

Cynthia  
Nowell

ANS 410  
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Albert Wassilie

This class was a joint effort with Albert and Jim Kari. They talked about the place names of the Daniana language.

Albert first started telling about some of the names of the area where he is from. The names of places are given by the characteristics of the place or what the area meant to the people. The reason for naming things was to be able to tell someone exactly where you were. An example of this was a mountain where a bunch of people camped. The name was Yatsi, chlya, xi which means we had our heads together under this mountain.

There is 1700 names for the area. There is a creek called hungry creek because at one time people lives there that went hungry because there was no moose. Once a place has a name it's permanent.

The town Nondalton means a little lake between two big lakes. One of the larger lakes was Illiamna which means the island lake.

When there was hardly any fish in Nondalton then the people went to another lake in the spring but they had to go over a mountain. When the people first did this they named the mountain. When they got to the top they named it; we walked up to the sky.

Around Alberts villiage there is 6-mile lake. At one end there is a little creek called that because it makes small waves. Another creek makes big waves so it is called big creek.

The people use to get paint off the mountains. They use to get red lava from the vocanoes to paint with like painting a face or skins and Albert even paint snow shoes because it is cheaper then paint. The paint is like a wet clay.

There use to be a lake where the people got Dentilia. They cannot find it anymore. They use to take meat and threw it into the lake and left it for awhile. Then they pulled the meat out and it would be covered with Dentilia. Then they would boil water and put the whole thing in and boil out the bugs. Finally they would string up the shells. There is so many lakes that they cannot remember exactly which one it is. From the elders that are left.

JIM KARI

It's interesting that for 41,000 miles there is names all over. Even on both sides of the Cook inlet and across the mountain range. It is odd how there is the tallest mountain in this area and that the language is on both sides of the range.

Almost all the names in the area are Daniana and not a

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mixture of any other language. All places are named except a small place across the cook inlet and that's because nobody has lived there for awhile and the people can't remember the names.

The names are thought to be aboriginal names because there not new, nothing is made up, and the names correspond to what was going on years ago.

The language is considered unusual. They are the only Athabascan language who live on the ocean. He thinks that the western range is the oldest part of the language because of the names. Since then the names have changed a bit. He figured this out by stories and dialect changes. The first moment was into Cook inlet area and then down by Illiamna.

Only Daniana and Ingalik have what you call vowel shifting of the schwa. They must have got it from the Yupik who have a schwa. He figured that the people were where the Yupik are now and then moved to where they are now after picking up the schwa.

Another interesting thing about the language is in the Stoney river area where the people first came there is names that are Daniana but nobody knows the meaning.

Lastly Albert talked about a book written by somebody from UAF. She wrote a story about a man who was really tall. He had really long legs and arms. At one time the Aluets came up to attack the Daniana so the really tall guy named ts'anhdyhulyat went and got rid of all of the Aluets and saved the Daniana. Who then made him a hero.