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## IMPLEMENTING DELGAMUUK'W

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Biography of Gene Joseph

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Good morning. One of my most important segments of my career was working as the librarian for the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en during the Delgamuuk'w court cases. I started there probably about 1984 and went back full-time in 1986 and worked until the end of the first two trials.

In the Delgamuuk'w case, as many of you probably know, there were reams and reams of transcripts. I don't recall how many pages, but there were massive amounts. We also had somewhere in the amount of 30,000 documents that had been put forward through either the Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en or the federal governments and provincial governments. These all had to be managed in some manner so that, when we were in the court, we could retrieve the material for the lawyers as well as the judge.

When we first started out seriously looking at organizing the material for the Delgamuuk'w case, we started in 1986 when they asked me to come up and start working. When I arrived, I discovered that they had started with a program that was being developed specifically for the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en by a programmer who worked in the Smithers area. So essentially what they were doing was developing an in-house program, a database management program. So this is what I was told to work with. They had started the year before by inputting information by law students, who did brief descriptions of documents. When I arrived I had the program, which we called AIRS, and we started inputting and basically cataloguing the information. What I found difficult was, while the law students were very good at legal research, they didn't really know enough about library work and library descriptions and such to make accurate and useful descriptions for me, especially those materials that were compiled by the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en which did not have any specific titles. So in some cases the description that was given was "map," which was fairly useless as a description, for me anyway. So I had that to work with. We started editing that work, started cataloguing all the documents on AIRS and we went through trial with AIRS. We constantly had to have our programmer with us. He always had to be on call. Quite frequently he'd come down from Smithers to Vancouver and stay with us for a few weeks to a month during the trial, during the preparations and such working on this program. In a lot of cases the program would crash and we'd be sitting there holding our hands waiting for the programmer to come and fix it, or to come and do something else with it so that we could do a little bit more of what we needed to do. At the end of the trial we ran out of money, which is quite usual -- we were constantly running out of money in the court case -- we ran out of money, the AIRS program crashed, I couldn't input anything into it; I couldn't edit, I couldn't do anything at all. Fortunately this was at the end of the trial, so it wasn't as upsetting as it could have possibly have been. Since we were out of money, I was laid off -- a good many of us were laid off.

Then when we went back in for the second round, the lawyers had themselves, through their law firms, purchased a program called SUMMATION. This is a program that was developed in the United States primarily for legal research and legal documentation. The program allows you to build databases, and we were able to transfer most of our information to this program -- that's SUMMATION. We were able to transfer a good amount of our material, our information to this program. So we were running with that. The added benefit of this program was that it did full text retrieval. We had attempted to do full text retrieval with the AIRS program, but that didn't quite work out as well as it could have. So we were very pleased, because with the SUMMATION program we were able to input or transfer from the court reporter's disks, which they gave to us every day at the end of each trial day. They'd give us these floppy disks which would contain the transcripts of that day. We'd rush over to our office and load it onto SUMMATION and we continued to do that through the whole trial. We also had on it the discoveries and interrogatories, and were able to put on some of our oral history transcripts, which we had prepared prior to the trial. So the program, I thought, ran quite well; it ran quite smoothly. At the end we ended up in the courtroom with our computers. I think we're probably the first court in Canada to bring our computers right into the courtroom and use it. So I used the SUMMATION program to retrieve information for the lawyers right in the courtroom, printed documents right in the courtroom. Mainly we were quite satisfied with it. I know that the lawyers were quite pleased with the full text retrieval part of it. As a librarian, I found the database which held my catalogue to have a few shortcomings but managed to live around that and I was generally happy with it.

Another program that we also used was the program called IN-MAGIC. It is now called DB\_TEXTWORKS. IN-MAGIC is a program that has been around for at least fifteen years or so, and it was developed in the United States specifically for special libraries, that is small libraries such as First Nations libraries that I often set up. The Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, about four or five years ago, purchased this program and are using it, the Heitsluk Cultural Center is using it,

and at the Weway library at the First Nations House of Learning I had the catalogue running on that until we transferred it to the U.B.C. library catalogue. The IN-MAGIC program not only allows you to build your library catalogue or your database for your information, but it also has full text retrieval and it will also allow you to put photographs and, I believe, oral tapes that may be used in conjunction with the programs. So you can have your database with your information -- physical description of, say, a museum artifact -- and then have right in it a photograph of it, or the territory, or whatever you find useful for your work.

Those were the three programs that I worked with. AIRS, which was an in-house program that we built -- and I would strongly recommend that no one attempt to build their own database program now. That's basically trying to reinvent the wheel and you're going to be throwing in a lot of money away, basically, I think. The SUMMATION program and the DB\_TEXTWORKS programs, I think, are quite excellent and I would recommend them. If you're working with lawyers and you're expecting to have a lot of court cases or whatever, you may seriously want to look at it. I think your legal teams would be quite appreciative of it. As a librarian, I would recommend the IN-MAGIC program, or DB\_TEXTWORKS. The only thing that is different about SUMMATION and DB\_TEXTWORKS that I find a little interesting, is that the cost of DB\_TEXTWORKS is fairly expensive. You pay by each user in your system. So if you have one user you pay somewhere around \$1,400, and if you have 10 users, then you pay somewhere around \$7,000. Then there is additional modules that are attached to it. If you want to do a little bit of something different, then you have to buy this module which can cost anywhere from \$200 to \$1,000. The manuals themselves cost about \$300. SUMMATION is a little easier on the budget. I don't have the cost of it right here with me, but when we purchased it, it was somewhere around \$3,000 and that was for a couple of users. So there are those two programs. While I think they are very useful, I think it is most important that you study what exactly you need. If you're going to be working a lot with lawyers going through court cases and such, look at SUMMATION. If you're trying to build a library, an archives-cum-treaty-office management system, band system, then look at IN-MAGIC. I think that would be most useful for you even though it is a little expensive. There's support that is available from both software companies. One is based in Toronto for SUMMATION and DB\_TEXTWORKS has a support group here in Vancouver. Thank you.