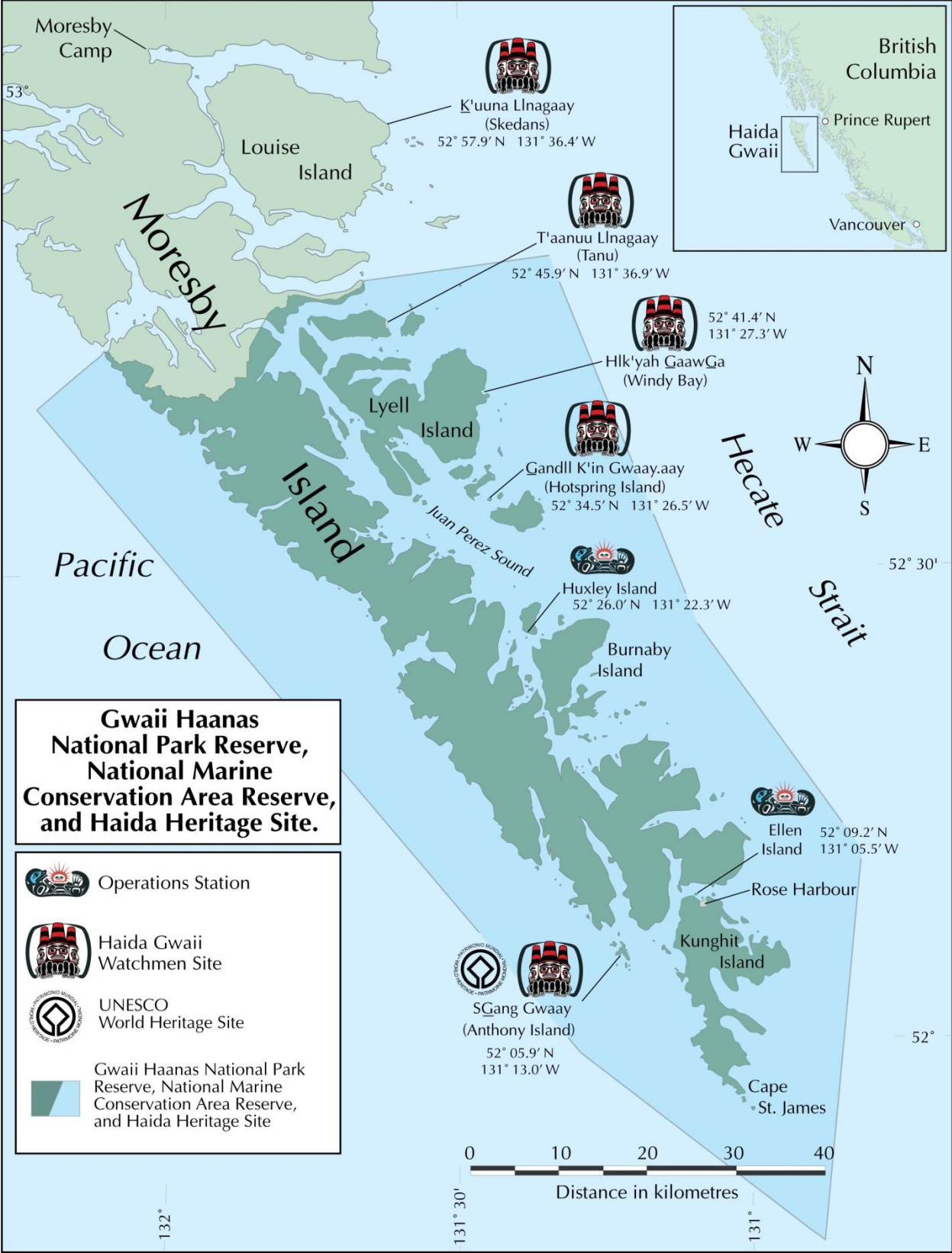
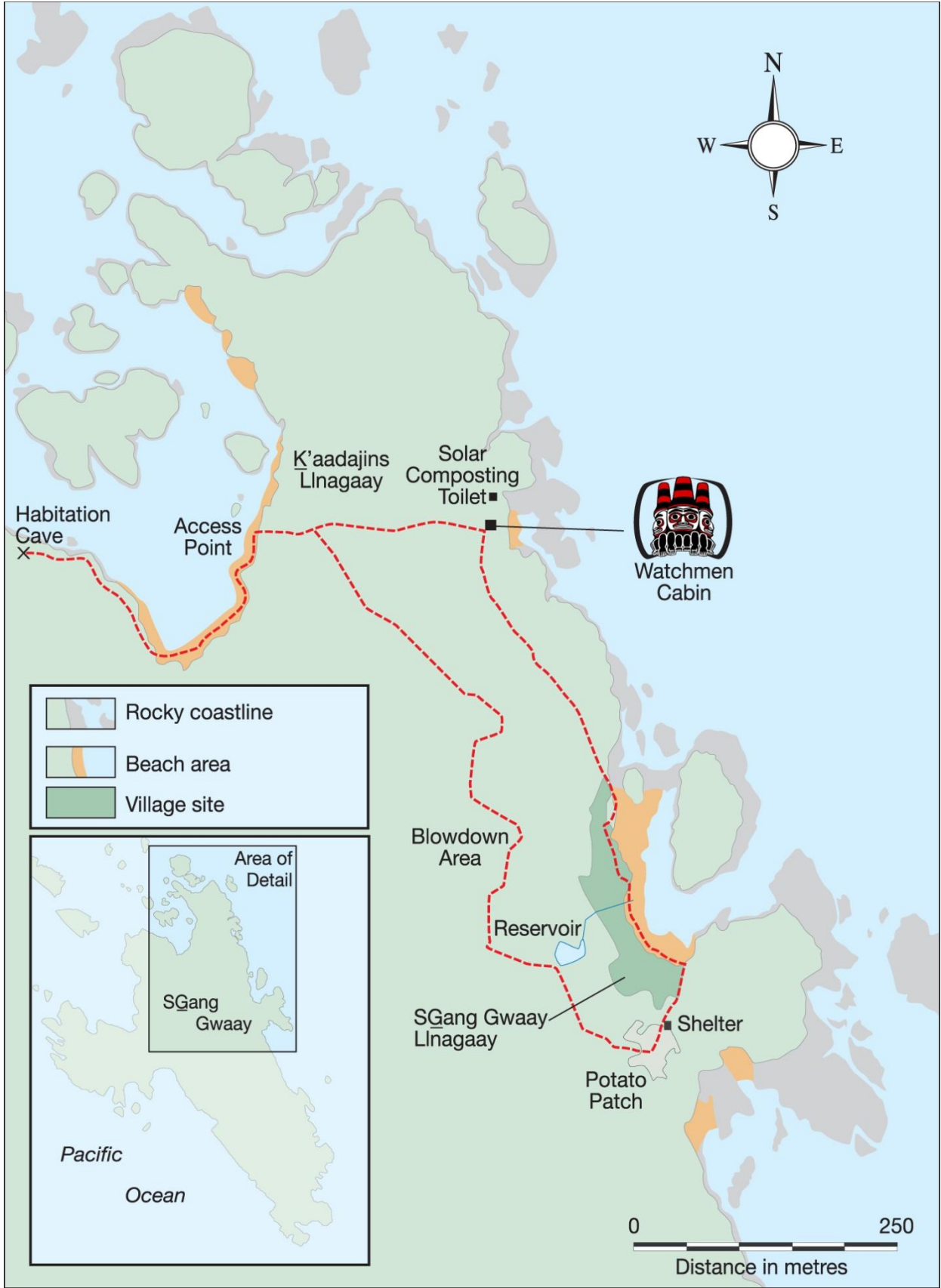


# **Community Involvement in the Nomination and Management of SGang Gwaay World Heritage Site**

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# GLOSSARY

In keeping with the wishes of the Haida community, this case study uses Haida place names that are in current use, and the spellings follow the most recent orthography established by the Haida Language Committee. The English names for certain places are listed in this glossary and occasionally mentioned elsewhere in the case study to orient readers more familiar with those names.

Many of our interviewees use their Haida name, either exclusively or in addition to their English name, and we have endeavoured to use the order and spelling of names that our interviewees prefer. People's names are listed once in the glossary and are not cross-referenced. In the case of individuals who use their English names predominantly, the given name precedes the surname.

## *Places and Organizations*

**Archipelago Management Board (AMB)** – established in 1993 under one of the provisions of the Gwaii Haanas Agreement between the Council of the Haida Nation and the federal government of Canada. Co-chaired by the Parks Canada Superintendent for Gwaii Haanas and by a councilor from the Haida Nation.

**Athlii Gwaay** – Lyell Island in English. Scene of anti-logging protesters' blockade in November 1985, which led to the signing of the South Moresby Memorandum of Understanding in 1987, and a year later the signing of the South Moresby Agreement by the Canadian Government and the Council of the Haida Nation.

**Council of the Haida Nation** – formed in 1974 to pursue the Haida title and rights claim related to Haida Gwaii.

**Cumshewa** – Site of ancient Haida village to the north of K'uuna Lnagaay (Skedans).

**Gandll k'in Gwaay.aay** – Haida name for Hotspring Island, one of five sites in Haida Gwaii where Watchmen act as guardians of the site and guides for visitors.

**Gwaii Haanas** – Abbreviation of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve and Haida Heritage Site. Incorporates South Moresby, the largest of the southern islands of Haida Gwaii, as well as Athlii Gwaay (Lyell Island), SGang Gwaay and 135 other islands and islets.

**Haida Gwaii** – Formerly known as the Queen Charlotte Islands, an archipelago off the west coast of the Canadian province of British Columbia.

**Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program** – Founded by Captain Gold, formally established in 1981 to provide guardians for five Haida cultural heritage sites in Haida Gwaii.

**Hlk'yah GaawGa** – Haida name for one of five sites in Haida Gwaii where Watchmen act as guardians of the site and guides for visitors. Known as Windy Bay in English, located on the east coast of Athlii Gwaay (Lyell Island).

**ICOMOS** – International Council on Monuments and Sites. Advisor to UNESCO's World Heritage Committee (But no longer, see docs from Rebecca Kennedy); evaluates cultural and natural sites nominated for inscription onto the World Heritage List.

**Islands Protection Committee** – Co-founded by Guujaaw and Thom Henley. Membership consisted of Haida and environmental activists opposed to logging on Haida Gwaii. Later incorporated as the Islands Protection Society.

**Kaay Llnagaay** – site of ancient Haida village within the town of Skidegate, and current location of Haida Heritage Centre and Haida Gwaii Museum.

**K'uuna Llnagaay** – Haida name for Skedans, one of five sites in Haida Gwaii where Watchmen act as guardians of the site and guides for visitors. Skedans is the only one of these sites not within the boundaries of Gwaii Haanas.

**Nan Sdins** – “He Who is Two”. This was the Haida name of Tom Price, the last hereditary chief of SGang Gwaay, who carved some of the poles in SGang Gwaay Llnagaay.

**Old Masset Village Council** – local government of one of two main Haida settlements in Haida Gwaii. Old Masset is located at the northern edge of Haida Gwaii on what is known as Graham Island. **(Check whether Graham Island has a Haida name now)**

**SGang Gwaay** (Anthony Island) – located at the southern end of the Haida Gwaii archipelago. A British Columbia Provincial Park from 1957 to 1988, SGang Gwaay received World Heritage Site designation in 1981, under Criterion (iii) for unique cultural buildings, monuments or sites.

**SGang Gwaay Llnagaay** – the village formerly named for its last hereditary chief, Nan Sdins (Tom Price).

**Skidegate Band Council** – local government for one of two main Haida settlements in Haida Gwaii. Skidegate is located on the east side of Haida Gwaii, north of Gwaii Haanas.

**T'aanuu Llnagaay** – One of five sites in Haida Gwaii where Watchmen act as guardians of the site and guides for visitors.

## ***People***

**Anita (Upsy) Moody** – General Manager of the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program Manager since 2009.

**Bill Reid** – 1920-1998. Haida master carver, jeweler, writer and public speaker. Created Loo Taas, a 50-foot expedition-size Haida canoe commissioned for Expo 86, with a team of carvers that included Guujaaw.

**Captain Gold** – born Richard Wilson. Named for an ancestor, who in turn got the name as a result of early contact with European explorers in the area. Founder of the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program, Haida activist and author.

**Carol Crosby, Gidinjaad** – Watchman in training.

**Cindy Boyko** – Executive member of the CHN, member of the Archipelago Management Board, and former manager of the Watchmen Program.

**David Argument** – Parks Canada Resource Conservation Officer and representative on the Archipelago Management Board.

**Ernie Gladstone** – In 2001, he became the first Haida Superintendent of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve and Haida Heritage Site. Co-chair of the Archipelago Management Board.

**Ganxiid** – refers to both the Haida people who used to inhabit SGang Gwaay, and to their dialect. It is also the name of an island to the east of SGang Gwaay.

**George MacDonald** – Author of Haida Monumental Art: The Villages of the Queen Charlotte Islands (1983), UBC Press: Vancouver. Director of Canadian Museum of Civilization from 1983 to 1998. Presented SGang Gwaay nomination to Parks Canada's Historic Sites and Monuments Board in 1981.

**Guujaaw** – President of the Council of the Haida Nation since 2000. He is an artist, a carver, and a key figure in the revitalization of Haida culture.

**Hélène Chabot** – Cultural Resources Management Advisor, Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve and Haida Heritage Site. Worked with Kii'iljuus on monitoring and conservation of Haida poles at SGang Gwaay.

**Ian Walker** – Geomorphologist at the University of Victoria. Director of the Coastal Erosion and Dune Dynamics Laboratory.

**Jacob Parnell** – Watchman in training.

**Jason Alsop** – Elected member of the Council of the Haida Nation, CEO of the Haida Heritage Centre, member of the Archipelago Management Board and chair of the Haida Language Committee.

**Kii'iljuus, Barbara Wilson** – Prior to her retirement in 2012, served as Cultural Relations Specialist, Watchmen Program manager and Watchmen trainer. She co-authored the ICOMOS study *Understanding the Spirit of Place: SGang Gwaay World Heritage Site, A Case Study* with Alastair Kerr, and presented the study to ICOMOS Canada in 2008.

**Mel Kotyk** – Fisheries and Oceans representative on the Archipelago Management Board.

**Nathalie Macfarlane** – Director of the Haida Gwaii Museum at Kaay Llnagaay in Skidegate.

**Peter H. Bennett** – Parks Canada's Special Advisor on UNESCO's World Heritage Convention in the late 1970s/early 1980s. First to suggest the idea of nominating SGang Gwaay as a World Heritage Site.

**Richard Beauchamp** – Conservator with British Columbia Provincial Museum, known since 1987 as the Royal British Columbia Museum. Worked with Captain Gold on early efforts to preserve the SGang Gwaay Llnagaay poles.

**Trevor Russ** – Member of the Council of the Haida Nation and the Archipelago Management Board.

## Introduction

The illusion of a temporal boundary between two planes of existence often dissolves in the ancient village of SGang Gwaay Llnagaay, allowing the Haida of today to share time and space with their ancestors. SGang Gwaay is part of the Gwaii Haanas archipelago of 138 islands and islets off the north coast of Canada's westernmost province of British Columbia.

Captain Gold, founder of the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program, experienced this merging of past and present as he paddled towards SGang Gwaay village in the early 1970s, receiving a clear mental image of children diving into the waters of the bay. "I could see the village as it used to be."

The children were diving and swimming right next to him, and he almost felt he should move his canoe over to give the youngsters more room. He suddenly knew he needed to land his canoe stern first, "in the manner of the old people." Captain Gold felt the power of the village and the knowledge that its people had come to see him and were standing behind him.

Anita Moody, Manager of the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program, has heard drumming and singing at SGang Gwaay village.

"You can almost hear people having conversations."  
*Anita Moody*

"I went down to SGang Gwaay with my son. I wanted to connect with my ancestors. The last time I had been there was 10 years ago, and because I wasn't open, I didn't connect with my ancestors. My four-year-old son did hear, and he played with the other kids."  
*Carol Crosby (Gidinjaad), Watchman in training*

Cultural Liaison Specialist and Watchmen trainer Kii'iljuus (Barbara Wilson) heard the drums after spending a week engaged in conservation work in the village. On one occasion, she felt as if something had been wrapped around her, and she began to cry.

This enduring and active link to their forebears embodies the cultural heritage value of SGang Gwaay for the Haida community. Kii'iljuus describes it as "a physical connection to our ancestors. It's like DNA."

"Of course everyone knows how important Skung Gwaii is. The Haida think it is important because of the history and stories. Most importantly, it is one of the home villages of our ancestor Haida."  
*Captain Gold*

"The cultural aspect of SGang Gwaay is that it is a sacred site and a lot of people, not just Haida, have very powerful experiences."  
*Nathalie Macfarlane*

SGang Gwaay's status as a World Heritage Site and ongoing media coverage of Gwaii Haanas has acquainted people the world over with the island and the village of SGang Gwaay Llnagaay. Up to 2,000 visitors a year arrive by sail, powerboat, kayak or canoe to stand in awe before the poles, wander through the village, and perhaps feel the spirit of the old ones.



This case study seeks to bring alive the story of how the early champions of this isolated island, on which nature was reclaiming the remnants of Haida habitation, recognized its outstanding cultural heritage value and launched the effort to save SGang Gwaay by volunteering as guardians of the island and petitioning for its inscription onto the list of World Heritage Sites.

The story progresses through anti-logging protests, the emergence of a unified and politically determined Haida Nation, and the genesis and current workings of the co-operative management structure set up to ensure the long-term preservation of this unique place and other sites in Gwaii Haanas.

Community involvement is the theme of the case study; as they began their research, the authors asked most of their interviewees which community they should turn to and quote in their narrative. Overwhelmingly, the response was that the relevant community was the Haida. Nathalie Macfarlane, the Director of the Haida Gwaii Museum in Skidegate, went a step further.

“The community should be the Haida and any specialists that they employ, for example from the Parks or museum community.”

*Nathalie Macfarlane*

To the Haida, the land, the sea and the people they nourish and sustain are inseparable – therein lies the living cultural heritage value of SGang Gwaay. Fittingly then, the story of SGang Gwaay is told primarily through the voices of the Haida protagonists who worked to save its ecological and cultural treasures for posterity.

Key non-Haida individuals – conservators, researchers, environmentalists and employees of government agencies – have demonstrated a personal commitment to SGang Gwaay, and their contributions also form part of this narrative.

After a lengthy struggle over ownership of and access to resources in Gwaii Haanas, or South Moresby as it was formerly known, all parties involved in negotiating the agreements designed to protect the area became willing to see through each other’s eyes. This goodwill has resulted in an unprecedented level of cooperation between the Haida Nation and the Canadian government in the management of SGang Gwaay and of Gwaii Haanas as a whole.

The Constitution of the Haida Nation states: “The living generation accepts the responsibility to ensure that our heritage is passed on to following generations.” As one of Canada’s contributions to the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the World Heritage Convention in Kyoto, Japan in November 2012, the story of community involvement in the nomination and management of SGang Gwaay as a World Heritage Site showcases how the Haida are ensuring the continuity of their cultural heritage, while preserving the site for the enjoyment and edification of all.

# Community Involvement in the Nomination of SGang Gwaay

## From Conflict to Consensus

“The World Heritage Site nomination involved the community from the beginning.”

*Captain Gold*

Community involvement in the nomination of SGang Gwaay, and the growth of that involvement over almost 40 years, is linked to efforts to save Gwaii Haanas, a campaign that gained increasing momentum and support across Canada and internationally in the 1970s and 1980s.

The same period saw the emergence of the Council of the Haida Nation as a unified voice calling for the enforcement of Aboriginal title and rights in the area, including the maintenance of traditional forms of resource use.

Industrial forestry practices of the day included clearcutting a block of forest and then, once that supply of trees was exhausted, moving to another block of woods in the same area. Logging companies did not question the wisdom of harvesting old-growth forests in this manner, and consultation with the local community was not the norm.

The movement to reclaim Gwaii Haanas began with the volunteer efforts of Captain Gold, who founded the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program as the first Watchman on SGang Gwaay. Not long after he landed on the island in the early 1970s, he was sketching when “a big boat came and dropped off a group of people. It was a scientific ocean bottom research vessel...My first day and all these people arriving.”

He greeted the group and took them on a tour of the site. About 30 people came to SGang Gwaay that summer, and Captain Gold kept records on the visits.

He became the Skidegate Director of the Islands Protection Committee (later incorporated as the Islands Protection Society), founded by Guujaaw and environmentalist Thom Henley in 1974. The group’s South Moresby Island Wilderness Proposal marked out the boundaries of the area they wanted protected from clearcut logging.

That December, the Council of the Haida Nation was born; its first six resolutions concerned Haida land claims.

One day, Captain Gold was with members of the Islands Protection Committee, the Skidegate Band Council and other supporters when Thom Henley asked him, “What would you do to protect South Moresby?”

“I told them right away without hemming and hawing that to save South Moresby, create a series of base camps throughout the area, manned by Haida. Regular service by supporting boat, food deliveries, regular radio contact. Call the program Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program.”

*Captain Gold*

Captain Gold believed that the establishment of the base camps would show the Haida presence on the land and that they were regulating activity on their land.

“As for the duties, just follow what I have been doing since 1973, keeping records of people, amount of visitors, how they arrived, and comments.”

*Captain Gold*

In 1975, logging operations commenced on Athlii Gwaii, then known as Lyell Island. In 1979, the provincial government established a stakeholders' land use forum called the South Moresby Planning Team to study issues around logging in the region. The Team included representatives from the Skidegate Band Council, the Islands Protection Society, the forestry company, provincial and federal ministries and the general public.

“1979 was a busy time for the South Moresby Planning Team. There were lots of meetings going on about the pros and cons of logging on South Moresby.”

*Captain Gold*

Logging on Athlii Gwaii continued while the Team prepared a report for the provincial government.

In the meantime, the Islands Protection Society worked on securing the funding and other resources needed to set up the Watchmen Program. The program was launched around the same time as the nomination of SGang Gwaay as a World Heritage Site.

“It all came together. The Watchmen Program and the World Heritage Site nomination worked together.”

*Captain Gold*

Captain Gold recalls how the idea for the nomination came about. In 1980, Peter Bennett, Parks Canada's Special Advisor on UNESCO's World Heritage Convention, arrived on SGang Gwaay with a group. Just as he was about to leave, Bennett ran back to ask Captain Gold what he thought of the idea of nominating SGang Gwaay as a World Heritage Site.

“Peter Bennett was in love with the area and wanted to save it.”

*Captain Gold*

Captain Gold endorsed the idea. Nominating all of Gwaii Haanas had been discussed in the past, but he said, “South Moresby as a WHS was too big and too unclear as to restrictions for the Haida to endorse, but SGang Gwaay as a World Heritage Site was easy for people to accept.”

The two men had arranged to meet again that fall, and on Bennett’s return, he and Captain Gold presented the nomination idea to a public meeting of the Skidegate Band Council.

“There were about 40 people out of a population of 500...The Haida were cautious about losing the right to continue harvesting our traditional food, something we have always kept on doing.”

*Captain Gold*

He and Peter gave their assurances that the Haida would not lose this right.

“Peter and I left the SBC meeting so the people can make a vote, and we returned to the South Moresby Planning Team meeting...The SBC Chief Councillor told us he would phone us to let us know of the voting results.”

*Captain Gold*

The two had just finished informing the planning team members that they had made their presentation to the SBC when they got the call. The Council had endorsed the World Heritage Site nomination.

In the early 1980s, UNESCO’s operational guidelines for implementing the World Heritage Convention outlined the criteria for the inclusion of cultural properties in the World Heritage List. One of these was that the monument, group of buildings or site be “unique, extremely rare, or of great antiquity.”

SGang Gwaay was the first to be recognized as a living cultural site among the World Heritage Site listings. The description in the April 1981 ICOMOS document reads: “The abandoned village of Ninstints [sic] on Anthony island bears a unique testimony to the vanished civilization of the Haida Indians...”

Captain Gold and Peter Bennett worked towards changing that description of the island and the village, and Captain Gold kept his friends on the Council of the Haida Nation informed about their efforts.

Today, the statement of significance concerning SGang Gwaay on UNESCO’s website reads:

*The site commemorates the living culture of the Haida people, and their relationship to the land and sea, and offers a visual key to their oral traditions.*

A Canadian government memo dated August 29, 1986 from the Director of Historical Research to the Acting Director General, National Historic Parks and Sites Directorate hints at how close the timing was for the SGang Gwaay application.

*Parks is the agency through which Canadian nominations are made to the World Heritage list, and also the agency responsible for implementation of the World Heritage Convention on behalf of Canada...the Minister will rely on the advice of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board for Canadian nominations to the list.*

*Anthony Island was brought to the Board's attention at the extraordinary meeting of January 1981...This was a last minute item, and the supporting material was not bound with the Agenda papers... It is my recollection that the main "documentation" came in the form of an enthusiastic oral presentation by George Macdonald, who, with Peter Bennett, was a moving force behind the nomination. The Board's recommendation was that "the Haida Village of Ninstints is of national historic significance" and that a nomination to the World Heritage list goes forward. There were subsequent negotiations between Canada and British Columbia, and with the Skidegate Band, deemed to be the heirs of the former inhabitants of Ninstints. In 1981 UNESCO added Ninstints to the World Heritage list.*

Anti-logging protests came to a head during the 1985 blockade on Athlii Gwaii. Throughout the month of November that year, a global media audience was riveted by images of Haida, led by elderly men and women dressed in ceremonial button blankets, blocking the head of a logging road next to a stream destroyed by clearcutting. Seventy-two elders were arrested and 11 charged with contempt for disobeying a court order prohibiting them from interfering with logging operations. The charges were later suspended or dropped. Captain Gold was one of three people photographing and tape recording events on the island during the blockade.

"I turned over 30-plus cassette tapes to the Haida Gwaii Museum in the late 1990s."

*Captain Gold*

That same year, the Council of the Haida Nation declared the land and surrounding waters of the South Moresby region a Haida Heritage Site.

The Haida cause received a significant boost in March 1986 from the Save South Moresby Caravan. Several elders from the Athlii Gwaii blockade joined a cross-Canada train journey designed by Thom Henley as a whistle-stop tour to rally support for the South Moresby campaign. The tour's participants collected more than 27,000 signatures on their petition to protect the region.

Logging on Athlii Gwaii ended in 1987, when the governments of British Columbia and Canada signed the South Moresby Memorandum of Agreement stating the region would be designated a National Park Reserve. One year later, the South Moresby Agreement was signed, paving the way to the region's designation as a National Park Reserve.

Years of negotiation ensued between the Haida Nation and Parks Canada in search of a cooperative management model for Gwaii Haanas.

“Getting the status of a WHS at SGang Gwaay changed everything in the South Moresby negotiations, because it put the area and SGang Gwaay on the world stage. South Moresby – Lyell Island – World Heritage Site – it became a political lever. The provincial government had to sign off. They had to give up any logging and mineral rights. The forestry companies and other resource extracting interests tried to find any outs...but soon gave up.”

*Captain Gold*

In 1993, twelve years after SGang Gwaay’s designation as a World Heritage Site, the Council of the Haida Nation and the Government of Canada created Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site, protecting a large area of Gwaii Haanas and a number of other traditional Haida villages. The agreement contained a plan to include protection of the surrounding waters, and in 2010, the two parties signed the Marine Conservation Area Reserve Agreement.

Among the outcomes of the World Heritage Site designation and the signing of the Gwaii Haanas and Marine Conservation Agreements is the transformed relationship between the Canadian government and the Haida Nation, and their shared determination to preserve the unspoiled character of the southern part of the Haida Gwaii archipelago. The achievement of this common purpose dovetails with UNESCO’s philosophy of protecting places that are believed to be irreplaceable sources of spiritual and intellectual richness for the benefit of all of humanity.

# Community Involvement in the Management of SGang Gwaay

## 1. Conservation Efforts

Fire, wind, rain, wildlife, looters, and encroaching grasses and forest have altered the landscape of SGang Gwaay Llnagaay. The standing poles have gone grey, and the features on their carved figures have blurred. The poles are close to 200 years old, and some are at risk of toppling. Some already have fallen and are now blanketed by moss.

For a time, Captain Gold seemed to be the only champion of SGang Gwaay. He had known about the island since his childhood, from stories told by his father's fishermen friends and the families of his own friends in Skidegate who had been sent to residential school. He was one of the few young people left in the community.

"SGang Gwaay played a role in all these stories, and they inspired me."

*Captain Gold*

Captain Gold spent each fishing season on the boats with his father and the other men, and got to within 40 miles of SGang Gwaay.

As an adult, tired of earning his living as a logger, he ordered a 16-foot fiberglass canoe from Simpson Sears.

"When it arrived I broke open the crate. I had to learn how to paddle the canoe – 100 miles down to SGang Gwaay." *Captain Gold*

As he stood on the beach facing the green wall of Sitka spruce forest that towered over the entire village, Captain Gold suddenly knew that he would spend the next 20 years of his life there, honouring the people of the village.

Until the establishment of the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program, Captain Gold's summers were spent as the unofficial guardian of SGang Gwaay.

"I began on day one to cut down the advancing forest, to push back the forest from old SGang Gwaay Llnagaay." *Captain Gold*

"Mary Lou Florian was the conservator from the Royal BC Museum in the 1970s and 1980s who developed a treatment approach that largely left the poles alone [and] focused on mechanical removal of mosses and grasses only."

*Nathalie Macfarlane*

“In 1980, Paul George, Miles Richardson, Guujaaw and other hereditary chiefs came to SGang Gwaay.”

*Captain Gold*

“The community was concerned, because artifacts were being looted, poles being cut down, so a group of people thought they should do something about this...A logging company was going to use Skedans as a log dump. Skeletal remains were taken off some of the sites...At first it was all volunteer work. People travelled to Gwaii Haanas and looked after ancestral sites when there were no longhouses, no refrigerator, etc.”

*Anita Moody*

Following a visit to SGang Gwaay in the late 1970s, Richard Beauchamp, chief conservator at the provincial museum in Victoria, went to Skidegate in search of community input regarding conversation work at SGang Gwaay. He met with Captain Gold, and the two worked out a program to continue the work Captain Gold had begun.

“Richard had a huge budget to do this in 1979. We were pushing the forest back from the village site and the poles. There were huge limbs spreading over the poles and the village sites. The limbs were cut and lowered carefully to not damage the fragile poles. We took out 35 trees or more.”

*Captain Gold*

Captain Gold wanted to hire Haida personnel from Skidegate and Masset and train them for the work in SGang Gwaay Llnagaay. He began by training 10 Haida students at Cumshewa, the site of another ancient Haida village to the south of Sandspit, to help with the removal of trees and shrubs. Sheldon Moody served as project foreman.

“We tested out our conservation methods in Cumshewa for two groups at two weeks apiece, and then refined the methods later at SGang Gwaay village with an older age group. At SGang Gwaay, 20-year-olds...packed debris into the intertidal zone to burn over the first two-week period; then carvers came for the last two weeks and removed parasitic plants off poles.”

*Captain Gold*

The debris-burning technique is still used on SGang Gwaay. The fires are lit at low tide; at the flood, the tide washes away the ash, and no unsightly brush remains to spoil visitors' views of the site. Maintaining a high-quality visitor experience has been one of the factors taken into account by the Haida community as they deliberate about the extent of conservation they will allow.

“The type of conservation and the level of conservation were due to the World Heritage Site status. Now it's just part of what we do and nobody talks about the designation as the reason for it...The conservation work is a form of respect.”

*Captain Gold*



During his years on SGang Gwaay, Captain Gold noticed that some of the poles were leaning further over each year, and was concerned they would fall over.

“I knew once the pole makes ground contact, it will wick moisture and be a feeding area for parasitic plant growth...all my past efforts were to slow down the decay process and allow the poles to disappear slowly with dignity and to show the old ancestors we care, as this is a living graveyard.”

In 1995, the Archipelago Management Board organized a meeting of Haida hereditary chiefs at SGang Gwaay to discuss pole straightening and other conservation issues. The outcome was that the conservation crews were tasked with keeping the site clean, clearing the brush, looking after the village, refraining from using chemicals, and respecting the site as a cemetery. The chiefs opted for pole straightening as a reasonable measure that would permit future generations of Haida to appreciate the site’s cultural remains. However, impregnation of poles with preservative material was deemed unacceptable, owing to the belief that the poles had come from the earth and should eventually return to the earth.

“When the province had SGang Gwaay, they had a big crew that looked after the site. Parks Canada has had a restriction on budgets and as a result, between 1995 and today, the conservation program has been mostly run by volunteer help.”

*Kii’iljuus (Barb Wilson)*

“Parks Canada conservation staff came to show Barb Wilson and I how to proceed with monitoring measures for the SGang Gwaay poles. There were two trips to SGang Gwaay where poles were straightened, in 1995 and 1997.”

*Hélène Chabot*

“Three poles were straightened in 1995 and two more in 1997. They first looked at seven poles, but two were too deteriorated...They didn’t touch the memorial poles, but propped up the one memorial pole on the top shelf with cedar posts. It is held up by a ship’s mast.”

*Kii’iljuus*

A work crew travels to SGang Gwaay each year before the tourist season begins. They cut the grass in a circle around the bottom of the poles to prevent damage from water and abrasion. They use a special ladder that does not touch the poles, but allows them to clip the moss and grass growing on top of the poles. Yet some deterioration occurs despite the crews’ efforts.

“The outer layer of the poles develops an oxidized outer shell while the inside gradually deteriorates. Eventually, and especially now, slabs of the outer shell are falling off, taking with them the design elements that distinguish the carved figures on the pole.”

*Nathalie Macfarlane*

A number of environmental issues are also of concern. Anita Moody notes: “There is a lot of garbage on SGang Gwaay. The garbage washes up on the beaches. There is already some debris from the 2011 tsunami in Japan showing up on the beaches.”

“They try to keep track of what is happening on the shoreline. It is eroding due to climate change. UVic, i.e. Ian Walker, is using the site as one of his research locations to monitor climate change...Trees along the shoreline were originally left because they were considered as a buffer for the poles. What is happening now is that the root system is washed out and they could potentially fall on the poles.”

*Kii'iljuus*

In 1998, Resource Conservation Officers began culling the Sitka black-tailed deer that had been introduced to the islands in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The concern was that the deer might accelerate the deterioration of the site by trampling on fallen poles or browsing the shrubs and grasses growing on the standing poles.

## **2. The Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program**

According to oral histories, watchmen alerted the inhabitants of Haida villages to imminent danger. Haida artists often depict Watchmen by carving human figures in tall hats at the top of their poles. The idea of enlisting the symbolic power of these figures came to Captain Gold when he was asked for his input on saving Gwaii Haanas from logging. He suggested Haida artist Bill Reid could replicate one of his Watchmen designs for use as the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program logo.

“In 1981 the Watchmen Program was established by the Haida due to pothunters. The program was put in place to offset people going down and taking things from illegal excavations. From 1981-1991 the program was run exclusively by the Skidegate Band Council. It was staffed by volunteers who paid for their own transportation, accommodations, food and supplies.”

*Kii'iljuus (Barb Wilson)*

“The Watchmen Program is great. It was initiated in Skidegate and Masset and was originally funded by the hereditary chiefs in the 1970s, before Gwaii Haanas was established. The reason for it was ‘high-end looting’ of historical Haida sites right up to the 1980s. There was a north end program, and there were Watchmen posted at all the Haida sites. The program was spurred by the hereditary chiefs – generally elders acting as hosts or guides; it was funded by the Skidegate Band, by chiefs and by donations. After the formation of Gwaii Haanas...Gwaii Haanas began funding the Watchmen Program in the southern part of the islands. The first generation of Watchmen had deep connections with the past and had inherent

knowledge...Captain Gold should get more recognition for his role as the original Watchman.”

*Nathalie Macfarlane*

“The Watchmen Program is a unique piece of community involvement. Haida Watchmen share stories about the site and their personal connections to sites – the history, etc. The Watchmen Program delivers on all three levels of Parks Canada’s mandate – protection, visitor experience and education.”

*Ernie Gladstone*

### **The Watchmen on Site**

Anita (Upsy) Moody, General Manager of the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program since 2009, employs 30-35 Watchmen from May through mid-September each year. Prior to becoming the program’s general manager, she spent 11 summers working as a Watchman.

“Working as a Watchman has brought me in touch with my culture; my identity, where I have come from.”

*Anita Moody*

“Altogether there are 10 Watchmen in Gwaii Haanas. They are in Skedans, Tanuu, Windy Bay, Hot Springs and SĠang Gwaay. There are two Watchmen at all sites except Hot Springs and SĠang Gwaay, where there are three. Hot Springs and SĠang Gwaay are always the first to open, on May 1. Windy Bay is the last to open (on June 18) and the first to close in August.”

*Anita Moody*

Each month, Anita visits the five sites to check in with the Watchmen and to make sure everything is going well. In addition, there is an annual management trip in early July on the vessel *Gwaii Haanas II*, touring all the village sites with a group that in 2012 included Drue Kendrick, the Visitor Experience Manager for Gwaii Haanas.

Supplies for the Watchmen are delivered to the sites by boat throughout the season.

“The Watchmen ship *Koya Poin* picks up the supplies (groceries, propane and water) every two weeks from the *Gwaii Haanas II* and brings it ashore.”

*Anita Moody*

“The Watchmen stay in longhouse-style cabins at all the sites. The cabins have solar-powered lights and propane refrigerators, woodstoves and composting toilets...Watchmen learn how to gather food when they are in Gwaii Haanas. People teach each other...There are little boats at each site and Watchmen go out fishing. There are also back-up generators for power.”

*Anita Moody*

Anita has VHF radios in her office, in her truck and in her home. The Watchmen are required to check in at 9 a.m. every day to report that all is well.

Experienced Watchmen are paired with new recruits so they can learn from each other. The program employs student workers as well, who do not require advance training, but learn on the job from the other Watchmen.

The May-to-September season is divided into two shifts, meaning that Watchmen teams stay at a site for no more than two months.

“At the end of the season, the Watchmen have to pack up all the gear. “Whatever is left over is taken to the food bank.” *Anita Moody*

### **Training the Watchmen**

In August, Anita begins planning the following year’s training program. She brings 10 to 12 new people on board each year.

“You have to be of Haida ancestry or be married to a Haida person to be a Watchman.” *Anita Moody*

Up to 35 people per year go through Watchmen training, which runs from January through March at the Haida Heritage Centre in Kaay Llnagaay (Skidegate). The curriculum includes wilderness first aid; small vessel operator proficiency; radio operators - marine; chainsaw safety; Bear Aware; and cultural training.

The first module in cultural training is traditional ecological knowledge, including the pre-contact and historical context of First Nations communities. First Nations knowledge keepers are invited into the classroom or visited in the field to illuminate local and traditional knowledge. The BC Cultural Stewardship component teaches students to identify Coast cultural/archaeological resources such as villages, house beams, culturally modified trees, petroglyphs and other locally relevant features and sites. This component also combines classroom time and field visits. In the ethnobotany segment of their training, students are introduced to the identification of plants traditionally and currently used by local First Nations people.

Cultural training was introduced in 2010. The plan to include it had been under consideration for years, and Ruth Wheadon, Community Education Liaison for the Northwest Community College, and Kii’iljuus were among the people who made this aspect of Watchmen training a reality.

The entire training program costs about CAD \$40,000, since the instructors must be brought over from the mainland. The other costs associated with providing the training are covered, but Watchmen do not get paid while they learn.

“The training can be used elsewhere and is a benefit to the Watchmen. Some people want to be Watchmen because they want to experience what it is like to live in isolation.”  
*Anita Moody*

“People realize that the training is to their benefit, even if they don’t get hired, because they learn life skills and survival skills.”  
*Captain Gold*

About 1,000 people from Skidegate and Masset have gone through the training since the program’s inception in 1981. No one can predict how well newly minted Watchmen will handle the isolated existence they face in Gwaii Haanas. For this reason, the length of their stay at any of the five sites during their first year is shortened to one month.

Two of this year’s trainees in Skidegate talked about what becoming a Watchman means to them. Carol Crosby viewed it as part of a healing ritual.

“I feel that I need to go to Skedans and SGang Gwaay. I feel that I have to have a ceremony there...I want to go to Gwaii Haanas to say sorry for disrespecting the ancestors...to feed them and to sing for them.”  
*Carol Crosby (Gidinjaad)*

“Going down south and becoming a Watchman is also a healing process, but...it’s a way to learn about my own culture. One day we will need all the knowledge. Being a Watchman is a contribution towards the next generation of Haida people...As a young person I feel a responsibility to become a leader. I went to the villages with a group of other people as a kid and I was the only person in the group who saw the ancestors, and saw the children and heard the drumming. I want to go back and relive that.”  
*Jacob Parnell*

### **Visitor Management**

Foot traffic impacts the five most visited sites in Gwaii Haanas through wear and tear on trails and exposure of middens and other artifacts. Still, the Haida community encourages visitation within certain parameters.

“In 1987 or ‘88 I suggested to Management that visitors should be limited to 1,800 a year at SGang Gwaay to ensure a high quality experience for everyone and to prevent deterioration of the environment. At the time there were 1,200 visitors per year. I was lucky that people listened.”  
*Captain Gold*

Welcoming visitors to Gwaii Haanas is carried out in keeping with the region's Strategic Management Plan, which encourages "sensitive access to the Gwaii Haanas area to ensure the area's wilderness character is protected and its natural and cultural heritage are not compromised."

SGang Gwaay is devoid of signs outlining what people can or can't do as they tour the island. Instead, visitors are required to attend an orientation session before travelling to the site. In addition, the Watchmen alert them to any areas of the island that are closed to visitation.

"There are no more than 12 people allowed on site at one time to reduce impact. No planes are allowed, and no helicopters, unless there is an emergency. People have to radio in on Marine 6 for permission to come ashore. We give them about an hour on site. Sometimes too many people arrive all at once. We let kayakers come on shore and they can wait for their turn and have lunch in a special area. If the weather is too dangerous for kayakers or people on sailboats, they can stay on the island and camp in specific locations. There is a shelter in a designated area. There are some pretty wicked storms...You learn to pay attention to the weather when you are down there. When there is a full moon it gets really nasty."

*Anita Moody*

Visitors store their backpacks and other gear in a modern longhouse shelter during their walks around the village. The shelter is also used by the Watchmen to provide additional information about the site, using photographs, maps and diagrams. Being under cover also offers the Watchmen some relief from the hours they spend outdoors, often in heavy rain, guiding successive groups of visitors.

"There are trails that allow people to go through the village, and they allow people to see from the north end. One area right off the north end that has human remains was closed off. The pole at the north end was cleared, and there is a creek that is used to drain the area every year. Where the creek is, they dig out to reduce mud buildup and swamp. There is a trail that goes to the big house, the house that Nan Sdins lived in. They cut and clip the grass in that footprint of the house. They try to stop people from walking in the footprint of the house. Most of the growth on the corner posts is cut off. They are trying to protect the house and the planks so they will last a longer time."

*Kii'iljuus*

"The trails are about three metres away from the poles and are supposed to keep people away from the poles. Clam shells demark the edge of the path. People have to stay on the ocean side of the poles on the path; they can't walk behind the poles...At the south end of the village, northwest of the shelter, visitors can walk up an incline and see a house site pit, and then walk through the potato patch, which is cleared so visitors can get a sense of the whole village site and activities."

*Kii'iljuus*

The 1998 site plan for the island, prepared in accordance with the draft Gwaii Haanas Strategic Management Plan of two years earlier, recommended the creation of a loop trail to separate visiting groups, based on an earlier suggestion from Captain Gold. This was intended to afford each group a greater experience of solitude and allow them to slow down enough to take in the entire environment instead of focusing only on the village site poles. The plan pointed out that it was the biologically abundant environment of SGang Gwaay that had enabled the development of the Ganxiid Haida's rich cultural heritage, which is expressed in the artistry of the SGang Gwaay Llnagaay poles. The plan also made the point that by slowing down, a visitor might connect with the spiritual qualities of SGang Gwaay.

At SGang Gwaay and the other sites, visitors have come to enjoy the extra services that Watchmen, beginning with Captain Gold, have provided over the years – tours and cultural interpretation. These are consistently reported by visitors as one of the highlights of their time on SGang Gwaay.

“Watchmen take it on themselves to give tours; they don't have to do it...The Watchmen's main job is to take care of ancestral sites, to watch over the poles, to make sure nobody does anything to the poles, like climbing on them.”

*Anita Moody*

“As a Watchman you are interacting with people all day. It is good to share our art, stories, tattoos and culture with visitors.”

*Anita Moody*

“The Watchmen Program has grown over the years in regard to the number of people who are involved and have the opportunity to be there. It has also evolved in terms of interpretation, which was not one of the original purposes of the program, but more of that is happening...There is more of an understanding of the power of interpretation in two ways: how people see, understand and respect Haida culture; and they find out how to conduct themselves while in Gwaii Haanas.”

*Jason Alsop*

“People who are involved in the Watchmen Program become ambassadors of the Haida Nation...The Watchmen Program has become a model for coastal villages and protected sites.”

*Captain Gold*

“Now there are discussions with the province about expanding the Watchmen Program to other Haida and provincial protected areas north of Gwaii Haanas.”

*Ernie Gladstone*

### 3. The Archipelago Management Board

The Archipelago Management Board, established in 1993 as part of the Gwaii Haanas Agreement, provides Haida citizens with another forum for community consultation and consensus. The Agreement stipulates that the Board shall be made up of equal numbers of Haida and government of Canada representatives.

Haida individuals, organizations, political bodies and economic agencies have the opportunity to propose issues pertaining to the “planning, operation and management” of Gwaii Haanas for Board deliberation, and to comment on Board decisions that are referred back to the Haida community for their input through the hereditary chiefs, the Council of the Haida Nation (CHN) and the annual House of Assembly.

Jason Alsop, member of the Council of the Haida Nation and CEO of the Haida Heritage Centre in Skidegate, has been with the AMB for two years.

“My job as a Haida representative on the Archipelago Management Board is to be the link between the community and the management of Gwaii Haanas...Issues are brought up from the communities and from the chiefs. An example of an issue is the question of how to deal with the aging and decaying poles in SGang Gwaay. In other sites it could be a question about human remains.”

*Jason Alsop*

“If there’s an issue and we want to get community input, we go to the chiefs and present at one of their meetings. They’re kind of like a Senate to the CHN. Their decisions and recommendations hold a lot of weight.”

*Jason Alsop*

The Council of the Haida Nation and the House of Assembly function as executive and legislative bodies respectively for the Haida community. The key difference between these institutions and similar bodies in other governments is the level of direct participation by citizens. The CHN meets quarterly and welcomes Haida individuals to attend and participate in discussions.

“We’re open to the public, all Haida.”

*Jason Alsop*

Article 4.S1 of the Constitution of the Haida Nation states:

*Any voting eligible Haida Citizen may propose policy legislation and vote to determine whether or not it is adopted, at the House of Assembly.*



Both House of Assembly resolutions and motions and any decisions reached by the Council of the Haida Nation require approval by a three-quarters majority of votes cast.

Once an issue has reached the AMB, the Board must strive to achieve consensus among its members “in a constructive and co-operative manner”, or hold the issue in abeyance while the federal government and the Haida Nation work towards a mutually acceptable solution.

“What the two nations want for Gwaii Haanas is the same, although for different reasons. Canada wants it protected as a system of National Parks for Canadians to celebrate and experience and learn from; the Haida want to carry on traditional activities they have carried on for hundreds of years. Both want Gwaii Haanas protected.”

*Ernie Gladstone*

“Prior to the Archipelago Management Board there was a lot of tension. For instance, the Provincial Park sign was not liked by the Haida, and there was not much community involvement in the provincial park. Now there is a much more respectful and constructive relationship between the Haida Nation and Canada in Gwaii Haanas. This is a result of the agreement.”

*Ernie Gladstone*

While Ernie acknowledges that dealing with issues through the AMB takes longer and is more complicated, “You end up with better decisions than Parks Canada or the Haida Nation would have made on their own.”

With the 2010 addition of the National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, which covers almost the same area and boundaries as the Haida Heritage Site, the AMB has expanded from four to six members. There are two Parks Canada representatives, one from Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and three from the Haida Nation – Cindy Boyko, Jason Alsop and Trevor Russ. Ernie Gladstone and David Argument represent Parks Canada; Mel Kotyk is the Area Director, North Coast for Fisheries and Oceans. Ernie has been the AMB co-chair since 2001, and is the first Haida Superintendent of Gwaii Haanas.

“The Parks Canada appointees are there because of their position, i.e. Superintendent and Resource Conservation Officer... Some of the Haida members have been elected, some have been appointed. Cindy Boyko has been on the Board for 10 years.”

*Ernie Gladstone*

Ernie attributes the effectiveness of the AMB to the integrity and good faith of the representatives from both parties to the Gwaii Haanas Agreement.

“They have personal commitment. Every single individual believes that this is the way things should be done and figured out. This is the way to effectively manage

Gwaii Haanas...There will probably be more issues around the Marine Conservation Area Reserve, because more commercial interests are affected, for example, when decisions on fishing are held in abeyance, and this causes delays and potential financial loss.”  
*Ernie Gladstone*

Ernie recognizes the personal challenges of being a member of the Haida Nation as well as a Parks Canada employee. “Both governments sometimes have different expectations.” He is committed to ensuring that every decision he makes is in the best interests of Gwaii Haanas, and sees his in-depth knowledge of Haida politics and the local communities as an advantage. Being a local means that he must be prepared to live with his decisions.

One of the goals of the Gwaii Haanas Agreement, as stated in Section 4 outlining the establishment, composition and functioning of the AMB, was to increase the participation and employment of the Haida community, whether individuals or organizations, in the planning, operation and management of Gwaii Haanas. The Canadian government and the Council of the Haida Nation committed to giving Haida individuals the chance to work in the archipelago as Parks Canada employees. Prospective candidates for any such positions are assessed by equal numbers of representatives of the parties on a selection board.

One indicator that the goal of increased employment is being achieved is the growing numbers of Haida individuals represented on the Gwaii Haanas staff. In the 1990s, only 10 percent of the parks employees were Haida.

“Today, 50 percent of staff members are Haida.”

*Ernie Gladstone*

The Gwaii Haanas Agreement tasked the AMB with the identification of sites of significant spiritual and/or cultural importance to the Haida, such as Gandll k'in (Hot Spring Island) and SGang Gwaay, and the development of management plans for those sites. The management plan for SGang Gwaay integrates best practices related to: management of the cultural heritage of SGang Gwaii Llnagaay; management of visitors to the island to reduce their environmental impact; management of the site's natural heritage, which includes the protection of seabird breeding colonies, sea lion haulouts and the soil and vegetation of the island; and improving living conditions for the Watchmen posted to the island.

The hereditary chiefs were consulted during the development of the management plan, which also incorporates the results of an environmental assessment. The plan's recommendations have been implemented and are now embedded in the policies and procedures employed by the Watchmen who manage SGang Gwaay.

The handling of requests from scientists to conduct research in the region is another testament to the level of care taken in the management of Gwaii Haanas. There is a Research Coordinator on staff who reviews research permit applications, sometimes discusses research plans with the applicant, sends the

request to peer reviewers, and submits the research request to the AMB as an issue form. Either the AMB or the peer reviewers may suggest changes to or impose conditions on the research proposal. Once a research permit is created, it undergoes review by the Environmental Assessment Coordinator and the Parks Canada Animal Care Task Force.

The permit and any conditions attached to the proposed research project are sent to the Superintendent and AMB representative for signing. Everyone in the research party goes through the orientation program prior to heading to the research area, and the lead researcher must check in with Gwaii Haanas staff before and after the research season. Staff may ask to see the material the researchers have collected.

The AMB is the vehicle for current deliberations on where to place the new pole being carved in Skidegate to commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the South Moresby Agreement and the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Gwaii Haanas Agreement.

“The Archipelago Management Board will go to the Haida community and the hereditary chiefs prior to making a decision about where the pole will be raised.”

*Ernie Gladstone*

Asked about the importance of SGang Gwaay’s designation as a World Heritage Site, Ernie Gladstone said, “Parks Canada puts a priority on SGang Gwaay because of its World Heritage Site status, and the Archipelago Management Board put resources into SGang Gwaay because of the international attention.”

In 2004, the entire region of Gwaii Haanas was placed on Parks Canada’s tentative list of future nominations for inscription onto the list of World Heritage Sites.

## Conclusion

Given the creative and extremely successful process of co-operative management among communities and between jurisdictions outlined in this study, could SGang Gwaay and Gwaii Haanas serve as models for joint management with Aboriginal people in other World Heritage sites around the globe?

Ernie Gladstone's thoughts on this are: "What worked for Gwaii Haanas was a strong First Nation, a willing government, a supportive public interested in creating a protected site, and international attention."

The mutual goodwill and commitment of the Canadian federal and Haida representatives on the Archipelago Management Board has played a crucial role in the achievements of the Gwaii Haanas management structure.

"We have a really solid relationship now. Trust has been built by continually working through issues at the Archipelago Management Board – people began to learn to understand different perspectives." *Ernie Gladstone*

Captain Gold and Ernie Gladstone have given presentations on the Archipelago Management Board, the Council of the Haida Nation, and the Watchmen Program to other First Nations over the years, and are responding to requests for speaking engagements from as far away as Australia and New Zealand.

Community involvement in the management of SGang Gwaay continues to evolve in the face of natural erosion and decay, a changing climate, and the expectations of visitors to the island.

For non-Haida visitors, the poles and house remains in the village have constituted the main attraction and value of the site.

"People go to SGang Gwaay to see the poles, to get a sense of the poles, to photograph the poles."

*Ernie Gladstone*

Discussion continues in the Haida community on what to do about the poles and what the site will be like once the poles are gone. Nathalie Macfarlane acknowledges that the poles are important to the site. "They are the biggest group of standing monumental poles in Gwaii Haanas and in the world."

Yet she also points out that the Haida cultural values related to the poles include the belief that the poles must eventually return to the earth:

"The poles are so rotten that they could no longer be preserved in a museum environment...Some people would like to see the mortuary poles in museums go

back to SGang Gwaay. There are different conservation philosophies. Time will tell how they interact and play out. The site is beautiful, powerful and phenomenal. People have incredible experiences there. To alter it in any way, through conservation measures like fibreglassing the poles or other techniques, would be an abomination.

*Nathalie Macfarlane*

For the Haida, the cultural heritage value of SGang Gwaay rests in the more broadly encompassing concept of “spirit of place”, as described in the paper co-authored in 2007 by Kii’iljuus and Alastair Kerr, formerly of the British Columbia government’s Heritage Branch:

*The loss of fabric through decay, inevitable with wooden poles in an extremely wet environment, will impair the visible presence of the spirit of this place, but for future generations of Haida people who retain their culture and the teachings of their elders, the spirit will abide.*

Understanding Spirit of Place: SGang Gwaay World Heritage Site, A Case Study

In the 1970s, Captain Gold suggested that a recreated Haida village be built at Raspberry Bay near Rose Harbour to honour the ancestors. The village was to contain four houses, four mortuary poles, and four memorial poles. All were intended as replicas of their historical counterparts.

“The mini village was supposed to house Haida. It was to be used to allow Haida to learn their traditional culture – food gathering, storytelling, dancing, and producing traditional food, etc. for a sales outlet. Over the years, several professional fundraisers offered their services to raise money.”

*Captain Gold*

The replica village idea may be ahead of its time, but in 2013, for the first time in 100 years, a new pole will be raised in Gwaii Haanas. Intended to commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the South Moresby Agreement and the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Gwaii Haanas Agreement, the 40-foot Haida pole is being carved by a team led by Jaalen Edenshaw, one of Guujaaw’s sons.

“The location for the pole has not been determined. One option being considered is SGang Gwaay. Another place that has been suggested is Windy Bay, where there is a longhouse. Not many people go to Windy Bay right now, and a new pole might attract more visitors. The new pole will be another expression of living Haida culture.”

*Ernie Gladstone*

## CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

We could find no better model for shaping this case study than the focus of the study itself: community involvement. As we were neither Haida Gwaii residents nor direct stakeholders in the cultural heritage values of SGang Gwaay, we were aware that our lens might inadvertently miss or even skew the story.

The Haida community participated in the case study from the outset: Jason Alsop, now CEO of the Haida Heritage Centre, chair of the Haida Language Committee and member of the Archipelago Management Board, was a youth intern at the Heritage Branch when UNESCO Canada asked the Province of British Columbia for a contribution to the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the World Heritage Convention. Haida community members were consulted as the proposal for this case study was being drafted.

With a green light from the Haida community and various provincial and federal government ministries and agencies including Parks Canada, and from UNESCO Canada, we embarked on the first of two trips to Haida Gwaii to build face-to-face relationships and invite members of the broader community to tell us their stories.

We had developed a series of open-ended questions that we felt would supplement our literature review and perusal of archival materials related to SGang Gwaay. However, we had no pre-arranged interviews in place. Instead, our community of supporters introduced us to people they felt could be helpful.

By the end of our first day, we had decided to discard our prepared questions. Instead, we asked for our subjects' thoughts on community involvement in the nomination and management of SGang Gwaay, and about the relevance and future prospects of the standing poles in SGang Gwaay Llnagaay. We wanted our interviewees to direct the conversation, while we listened for the community values and opinions being expressed.

We spoke with Haida elders, current and former Watchmen and Watchmen trainees, as well as staff from Parks Canada, the Haida Heritage Centre and the Haida Gwaii Museum, tour operators and local government officials.

Once the interview notes were transcribed, we sent them back to the interviewees for their review, comments, edits and signed approval. This necessitated a second trip to Skidegate and resulted in additional interviews and a deepening of the relationships developed during the earlier visit.

The first draft of the case study was also sent back to individual interviewees and members of the Archipelago Management Board for review. We offered all those involved the opportunity to add to the content if they felt we had missed important aspects of the topics, and to enlarge on the comments they had made in their initial interviews. This community input substantially enriched the study, by painting a

fuller picture of the history surrounding the World Heritage Site nomination and the interrelationships among the various organizations and governing bodies responsible for managing SGang Gwaay.

The following list of best practices is offered to readers of this case study as a summary of lessons learned by those involved in the project.

1. Consultation and community involvement from beginning to end of the project
2. Building relationships based on mutual trust and respect, and an open mind
3. Listening for themes and values instead of “hard facts” and program details
4. Willingness to change direction at any stage of the project, based on community input

We wish to express our gratitude to our interviewees in the Haida community and elsewhere for their participation in this study, their willingness to entrust us with their stories and their generous gift of time to enhance the quality of the information we have presented here.

The co-operative management structures described in this case study are unique and perhaps cannot be replicated elsewhere. Yet we hope that the solutions devised and implemented in Gwaii Haanas may inspire indigenous people – and all people – who believe that finding common purpose and forming partnerships among competing interests is the key to the wise management of treasured places around the globe.

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