



# Coast Salish Communities

Language, Culture,  
and Art



Coast Salish mask from  
Royal BC Museum

Douglas La Fortune, Cowichan Totem



**We acknowledge the traditional territories of the Coast Salish, specifically Esquimalt Nation and Songhees Nation on which the school is built. We also acknowledge the nations that we work with, Beecher Bay Scia'new Nation, T'sou-ke Nation, and Nuu-chah-nulth Pacheedaht Nation to the West.**

**We recognize the territory, the people, and thank them for sharing this beautiful land.**

**Hych'ka**



*School District No. 62*  
**First Nation  
Communities  
we work with:**  
Pacheedaht Nation  
T'Sou-ke Nation  
Scia'new Nation  
*Map approved by  
the three Nations 2014*

There are over 50 different Nations on the Island.

Some of the most local to Victoria are:



**Esquimalt and Songhees:**  
Victoria, Esquimalt, and Western Communities \*

**WSANEC** - Tsawout, Tsartlip, Tseycum, Pauquachin- Gulf and San Juan islands, Saanich (Incl. North, West and Central) \*

**Scia'new** - Beecher Bay, East Sooke Area \*

**T'Souke** - Sooke area \*

**Pacheedaht** - Port Renfrew Area \*

\*Traditional Territories centered around but not limited to those areas

# Teechamitsa



From Esquimalt Nation's Website:

- ***Teechamitsa*** (the western boundary; its most southern coastal points were at Albert Head/Parry Bay (now Metchosin) and about ten miles inland “to the range of mountains on the Sanitch arm”).

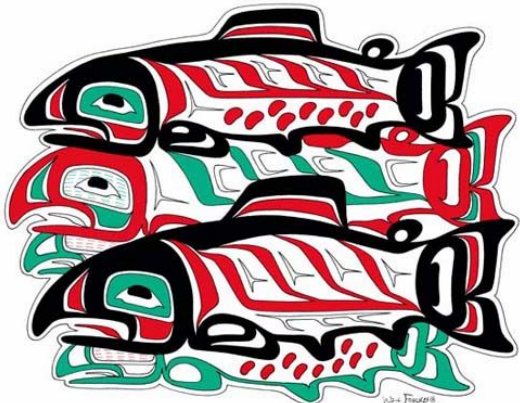
A permanent Winter Village location for the *Lekwungen*, or Songhees people

The Colwood waterfront is home to First Nations *middens* - shells, bones, utensils and artifacts that accumulated sometimes over thousands of years of people living in the area.

-From the Colwood Municipality Website

# Coast Salish call themselves the “Salmon People”

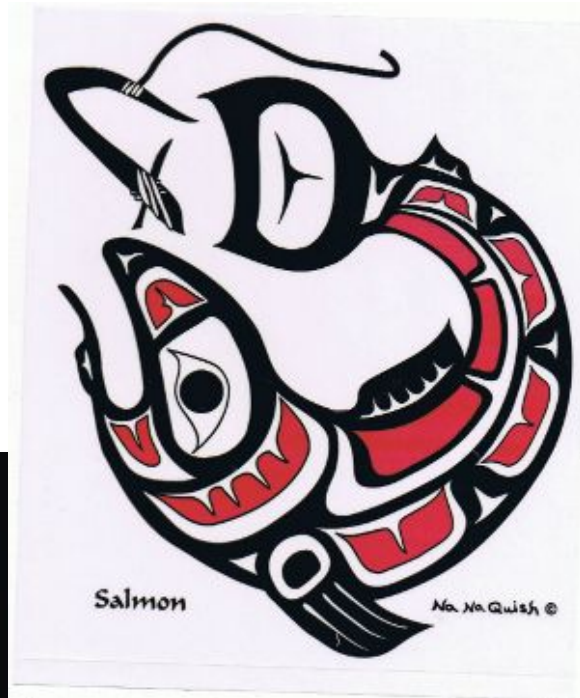
- Staple to their diet
- Rely on and honour the salmon
- Seen as a gift to them



Will Foulkes



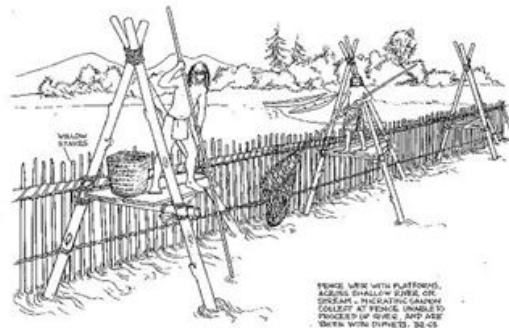
Joe Jack



Na Na Quish

# Salmon – Traditional Fishing Methods

FENCE WEIR WITH TRIPPODS



- **Weirs & Traps** were built to catch salmon in fast flowing rivers out of posts, some had a walkway for spearing or netting fish, and some included openings with boxes that would trap the fish
- **Dip Nets** were used to catch various fish and were made from twine made from cedar bark & stinging nettle plant

# Salmon – Traditional Fishing Methods

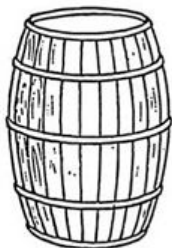


- **Spears** were used as salmon were making their way to spawning grounds
- **Hooks** were made from natural materials
- Children participated by trying to catch fish in shallow water with their **bare hands**
- **Boats & Nets** were used in deep waters





# Salmon – Methods of Preparation



- **Smoked** – head & tail removed, fillet spread flat and hung in smoke house. The size of smoke houses was determined by the size of the family & its use. Some smoke houses included fish, meat, and berries
- **Open Fire** – cooked using stick of iron wood
- **Salted in Barrels** - rock salt would be collected, crushed, & put into barrels between layers of fish. Sometimes salmon would be taken directly from the barrel and boiled to remove the strong salt taste; other times people would take the preserved (salted)salmon & smoke it



# Salmon – Methods of Preparation



- **Sun & Wind Dried**

- **Pit Cooking**

- As time progressed, cooking pots and marinating became more popular (wild berries)



# Features of Coast Salish Culture Similar to Other Northwest Coast First Nations

- Song and dance, Potlaches and Winter Ceremonies
- Button Blankets
- Oral teachings, stories passed through generations, importance of elders
- Carvings, Totems, house posts
- Big Houses/Long Houses

How many of these are familiar to you?

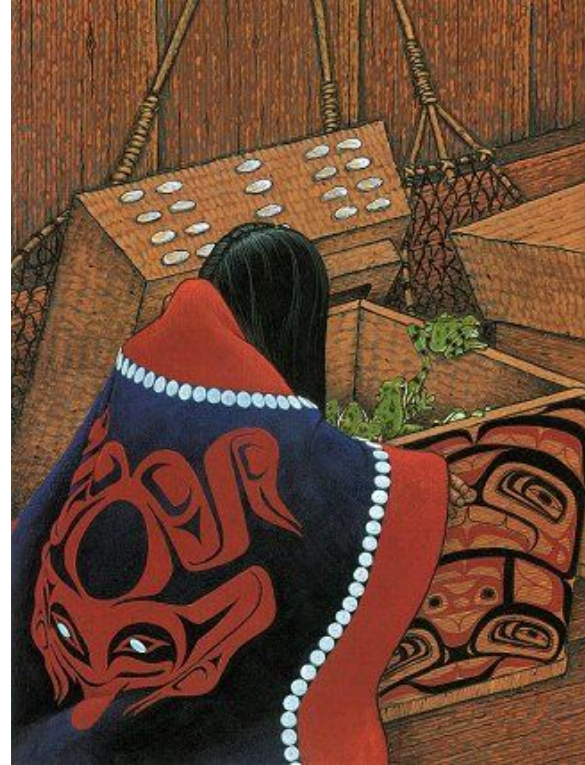




Potlach Preparation, Cowichan



Songhees Longhouse, 1870's



Frog Button Blanket from *Frog Girl* by

# Stories are recorded in many ways

- ... told by memory and learnt through repetition, carved, weaved, knitted, sung, danced



Tzinquaw dancers, 1950, Cowichan Valley Museum



"Raven Stealing the Sun" Si-yaaxultun (Donald Smith)

What is the story? Guesses?



Chief  
Swaletthul'thw  
(Harvey  
Alphonse) and  
Kelly Antoine



Douglas La Fortune



Luke Marston, 2011



# The Thunderbird and The Whale

“Tzinquá” - Thunderbird

A Coast Salish origin story told for many generations orally, or through carvings and dance.

[Video of the story told and danced \(go to 9:30\)](#)

[Written Story by Joe Jack](#)



Thunderbird by Joe Jack

# Unique to Coast Salish - Language

8 distinct Coast Salish Language Groups

Northern Straights Salish language group has a different name in each dialect [examples](#)

SENĆOŦEN has the greatest number of fluent and learning speakers

Many languages are “sleeping”

Language Revival- Lau Welnew School, immersion

**Why might there be so few fluent speakers?**

**How much does our language shape our thoughts and identity?**





A TELUS ORIGINAL

# VOICES ON THE RISE

by GEOFFREY TOMLIN-HOOD with ANITA SHINDEN and GEOFFREY TOMLIN-HOOD edited by KAROLINA DUCALIK sound by GEOFFREY TOMLIN-HOOD & KAROLINA DUCALIK creative  
producer CHRIS LONG & KEVIN GIBMAN producer SU HYLE with JESS KOSICHY camera JESS KOSICHY and MICHAEL CHRIS LONG with KIRILAN RAMPANER & SALT CINEMA

# SENĆOFEN

ÍY. SÇÁĆEL SIÁM.

Good Day, Respected one.

ESE \_\_\_\_\_

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

ĆSE LÁ,E SEN ET \_\_\_\_\_

I am from \_\_\_\_\_

HYCH'KA - Thank you



# Hul'q'umi'num' Greetings

To hear these greeting go to

<http://abed.sd79.bc.ca/curriculum-resourcess/hulquminum-greetings/>

## Hul'q'umi'num

Another commonly spoken Coast Salish Language From Parksville to Saanich and on the mainland

'Uy' skweyul	Good day (Hello)
'Uy' netulh	Good morning
'Uy' snet	Good night
Tth'ihwum	Please
Huy ch q'u	Thank you
Namut kwu	You are welcome
Hey'ewulh	Good bye

The most important word that you could learn and use with Coast Salish people is **Huy ch 'qa (Hych'ka- Sencoten Coast salish language)!**

# Unique to Coast Salish - Calendar

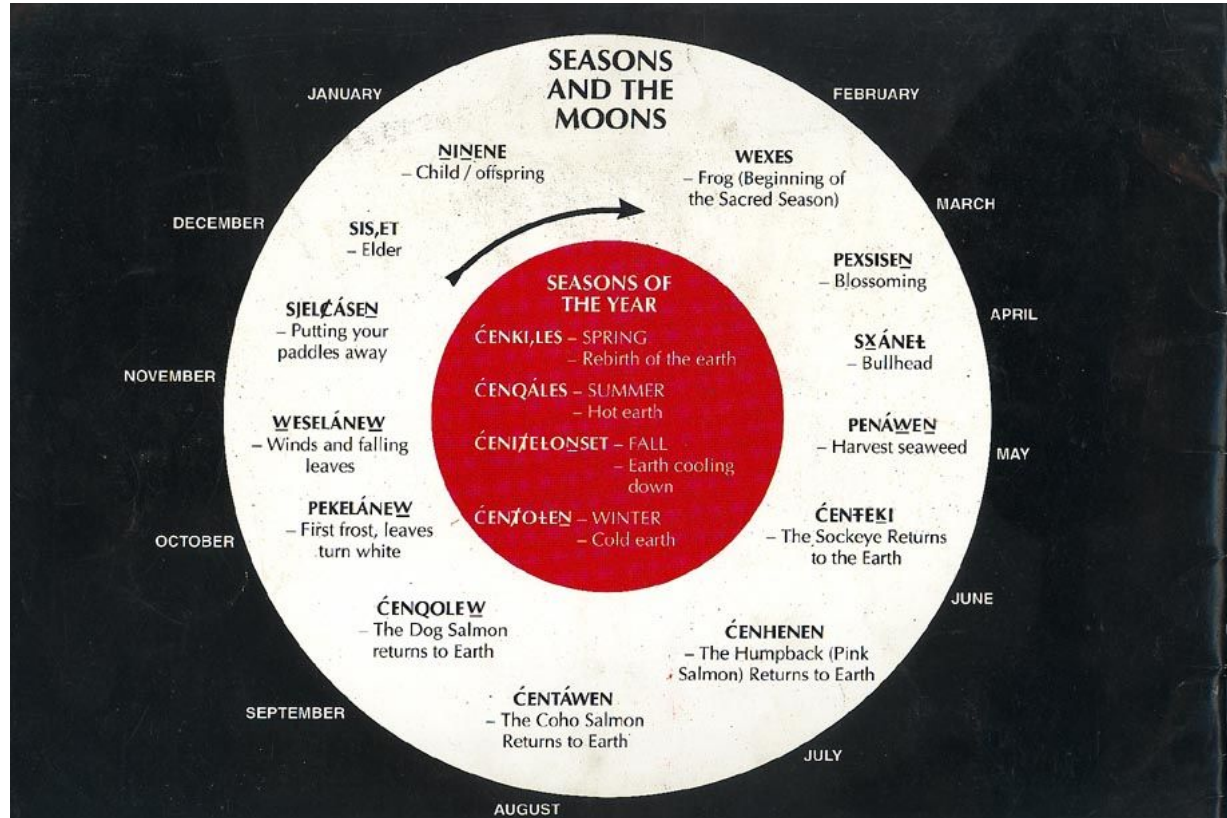
Coast Salish 13 Moons

Also known as the Wsanec (Saanich) Moons

-The year organized in 13 moons, identified by watching nature closely, guided people in seasonal activities

See them all here:

[Race Rocks - 13 Moons](#)



# WEXES

**MOON OF THE FROG (Mid February to Mid March)**

**End of Winter ceremonies**

**Ocean is now safe for travel**

**Herring and Herring Roe collected by placing cedar branches on the shoreline for Herring to lay their eggs on**



# PEXSISEN

**THE MOON OF OPENING HANDS THE  
BLOSSOMING OUT MOON (Mid March to  
Mid April)**

**Less rain**

**Drying out and preserving Foods**

**Collecting Clams, Oysters, and Mussels**

**Cedar trees fallen for boats and building**

**Gathering wool from Salish dogs**



# Coast Salish Wool for Nobility Blankets

Nobility Blankets - *swuqw'alh* in Hul'q'umi'num' and in SENĆOŦEN

-Very valuable, used as gifts to guests when attending memorials, initiations, naming ceremonies, to pay a ritualist for their services, or as formal wear.

-Wearing a blanket

Shows authority and respect



Chiefs Delegation  
1906, Chief  
Capilano (RBCM  
photo)

# Nobility Blankets - currency

Form of currency or wealth, pre-contact

1 blanket = 1000 dentalium shells.

1 Ocean-going canoes = five blankets, a deerskin shirt and a fathom of dentalium shells



Ocean-going canoe



Dentalium shell headdress



# Coast Salish Wool - unique blend

Wool was mainly from domesticated Salish “wool dogs.”

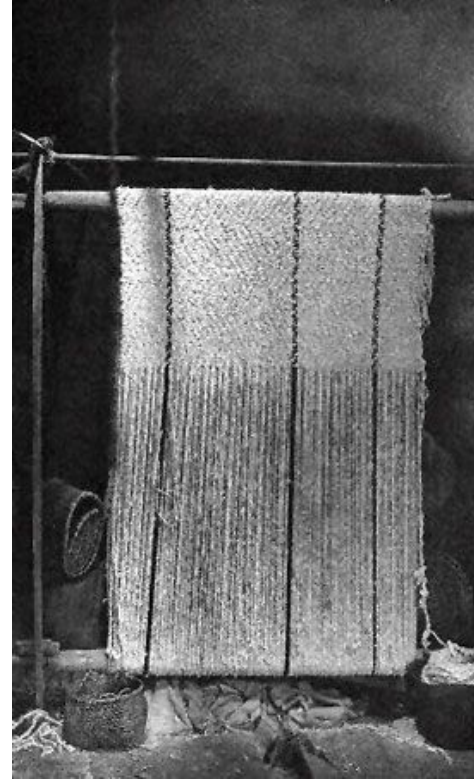
The dogs’ hair was spun with mountain goat wool (traded for dog’s wool with nations from the interior), goose down, and plant matter

Salish wool dogs went extinct in the late 19th century.



**Why do you think they may have become extinct?**

Paul Kane (1810 Mallow,  
Ireland–1871 Toronto, Canada),



# Spindle Whorls

- Used for Spinning wool into yarn that can be weaved
- Often carved with supernatural creatures which lend spiritual energy to the wool.
- When the whorl spins, the image on it appears to change and move.
- Carved shapes the basis for today's Coast Salish art.

[Animated Spindle Whorl, Joe Jack, Cowichan](#)



Woman spinning yarn at the Coast Salish village of Musqueam. Charles F. Newcombe, December 5, 1915. Direct duplicate negative. PN 83 – Royal BC Museum/BC Archives.

# Spindle Whorls



Pre-1900 Spindle whorl, depicting a Thunderbird (Featured in an important Coast Salish story)



Quw'utsun' spindle whorl, pre-1912.



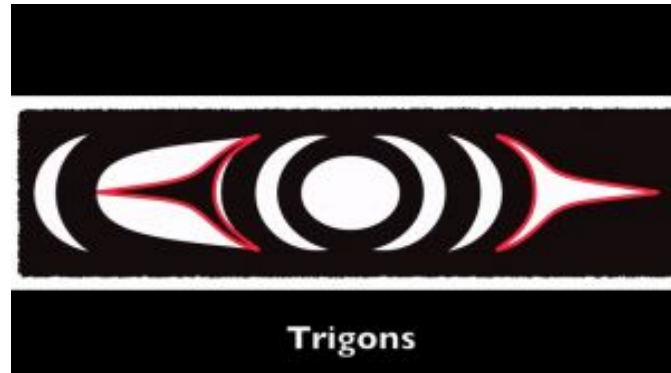
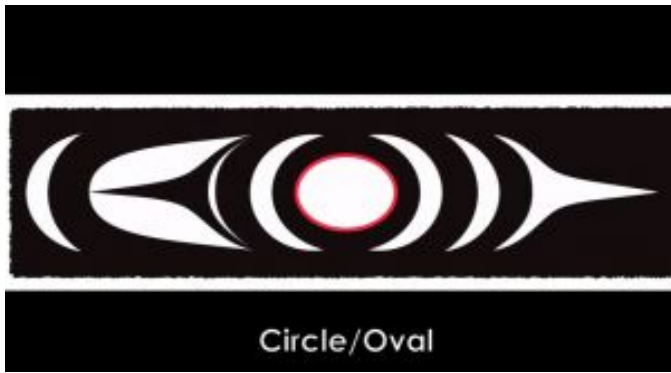
*Salish Vision*, Susan Point, 2002, Carved and painted red cedar and copper whorl



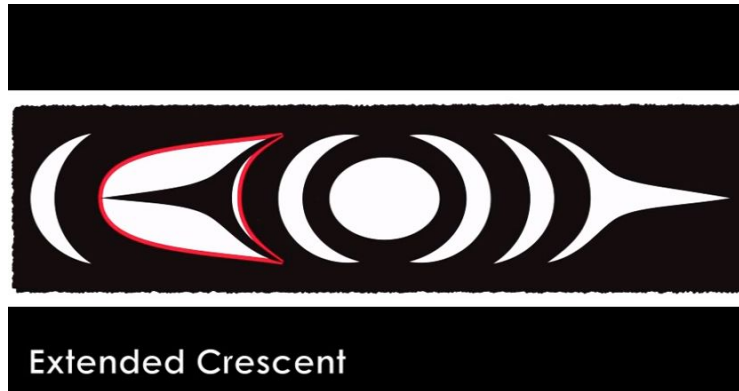
*The Moon and the Pond*, Dylan Thomas, Acrylic on canvas



WHOLE W(((H)))ORL(((D))), LESSLIE, SERIGRAPH ON PAPER

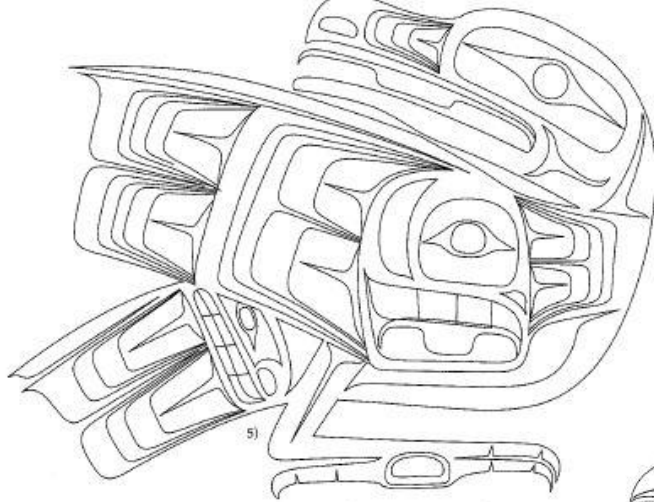


The circle, trigons, and crescents are unique to Coast Salish art and carvings

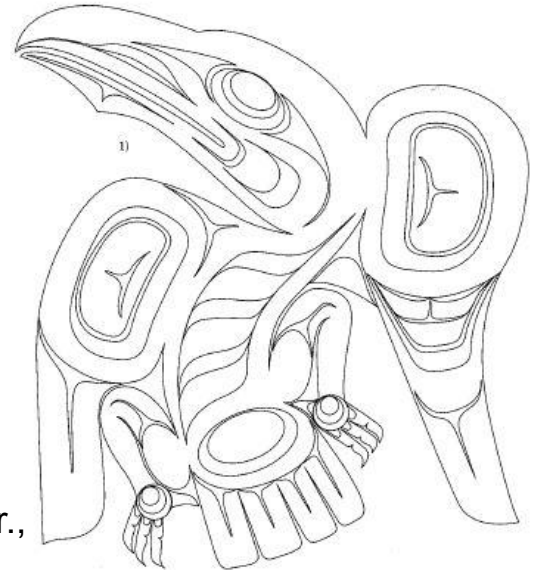




The Ovoid and U-forms seen above are common to many Northwest Coast groups, and in particular, associated with the Haida, but now used frequently by Coast Salish artists as well.



Raven by Ben Houstie,  
Bella Bella

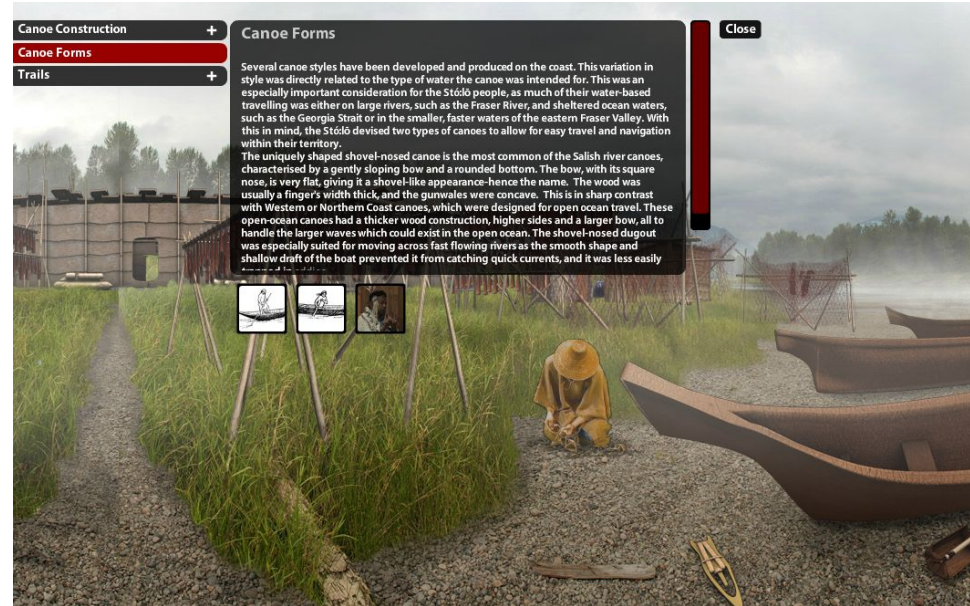


Raven by Francis Horne Sr.,  
Coast Salish

# Interactive Exploration of a Coast Salish Community!

Explore around a traditional village of the Xalem people from the Fraser Valley with [A Journey into Time Immemorial](#)

- Look for Salish wool dogs, spinning, cedar preparations, Salmon preparations, and more.
- Click on objects to learn more about them and watch interviews

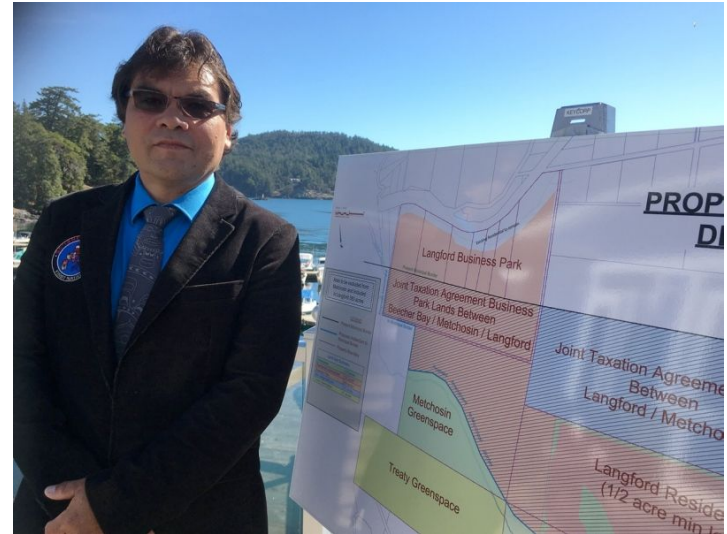


# Some Things Going on in Our Communities:

## T'Souke First Nations' Solar Project



## Beecher Bay, Langford, Metchosin land swap ([Article](#))



## Spirit Bay Sustainability Development in Beecher Bay



# Public Art



“Signs of Lekwungen,” Butch Dick  
Land markers with traditional  
names in the shape of Spindle  
Whorls

First Nations Public art to encourage education and discussion throughout the city

[Link for a full list](#)



“The Emergence of Life  
Bringers” by Marianne  
Nicolson, Esquimalt



**Kwakiutl Bear Pole by  
Henry Hunt, Downtown  
Victoria**

# *Na'Tsa'maht* The Unity Wall

## Ogden Point



For more info: [website](#)

# Sources

Mid Island News Blog. “Coast Salish Nobility Blankets.”

<http://midislandnews.com/early-nanaimo-history/history-coast-salish-nobility-blankets>

UVIC. “Perpetual Salish.” <http://uvac.uvic.ca/gallery/salishcurriculum/>

SFU. “A Journey into Time Immemorial.” <http://www.sfu.museum/time/en/flash/>

Royal BC Museum <https://www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/about/explore/featured-collections/first-nations-collections>

Joe Jack, Cowichan. “Coast Salish History.” <http://www.joejack.com/coastsalishhistory.html>

Race Rocks. “13 Moons of the Wsanec People.” <http://www.racerocks.com/racerock/firstnations/13moons/13moons.htm>

First People’s Language Map of BC. <http://maps.fphlcc.ca/sencoten>

SD 79, Hulquminum resources <http://abed.sd79.bc.ca/hulqumimum-resourses/hulquminum-greetings/>