Elder Presentation – Betsy Jackson

Life in the Subarctic

September 27, 2016

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

* Citizen of the T’an – described the importance of being a citizen
* Wolf clan member
* Mother and father have different heritages – father Tlingit, mother H’an Gwich’in, Tahltan
* History of contact 118 years ago vs South of 60 as much as 500 years ago
* Dad’s hunting outfit was on Blackstone River
* Spent childhood playing on the hillside across the Yukon River

**GEOGRAPHY/ TERRITORY**

* Harsh climate when she was young
  + FN were and are adaptable
  + Halloween first day of snow
  + 40 or 50 below between November and February
  + Damp climate vs. dry climate and ability to stay warm
* Land owned by the future generations

**CLOTHING**

* Clothing – mukluks, moccasins, wool pants

**SPIRITUAL BELIEFS/ TRADTITIONS**

* Taught to always be quiet – contrast to today \*\*\*remember you’re in someone else’s home
* Potlatches banned by government
* Spiritual beliefs – good and bad; bear sign – don’t step over or touch; waist down powerful
* Bear skinned looks similar to a human \*\*\*Need to respect bears
* Potlatches – taking care of people who have died; crow and wolf clans take care of and are paid for other clan’s death \*\*\*dig graves, take care of body, cook meal
* When you give away the best you have, it comes back to you
* Potlatches were banned in Betsy’s childhood until she was a teenager
* Potlatches no place for a young person because the dead will take the young with them
* Camp robber – tells you about being successful in hunts
* Calm and positive energy brings calm and positive energy
* Young women first moon ceremonies – take care of themselves, self-discipline, sewing \*\*\*Taken care by grandmother and aunties \*\*\*7 times more powerful during year of first moon; fasted from strawberries for a year
* Grandpas and uncles took young men out to hunt beaver; why – teaches patience, listening in three spots and being quiet, beaver’s hearing is so good
* Strawberry/ rock story – strawberry will not give up on the 2-leggeds when the 4-leggeds did; rocks will take troubles
* Tobacco offering

**FOOD/ HUNTING**

* Lived by the season
  + Don’t deplete any one area
  + Spring – fish and eggs \*\*\*craving omega 3s, look for fish at the edgest of lakes where the ice is starting to melt and oxygen is available to fish
  + Fish nets – moose skin, caribou, willow
* Fish traps in Klukshu - Walking to Klukshu from back of Kusawa
* Food sources: gophers, birds, moose, grouse, rabbits, caribou, sheep
  + Small game live off of medicine foods (i.e. plants with powerful chemicals)
* Small game hunting – women; large game hunting – men…sometimes \*\*\*Besty’s grandmother was a big game hunter
* Hunting – leave fat for birds and 4-leggeds
* Gaffing fish – 10ft pole, hand sized with big hook on the end
* Preparing meat for winter – cut for drying, smoking and packing away in hide of canvas (could last for 2-3 years)
* Different Yukon fish camps had different ways of cutting fish
* Store fish in caches or holes in the ground

**LEADERSHIP/ SOCIAL ORGANIZATION**

* Moved around in smaller groups; sometimes even split up families

**SHELTER**

* No snow shelters
* Shelters – branches, dry brush, fill it with boughs of spruce to make windproof; used hides that weren’t completely tanned

**LANGUAGE**

* Language: Tagish Tlingit language \*\*\*hit on head at residential school for speaking native language; feels resentment when she hears people speaking native language

**TRANSPORTATION**

* Transportation: one tonne, horses (round up hundreds of them)
* No fences but let other people know they are in their area

Definitions: nomadic, deplete, arrogance, potlatch, gaffing, fetch

Questions – hunting stories

To show – topo map to show distance between Kusawa and Klukshu