

**ACTIVITIES REPORT — DECEMBER 2005**  
COVERING THE PERIOD JULY – DECEMBER 2005



This fall YNLC has continued its support and training of a new generation of language instructors. A special session for Southern Tutchone trainee instructors was held in September, providing focused training for a small group with the assistance of two elders. YNLC also held a Gwich'in in-service training session in October for Gwich'in language instructor Randall Kendi. Randall is the new instructor for the Gwich'in language program at F.H. Collins and is developing a complete language program from Grades 8-12. This session was followed by a Gwich'in literacy session in November with 25 participants, including 13 students from F.H. Collins and elder Annie Lord from Old Crow, who was flown in especially for this session.



Peter Abel, Annie Lord at the November Gwich'in Literacy Session

YNLC also welcomed new Grand Chief Andy Carville and the CYFN leadership on a visit to the Centre in October. They were very interested in YNLC's work and asked a number of questions. Staff took the visitors on a tour and displayed teaching and other materials developed by the Centre.

Another major development this fall has been the addition of more on-line language lessons with audio on the YNLC website. YNLC now offers a complete set

of lessons in the Ta'an dialect of Southern Tutchone, spoken by Irene Smith. For the first time, one month of Tlingit lessons in the Teslin dialect by Sam Johnston are also available.

Centre staff and native language instructors participated in a very successful Yukon Teachers' Association fiftieth-anniversary conference in September. With one of the main strands of the conference being aboriginal language and culture, staff and instructors led a number of sessions for participating teachers from around the territory.

YNLC's activities for the second half of 2005 are summarized in the table accompanying this report. With the rapid evolution of technology, the Centre is finding its staff and resources increasingly stretched in order to support requests for assistance from

community-based language programs. The Centre's long-term goal is to make as much material as possible available through its website so that it can be accessed by anyone with a computer.

## In Memoriam



**Photo of elder (s) ?**

[John, this section occasioned considerable discussion about who to include, e.g. Annie Henry and Rose Dennis. There was discussion both pro and con about including Annie -- it is her husband who is a founding elder, and as I understand it Annie was not directly involved with the Centre. It was decided to refer this topic to you for a decision as to what criteria we are using when we include people in this section.]

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## Native Language Teacher Training

### Certificate Training

A five-day Certificate Training session was held from September 19 to 23 for 14 participants representing eight Yukon and Alaskan languages: Ahtna, Tanacross, Gwich'in, Hän, Northern Tutchone, Southern Tutchone, Kaska, and Tlingit. The focus of the session was on methodology, language structure and professionalism for both trainees and experienced instructors. Rural Programs Co-ordinator Jo-Anne Johnson and Urban Programs Co-ordinator Linda Harvey conducted sessions on staffing protocol, decorating classrooms, student enrollments,



Margaret Bob teaching Tlingit in Teslin school

and the YTA, while staff linguist André Bourcier conducted a session on the curriculum guide and lesson planning. Teaching techniques were demonstrated for the themes of people, fish and berries, animals, and food. During materials production participants made fish mobiles and binoculars. Margaret Bob and Bessie Cooley, Tlingit instructors at Teslin School, did a presentation on team teaching.

Guests during the training session included Dennis Rankin, YTA Executive Director; David Sloan, Director of Learning, Department of Education; and the Hon. John Edzerza, Minister of Education.



Mary Henry and Mabel Henry teach Hän at Robert Service School, Dawson City

Attendance at the training sessions is part of the course requirements for the three-year Certificate program accredited by Yukon College. Participants must also complete three years of classroom experience in order to receive their certificate. Graduates of the Certificate program may go on to take a two-year Diploma program, during which they develop their linguistic and teaching skills, develop original teaching materials, and document oral history and traditional narratives.

### **Special Training Session for Southern Tutchone Trainees**

On September 7 and 8 a special training and literacy session for the Southern Tutchone trainees in Whitehorse was held. Mary Jane Allison (F.H. Collins/Porter Creek), Amanda Workman (Takhini Elementary), and Stephen Reid (Elijah Smith) participated, as well as experienced Southern Tutchone instructor Vera Brown (Elijah Smith), elders Irene Smith and Margaret Workman, and YNLC staff. The session focused on the Southern Tutchone alphabet, listening exercises, possessives, and names of plants. The group also transcribed a story, "Big Owl," shared by Irene Smith. Participants also developed suggestions for activities at the Porter Creek Secondary School Culture Week (Oct. 26-30), and discussed requirements and fund-raising for student participation in the Juneau, Alaska Coastal Celebrations in June 2006.

### **Gwich'in In-Service**

From October 3 to 7 a special Gwich'in in-service was held with native language instructor Randall Kendi, newly hired this fall for the Gwich'in language program at F.H. Collins. Elders Mary Jane Kunnizzi and Ruth Welsh attended, as well as YNLC staff Linda Harvey and André Bourcier. Linda has been assisting Randall with daily lesson planning, long-range planning, and curriculum materials. Excellent support has been provided for

this new language program by Community Education Liaison Co-ordinator Kim Rumbley, by the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, and by F.H. Collins principal Darren Hays and vice-principal Christine Klassen-St. Pierre. Twenty students are enrolled in this program, which is offered to students from Grade 8 to 12.



Participants in the November Tlingit Literacy Session

## Literacy Training Sessions

A Tlingit literacy session was held from November 16 to 18 for twelve participants from Carcross, Teslin, and Whitehorse. Dr. Jeff Leer from the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska Fairbanks led the session. Participants worked on listening exercises, the Tlingit alphabet, songs, and Tlingit grammar.

A Gwich'in literacy session was held from November 22 to 24 with 25 participants, including 13 students from F.H. Collins. Participating elders included Annie Lord

from Old Crow, who was flown in especially for this session, Betty Sjodin, Ruth Welsh, and former Gwich'in language instructor Ruth Carroll. Yukon Toponymist Garry Njootli also attended. New Gwich'in language instructor at F.H. Collins, Randall Kendi, taught a number of demonstration lessons. Participants worked on listening exercises, played a variety of language games, and practised traditional Gwich'in hymns. The singing was recorded and broadcast by CBC along with interviews with participants.

From December 7 to 9 a Hän literacy session was held with 17 participants from Dawson City and Whitehorse, including Native Language instructors Mary Henry and Mabel Henry. Randall Kendi assisted director John Ritter and André Bourcier in leading the workshop. The group practised listening exercises, practised Christmas carols in Hän, and translated new carols for use in the classroom. Participants also corrected the translation of a photo story they had prepared with Georgette McLeod called *Georgette Goes Hunting*. A special request was to translate the Anglican doxology into Hän from the older version of Gwich'in known as Tukudh.



F.H.Collins students playing the line game at the November Gwich'in Literacy Session

New versions of the audio story books *At Home* and *Camping* were also recorded with Percy Henry.

## School Visits

### School and Community Visits by André Bourcier, Staff Linguist

School, Community	Native Language Teachers	First Nation	Date
Robert Service School, Dawson City	Mary Henry	Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation	August 30-31
F.H. Collins	Principal Darren Hays, vice-principal Christine Klassen-St. Pierre, Randall Kendi	Gwich'in language program	November 30

### School and Community Visits by Jo-Anne Johnson, Rural Programs Co-ordinator

School, Community	Native Language Teachers	First Nation	Date
Ross River School, Ross River	Doris Bob, Jim Atkinson	Ross River Dena Council	October 3-7
Teslin School, Teslin	Bessie Cooley, Margaret Bob	Teslin Tlingit Council	October 12-13
Nelna Bessie John School, Beaver Creek	Rose-Marie Blair	White River First Nation	October 17-19
St. Elias School, Haines Junction	Vivien Smith, Martha Smith		October 20
Eliza van Bibber School, Pelly Crossing	Alice Joe, Shirley Joe	Selkirk First Nation	October 24-25
Tantalus School, Carmacks	Ragene Blackjack, Grace Wheeler, Amy Billy	Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation	October 26
Tantalus School, Carmacks	Ragene Blackjack, Grace Wheeler, Amy Billy	Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation	November 1-2
Robert Service School, Dawson City	Mary Henry, Mabel Henry	Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation	November 28-30

## School and Community Visits by Linda Harvey, Urban Programs Co-ordinator

School, Community	Native Language Teachers	Date
F.H. Collins	Randall Kendi (Gwich'in program)	September 28
F.H. Collins	Randall Kendi (Gwich'in program)	October (ongoing)
Takhini Elementary	Amanda Workman, Bertha Moose	November 2
F.H. Collins	Principal Darren Hays, vice-principal Christine Klassen-St. Pierre, Randall Kendi (Gwich'in program)	November 30

## Presentations

### New Yukon Teachers' Orientation

On August 24, YNLC staff participated in the orientation of new teachers to the Yukon, organized by the Department of Education, which was held at Brooks Brook. Jo-Anne Johnson and Linda Harvey hosted a display of YNLC materials, and participated in sessions on First Nations traditional medicine and legends.



Kaska teacher Doris Bob and students at Ross River School

### Yukon Teachers' Association Conference

YNLC staff and native language instructors offered a number of sessions about First Nations language and culture at the 50th anniversary conference of the YTA, held on September 29 and 30 in Whitehorse. Because this year's conference featured First Nations languages and culture as one of its six strands, more workshops were offered on this topic than in any previous year.

Two sessions on First Nation family trees were led by Linda Harvey and Jo-Anne Johnson, with a total of 20 participants. Linda McDonald (Watson Lake Secondary) led a session on the gesture approach to teaching Kaska. Stephen Reid (Elijah Smith School) and Linda Harvey led two sessions on starting culture clubs in schools, with 11 participants. Margaret Bob and Bessie Cooley (Teslin School) led a session on team-teaching native languages. André Bourcier and Anne Ranigler staffed a display table of YNLC materials.

### **Visit by CYFN Leadership**

About 15 members of CYFN's leadership, including Grand Chief Andy Carville, toured the centre on October 26. YNLC staff Linda Harvey, André Bourcier, Anne Ranigler, and Josephine Holloway organized a display and answered questions. The tour was organized by the Director of First Nations Initiatives at Yukon College, Steve Smith.



Yukon First Nations Chiefs visiting YNLC in October

### **Porter Creek Secondary School Culture Week**

On October 28 André Bourcier, Jo-Anne Johnson and Linda Harvey made a presentation as part of Culture Week at the school. They spoke on what YNLC has to offer students if they want to become native language teachers. The day was organized by Southern Tutchone trainee language instructor at the school, Mary Jane Allison.

### **French Monitors**

Fifteen French monitors from across Canada attended a presentation about the YNLC on November 4. André Bourcier, Linda Harvey and Jo-Anne Johnson presented information on the work of the Centre, Yukon languages, and the teaching of native languages. Linda Harvey taught a demonstration lesson to the group. Gilbert Lamarche from the Department of Education also attended.



YNLC Urban Co-ordinator Linda Harvey with visiting French monitors

### **Education Act Reform**

On November 29 YNLC Director John Ritter and André Bourcier met with Ed Schulz, representing CYFN, and Colin Kelly of the Department of Education, co-chairs of the Education Act Reform Committee. Discussion focused on technology, YNLC's on-line capability, and the terms of reference of the Committee. Yukon native language teachers will be making a formal presentation to the Committee in February.

### **Website Developments**

Work continues on the development of the new YNLC website. Four of the five major sections of the site have been worked on this

fall, but because of its increased size and complexity, the opening of the new site to the public is still several months away.

The new site organizes the information and materials into five major sections called

YNLC, Languages, Culture & History, Materials, and Training. All the pages have been created under the first two sections, but some revision is needed. The Materials area now has a substantial number of audio language lessons, but information on print and other materials is still to come. Work has just begun on the Culture & History section.



Lucy Wren's Tagish *Camping* book on the new web site

This fall a complete set of language lessons in the Ta'an dialect of Southern Tutchone, spoken by Irene Smith, has been added to the existing website. One month of language lessons in Tlingit (Teslin dialect), spoken by Sam Johnston,

is now also available for the first time. Over 20 audio story books have also been added to the site in 10 languages, including Gwich'in, Hän, Kaska, Northern Tutchone, Southern Tutchone, Tagish, Tanacross, Tlingit, Upper Tanana, and Navajo.

## New Materials

Multimedia CDs of language lessons in four languages are now available: Northern Tutchone (Gertie Tom), Gwich'in (Mary Jane Kunnizzi), Hän (Percy Henry), and Tagish (Lucy Wren). These CDs use a computer browser to give the same pictures and sound as on the website.

Printed booklets of the October and November Gwich'in literacy sessions with the F.H. Collins students, and the December Hän literacy session, are now available. The booklet of the November Tlingit literacy session will be printed shortly.

Increasing demand for materials in Yukon's native languages means that a number of literacy session booklets have been reprinted (Tlingit, October 2004; Kaska, May 2005 and November 2001; and Southern Tutchone, April 2002). A number of language lesson and tape packages have also been re-issued. These are: Kaska - Josephine Acklack and Nancy Sterriah; Northern Tutchone - Gertie Tom; Southern Tutchone - Hazel Bunbury; Tlingit - Emma Sam; Southern Tutchone - Kathy Birckel; Northern Tutchone - Catherine Germaine.

All these materials can be ordered from YNLC (see contact information below).



## Planning for Spring 2006

This spring the YNLC will be making a formal submission on behalf of aboriginal language instructors to the Education Reform Committee.

YNLC literacy and training workshops will be announced as information becomes available.

## How To Reach Us

If you would like more information on the Centre's programs or publications, please write us at Yukon Native Language Centre, Yukon College, Box 2799, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 5K4. We can also be reached:

- by telephone at (867) 668-8820, toll-free 1-877-414-9652
- by fax at (867) 668-8825
- by email at [ynlc@yukoncollege.yk.ca](mailto:ynlc@yukoncollege.yk.ca)



Hän Elders Percy and Mabel Henry with their grand-daughter Teresa and Gwich'in teacher Randall Kendi

## YNLC Activities July - December 2005

<b>Session</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Days</b>
Southern Tutchone In-Service	YNLC Trainee Literacy	Sep 7-8	2
Certificate Course	Teacher Training	Sep 19-23	5
Yukon Teachers Association Conference	YNLC Materials Display	Sep 29-30	2
Gwich'in Literacy and Planning Session	Gwich'in Course Planning	Oct 3-7	5
First Nations Education Conference	YNLC Materials Display	Oct 4-5	2
CYFN Leadership Visit	YNLC Presentation	Oct 26	1
YNLC Orientation for French Monitors	YNLC Presentation	Nov 4	1
Tlingit Literacy Session	Classroom Literacy	Nov 16-18	3
Gwich'in Literacy Session	Literacy for Youth	Nov 22-24	3
Hän Literacy Session	Classroom Literacy	Dec 7-9	3