salmon, oolichan, and herring. Differences in the frequency of sea mammal remains support the marked differences between sites seen in other parts of the harbour. [Millennia Research Limited 2008:vi]

Within their reports, the authors describe the Prince Rupert Harbour area, highlighting features that would make it advantageous and highly sought after for use and occupation of Indigenous peoples of the region:

The features that make Prince Rupert such an attractive place for industry and residence today were equally attractive to people in the past. The harbour is sheltered from storms, yet contains or is near to a very wide variety of ecological communities, both marine and terrestrial. It is strategically placed midway between the enormous salmon runs of the Skeena River and valuable eulachon runs on the Nass River. The harbour area lies within the Hecate Lowland ecosection, and while the western side has the expected low relief and elevation, the east side of harbour is very mountainous ... Hemlock, spruce and western red cedar forests characterize this very wet regime. ... To the westward, surf-tolerant species inhabit the reefs and islets fronting Hecate Strait and Dixon Entrance. Marine resources are particularly abundant; the salmon runs up the Skeena River, and the salmon and eulachon runs up the Nass River, are amongst the biggest in North America. Halibut and rockfish are abundant in Hecate Strait and many of the channels and islets. Sea mammals, from sea otters to large whales, were once common. ... [Millennia Research Limited 2008:5]

Given that the archaeological sites being discussed are largely located at sea level, the Millennia authors also address the potential impacts of sea level changes upon the archaeological record, conveying that:

The effect of sea levels on the archaeological record has been discussed since the beginning of the discipline in British Columbia. Although the details of sea level history and the mechanisms by which they changed were unknown at the time, raised beaches were identified as much older than present day ones in some of the first archaeological work done in BC: “At Fort Rupert, Kliksiwi and other places there seem to be a series of old beaches parallel with the shore, upon which, it seems probable to me, there may be located the [struck out] of shell heaps belonging to an older period than those on the present beach” (Smith 1898:5 [quotation extracted from Harlan Smith’s letter to Franz Boas, June 13th, 1898, from Fort Rupert]). [Millennia Research Limited 2008:7]

The authors Millennia Research Limited explain that work on the Phase I and II related archeological undertakings began in mid-May 2006, with reconnaissance fieldwork in August and September. The thirteen archaeological sites identified in the Prince Rupert Harbour area will be discussed in the passages that follow, beginning with GbTo-10 (Co-op site) and moving geographically southward. Most of the site descriptions that follow are informed by the literature and site research of the Millennia authors. A map developed by Millennia which shows these sites against the footprint of the port development is attached in an appendix.

GbTo-10 (Co-op site)²⁶ – Shell Midden, Burial

About GbTo-10 (Co-op site), which appears to be totally destroyed, the Millennia authors report:

The GbTo-10 site was observed by Drucker in 1938 (Drucker 1943:72) and excavated by Charles Borden with the assistance of James Baldwin in 1953. Three human burials and a number of stone and bone artifacts were found. ... The actual location of the excavated site was lost through time, however, and at the start of the overview was mapped as being inside the existing terminal, just south and west of the DND fuel tanks, and south of the Lachane site (GBTo-33). Reports on the Lachane site, however, identified Coop as a northern extension of the Lachane site, perhaps located directly across the large creek that bordered the Lachane site (Ames 2005; MacDonald and Cybulski 2001; MacDonald and Inglis 1981). The natural and cultural features in the area have all changed so much since the early 1950s, that identification of the location had become very difficult, but was resolved with the help of archival aerial and ground level photographs (Eldridge and Parker 2007). ... [Millennia 2008: 25-26]

The Millennia authors link the archaeological evidence to the oral historical and archival record:

The Co-op, and perhaps the Lachane sites (which were likely at one time continuous) are the location of a pivotal event in the warfare between Tlingit and Tsimshian. The *Adawx* story describes how the Gitwilgyots chief Aksk²⁷ built a booby-trapped fortified house and arranged elaborate dummies that tricked the Tlingit warriors and led to their utter defeat. In a narrative merged by Susan Marsden (2001:79-80) from two versions originally told by Heber Clifton and Herbert Wallace, the specific location of the fortress was related in reference to 20th century landmarks:

“They came to a place on Kaien Island (Prince Rupert) and were going to build a village there (where the white beacon stands, and where the cemetery of Prince Rupert is).”

²⁶ The numbers used are Charles Borden designations (Millennia 2007:50) and are commonly used in British Columbia to identify archeological sites.

²⁷ See footnote #40.

“Here he erected a fortified place. He built his house on a mound (right opposite where the Cooperative Cold Storage Plant now stands, in Prince Rupert) ... Then he made a huge trap door which was many timbers thick, and he suspended it from the rafters of the house right over the doorway of the house so that it would drop upon the clear space below and would crush everything it would fall upon.”

The cemetery is 150 m east (directly inland) of the former location of the Co-op plant, substantiating this location. Photographs from the early 1970s show a large white navigational marker just south of the Co-op, at the location of GbTo-33. ... [Millennia 2007:20]

GbTo-105²⁸

This is a small area of previously disturbed shell midden ... [Millennia 2008:27]

The examined faunal assemblage from GbTo-105 contains 323 skeletal specimens, the majority of which are fish remains ... [Millennia 2008:28]

GbTo-33 (Lachane Site) – Shell Midden; Burial²⁹

The Millennia authors claim that the “Lachane site is one of the most extensively excavated sites on the Northwest Coast” (2007:23). Richard Inglis, Archaeological Survey of Canada, who in 1973, directed a five-month long field investigation at Lachane wrote (1973:1-1)

On September 7, 1972 the lead article in the Prince Rupert Daily News heralded plans for construction of a deep-sea shipping terminal in Prince Rupert. I immediately noted that two of the last remaining middens on Kaien Island would be destroyed by the development, and plans for a major salvage program were drawn up.

The two sites threatened by the development were situated on the east side of the Canadian National Railway Track, some 2000 feet apart. The northernmost site, GbTo-33, was located at Fairview Point ... This site is likely the northeast extension of GbTo-10, the Co-op site, that was salvaged by Dr. Borden and James Baldwin in 1954. The designation GbTo-33 has been maintained, however, as it is impossible to determine conclusively the relationship between the two areas. GbTo-10 was on the west side of the tracks, and was totally destroyed and built over in the late 1950’s.

²⁸ The Millennia authors report that this site was previously destroyed.

²⁹ The Millennia authors report that this site was previously destroyed.

GbTo-36, located on a small point half-way between Fairview and Casey Points ... was partially destroyed by the railroad construction in the early 1900's.³⁰

Concerning the field excavation at Lachane as well as GbTo-36 (Baldwin Site), Inglis reported (Inglis 1973: 3-4):

The larger of the two sites, GbTo-33 was sampled during the first three months. Over 25,000 cubic feet of the cultural deposit were excavated from 23 units. Four thousand artifacts were recovered along with large quantities of associated faunal material, 50 burial features ... GbTo-36 was excavated during August and early September. Ten excavation units were started ... Roughly 14,000 cubic feet of deposit were sampled yielding 1000 artifacts, 13 burial features ...

Artifacts and features encountered in the shell middens correspond closely to those found previously in excavations conducted by the Archaeological Survey of Canada in the Prince Rupert area. The most dramatic finds, however, came from the stream channel that flowed through GbTo-33. Over 400 artifacts of perishable wood and vegetable fibres were recovered.

In his preliminary analysis of the Lachane and Baldwin sites, Inglis (1973:6-7) wrote:

Detailed study of these collections will begin late in 1974 ... Preliminary conclusions from the study of materials and manufacturing techniques indicate a close relationship between historic and prehistoric basketry [found at the site], and support the interpretation of cultural continuity in the harbour for **more than 5000 years of occupation**. [Emphasis added]

Concerning more recent archaeological excavations and analysis undertaken at Lachane, the Millennia authors report that:

³⁰ Inglis then linked the archaeological record with the oral historical record and archival record, explaining that (Inglis 1973:2): "There are several references to GbTo-33 in Coast Tsimshian traditions. It was a major village site of the Gitwilgyots tribe, named tot'sopem galts'oep 'fortified village' (Beynon, 1953, Vol III), and was the scene of several recorded stories: They myth of the giant grubworm (Beynon, 1947, Vol. GG); Narrative of t'saek (Beynon, 1947-48, Vol. HH); and Myth of the house of 'wae'ie, laxkibu, gitwilgyots (Beynon, 1952, Vol. V)."

... A third much smaller excavation occurred in 1987 in response to DND construction of large fuel storage tanks at the site (Simonsen 1988). The archaeological site contained house platforms, shell midden up to 4 m deep, and a large wet site area (Inglis 1973a, 1974). The skeletal remains of some 73 individuals were excavated (Cybulski 1996). At least 3393 bone and stone artifacts and about 400 perishable artifacts were recovered during the earlier excavations; 79 more were found in 1987. Some 35 radiocarbon dates were obtained (Ames 2005:92; Simonsen 1989:30). [Millennia 2007:23]

Regarding human occupation dates at the Lachane site, Millennia authors maintain that:

The earliest occupation dates to about **3,500 BC**, while the terminal occupation dates were about **AD 1400** (Ames 2005:89-92). The wet site dates from about **800 BC to AD 450**. Despite this abundance of dates, a lack of stratigraphic drawings prevented Ames from subdividing the assemblage on more than horizontal areas, resulting in the lumping of thousands of years into single analytical units (e.g., Ames 2005:290-291) and therefore severely limiting the usefulness of the analysis.] [Emphasis added]

At the base of the wet site were adzed logs and stumps that Inglis (Inglis 1976) attributes to initial site clearing (although other parts of the site date almost **3,000** years earlier). ... Among the remarkable assemblage of perishables are about 16 baskets or basket fragments and a small number of mat fragments (Croes 1989a, 1989b; Inglis 1976), many wooden wedges, chisel and adze hafts, a few carved wooden bowls, a few small kerfed wood boxes or buckets, paddles, fish-drying sticks and many arrow or spear shafts (Inglis 1976). The baskets here show a notable similarity to historic Tsimshian³¹ baskets, with exclusive use of cedar bark and square plaited bases (even on cylindrical baskets); Croes and others have argued that this demonstrates ethnic continuity through time. Both these basic attributes are missing from the baskets of neighbouring groups, the Tlingit and Haida. ... [Millennia 2007:23] [Emphasis added]

In their concluding remarks concerning the site the Millennia authors, once again, link the archaeological and oral historical record:

³¹ As noted on page two of this report I refer to the people now living in Lax Kw'alaams and Metlaktala as Tsimshian and/or Ts'msyen and the people who are part of the Gitxaala Nation as Gitxaala. Academic and public writing has often grouped all of the people living from the headwaters of the Skeena and Nass and out along the coast as Tsimshian using linguistic categories as a gloss for social groupings. The authors of the Millennia Report are here using Tsimshian in the latter sense—as a blanket term inclusive of Gitxaala.

The Adawk of the warrior Aksk describes the fortified house as built on a mound; photographs of the archaeological excavations show the main area of the archaeological excavations to be on a raised, mound-like landform, considerably higher than the surroundings. Instrument measurements in 1987 show the hillock, even after much of the upper part had been removed, to be over 20 m higher than the elevation of the main platform of the adjacent Fairview Terminal (Simonsen 1988:10) which in turn is a few metres above high tide. No similar low hills were observed nearby on the other photos and it is possible that the excavations were within the actual fortified house area described in the story. [Millennia 2007:25]

While most scholars with anthropological expertise in the northern coast area of BC commonly accept the linkage between Aksk and this archaeological site, it is not possible to unequivocally presume that the contemporary archaeological site is in fact the remains of Aksk's house. Oral History data provided by Gitxaala Hereditary Leaders and Elders provides an alternative explanation as documented below (see discussion in Oral History).

GbTo-36, Baldwin Site

As previously stated in the discussion concerning GbTo-33 (Lachane site), Gb-To-36 (Baldwin Site) was excavated in the early 1970s, at the same time, as the Lachane site. Since that time additional research and analysis has been undertaken and applied to the site and the archaeological evidence, found there. The Millennia authors convey that radiocarbon dates indicate a time depth of about 2,000 years (Millennia 2008:32), noting that:

Seven dates on occupation layers span **1780 BC to AD 650**, while four human burials dated from **1630 BC to AD 420** (Ames 2005:95). ... Twenty-two human burials were excavated. [Millennia 2007:29-30] [Emphasis added]

In their description of the Baldwin site, the Millennia authors state that:

This site was another formerly moderate-sized shell midden site, though perhaps not large enough to represent a village. There is some disagreement with this, with Ames (2005:95) suggesting it was too small for a village, or may have been associated with Lachane, and the site form quoting National Museum website that it was a village, of which only the back ridge remained. The site was on an elevated small point, which was visible on early air photos of the harbour, and which allowed precise location of the site and excavation units ... The site is about 500 m south of the current Port Machine Shop. The site map indicates a 60 x 25 m site size and the siteform gives an average depth of 1.5 m. Much of the site had been destroyed by railway construction in the early 20th century and military camps in the Second World War had further disturbed the site. [Millennia 2007: 29]

GbTo-96 - Intertidal Lithic; Possible Canoe Runs

Concerning, GbTo-96, Millennia authors write:

This site consists of lithic artifacts in the intertidal area just south of the existing terminal at the location where the current rail system diverges, and just south of a small creek, which enters the intertidal through double cement culverts ...

... some possible cultural rock alignments related to canoe runs may be present; these were not observed in the field but can be seen on the orthophoto ... [Millennia 2007:32]

GbTo-37 - Shell Midden; Intertidal Lithics

According to the Millennia authors, GbTo-37 is of high overall significance in that sense that it contains: chronologically sensitive cultural items; quantity and variety of tool types; distinct intrasite activity areas; tool types indicative of specific socio-economic or religious activity; cultural features such as burials, dwellings, hearths; and exotic cultural items and materials, for example (Millennia 2008:84). The authors explain that:

GbTo-37 was first recorded as a shell midden in 1979 by Milt Wright ...

During the 2008 work... A total of 54 artifacts were found on the beach and nine more were found during upland testing. ... [Millennia 2008:39]

More specifically, at GbTo-37:

Diagnostic artifacts found on the beach include a splitting adze, a ground slate point fragment, a scraperplane, and a grooved stone ... Scraperplanes are found only in the very early components of Haida Gwaii ... while splitting adzes are only in the late Prince Rupert I [2500 BP – AD 1830] [Millennia 2008:44]

Concerning the faunal analysis concerning GbTo-37, Millennia authors report that:

A total of 321 skeletal specimens were examined ...

Salmon remains overwhelmingly dominate the 1/4" excavation unit assemblage, representing approximately 90% of the examined assemblage followed distantly by deer and dog. ... the fact that salmon is the most abundant taxa in the three differently screened assemblages supports the interpretation that salmon is an important component of the vertebrate assemblage at this site. [Millennia 2008:47]

GbTo-12 – Shell Midden; Intertidal Lithics

The Millennia authors describe GbTo-12 as lying on the northern side of the mouth of Casey Creek. They explain that:

The first archaeological record of the site comes from the early 20th century, when Harlan Smith noted a shell midden at the mouth of Casey Creek that the railroad had cut through ... [Millennia 2008:48]

The Millennia authors report that:

Only 23 artifacts were found on the beach here during the current project. A gap between these and the intertidal artifacts at GbTo-37 seem unusual, and corresponds to the submarine power line that has modified the intertidal zone here ... However, the level of disturbance evident at the submarine cable crossing seems too small to account for the pattern, and it may correspond to a precontact area of low activity. [Millennia 2008:48] ...

The Millennia authors state that the archaeological record left behind at GbTo-12 “suggest a very long period of use of the site” (Millennia 2008:51). In support of their assertion the authors convey that:

Among the diagnostic artifacts located at the site are: a lanceolate chipped biface, a splitting adze, a bipointed stone. The presence of a **lanceolate chipped biface suggests great antiquity** (Ames 2006, personal communication suggests it **predated Prince Rupert III**), while the splitting adze and bipointed stone suggests a late precontact Prince Rupert I date ... Bipointed stones are an unusual artifact, almost completely restricted to the Tsimshian³² area. ... [Millennia 2008:51] [Emphasis added]

GbTo-13 – Shell Midden, Intertidal Lithics; Canoe Runs; Possible Burial

As is the case with GbTo-37, GbTo-13 is also considered to be of high overall significance (Millennia 2008:84). The Millennia authors explain that:

... Although this site has not been formally excavated, it has been in the archaeological literature for a hundred years. Only a small amount of midden was identified in previous surveys and the site was considered to be less than 10% intact. ... [Millennia 2008:54]

The Millennia Research Limited group found GbTo-13:

³² See note #31.

... to be much more extensive than previously recorded. Midden deposits were exposed along nearly 50 m of shoreline ... In addition, another 35 m of midden is exposed on the bank of Casey Creek inland of the tracks. Deep but limited deposits are exposed along the shoreline, with relatively deep deposits (possibly a midden back-ridge) lying immediately behind. The midden on the shoreline side of the tracks appears to have been truncated by the railway construction and the tracks appear to have split a single small village in two.

Five evaluative 1 x 1 m units were excavated: four on the water side and one on the inland side. ... EU1 was excavated at the top of the narrow ridge formed by the railway cutting; EU2 was located at the top of the beach below a deep midden exposure; EU3 was located adjacent to Casey Creek inland of the tracks; EU4 and EU5 were located at the edge of the beach erosional face. ... [Millennia 2008:54]

Given the significance of the site and the wide-ranging materials found at GbTo-13, the Millennia authors reported extensively, including a discussion of the stratigraphy or layering of deposits:

EU1 has a very unusual stratigraphy, with apparently intact midden on the sides separated by a large, expanding intrusion containing light sandy-gravel loam fill ... We conclude that the intrusion is the remains of a tree root system that was removed during railway or Fort Casey construction. Just below EU1, EU4 showed laminated probable house floor deposits in the eroded beach profile (Figure 54). The shoreline was found to be undergoing significant erosion ... This erosion may partly explain the large number of artifacts found on the beach here. If the back of a house is present here, the deposits on the ridge may represent a midden back ridge. ... EU5 showed a thick layer of predominantly whole clam on initial clearing but this proved to be a thinner, sloped layer truncated vertically by erosion on the lower end ... Other shell species contained in EU5 included mussel, barnacle, chiton, and cockle.

Radiocarbon dates of shell from EU5 ... are each given as approximately **1,000 years old**. ...this portion of the site is a single depositional component and dates to a Period I occupation. [Millennia 2008 :57]
[Emphasis added]

Concerning the artifacts found at GbTo-13, the Millennia group reports that:

... an early stage flake, and a ground bone fragment were found in the exposed face at EU4. The high number of artifacts in the EU4 facing may be comparable to house floor edges in other Prince Rupert Harbour sites in particular (Coupland, et al. 1991:12) and cultural transmutations from sweeping household debris to the edge of houses generally (Schiffer 1982).

EU5 contained two lithic flakes, a ground slate fragment, a polished bone fragment, and a shaped whetstone of slate. [Millennia 2008:57]

Regarding the intertidal artifacts and features at GbTo-13, the Millennia authors report that:

Two canoe runs are visible on orthophotos ... As with several other such features, these are more difficult to see in the field than they are from the air. ...

A relatively large number of artifacts, 66, were found on the beach fronting the midden ... Cores and hammerstones comprise the bulk of the assemblage, but there are several 'exotic' artifacts. These include two pinpointed stones (discussed in more detail below) and a second labret ... This **labret** is spool or pulley-shaped, with a hint of internal flanges. Tooth wear of the owner can be seen on the inside, and the grooved part has extremely even and parallel incisions or scratches unique on the entire Northwest Coast (Grant Keddie 2007, personal communication, Marina LaSalle 2007, personal communication). The age of the artifacts found suggest middle or late period (approximately **3500 BP to contact**). [Millennia 2008:63] [Emphasis added]

Concerning the faunal analysis conducted at GbTo-13, the Millennia authors write:

A total of 682 skeletal specimens were examined ...

Salmon remains dominate the 1/4" excavation unit assemblage followed by deer, Stellar sea lion, sea otter, and harbour seal ... However, in the fine screened sample, eulachon represents the majority of the identified remains (73% NISP), followed distantly by herring (16%) and fragmented salmon vertebrae. Both eulachon and herring are absent from the 1/4" assemblage as expected due to the small size of their bones. ... Eulachon density is high in EU5 ... moderate in EU3 ... and absent in EU1 and EU4. Eulachon outnumber herring in each of the fine screen 1 litre sediment samples indicating that the relative abundance of these taxa is consistent for the examined deposits. [Millennia 2008:63-64]

GbTo-107

GbTo-107 is described as a site, which is:

.. about 80 m upstream of GbTo-13 ...in the bank of **Casey Creek** ... This site was recognized in 2007 as being different to the recent period shell middens scattered throughout the lower Casey Creek area, on the basis of the different species of shell represented. This was despite the lack of artifacts in the deposit and the admixture with recent historic refuse. The recent period middens were comprised entirely of butter clams and cockleshells, all locally abundant in the Casey Creek gravel fan. In contrast, shells in GbTo-107 were found to come from a wide range of habitats and included bay mussel, whelk, limpet, and chiton. The opinion that the diversity represented a precontact midden was proven correct by a radiocarbon date on the shell that spans the years AD340 to 650 ... The site was perhaps originally an outlier special activity area or secluded house associated with GbTo-12 or GbTo-13 downstream. [Millennia 2008:71]

Various historic remains were found in the lower Casey Creek gully. Shack remains and refuse dumps dating from throughout the 20th century were found along the bench on the northern side of the creek. ... [Millennia 2008:71-72]

GbTo-54 - Shell Midden; Canoe Runs; Intertidal Lithics

As was the case with GbTo-37 and GbTo-13, GbTo-54 is also considered to be of high overall significance (Millennia 2008:84). Millennia authors note that D. Archer recorded this shell midden and canoe run site in 1983 (Millennia 2008:74). They continue, explaining that:

As part of the current study [i.e., undertaken by Millennia], the intertidal portion of this site was surveyed thoroughly, and numerous subsurface tests were conducted to identify and locate inland portions of the site. The intact midden, intertidal artifacts, and canoe runs overlap with CN property ... The canoe run locations were identified primarily using orthophotos and their locations confirmed in the field with handheld GPS. ... [Millennia 2008:74]

A total of 31 artifacts were recovered from the beach at GbTo-54. ... The majority of the artifacts are of a simple/expedient nature and consist primarily of either hammerstones or cores ... [Millennia 2008:77]

The artifacts found at GbTo-54 serve as a time sensitive diagnostic tool. More specifically, the site held “two pestles (Period I), a bark shredder (Period I or II), and a bipointed stone (probably Period I) (MacDonald and Inglis 1981): (Millennia 2008:79). The Millennia authors claim that:

The most interesting artifact from GbTo-54 is a D-shaped bark shredder perform ... Bark shredders are diagnostic of Period I and Period II, but are absent in III (MacDonald and Inglis 1981). ... [Millennia 2008:79]

Discussion of Prince Rupert Harbour Archaeological Evidence

The Millennia authors conclude their reporting with a discussion that focuses on:

... specific items of interest or concern, including an artifact type that may be diagnostic of Tsimshian peoples³³, interpretations of the overall distribution of intertidal artifacts, artifact movement on the beaches, lithic reduction technologies employed, faunal remains, and the basis for predicting the numbers of human remains. [Millennia 2008:96]

They begin by exploring the significance of the bipointed stones found at the sites within the Prince Rupert Harbour area:

These artifacts appear to be relatively common in the Prince Rupert Harbour area, perhaps even more common than previously realized ... Bipointed stones are clearly produced in the Harbour area because of the presence of performs. The distribution appears to indicate that they are Tsimshian,³⁴ only rarely occurring outside this area. [Millennia 2008:101-102]

The discussion continues with the archaeological evidence located within intertidal zone:

The intertidal lithics were found to be essentially continuously distributed along the project area, in varying density. For the purposes of artifact cataloguing and site assessment and management, site Borden Numbers were maintained and the original site boundaries adjusted ... Approximately 250 artifacts were recovered during the project, over 200 of them from the intertidal zone ... Unusual in the beach assemblage is the relatively large number of 'exotic' artifacts ... Two chipped stone lanceolate points were found: only 12 were found in the 18,000 artifacts recovered during the huge Prince Rupert Harbour [PRH] project; two stone labrets were found; the PRH project recovered 16 stone, seven bone, and one wood labret, the last from the Lachane wet site ...; a perform for a D-shaped bark-shredder was found ... [Millennia 2008:104]

Concerning the faunal remains found in the archaeological sites identified along the Prince Rupert Harbour, the Millennia authors make the following observations:

GbTo-105: ... an unusually large concentration of small bones was noted in one pocket. These are juvenile herring bones. These suggest a summertime harvest, as this is when these fish school inshore and may be caught in simple traps. No fish traps of any kind have been recorded in Prince Rupert Harbour.

³³ See note #31.

³⁴ See note #31.

GbTo-37: Salmon was the most common faunal remain, with almost all the bone being vertebrae, an indication that preserved dried salmon were being brought into this site. Traces of both herring and eulachon were found, indicating links with the Nass river eulachon fishery and, since herring runs arrive on the Nass at the same time as eulachon, creating a scheduling problem ... suggesting that either herring was obtained in the harbour at a different time, or by trade. ...

GbTo-13: Sea mammal remains from a number of species are present ...

GbTo-54: The presence of Stellar sea lion and rhinoceros auklet ... is suggestive of use of the Hecate Strait region as these species are not commonly found in the protected harbour waters. ...

The presence of all three major fish (salmon, herring, and eulachon) at all sites indicates temporal continuity in the traditional Tsimshian economy, as also found at other sites in Prince Rupert Harbour ... [Millennia 2008:113-115]

In regard to shellfish, the Millennia authors observe that the “predominance of mussel in the lower component at GbTo-37 and GbTo-13 is confirmed by the analysis of shellfish” (Millennia 2008:120). Furthermore, “urchin was particularly dense in GbTo-13.”

Archaeology Summary

In my opinion the review of the archaeological evidence clearly demonstrates an extensive and long-term Indigenous use and occupation of the Prince Rupert Harbour, including the container port and expansion area. This evidence, however, cannot identify whether the sites were occupied exclusively by Tsimshian, by Gitxaala, or by both peoples. Recognizing the limitations of archaeological research we are nevertheless presented with cultural materials such as lithic tools, barbed harpoons, wood-working tools, and decorative motifs that radiocarbon date to 5000 years BP. Beginning approximately 1500 B.C. there is evidence of larger village occupations and larger house construction, and likely a substantial population increase. The basic tool kit persists, accompanied by “new artifact forms” that included labrets, novice lip-pins, pecked and stone tools, and shaman mirrors. Also, characteristic to the Prince Rupert Harbour and this time period are human remains, demonstrating specific burial practices (e.g., grave goods), and physical injuries that may be attributed to intergroup hostility. The archaeological evidence that is characteristic of Period I, (A.D. 500 to A.D. 1830) reflects ranked village structure; massive and elaborate art forms in wood, bone, and stone. In addition, canoe runs that are at times difficult to identify in the field but can be observed on the orthophotos were confirmed at GbTo-13 and probable at GbTo-96.

In my opinion the faunal and floral remains found at the archaeological sites located within the Prince Rupert Harbour also support indigenous use and occupation. These sites are clearly within the footprint of the current container port and the proposed expansion areas. Evidence of three major fish species -salmon, herring, and oolichan- were present

at all sites. In addition there is clear evidence of shellfish, land and marine animals, as well as plant and tree remains. All this is strong evidence of a wide range of customary indigenous practices in the Prince Rupert Harbour area (including the current container port and proposed port expansion) that pre-dates European arrival and continues well after European arrival.

The archaeological evidence is unequivocal regarding aboriginal use and occupancy of the Prince Rupert Harbour, including the container port and expansion area, prior to, at, and well after European contact. It cannot, however, establish whether the aboriginal inhabitants were exclusively Tsimshian, exclusively Gitxaala, or some combination of both. To make this evaluation one must draw from additional sources of data which include archival and oral history evidence.

2. Archival Data

In my opinion the archival data reviewed by me provides good evidence of Gitxaala use and occupancy of areas in and around Prince Rupert Harbour, including the container port and expansion area, prior to, at and well after European contact. The archival evidence, in conjunction with Gitxaala oral history (see section, 3. Oral History), substantiates Gitxaala use and occupancy of specific places in and around Prince Rupert Harbour, including the container port and expansion area, and evidence of a range of activities and practices of the Gitxaala in and around the aforementioned area and time span.

The primary archival sources are from materials collected by William Beynon, a Tsimshian ethnographer who worked for and with a series of non-Indigenous anthropologists including Maurice Barbeau, Franz Boas, Viola Garfield, and Phillip Drucker.

Overview of William Beynon's Work

William Beynon began interviewing members of the Gitxaala Nation as early as 1916 and he continued to do so until the late 1940s.

Beynon described his methodology for collecting oral narratives at Gitxaala in 1916:

In gathering the information below I went from one informant to another just to get an idea from them and in making a summary I gathered the notes below mostly from Joshua Tsiybesse, George McCauley, Sam Lewis, Norman Lewis. All men of above the year of 60 excepting Chief Tsiybesse. [1916, Vol. 1]

Beynon's Gitxaala research was, however, a small component of his overall work. The number of respondents from Gitxaala proper was a small set of the larger number of interviews that Beynon recorded with people living in Port Simpson or Metlakatla. Two things should be noted here: (1) given Beynon's focus on Port Simpson and Metlakatla it is likely that aspects of Gitxaala history would be underrepresented in his fieldnotes and recorded accounts (2) there are, nonetheless, clear indications in Beynon's own notes that

Gitxaala had an ancient and ongoing use and occupancy of the Prince Rupert Harbour area.

In the process of producing a sketch of Beynon's numerous archived manuscripts, a collection of 252 Tsimshian and Gitxaala texts (4 reels), with interlinear translations collected by William Beynon, were reviewed at the University of British Columbia. The originals are housed at Columbia University.³⁵

The collection of 252 Tsimshian and Gitxaala texts, recorded by Beynon, consists of Tsimshian and Gitxaala history, ethnography, and literature. Each text within the collection often consists of three parallel lines: a line of sm'algyax; a line of literal translation into English; and a line of grammatically corrected English. For each oral narrative, Beynon identifies the historical moment during which the narrative was recorded, along with name of the narrator. At the conclusion of each of the narratives are notes created by Beynon. The content of the notes includes a definition of terms (e.g., explanation of specific place name) and a profile of the narrator (e.g., age, lineage, social position).

Beynon's Notes on the Connection of Gitxaala and the Prince Rupert Harbour Area

Within the period of Beynon's research he collected numerous narratives, discussing Gitxaala history, cultural, economic, and political practices. In the process of recounting narratives, the various narrators would make reference to specific geographical locations where various events and activities took place. Various individuals referred to K-xen, commonly known as Kaien Island today (upon which is located the City of Prince Rupert). K-xen was referred to as a place where Gitxaala lived, hunted, gathered food and materials and where important Gitxaala historical events took place.

In 1916, Beynon interviewed Dan Haldane of Metlakatla. According to Sam Lewis (La'oi, son of Lutkudzemti) of Gitxaala, whom Beynon also interviewed in 1916, Haldane was very knowledgeable as he was "brought up with the ancient people" (1916:Vol. III). Haldane, while recounting a narrative entitled *The Gitxala*³⁶ *Tribe of the Seacoast*, referred to Prince Rupert and the Skeena:

... Gitxala people were in old days the head of all the Tsimsyen people ...always lived out by themselves and never mixed up with any of the other people from north. ...their chief he.l was the greatest of all chiefs as he was the head of all the temlax'am.³⁷ [P. 1]

³⁵ Several narratives collected by Beynon are also located in the collection of the American Council of Learned Societies Committee on Native American Languages. The other main source for manuscripts collected by Beynon can be found at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Ottawa. A number of those references are identified in this report, including his "Beynon Notebook, Gitxaxta" (Vols. 1-6).

³⁶ Beynon spells Gitxaala in a variety of ways. In his 1916 notebooks he spells it Gitxata.

³⁷ That Haldane recognizes He.l, a Gitxaala sm'ooygit, as the "greatest of all chiefs" is a critical indication of the importance and social predominance of the Gitxaala. Note that this narrative also states that Metlakatla derives its name from the Gitxaala who were living at this time near where Prince Rupert is. Temlax'am (variant Temlaham; also

...nioswexs; gin'adoiks and cekks, ginaxangik were from the Gitxala house of cekks and wilaxa a chief of the nisse was also from the gitxala royal house of he.l and the gitxala were also the strongest tribes in war and their territory is far larger than the tsimsyen. [P. 1]

...When the temlax'am chiefs of Gisp. came down from temlax'am they were led by tsiybese and niostkaxs... they all settled at the Gitxala village (at near where Prince Rupert is now) and that is why the present Metlakatla gets its name ...to-go-over-through-on water). ...from here they divided and some went to where the people were living at what is now Metlakatla and Tsiybese and Niostkaxso stayed with the Gitxala people. [P. 2]] [B-F-12, Vol. 1 – CMC Collection].

Within manuscript B-F-422.9, Beynon noted that the Gitxaala “lived near what is now Prince Rupert”:

I asked the informant who he meant by them in this case. He says the Gitxaala people, but as the Gitxala never lived on the Skeena as a tribe, but lived near what is now Prince Rupert. [B-F-422.9 – CMC Collection]

Beynon interviewed Henry Pierce, (Gao'wold) a Gispaxlo'ots³⁸ headman of approximately 70 years of age, in 1937, 1938 and 1939. In an oral narrative entitled *Myth of the Origin of Txemson and Lagabula*, Pierce identified Kxe'n as place where “ancient people” procured hair seals:

...Well about the ancient people,³⁹ while they were living at **Kxe'n** (Prince Rupert Harbour) [Tuck's Inlet] it was here they were able to get hair seals as they were plentiful here [P. 66] [Emphasis added] [MSS No. 119]

In October 1939, Beynon recorded what he identified as “a discussion between two men, [concerning] ... the new buildings being erected as military buildings in the vicinity of Prince Rupert.” Beynon documented the following references to Kaien Island:

The ancient people formerly made palisade forts on the mountains of what is now Kain [Kaien] Island, which was really the route of the ancient people's canoes of all tribes. And these palisades stood out prominently on high on top of the hill forts and was like a watch tower in appearance. Remember, the narrative of Aksk⁴⁰ in which he slaughters the Tlinkits from his palisades along the **Kain**

Prairie Town) is an ancient village in what is today Gitksan territory. In the old times, long before European contact, the people found themselves dispersed from Temlax'am as a result of a series of disasters. Key Gispuwada houses and lineages, which are now Gitxaala, had their origins in Temlax'am.

³⁸ Gispaxlo'ots was one of the original lower Skeena River villages which today is part of the community of Lax Kw'alaams.

³⁹ The ancient people, Ligyiget, are viewed by the Gitxaala as their ancestors and the original people of the coast.

⁴⁰ Aksk is an important figure from the *adawx*. Aksk is the nephew of Gitxaala *Sm'ooygit* Tsiyassa. The fact that Aksk is Gitxaala is also acknowledged in the Lax Kw'alaams/Metlakatla report: *Prince Rupert-Fairview Terminal development. First Nations Impacts and Opportunities Report. Traditional aboriginal interests overview* (On behalf of the Lax Kw'alaams Indian Band and Metlakatla Indian Band. February 2006: pages 118-123). The Lax

[Kaien] passage and he had done this by making a tower house at one corner of the house. [Emphasis added] [MSS No. 252]

At the end of the narrative, Beynon, once again, explained the term “K-xen” “K-xen - The native name of what is now termed Kain [Kaien] Island, being derived from the Tsimshian the meaning = place of the skunk.”

Beynon interviewed an individual by the name of Mark Luther⁴¹ in 1937, 1938, and 1939. Luther was in his late 70s. Beynon provides a profile of Luther:

The informant speaks most with the Kitkatla form of speech and while he is a Ginaxongiak, his paternal origin is Kitkatla and spent much of his early boyhood there. This explains a great deal the figures of speech he now uses and pronunciation leans to Gitxala.

Kw'alams/Metlakatla report cites a narrative record by William Beynon called, “The Adaorh of Gilarh’aks.” In the narrative Aksk is identified as a cousin of He:l of the Gitxaala. In the same narrative it is stated that after Aksk regained his honour (he had been banished for violating a social norm -marrying a clan sister) he returned to the Gitxaala to stay permanently taking with him the crest of Kansaelawae (later termed Ligyidhl of Neewwaerhs.

Further to the history of Aksk: In 1938, Beynon interviewed William Smith (age 70), also known as Domgaosam tkwa. In the narrative, entitled *The Story of the Doings of Aksk*, Smith addressed the significance K’xen or Prince Rupert in Aksk’s life, recounting that:

There was a man, whose name was Aksk, who was the foremost warrior of the Gitwolgots. And was very much used by the Gitwolgots, to lead them when they went on their raids or when attacked by raiders, and it was Aksk who saved the village as he knew all the ways of fighting and this was why they made him the foremost man. And this group of Aksk, were those that came with the forefathers of Saxsa’axt, chief of the Gitwilgots, when they left Tamlax’am (Prairie Town) and he was of the **Gispawudwada** phratray. And this was what Aksk done, which his tribe did not approve. There was a young woman who was a secret lover of Aksk and was his own relative, because she belonged to his phratray. And it was not the custom that people should cohabit with people of their own phratray, as they were considered as a sister, by the people to this woman, and they [the people] were very much ashamed of the doings of Aksk. ... And when he had children from the woman, the shame of the family of Aksk was even more... The people gave no consideration of his cleverness of fighting and always embarrassed him. And at all of the happy gatherings of his tribe, he was never invited. ... [Pp. 1-4]

And then because he could not forget the way they ridiculed him. So he moved and went to the territory which was called **K-xen [Prince Rupert, BC]** and here he planned he would make his fort. And when he moved and passed his old village of his tribe, he sang... but did not stop. Well, Aksk then choose a site where there was a creek running down and it was also close to where the Tlinkits lived at Dundas Island. He then started to build a larger house... [Pp. 6-7] [Emphasis added]

It was on Dundas Island, where the Tlinkits lived and one morning one of the men looking toward the mainland and he saw smoke coming out of the hills. The Tlinkits watched the Tsimshians very closely and always attacked them whenever they saw them. [P. 11]

...Well Aksk was now victorious and he now avenged upon those who had attacked him at the Skeena River. And as he was now victorious he took the territory of the Tlinkits and this was when the Tsimshian moved down, who were living all along the Skeena River and they all made their villages at Metlakatla. And Aksk again took his former position. And he was the warrior of the tribe of the Gitwalgots. [P. 23-24] [MSS No. 65]

⁴¹ Luther was Ginaxangiak and lived in Port Simpson. Beynon notes that his paternal origin is Gitxaala and that he spent much of his childhood living at Lach Klan. Beynon also notes that this would explain Luther’s use of a Gitxaala pronunciation and figure of speech.

One of the narratives Luther recounted to Beynon was entitled, *When the Stikine Made War on the Gitxaala*. Within the narrative, Luther referred to Kaien Island:

There was one Gitxala warrior whose fame was all over and that no one could capture him, and his ability made him famous all over. And this was one of the reasons that Gusgain camped for a time on **Kain** [Kaien] Island. [P. 4] [Emphasis added] [MSS No. 92, P. 4]

Within his notes at the end of the narrative, Beynon discussed the term “Gusgain”:

Gusgain - a Tlinkit term meaning High Cliff.

In January 1939, Beynon interviewed Henry Collison (Wa-ka-s), Gitxaala. On that occasion Collison related a narrative entitled *The Happenings of the House of Wa-ka-s and Why They are Gitxala*, referring to K-xen in the process:

Well at the very first, Watsta (Bella-Bella) was the real village of the house of Wa-kas, one of the Raven Clan chiefs among the Wot-sta. [MSS No. 226, P.40]

So that was why Gus-gain came again to make war upon the Gitxata people... When they came to **K-xen** and they camped for a while at the mouth of creek here and all the Stagin gathered here and it was then that the chief Gus-gain said to his warriors... [MSS No. 226, P. 66] [Emphasis added]

In 1939, Beynon also spoke with John Nelson (Wisa ak) and James Lewis, “of Kitkatla” and recorded a narrative entitled, *About the Wolf Clan at Kitkatla*. Nelson and Lewis referred to “K-xen”, conveying that:

The Wolf phratry was very powerful among the Kitkatlas years ago, as they were very numerous among here and these people went away up as far as the Kitamat village. ... [MSS No. 227, P. 93]

And nearly all of the good streams in which salmon were plentiful was really in the possession of the Wolf Clan as they were the more powerful of all the people. ...the Wolf clan took all the good territories and this made them more wealthy. And the Wolf Clan of the Tlinkits came down away to **K-xen [Kain Island]** and Gus-gain was the real chief. And their opposite phratry with whom they inter marry was the Eagle phratry. And this is why the Eagles are so strong among Kitamat and Gitxala. [MSS No. 227, Pp. 96-97]

The Gitxala and the Wolf Clan of the Stikine River there lived one of the chiefs of the Gitxala which was Tsibasa at one of his villages and one day while canoeing about the Wolf Clan suddenly met with the Gitxala. Now the Kitkatlas themselves had not lived here in the past, they had just come running away from war parties and they made their village at the Dried Up Passage [Maxta-sqa-

dziaka]and this was the first time each Tsibasa and Nis gat'nt met... [P. 103] [MSS No. 227, P. 103]

In his notes Beynon wrote: "Kain Island on which Prince Rupert is on."

In 1927, Chas Abbott (Port Simpson), in recounting a narrative entitled *Gidaranits and Tsimsyan Raids*, referred to Prince Rupert:

The Stikine tribe planned a double invasion on the Gitrhahla [Gitxaala] first, and then, on their return northwards, they intended to invade the Gitsees. ... For three days they paddled without food or drink and they never stopped until they arrived at a place called Krhain (Now Prince Rupert). [R 26.1 – CMC Collection]

Beynon also includes references to post-Temlax'am Tsimshian settlement around Prince Rupert Harbour. Nonetheless, his accounts substantiate and corroborate Gitxaala oral history of an ancient presence in and around the area that is now known as Prince Rupert Harbour.

Beyond Prince Rupert Harbour Area

Beynon's notes include reference to Gitxaala use and occupancy beyond the Prince Rupert Harbour area, which date to before, at, and long after European contact. These notes include references to a core territory that stretches from Porcher Island south to Aristazabal Island,⁴² west into the Hecate Strait⁴³ and east to areas along the Skeena River,⁴⁴ Exstall River,⁴⁵ Lowe Inlet and Grenville Channel.⁴⁶ Also noted are more distant, non-contiguous areas of Gitxaala territory, such as the Gitxaala oolichan fishing and processing territory to the north on the Nass River⁴⁷ and marine mammal hunting

⁴² See Beynon's 1916 notebooks of a field research trip to Lach Klan. Joshua Tsibese, When The Bella Coolas and Gitxalas Fought, ... [MSS No. 102]. Cecilia Venn, Kitkatla, *Narrative of the Raven Clan, House of We's, Kitkatla*, [P. 1] [MSS No. 103]. Henry Collison (Wa-ka-s) and John Nelson (Wisa ak), Ways of Making Brave, the Kitkatla Warriors or Ways of Making Brave Warriors of Kitkatla," [P. 85] [MSS No. 224]. Mrs. Cecilia Venn, *Gitxala Feud with the Haida*. H. L. Clifton, Why the Git wolg'ots and Gitga'oto are Related, [P. 28] [MSS No. 155]. H. L. Clifton and Mrs. Clifton, *The Myth of the Monster Devil Fish*, [P. 56]. [MSS No. 157]. Mathias Shaw, Kitkatla recounted *When a Haida Chief Made an Island offshore from Kitkatla Village*, [P. 13] [MSS No. 243]. Nathan Shaw, *The Gidaranits Attack the Gitxala*, [P. 2] [T 53]. Mark Spencer, Kitkatla Version of the Deluge, [P. 20] [B-F-132.5-CMC Collection]. George McCauley. *The Origin of the Name of Sabaen*, [R 25.1 – CMC Collection]. Job Spencer, The Origin of the Eagle Down as a Symbol of Peace, [MSS No. 115. Pp. 2-3].

⁴³ Joshua Tsibese, *The Myth of Garment of Lighting*, [P. 3] [MSS No. 101].

⁴⁴ Joseph Bradley, Ni-uks Gitian, Gispawudwada and James White *The Combat of Hel with Su'halait*, [P. 1-3] [MSS No. 46]. Joshua Tsibese, Royal Gitxaala, *The Myth of the Mountain Goat*, [P. 1] [MSS No. 67].

⁴⁵ Arthur Lewis, Gaiyomtkwa, Kitkatla, *When the Gitxalas Called Upon Legex to Do the Death Duties for Ksomgemk*, made reference of the Gitxaala travels to the "Kstol River" [Oxtall]: [Pp. 1-2] [MSS 96].

⁴⁶ Oswald Tolmie (Sedzan) Wolf Clan, Gitxaala and Heber Clifton, Hartley Bay, *Why the House of Seks Uses as a Crest the Prince of Grizzlies*, [P. 107] [MSS No. 250]. Beynon, [Pp. 68-69] [MSS No. 177]. P. Nelson, Gitsomgelam and James Lewis, Kitkatla, *Narrative of the Origin of Some of the Gispowndwada Chiefs of Kitkatla and Ginaxangik*. (MSS No. 204).

⁴⁷ Mark Luther, Kitkatla, *Narrative of the Battle of the Stikine and Tsimhian*, [MSS No. 76]. Sam Lewis, Kitkatla, *The Origin of the Name Tsim-hotgan: And An Account of a War Between the Nishgas and Gitxala* [P. 1]. [MSS No. 99]. Arthur Lewis, Kitkatla, *When the Tsimshians and the Kit-Katlas Fought With the Nishgas and the First Guns Were Used*, [Pp. 47-48] [MSS No. 160]. James Lewis, Gai'mtkwa, Kitkatla, [P. 1] [W 38 – CMC Collection]. J. Morrison, Tsimsyan, Port Simpson in a narrative entitled *The Gitxala Made Captives by the Stikine*, [P. 1] [W 39 – CMC Collection].

territory to the south on Vancouver Island.⁴⁸ As recorded by Beynon (and as documented in Gitxaala oral history) Gitxaala people had customary rights to, and spent significant periods of time, in places that were outside of the core territory.

Summary of Archival Data

The data collected by William Beynon and found in archives in North America contains evidence of Gitxaala use and occupancy in and around the place now known as Prince Rupert Harbour. As early as 1916 Beynon identifies sites used and occupied by Gitxaala people located within the Prince Rupert area. Beynon's materials help us to contextualize and understand the data collected by archaeologists. They provide historical grounding to oral history data collected in the early 21st century.

3. Oral History

Places like Wil'yagala (a Gitxaala named place also known as Casey Point) on and surrounding Kaien Island, including the container port and expansion area, were and are important for Gitxaala people. In the past these places were used as places of residence, as important resources harvesting sites, and they retain a prominence in Gitxaala oral history as the locations of culturally significant events.

Gitxaala elders and hereditary leaders have identified a range of different types of places in and around the Prince Rupert harbour area, such as village, camping, fortified, and defensive sites. Also described are culturally important *spanaxnox*⁴⁹ sites, places associated with high-ranking names, and important events. The Prince Rupert Harbour and surrounding area is part of Gitxaala's traditional territory and as such figure in the Nation's oral history and identity.

(A): Context

Changing conceptualizations of tribal territories

Contemporary understandings of Gitxaala and Ts'msyen territories reflect the significant political and economic changes that have occurred since first contact with Europeans in the eighteenth century. Twentieth and twenty-first century academic and legal documents have outlined territories more recently associated with contemporary villages and Indian Reserve communities (such as Hartley Bay, Kitkatla, Lax Kw'Alaams, Metlakatla).⁵⁰ However, these geographic partitions reflect historical

⁴⁸ Mark Luther, *When the Tsimshians and the Cape Mudge Fought*, [P. 1] [MSS No. 89]. Joshua Tsibesa, *The Feast of Tsibasa*, [MSS No. 112].

⁴⁹ *Spanaxnox* are culturally important locations in which a *naxnox* –a spirit or power- resides. Such places are important aspects of Gitxaala relationships with the land and form an element of Gitxaala use and occupancy or their territory.

⁵⁰ See, for example Neil Sterrit (et al), **Tribal Boundaries in the Nass Watershed**, Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998, for a detailed discussion of how one First Nation used non-aboriginal techniques to expand their territory. See also, Christopher Roth, **Becoming Tsimshian: The Social Life of Names**, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008, pages 16-24.

changes in residence and resource use post-dating European contact.⁵¹ The traditional territories of the Gitxaala people are much broader in scope than the colonially induced alterations of residence patterns. This fact is reflected in the way that hereditary leaders, elders and community members talk about particular locations and areas, and about territory in general.

The core of Gitxaala territory has been recently understood as stretching loosely from Porcher Island to just south of Princess Royal Island (see Menzies and Butler 2007). However, interviews with community knowledge holders and archival research investigating Gitxaala territorial holdings in the Kaien Island area have revealed significant use and occupancy in that area from the pre-contact era into the twentieth century. Furthermore, there are documented references to other more distant areas that to which the Gitxaala hold customary rights for resource harvesting.⁵² Gitxaala use of their traditional territory must be understood as having undergone a significant centralization subsequent to the allocation of reserves by Peter O'Reilly in the late 1800s. As Thelma Hill states: "There were so many little villages where the Gitxaala lived before they chose Lach Klan to live."⁵³

Gitxaala oral history emphasizes the primacy of the Gitxaala people on the coast. They differentiate themselves from the peoples that have been known as Ts'msyen, who they understand to have come to the coast at a later time. While linguists, anthropologists, and colonial governments have put the Gitxaala under the general rubric of Tsimshian, the Gitxaala themselves have emphasized their distinct identity and origins. Their territorial claim throughout the north coast is linked to the nation's antiquity.

We were already occupying these areas and I think that is where we have to be very specific, because all the others just came and Gitxaala was always generous and accommodating people, no matter where within our territory (Matthew Hill).⁵⁴

Gitxaala hereditary leaders and elders often reference their residence on the coast as predating "the Flood", and indicate particular locations where Gitxaala people anchored their vessels atop mountains. Beynon also documented these *adawx* during his work with Gitxaala informants in the early twentieth century. Archaeological evidence indicates a flood or Tsunami event prior to 2000 years before present (see, note five). This archaeological evidence corroborates the *adawx* of a flood which significantly predated both European arrival and the common understanding of Tsimshian movements to the coast.

Lach Klan is believed to have been inhabited continuously (seasonally) for over nine millennia as a winter village in Gitxaala territory. Even so it has not always been the centre of the Gitxaala world in the way that it has become in the post-contact period. Furthermore,

⁵¹ Europeans first entered Gitxaala territory in 1787, appearing near the village of Laxgibaaw on the south end of Banks Island (Menzies and Butler 2001).

⁵² This point is discussed further in the Oral History section and also in the Archival Data section of this report.

⁵³ Community meeting at the Highliner Inn, Prince Rupert, June 16, 2008.

⁵⁴ Community research workshop, North West Community College, January 2008.

Hereditary Leaders and Elders emphasize the difference between Lach Klan as referencing a particular place and Gitxaala having a much broader geographic meaning.

Gitxaala territory is not a contiguous geographic area. Gitxaala people had customary rights to, and spent significant periods of time, in places that were outside of the contemporary core territory associated with the village of Lach Klan. Gitxaala oral history and the Northwest Coast ethnographic record include references to both close and distant sites to which Gitxaala lineages held rights through various forms of social relations and alliances. Mitchell and Donald (2001), discussing oolichan fishing sites on the BC coast, cite McIlwraith (1922-24: 47, 1948: 359, 360) who documented that Gitxaala people traveled to the Kitlope to produce grease, and the high-ranking Gitxaala leader Tsibasa sometimes remained there for the entire season. The descendants of Ts'ibasa and He:l continue to move from Lach Klan to Haisla territory to participate in the oolichan harvest.

The yearly movement of Gitxaala and Ts'msyen peoples to specific sites on the Nass river for oolichan harvesting and grease-making is also documented (see Mitchell and Donald 2001: 25). Some of the key sites of Gitxaala use and occupancy around the Port of Prince Rupert reflect the movement of Gitxaala people from the more southerly parts of their territory to their oolichan fishing sites. Gitxaala people had settlements in the Prince Rupert area where they waited for the oolichan runs, while harvesting, processing, and trading other foods (see below).

Gitxaala traditional territory is broad and non-contiguous, reflecting the pre-contact movements of people for harvesting, trading, and feasting, and later, the post-contact integration of new economic opportunities. It is critical to recognize that territorial boundaries used more recently by twentieth-century colonial governing structures (e.g. Department of Fisheries and Oceans) reflect significant changes in seasonal movements and a process of residential centralization forced upon the Gitxaala by colonial economic and political pressures.

“Camping”

References to camps in and around the Prince Rupert are described in the oral history. Camps are distinguished from villages as seasonal specific purpose sites, whereas villages are permanent general-purpose sites with stable structures. There are several types of camps that the Gitxaala used, where they stayed for varying periods of times. Some examples are: simple camps for an overnight stay; camps used to gather important items on the way to the Nass River oolichan fishing grounds; camps where people would harvest foods and materials in season. Many of these camping spots were used annually for periods from one night to several months.

Anthropologist James MacDonald suggests that the Tsimshian (here including the Gitxaala), distributed themselves throughout their territory to harvest resources most of the year, and consolidated into winter villages/towns/tribes (MacDonald 1991: 200). He

cites Boas' description of the seasonal cycle of territorial movement based on harvesting key resources, reconstructed from interviews in the first decade of the twentieth century.⁵⁵

Viola Garfield's work in the 1930s suggests a more constricted pattern of movement (see MacDonald 1991: 202). MacDonald describes the increasing restriction of Tsimshian (using Kitsumkalum as a case study) harvesting due to foreign appropriation and regulation of resources during the twentieth century. He suggests that post-contact, there was a decreasing ability for title holders and their lineages to enforce rights to territories and resources (ibid.: 201). The colonial state and non-Indigenous enterprises thus infringed upon Ts'msyen and Gitxaala capacity to use and occupy their territories and thereby contributing to a constriction of indigenous movement.

The impact of European trading, settlement, and industrial development in the region considerably altered Gitxaala and Tsimshian settlement and harvesting patterns. In the areas surrounding what is now known as Prince Rupert, changes to settlement patterns were immense. The contemporary village of Lax Kw'Alaams is located at a Hudson Bay Company fort site established in 1834. Members of nine tribes whose traditional territories were closer to the Skeena River settled this site subsequent to the establishment of Fort Simpson. The village of Metlakatla, while an older Gitxaala settlement site⁵⁶, was re-populated in 1862 by Christian converts following the missionary William Duncan. Gitxaala people had settlements in various locations in the Prince Rupert area (including sites that are now known as Digby Island, Casey Point, Kloya Bay, Kennedy Island), the continued and long-term use of which became increasingly constrained by external forces of change. Winter village sites such as Lach Klan, and post-contact villages such as Lax Kw'Alaams have become the focus of contemporary discussions of tribal territories, but traditional, pre-contact territories included sites of occupation and use much further dispersed.

Colonial intrusions and restrictions have had impacts on the geographic range of movement and harvesting, and the amount and variety of resources gathered. For instance, the Hudson Bay Company records reveal that for the first time in 1857, some Native peoples living near Fort Simpson remained at the fort to log rather than travel to the Nass for the Oolichan fishery (see Menzies and Butler 2001), suggesting a significant change in the indigenous economy. Contemporary research with Gitxaala community members outlines a similar seasonal round to that documented by Boas, the core of which persisted until the 1960s. Gitxaala people traditionally moved throughout a large expanse of territory, including both the particular walp (house) territories over which they held exclusive ownership, and other areas for which they held various customary rights and forms of ownership.

⁵⁵ Franz Boas, *Tsimshian Mythology*, Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1909-1910 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916), 399.

⁵⁶ Joshua Tsibese, a leading s'moogyit at the turn of the 19th century, identified Metlakatla as a Gitxaala site in a narrative collected by William Beynon in the early years of the 20th century entitled, *The Myth of the Adventures of Gom'asnext*. He states: "Years ago many people elived at Metlakatla and it was Nagapt of Gitxala, lived. And this is why the Gitxala lived here." MSS no. 100.

Richard Spencer describes the way in which Gitxaala movement has changed over time:

“Hakhoksgm wila daawla wineeyam. [We follow where all our food runs to, our movement is determined by the availability of food, we accompany our foods].⁵⁷ Not like the way we are now. We follow wherever there is food. We know exactly when the food starts here, we move in from out there to here” [Lach Klan to Prince Rupert area].⁵⁸

Gitxaala Elders remember that during the middle part of the twentieth century, only one old man was left in Lach Klan during the summer months to care-take the houses and gardens; the entire village was empty as people were at their fish camps and canneries.

Using the English word ‘camp’ to denote these various types of places used by the Gitxaala runs the risk of diminishing the importance of these places for the Gitxaala. Like village sites, these camp sites were owned by Gitxaala people and contribute to how Gitxaala people understand their ownership of their traditional territory. The more nuanced Smalgyx⁵⁹ words for different forms of camping reveal the importance of ‘camps’ in the Gitxaala seasonal round, as regularly-used and often long-term sites of residence.⁶⁰

Galdoo – where you camp

Wox – stay overnight (not necessarily camping, used in reference to towns, villages)

Wil dzox – where we live, reside permanently (plural)

Wil dzax dzox – people live there, more than one people, more than one group

Nigyoo – where I anchor my boat (singular)

Wil ksidzox – looking out the opening of the bay, into the sea

N’dzox – place of residence – refers to places people lived while harvesting

Gitxaala elders and hereditary leaders describe having campsites that were used as community members traveled from Lach Klan to their oolichan fishing site on the mouth of the Nass River. Camps were located along the route through Ogden Channel, past Kennedy Island, in to Prince Rupert Harbour, out through Metlakatla Pass, and up the coast past what became Port Simpson and then into the mouth of the Nass. Camps such

⁵⁷ Translation by Doug Brown (Gitxaala member and smalgyax teacher in Prince Rupert) and Ernie Bolton (Gitxaala community member). August 9, 2008.

⁵⁸ Community meeting at the Highliner Inn, Prince Rupert, June 16, 2008.

⁵⁹ Smalgyax is the language spoken by Gitxaala. The language is shared with Ts’msyen peoples, but there are important dialect and usage differences between the two First Nations.

⁶⁰ This list of words was compiled June 16, 2008 in Prince Rupert at a community meeting. Subsequently Dr. Caroline Butler, Mr. Ernie Bolton and Mr. Doug Brown translated and clarified the orthography.

as Kennedy Island and others are referred to as “*N’dzox*”, not “*wox*”, emphasizing the practice of long-term residence there on the way to the Nass.

“Once they started traveling, once they left, they knew exactly where they were going to stop for overnight and as I was saying, they don’t just stop for a couple of hours. No, they dwell there” (Richard Spencer).⁶¹

Ecological Significance of Territorial Holdings

Syt güülm goot (being of one heart) is a Sm’algyax phrase that describes the ideal state of social and ecological relations in their communities and territories. This is a Gitxaala *ayaawx* (law) of interconnectedness and reciprocity that structures Gitxaala relationships with humans, animals and *naxnox*.

The relationship between the notion of *syt güülm goot* and territory is one of ecological adaptation. Gitxaala territory is far-ranging and, out side of the core areas, non-contiguous. Gitxaala territory includes diverse eco-systems and key resources. This has made it possible to support the survival of a large population of affiliated lineages. A tribe-wide system of distribution ensured both survival and nutritional balance, in addition to maintaining, for example, the sustainability of fish stocks such as salmon or herring. While resource use was territorialized, facilitating stewardship and management, it was flexible in order to adapt to regional and seasonal scarcity.

“Certain fish camps caught certain fish, some pinks, some dogs etc. Back in the village they would barter with each other so their diet was balanced. So they just took so much out of each creek” (Ken Innes).⁶²

The Northwest Coast feasting system has been analyzed as a mechanism for redistribution of resources, among its other political, economic, and social functions (see Suttles 1987). In recent memory, the paramount Smooygit in Gitxaala facilitated redistribution between house groups and house territories. Portions of each house’s harvests would be given to the chief, and redistributed to houses in need throughout the year. Gitxaala elders recount their mothers taking foods to Alice Gamble, wife of Gitxaala *Sm’ooygit* Ts’ibassa (Edward Gamble).⁶³

Through village-based redistribution, each of the camps/harvesting sites used by Gitxaala peoples would have made a critical contribution to the health and survival of the entire population.

⁶¹ Community research workshop, North West Community College, January 2008.

⁶² Interview 2002.

⁶³ In his 1916 notebooks William Beynon observed that interviewees who he had paid gave all of the money he paid them to the leading chief. The chief then returned a portion of this money to the interviewee. This practice was one that dates back, according to Gitxaala traditions, prior to the arrival of Europeans.

Gitxaala Attachments to Place and Territory

Gitxaala people have a variety of attachments and connections to places, related to use and occupancy, resource harvesting, and also more spiritual and cultural associations.

Richard Spencer explains that “When the old people spoke and visited each other, one would say, sing this story to us for such and such a place. Sing that story to me (*Gunyata Adawx*)”.⁶⁴ Places are named, and have stories (*adawx*) and songs (*liimi*) connected to them. The names of high ranking *smgigyet* are sometimes the same names as places of significance (see reference to *Lax Li’Oy*/Tugwell Island below). Some places are extremely powerful *spanaxnox*, places associated with spiritual or supernatural beings (*noxnox*), and figure prominently in the *adawx* of the society.

The Gitxaala people have an intimate and active relationship with their territory.⁶⁵ Gitxaala community members have a persisting level of detailed ecological knowledge despite significant colonial restrictions on their ability to harvest foods in the full extent of their territory.

The Gitxaala have proactively managed for ecosystem health and resource abundance for millennia. The system of clan and house group title to territories provides a structure of resource management; the walps organize and monitor resource use. The house leader inherits the responsibility for caring over a particular territory. At fish camps, house leaders would inspect the creeks for debris etc. that might interfere with spawning salmon. During the fishing season, the amount of fish taken would be balanced with the amount of spawners allowed up the creek. Marvin (Teddy) Gamble describes how his grandfather, Gitxaala *Sm’oogyit* Ts’ibassa (Edward Gamble), would walk along the spawning bed above his customary fishing site to make sure there were enough fish for escapement before he would allow fishing to take place.⁶⁶

In addition to carefully controlling their exploitation of various species, Gitxaala people deliberately managed for abundance and continue to do so. An often-cited example is the transplanting of deer by James and William Lewis during the 1940s. These two brothers had noticed an increase in the wolf population on Banks Island. During the weekends, when their drag seine fishery was closed, they chased deer from the east side of Banks Island, to the west coast, using dogs. The younger deer were captured and transported in the holds of their seine boats to Bonilla Island, where there were no wolves or deer. They created a deer colony on Bonilla, free from predation, for their future use.⁶⁷

The lucrative spawn-on-kelp fishery in Kitkatla Inlet is also a result of ancestral resource management. Several centuries ago, Gitxaala people dragged trees covered in herring spawn behind their canoes from Surf Inlet in Camaano Sound to Kitkatla Inlet, a distance of over 80 nautical miles.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Community meeting in Lach Klan; November 2007.

⁶⁵ See, Menzies and Butler (2007) regarding resource management and Gitxaala conservation principles.

⁶⁶ Interview, Marvin (Teddy) Gamble 2002.

⁶⁷ Interview. Agnes Shaw.

⁶⁸ Interview. Marvin (Teddy) Gamble 2002.

While colonial restrictions have constrained the ability of Gitxaala people to use some of the sites in their territory, these places remain important to individuals, lineages, and tribes. Some Gitxaala elders have been unable to return to key fishing camps since the outlawing of drag seining in 1964 (see Menzies and Butler 2007), however, they talk about these places as critical parts of their territory. Individuals who receive new hereditary names spend significant amounts of money to feast their new titles to publicly declare their connection to the associated territory even when some places may not currently be in active use. Discussions of Gitxaala sites in the Prince Rupert Harbour area consistently lead to discussions of sites in other parts of Gitxaala territory (from Porcher Island, to southern Banks Island, to Aristazabel Island), reflecting a persisting holistic conceptualization of traditional territory. While Gitxaala use and occupancy of the Prince Rupert Harbour and surrounding area has been increasingly constrained in the post-contact period, these sites retain meaning and significance to Gitxaala people.

(B): Gitxaala Use and Occupancy of the Port of Prince Rupert and Surrounding Areas.

Oral history research with Gitxaala elders and hereditary leaders has documented significant Gitxaala use and occupancy of the Port of Prince Rupert and surrounding areas. For this report these connections to sites have been organized into four categories: village sites, camps, *spanaxnox*, and named places. I have included references to the twelve sites most relevant to the question of the Prince Rupert Container Port and expansion area.

Village Sites

At least four Gitxaala village sites were described in and around the Prince Rupert Harbour area; the most relevant to the Container Port project is the complex of village and defensive sites that extends from *Wil'yaga loo* (Casey Point) to *Spa Ganaaw* (a creek near the current BC/Alaska ferry dock). The village complex within and near to the current Container Port has been previously described in the archaeological data section of this report. However, this description only provides data on the antiquity of the sites. Archaeological data cannot provide an unequivocal indication of exclusive use and occupancy by the Tsimshian, the Gitxaala, or both.

1. *Wil'yaga loo* (Casey Point)

Etymology:⁶⁹ *yaga* = down
loo = slide (fast),
where earth slid down

⁶⁹ Etymology of place-names was done by Douglas Brown, working with Ernie Bolton and Caroline Butler August 9, 2008.

Gitxaala oral accounts document the extent to which the village complex within and near the Container Port is an important site for Gitxaala. This site dates to several millennia in the past when the Gitxaala were engaged in a period of warfare with Haida and Tlingit peoples. *Wil'yaga loo* is described as a decoy village and fortification. On the beach front near the water's edge Gitxaala people built a false village. Perched on the steep cliff above the false village was a defensive structure. This defensive structure was made of large logs and filled with rock and gravel. When attackers entered the false village the log structure would be released and a rockslide would ensure crushing the invaders below. Repeated use of this defensive structure is believed to have contributed to the extension of the beach and reef at this place.

“If you get archaeologists right on top of that mountain there, you will see the old ruins, where the people were building logs and whenever the enemy comes and attacks them, they just let go of that and they cause a landslide, which is our protection... They never look for flat ground, they always look for a high place where they can protect themselves and that is one of them right on top of Casey Point there. That is the main reason actually not too far from there that *Spa Ganaaw*, that's a summer village of our people from Gitxaala. And there's four or five of them around Kaien Island there.

“And right into Porpoise Harbour, inside Ridley Island – so those are the locations of where our people lived. They called it a summer villages because of the places that Matthew⁷⁰ was talking about, that creek there and the berries. That is when they generally move in there, after the winter months when the ice is all melted, and that is when they move into those places. They call them summer villages for Gitxaala” (Richard Spencer, *Gitxaala Ganhada Sm'ooygit*).⁷¹

The inhabited village complex was further to the east of *Wil'yaga loo* and includes much of what has been described by archaeologists as the Lachane and Co-op sites (most of which was destroyed during the construction of the initial port in the 1970s). Gitxaala people continued to live in this area up until the middle years of the 20th century when James Innes was living at *Spa Ganaaw* (see below).

Archaeologists have identified one portion of this village complex as being the village of Aksk, a maternal nephew of Gitxaala *Sm'ooygit* Tsibassa. Many of the leading hereditary leaders of the Tsimshian from the mouth of the Skeena River have been nephews of leading Gitxaala lineages. This is documented in Gitxaala oral history and corroborated by William Beynon's notes.⁷² The archaeological findings included human remains that

⁷⁰ Matthew Hill, a Gitxaala Lasgeek *sm'ooygit*.

⁷¹ Community research workshop, North West Community College, January 2008.

⁷² Relations between Gitxaala and the Tsimshian have existed both in the contemporary period and the ancient past. In September 1938, Beynon interviewed Arthur Lewis whom Beynon described as follows: “Lewis (Gaiyomtkwa) was with the group that went with Niashoot at the time of Ksongemk's death and while only a young man at the time, he remembers everything that he tells here. He went to Port Simpson and then to Gitxala [Gitxaala] and took part in the preparations and the ceremony of reception to Legex by Tsibesa. ... This event happened about 38 years ago. The informant now a man of about 68 yrs. of age took a prominent part in the whole thing. A member of the Gitxala [Gitxaala] people, and is reconstructing the whole thing from his own memory of the whole event.” Lewis recounted a

showed marks of warfare. Additionally, features of houses found during excavations corresponded to descriptions of houses in the oral history. The close connection of Aksk with Gitxaala provides an important historical linkage to the continuation of Gitxaala use and occupancy of the Prince Rupert Harbour area.

Richard Spencer expressed deep concern about the loss of artefacts that would happen during the development of Phase II of the port: “Our history lives there” (May 2008).

2. *Spa Ganaaw*

There are alternative pronunciations and spelling for the place name:

Ksba ganaaw (Jeanette Moody, Gitxaala Laxgibu matriarch)

Ksi ganaaw (Alan Brown, Gitxaala Lasgeek hereditary leader).

Etymology: *ksi-* out, where water comes out

ganaw – frog

The word origin refers to creatures living in the creek – a type of frog.

The name *Ksba ganaaw* refers the creek known in English as Fairview Creek. This is very close to the contemporary site of the BC Ferries dock. Gitxaala use and occupancy of *Ksba ganaaw* stretches from prior to European contact with the Gitxaala in 1787 into the twentieth century, reflecting a continuity of settlement that predates and postdates the establishment of Prince Rupert. James Innes, a Gitxaala person, lived at this site in the early decades of the twentieth century. He was “the last one staying there, holding the port for Gitxaala” (Jeanette Moody).⁷³ Her mother and father used to visit him: “They used to walk there to visit him and he would laugh and say, ‘I’m the only Gitxaala that’s still holding up the fort’, and that’s James Innes.” He lived right at the creek.

Rita Robinson remembers her mother (Gertie Bolton, born approximately 1906) visiting this settlement to pick berries.⁷⁴ Grace Alexie was also a Gitxaala person who was remembered to have lived at this site during the early twentieth century. Another Gitxaala, Ellen Mulligan (nee Brown) resided in that area around the same time. She is thought to have lived at *Ksba ganaaw*, or possibly slightly further north at Moresby Creek. The people and chiefs who lived at *Ksba ganaaw* were part of the Gitxaala *walp Git nagwn aks* (Richard Spencer,⁷⁵ Alan Brown⁷⁶).

3. Porpoise Harbour and Coast Island

Hereditary leaders Richard Spencer and Larry Bolton, a Gitxaala Gispuwada *sm’ooygit*,⁷⁷ shared a Gitxaala *adawx* about a family (ancestors of the contemporary Douglas family of Gitxaala) who resided near Porpoise Harbour. They were invaded by the Haida and

narrative entitled *When the Gitxalals Called Upon Legex to Do the Death Duties for Ksomgemk*, in the process explaining the relationship between the “Gispaxloots and Gitxalals [Gitxaala].” “The Gispaxloots and Gitxalals were always closely associated with one another and the royal houses of each had each as their paternal origin” [P. 1]. “...for many years the Gitxalals [Gitxaala] had been going near the head of the Kstol River [Oxtall River]...” [MSS No. 96]

⁷³ Community research workshop, North West Community College, January 2008.

⁷⁴ Prince Rupert Harbour Boat Trip, May 9, 2008.

⁷⁵ Prince Rupert Harbour Boat Trip, May 9, 2008.

⁷⁶ Community meeting at the Highliner Inn, Prince Rupert, June 16, 2008.

⁷⁷ Community research workshop, North West Community College, January 2008.

two children were taken. The children had been entrusted with a bag of treasure which they dropped in the water near Coast Island, in order to keep it from their captors.

The Gitxaala village in Porpoise Harbour, near the current location of the Aero Trading Fish Plant, was still settled in the latter part of the 1800s when the canneries were being established.

Camps

Jeffrey Spencer, a Gitxaala Ganhada *sm'ooygit*, described the route that Gitxaala people would have taken to go to their oolichan fishing grounds on the Nass in a conversation June, 2006. Mr. Spencer described the route as going through Ogden Channel and along the shore into Rupert harbour where the Gitxaala had places to pull their canoes out of the water.⁷⁸ Millennia Research, contracted by the Prince Rupert Port Authority, has documented canoe runs in the phase two area of Prince Rupert Harbour that would be about the location referred to by Mr. Jeffrey Spencer in his 2006 conversation (this is prior to Millennia Research's publication of their report).

4. *Lax kas'waan* (Kennedy Island)

A particularly important camp was described on Kennedy Island. At this 'camp' Gitxaala people would prepare for the oolichan season that was to come. A variety of resources were gathered as they lived on that site. Deer were hunted in the interior of the island, where the topography supported successful hunting. Bark was pulled. Marine animals were hunted. When supplies had been prepared and the signs so indicated the people would move on toward the next camp and closer to the oolichan fishing grounds.

Named the 'place of no teeth' in reference to a sea mammal (sea lion or whale) with no teeth that beached there. This island was *N'dzox*, a place of residence (Richard Spencer), an important place where Gitxaala people lived while moving to and from the Nass for oolichan fishing. Elders discussed *Lax kas'waan* and other sites as places where people would reside, waiting for signs of resources being ready to harvest. For example, they would watch for the arrival of *liitsk* (grouse) when they resided at the port as an indicator that the season for oolichans had arrived (Sampson Collinson, Gixaala hereditary leader, January 2008). *Lax kas'waan* was noted as a lookout, because of its relation to the harbour (Matthew Hill, Gitxaala Lasgeek *sm'ooygit*, January 2008).

5. Fish Trap at Digby Island

Alan Brown was told by his elders of a Gitxaala fish trap on Digby Island. Stone traps can be found through the Northwest Coast region. For salmon they would be located near streams and rivers. For other fish, such as herring or flatfish, they would be located in the intertidal zone. A series of carefully selected stones were arranged in a semicircular or rectangular design (depending upon target fish species), using the principle of 'tidal drift' to catch the fish. Fish pushed towards the shore by an incoming tide were trapped in stonewalled pools when the water level dropped. Stone fishtraps

⁷⁸ From fieldnotes, June 14, 2006 of meeting with Jeffrey Spencer and Larry Bolton in Lach Klan.

were used by house-groups. Relying on collaborative labour under the guidance of the house leader (see Menzies and Butler 2001).

The existence of a stone fish trap at a Gitxaala camp in the Prince Rupert Harbour suggests that this was a significant harvesting site and therefore of residency during the seasonal round of a Gitxaala lineage. The building of a fish trap reflects a significant commitment of labour and time; the Gitxaala had other fishing technologies at their disposal so the decision to build a stone trap reflects ongoing use and occupancy. Gitxaala fish traps were a highly efficient and selective fishing technology, resulting in the capture of significant numbers of salmon⁷⁹. The time required to process the fish (to dry or smoke them) would be considerable. A camp with a stone trap would not have been a short-term stop during travel, but rather a major site for the harvesting of fish, and other resources such as berries.

6. Kloya Bay

Kloya Bay is derived from the Gitxaala term for highbush cranberry, *laaya*, a freshwater berry that is found in abundance at that site. Kloya Bay is referred to as an important berry picking and salmon fishing site for Gitxaala, as a place of *Ndzo*:

That's the main creek and this is where those people that were living around this area, that is one of the real rich places here, where they got their salmon and berries (Richard Spencer, January 2008).

Spananax

Spananax are culturally important locations in which a *naxnox* –a spirit or power-resides. Such places are important aspects of Gitxaala relationships with the land and form an element of Gitxaala use and occupancy or their territory.

7. *Wil luu Gye'bn*

Etymology *gyeb'n* = surfacing

-place of surfacing, place where the supernatural creature comes up

Currently known as Sourdough Bay, *Wil u gyben*, connects a Gitxaala lineage with that location through an encounter that is recorded in Gitxaala oral history, involving the surfacing of a spirit from the water.⁸⁰ When asked if people lived there, Jeannette Moody replied “No - it was a sacred place.”⁸¹ However, there was a suggestion that there were Gitxaala people dwelling there at the time of the sighting of the *noxnox* (Richard Spencer⁸²).

⁷⁹ Pre-contact harvests of salmon using indigenous fishing technologies, including stone traps, have been estimated to have been close to the median industrial harvests of the twentieth century (Kew 1989).

⁸⁰ See, Susan Marsden “Adawx, Spananax, and the Geopolitics of the Tsimsian.” *BC Studies*, no. 135 Autumn 2002. Marsden outlines the critical relationship between place, spananax, and aboriginal rights and title among the Tsimsian speaking peoples of the north coast of BC.

⁸¹ Community meeting at the Highliner Inn, Prince Rupert, June 16, 2008.

⁸² Community research workshop, North West Community College, January 2008.

Gitxaala Place Names

The naming of places reflects Gitxaala connections to specific sites. Gitxaala Elders who are fluent Smalgyx speakers emphasize the significance of place names and word origins in supporting their connection to places. A number of places in and near the Prince Rupert harbour have been named and thereby recognized as important by the Gitxaala.

8. Kaien Island

A Gitxaala *adawx*, passed down by elders suggests that Gitxaala people named Kaien Island. Alan Brown (November 2007) relates:

Prince Rupert, it's Gitxaala people that put that name Kaien Island, that named that place Kaien Island. There's two Elders that I got this story from. When Gitxaala people lived there, where the ferry dock is, they saw an animal with a white strip. They called it *geen*. Skunk. The new settlement, new settlers called it Kaien Island.

9. Lax Le'oy/Li'oy (Tugwell Island)

Etymology: -island of significant event, to do with mourning, passing on (*oy*)

The hereditary name of Gitxaala *Sm'ooygit* Sam Lewis is *Lax Le'Oy*, the Smalgyx name for Tugwell Island. "One of our chiefs, his name is on that island." (Sampson Collinson and Richard Spencer, January 2008).

The reason we are bringing this out is there is a name from our chief Gitxaala name, our name and it names the coast here. That's where they got the names. You heard me mention it last night –the land, the names, and the totem poles – the three thing had to be told by a person before you believe that particular place belongs to them. (Richard Spencer, January 2008).

Gitxaala elders know the song attached to that place that connects the name, lineage and place.

10. Metlakatla

"Metlakatla" is an Anglicization of the contraction *Maxlakala*, from *Maxlagitxaala* meaning a passage for the Gitxaala people. (*Maxla*, through a narrow passage). This refers to the habit of Gitxaala people anchoring their canoes across the passage. The name is also described as meaning the place where Gitxaala people go through.

Richard Spencer describes: "Before Prince Rupert was ever born, Metlakatla, [was] part of Gitxaala, where they exchanged food with the people from the Nass." (June 15, 2008). Explaining the Gitxaala language origins of the name Metlakatla, he says:

So this is part of Gitxaala we're talking about. Metlakatla BC is part of Gitxaala, same language, same people.. Where the Gitxaala meet all the Nisga'as when they started to exchange food, this is the reason why we claim this area here, this is where Gitxaala moves in when the berries are started. And salmon run up in the inlet here.

Matthew Hill also mentioned that Chief Seks of Gitxaala was invited to the church opening in Metlakatla and he came with 50 paddlers and all of his people, because it was his territory (January 2008). Metlakatla Pass was also mentioned as an area where people stayed and camped, like Kennedy Island (Matthew Hill January 2008). Traditional Gitxaala use and occupancy of this area stretch into the twentieth century. Hereditary leader Sam Lewis states that his parents resided at Metlakatla for two or three months each year, in order to trade the resources they had collected at their summer settlement on Banks Island (June 15, 2008). This suggests the persisting role of the Prince Rupert Harbour area as a key trading site for Gitxaala, Tsimshian and other nations, both prior to and after the intrusion of the Hudson Bay Company.

11. *Uks txa loo*

Etymology: uuk or uks – from the shore out onto the water

loo – slide

txa – all

This refers to a landslide near the site of what became Inverness Cannery. This site was originally a Gitxaala fishing camp. “That’s where our Gitxaala people lived. And there’s a story about that place.” (Larry Bolton, January 2008).

12. *Shk' Tuk* (Hunts Inlet)

Derived from the verb “to twist” this place name refers to a sporting event that was held at the site. Warriors from many places gathered in the Spring and competed in a test of strength, attempting to twist apart the branch of a tree. This tradition was carried on during the cannery era when fishermen competed, twisting broom handles apart.

General Summary of Findings.

In my opinion the data reviewed from archaeological, archival, and oral history sources indicates that Gitxaala used and occupied places in and around Prince Rupert Harbour, including the container port and expansion area, prior to and at the time of European contact. The evidence also supports Gitxaala use and occupancy of this area through to the contemporary period. Each source of data provides a particular vantage point from which the above conclusion can be drawn. The archaeological data tells us that aboriginal people have had millennia of engaged use and occupation of Prince Rupert Harbour but it cannot decisively tell us if these people were exclusively Tsimshian, exclusively Gitxaala, or both. The archival data, primarily that produced by William Beynon, strongly indicates that prior to European contact Gitxaala people used and

occupied places in and around the harbour area and that other indigenous communities acknowledged that use and occupation. Finally, the oral history data provides specific references to places and histories of use and occupancy of the region by Gitxaala people, such use and occupation dating prior to, at, and well after European contact.

In sum, it is my opinion that the available evidence indicates it is very likely that Gitxaala (and Tsimshian) used and occupied of the Prince Rupert Harbour area, including the container port and expansion area, prior to, at, and after European contact into the 20th century.

Appendix 1: Map of Archaeological Sites Against Foot Print of Port and Port Expansion, prepared by Millennium Research Ltd., on Behalf of the Prince Rupert Port Authority.

