

Submitted By: Karen Church  
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**Report to THEN / HiER Graduate Student Project Program:**  
**My attendance of, and Presentation at, the Canadian Archaeological Association (CAA)**  
**Annual General Meeting and Conference, Whistler BC, May 15-19, 2013**

The CAA, held each year in a different province or territory of Canada, is a great opportunity not only to present on individual current research, but also to be informed on the new and continuing archaeological research taking place across Canada. This year it was in Whistler, BC at the Whistler Conference Centre.

I presented my graduate student thesis topic, **The Inland Lifeways of the Larger Islands of *xáadlāa gwaayee***, in the Session entitled: *Archaeology of Coastal and Interior British Columbia: Papers in Honour of Dr. Roy Carlson, Professor Emeritus, Simon Fraser University*. The Moderators of the session were Duncan McLaren of the University of Victoria and Hakai Beach Institute, Farid Rahemtulla of the University of Northern British Columbia, and Rudy Reimer of Simon Fraser University. Our papers were discussed by Drs. Aubrey Cannon and Madonna Moss, two leaders in Northwest coast archaeological research and education.

The conference was very successful, as was my presentation. After I presented, I was asked about if I would be publishing on my research, and 2 students asked me about my work with Geographic Information Systems spatial analysis. The support I have received from THEN / HiER has been invaluable to having my research disseminated to a broader public, and in the case of the CAA, has updated my peers on the results of my graduate student research, which was called "trail blazing" by one audience member. My research is ground breaking in terms of the archaeology of Haida Gwaii, because no one has researched inland lifeways of the pre-contact period to any extent in the past. Archaeological research for this region has always focussed on coastal settlements, trade, and late Pleistocene isostatic effects as relate to human habitation. My research brings together data that has been disparate up until now, into a landscape level analysis, which should be useful for predicting potential for previously unexpected archaeological sites in development areas in the future. When I present on this work, I always introduce the audience to my majestic study area, the rainforest of the Charlottes. The photos I show invariably get a few gasps from the audience, because of the unprecedented size of the trees, something that was also remarked on by early explorers to the region. These forests were my work place for many years, and I love to bring the audience into this world. I use a Geographic Information System (GIS) to create many of the visuals, especially maps in my project, and I also use the GIS to conduct spatial analyses. My analyses include a relatively untested and little employed function called *Tobler's Hiker's function* which, when applied to the cost surface prior to running a *least cost path* analysis, creates an output that is more useful for determining human trail route location than the standard ArcGIS *least cost path* analysis. This is because Tobler's function was created from real life measurements of human hiking variables and preferences, via a study done by a researcher named Imhof, of how Swiss soldiers navigated the Alps, ca. 1950. The standard *least cost path* analysis is intended for pipeline and road locating and, and is not the best predictor of routes for human hiking. Dr. Roy Carlson, a very honorable archaeologist and educator, who attended the entire session, and for

whom the session was in honour, remarked on the use of techniques such as these which provide new ways of refining archaeological potential.

The conference began with a gala meet and greet in the main ballroom of the Whistler Conference Centre, which was very well attended. The final event of the conference was a banquet at the Squamish and Lillooet Cultural Centre and Museum in Whistler. This beautiful new facility was created as part of the Whistler Olympics and it is a beautiful, majestic tribute to the first nations who claim this region as their ancestral territory. Whistler is definitely a great place for a conference.

Thanks once again to THEN / HiER for your sponsorship.

**Karen Church, BGS, (Hons)**

Certificate of Proficiency in First Nations languages – xaad kil / the Haida Language

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