Yuman Family Language Summit

By Museum Committee member Candy Christman

The 6th annual Yuman Language Summit will be held April 29 – May 1, 2008 here at Barona. This year’s conference theme is *Sixteen Languages – One Family: Aa Shahuuk Maay Hemhuuk Kinyeway Ehnh*. This is the first time that the conference will be held in California, and it is very exciting to be part of it. The summit was first started in Arizona by people who are committed to preserving their language and culture. It has since grown and is a collaboration of all of the tribes who share the Yuman dialect, including people from Arizona, California, and Baja California.

It has been an enjoyable experience coordinating the event. Over the past year, the Yuman Summit Steering Committee, comprised of several Tribal members from Arizona and California, has met monthly to plan the conference. We are anticipating 400 people or more to attend this cultural language event. There are many different tribal language workshops to attend, a night of traditional song and dance, as well as a special night set aside to honor people who have been instrumental in preserving their language and culture.

Registration is still available and people are encouraged to register early. Please go to www.baronatribe.org to access the registration form. Print it out and mail with your check to Toni Carlyle of the SRPMIC O’Odham Piipaash Language Program (address included on website).

Please call Rich at the Barona Museum 619-443-7003 ext. 2 for more information.

Visit our website! www.baronamuseum.org
The Barona Inter-Tribal Dictionary Project

After eight long years of intensive meeting, recording, and translating, we are beginning the final editing process to go press with the new Barona Dictionary. This dictionary is being published in 2008, 20 years after the first version in 1988. We have asked Sunbelt Publishers to assist us in bringing about the first Barona Museum Press publication.

The effort for this edition was definitely an intertribal happening. Twenty years ago there were several fluent speakers at Barona, including Lenora Banegas, Dora Curo, Charlie Magginni, and Isabel McGee. They worked closely with Dr. Margaret Langdon of UCSD. Sadly, all of these participants are no longer with us. Today, there are only a few Tribal members throughout San Diego County who speak Tipay ay and the other language variations also known as Tipay as and Kumeyaay. We have also talked with friends from the Baja California Kumiai. Today’s dictionary would, of necessity, be a complex compilation of many speech varieties throughout the San Diego area. So, we asked our neighbors from other reservations to join us in this important task. Some were hesitant to participate in the dictionary. To speak the Indian language and represent one’s family and/or tribe in a written document is a very difficult decision for Tribal members. We sincerely thank those who participated for their input and choice to assist in this very important project.

I would like to thank three other participants. First, Dr. Amy Miller, who assumed the project in 2003 for Dr. Langdon who was in ill health. Dr. Miller has met with the speakers, recorded, transcribed, analyzed and compiled their words, and created the written form of the dictionary. An incredibly complex and amazing task; the late Ed Brown (Viejas) marveled at how well Amy speaks the language.

Also, Myrna DeSomber, (Museum Committee member and former Barona Museum Senior Coordinator) and Arlette Poutous (language instruction coordinator in the 1970’s-80’s, and grandmother of a Tribal member) were instrumental in the 1988 dictionary project. Later, when the Barona Museum decided to create an updated edition, they assisted me in getting the project going. Myrna was the project coordinator for several years until her retirement, and is still an active participant. She has written a history of the project for the new edition. Arlette continues to participate by opening her home for the dictionary meetings, making the participants comfortable.

The editing work is in progress. The editing team includes: Dr. Miller, Sunbelt Publishers with Jennifer Redmond (Editor-in-Chief) and Diana Lindsay (Publisher), Cheryl Hinton, and Paul Jeffrey (language intern). The editors are currently working on the list of participants from our research files and recordings. We ask that if you participated in any of the categories below and somehow we have missed your name or the name of a family member, PLEASE CONTACT US. We are trying to compile this very important and very long list and do not want to leave anyone out. To date, the list of participants includes:

Our Core Group:

Viejas: Ed Brown (Deceased)
Barona: Pat Curo
Santa Ysabel: Herman Osuna
Jamul: Jane Thing Dumas and Adolph Thing

Extended Group (participating in some sessions and offering words):

Barona: Ramon Ames (from tapes), Larry Banegas, Steve Banegas, Josephine “Sister” Romero, Charles “Beaver” Curo, Arlette Poutous (from tapes; Barona grandparent)
Viejas: Sam Brown, Tom Hyde
Santa Ysabel: Myrtle Welch, Stan Rodriguez
Jamul: Lupe Curo(Deceased), Mary Cuero, Trini Cuero
La Posta: Marie LaChappa (Deceased)
Baja California Kumiai: Jon (Juan) Mera, Martha (Marta) Rodriguez (Santa Ysabel spouse)

Observers:

Barona: Candy Christian, Beverly Means, Caroline Mendoza, Lynn “Teddy” Yeats, Linda LaChappa, Carol Banegas (spouse), Dana Curo (spouse)
Camp: Nancy Curo, Janice Cuero
Jamul: Lee Acebedo; Karen Toggery; Maria Thing (spouse)

Staff and Interns:

Myrna DeSomber, Cheryl Hinton, Diane Tells His Name, Paul Jeffrey

Thanks to everyone, especially the Barona Tribal Council, the Barona Museum Committee, and most importantly the Barona Dictionary Group (2001-2008).

Do you speak a language other than your own? Do you remember learning to speak English?

If you answered yes to the above question, then you are not in the estimated 82% of the United States that speak only English. The United States does not have an official language, but many states have adopted English as their official language. The English we speak here is termed “American English” as opposed to “Canadian English,” together they represent “North American English.”

Is this an English lesson? No. This article is about language; specifically Native language. Native American languages are those that existed long before European settlement in the Americas. According to Wikipedia, these indigenous languages are still spoken fluently in a few places, usually on reservations. Unfortunately, most of them are endangered to some degree because there are few fluent speakers left. The Navajo of Arizona and New Mexico have the most speakers with 178,000. With over 500 recognized tribes in the United States and thousands of language dialects, our indigenous languages are very diverse. Linguist Edward Sapir observed:

“Few people realize that within the confines of the United States there is spoken today a far greater variety of languages… than in the whole of Europe. We may go further. We may say, quite literally and safely, that in the state of California alone there are greater and more numerous linguistic extremes than can be illustrated in all the length and breadth of Europe.”

How does it happen that a language disappears? There is one theory that points to a primary culture consuming the smaller culture. I can remember my father and mother telling me when I was growing up that I had to speak English only because “Indian” (he never used the word “Kumeyaay”) was a dead language. I overheard my mother use Spanish and “Indián” with my grandmother when she didn’t want me to know what she was talking about. I look back at that time and realize the discrimination my parents faced because of their language. They had to conform to the language and culture that paid their bills.

It’s wonderful to hear young people on the reservation use their Native language in phrases to each other. In order for the language to thrive, it must be practiced on a daily basis, just as Native dances and songs are practiced. This is difficult on Barona people because our population number is around 400—of this number there are very few conversations in Kumeyaay. Wouldn’t it be wonderful to answer the phone with Hauwka (“hello” in Kumeyaay)? This could be the first step in a language journey.

“Revival of the Kumeyaay language must begin with a desire to keep our culture alive…”

Today, the Barona Museum is working actively to preserve our native language by creating the “Barona Inter-Tribal Dictionary,” sponsoring Kumeyaay language classes, and participating in the “2008 Yuman Language Summit.” Whether you call us Diegueño, Kumeyaay, or Tipay, the language of our ancestors can be linked to the Yuman division of the Hokan language family of the Southwest, which includes the languages we speak, Kumeyaay. Revival of the Kumeyaay language must begin with a desire to keep our culture alive by speaking the words that go beyond verbs or nouns or other parts of speech. As I recall my father describing Mt. Cuyamaca’s name, he told me it was an “Indian” word, Ekwii Aakmak, that meant a veil of rain like tears (tkeyima means “you can go.”

My brother Sam Brown tells me this means “you can go.”

* Wikipedia, Languages of the United States, 02/20/08
Thank you to all Southern California Natives and friends who came and “hung out” at the Cultural Night we had here in Barona in January. There was mention that nobody gets together anymore to eat, talk, sing, and dance during the good times, so we helped by putting this event together from the ideas of many. We encourage everyone to come and get together next time to learn and share in some traditions that were here long before us, and hopefully will stay with our people as time goes on.

A special thanks to our friends and families that traveled here to Barona from afar. It was really great to see everyone together enjoying the night.

See you next time.

— Bobby

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NATIONAL ARCHIVES DOCUMENTS NOW ACCESSIBLE TO RESEARCHERS
By Alexandra Harris, Curator of Historic Media

After two years and over thirty volunteers, we have finally finished archiving and developing a finding aid for the Capitan Grande documents copied from the originals at the National Archives at Laguna Niguel. The collection is comprised of documents, reports, and other communications between the local Indian Agency and the reservations, and often including the Federal government in Washington, D.C. as well. Most of the documents in this collection concern people and events on the Capitan Grande Reservation between 1900 and 1934. This period of time is significant in the history of the people here at Barona because of the important issues they went through during that time: water rights, political and cultural struggles, and ultimately being removed to the Barona Indian Reservation. We already had two researchers make appointments this past January to use the archive even before all the documents were accessible. We are very pleased to be able to offer this resource to Tribal members and the public. If you are interested in doing research, please contact the Museum to schedule an appointment.

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EDUCATION

SPRING/SUMMER CLASSES 2008
Ancient Spirits Speak

These classes are open to the public.

Painting Class with Robert Freeman
Well-known artist Robert Freeman (Luiseno/Hunkpapa) will be instructing a three-part series on painting. Classes are held Saturdays; May 3, 10, and 17, from 9:00am-1:00pm. Please plan on attending all three dates. All levels of artists are welcome to attend, including those who have never picked up a paint brush. This class is designed for individuals at least 12 years old. Lunch will be served. Fee: $25 per person (one time cost only). Barona Tribal Members free. Please RSVP by April 25.

Bow and Arrow Class with Stan Rodriguez
Join us for a full weekend, June 21 and 22 from 10:00am-4:00pm, of making traditional hunting tools. Stan Rodriguez (Santa Ysabel) will be teaching a course on bow and arrow making. Please note that this class does not include flint knapping (arrow point making with rock or obsidian). We will be creating arrows with wooden points. You must attend both days. Due to the use of sharp tools, each participant must be 18 years or older. Lunch is included. Fee: $25 per person (one time cost only). Barona Tribal Members free. Please RSVP by June 13.

Due to the high interest in both of these classes we recommend that you call to RSVP ASAP!

‘Iipay aa classes
‘Iipay language classes are held at the Museum on Thursday evenings at 5:00pm. Language classes are open to Kumeyaay/Diegueño Tribal and community members. Call Rich at the Museum for details.

For more information on these upcoming classes, call Richard Rodriguez at (619)443-7003 ext 229.
**COLLECTIONS ACTIVITY**

**NEW AND CONTINUING EXHIBITS**

*Eku’remøyoyop Barona Indian Reservation, A Story of 75 Years of Unity*

**The 75th Anniversary of the Barona Indian Reservation**

A history grows and prospers through the telling from one generation to the next. Our exhibit tells the story of the Barona people and their Reservation. The people have stayed together through the years; during difficult times and good times, they have grown and prospered. Barona Indian Reservation is celebrating 75 years since the people moved here from Capitan Grande. In 1875, the United States formalized the government at Capitan Grande and it entered into the new reservation system. When the people moved to Barona in 1932, the Barona Group of the Capitan Grande Band of Mission Indians was formed. The Museum has gathered a great deal of information from historic and recent interviews, archives, and family photographs to accomplish this important exhibit.

We hope this exhibit will give rise to other remembrances and that the body of history will be enhanced and grow. In this way, the Museum has been privileged to put these visions, thoughts, and reminiscences together at the Barona Tribal Members tell their own stories of this living history.

**MUSEUM CALENDAR**

**APRIL 14**

*Barona COE Sewing Classes*

**APRIL 20-24**

*Cosmic Serpent Project in Santa Fe*

**APRIL 24-28**

*Senior trip to Gathering of Nations*

**APRIL 27-MAY 1**

*American Association of Museums Annual Meeting*

**APRIL 29-30, MAY 1**

*Yuman Family Language Summit*

**MAY 5, 12, 19, 26**

*Barona COE Sewing Classes*

**MAY 26**

*Museum Committee Meeting*

**JUNE 23**

*Museum Committee Meeting*