

Executive Summary

This is more than a history of Zeballos coming into being in the early 1930s, when three prospectors, Charlie Smith, Andy Donaldson and a Mr. Bloom were welcomed ashore by Old Man Petersen and his son Harry Petersen on the shores of Ehatis.

It is also about Old Man Petersen's wisdom, knowledge and understanding of biodiversity and sustainability of resources; this is evident in the chant, he and his son used to welcome three prospectors. Title of the chant; Tin-Wis-Souks-Hihtinkis; *translation; the beaches in my traditional territories are pristine, clean, shiny and productive I want to see them remain in that condition.*

Some fifty years a part Old Man Petersen and Gro Harlem Brundland author of, Our Common Future had the same concerns; the health of the environment; sustainability, regeneration of natural resources and healthy traditional foods. This is the theme of the two panels Vincent Smith carved for School District 84.

The two panels Vince carved and titled Life From The Blue Skies To The Deep Seas are central to this summary. It addresses the history of Ehatis and the community of Zeballos from a creative mind and through the eyes of an artist.

The current information for unveiling of the Vincent Smith Panels, a great nephew and a great/great nephew of Vince, are the sixth and seventh generations from Old Man Petersen attending this new Zeballos Elementary Secondary School.

Old Man Petersen was an uncle to Francis Smith.

- 1) Chief Tahahtis [Old Man Petersen]
- 2) Francis Smith – nephew of Old Man Petersen
- 3) Paul Smith – oldest son of Francis Smith and Jesse Curley
- 4) Doreen John – daughter of Paul Smith and Julia John
- 5) Colleen John – daughter of Tony John and Doreen John
- 6) Ashley John & Kailip – Daughter and son of Colleen John and Simon John
- 7) Jaiden John – Son of Ashley John and Bert Boucher

The panels are not only a history Ehatesaht/Chenahkint, the panels also addresses through traditional art, sustainable development, regeneration and the need for healthy environment, in order to have sustainable foods from forests, lands, and the rivers, lakes, beaches and deep seas.

Chief Tahtahtis [Old Man Petersen] understood this when he and his son Harry Petersen [Chief Chachomsenup] welcomed the first three prospectors from Quatsino ashore at Ehatis.

Harry Petersen often told the story of he and his father welcoming three men, Charlie Smith, Mr. Bloom and Andy Donaldson with a chant “Tin-Wis Souks- Hihtinkis”. Literal

translation, *I have within my traditional territories pristine, shiny, clean beaches that I do not want wish to see destroyed by development.*

Harry translated the chant for his father, telling the three prospectors, my father welcomes you into his traditional lands; only thing he asks; do not destroy the lands, forests, waters, beaches and resources, for they are the sources of our foods, needs and comfort.

Chief Tahahtis and Gro Harlem Brundtland had the same concern and understanding of biodiversity and both addressed the need for sustainable development and the need for the protection of the environment some 57 years apart.

In 1982 Gro Harlem Brundtand then Prime Minister of Norway was mandated by the United Nations to define sustainable development and to be cognizant of the need for protection and improvement of the environment to achieve sustainable development.

It took six years from 1982 to 1987 for Gro Harlem Brundtland and a panel of scientists, highly respected businessmen, scholars, politicians, environmentalists and activists to define sustainable development.

The point here is, my great uncle Old Man Petersen who never went to school a day in his life understood, what took six years for scientists, scholars, businessmen to gain the same understanding of what takes to achieve sustainable development. This is evident in his chant 'Tin Wis Suoks Hihtinkis'.

I mention this because I was invited to University of BC in 1991 to participate in discussions about Our Common Future, biodiversity, sustainable development and the need for the protection of the environment.

Others invited were First Nation leaders, scientists, businessmen and activists from all over the world; as well the panel that worked with Brundtland for six years to arrive at the definition of sustainable development was present.

I did not have an understanding, of sustainability, so I called on Nuuchahnulth elders living in Campbell and area to be educated.

The participants were; Moses Smith [translator], Joe Smith, Lily Michael, Arthur Nicolaye, Willy Harry, Robert Peter, Sam Johnson, Maurice MacLean.

Moses told the elders in our language; I was invited to UBC to participate in discussions about "Our Common Future" a report by Brundtland on the destruction of the environment world wide through greed and pursuit of money and riches that was resulting in non- sustainable development and lack of protection of the environment.

The elders were informed I wanted to learn from them, their understanding of biodiversity and sustainable development. Lily Michael oldest in the group approaching

her hundredth birthday jokingly stated: “Those educated mumulthnee* must be really slow if they have to ask us who never went to school what biodiversity and sustainability means”

****“Mumulthnee is not a derogatory statement it means people who live in homes floating on waters and appear to be disoriented”***

The elders’ statement on biodiversity and sustainability was the only presentation to receive a standing ovation at UBC; there were many presentations made by scholars, scientists, business men, activists and educated individuals from all over the world; the elder’s statement on biodiversity and sustainability was simply stated.

****“If we have clean air, clean water, clean soil, and we look after and protect the environment, Mother Nature will provide for all our needs.”***

This is what the two panels are about, an understanding of biodiversity, sustainability and regeneration from an artists view and an understanding from traditional teachings.

ZESS Panels – Life From The Blue Skies To Deep Seas

Panel# 1 – Bottom to Top

- Blue represents clean water
- Welcome figure representing Chief Tahahtis/Old Man Petersen in a Nuuchahnulth canoe welcoming three prospectors from Quatsino.
- Chief Tahahtis is clothed in yellow cedar regalia an apron, a cape and headband.
- Old Man Petersen and his son Harry Petersen chanted; “Tin-Wis-Souks-Hihtinkis” ***English translation, in my traditional lands I have pristine, clean, shiny productive beaches.***
- After the chant Chief Hahoosis stated in Ehattesaht language, you are welcome to work in my lands but, do not destroy the environment. I want to see the beaches remain productive with clams, oysters and seafood for my community. Harry Petersen translated the chant and the message about the need of protection of the environment to ensure sustainability of resources.
- By the bow of the canoe is a black bear once abundant in Zeballos valley. [***Dead fall for bear was located at the hill close to where the iron ore cart is situated***]
- Tahahtis River transforms to sea serpent representing Harry Petersen’s sea serpent dance mask.
- Cedar branch over sea serpent head represents the cedar tree the mask was carved from as well as representing regeneration.
- Bear cub climbing a cedar tree, again depicting sustainability and regeneration
- Spring salmon swimming up the Tahahtis River, salmon were plentiful prior to development of the mining industry.
- A wolf from Zeballos valley along with an artist’s traditional drawing of wolf, Harry Petersen only had two wolves one black and one white on his mooyahplithlum [potlatch screen]. In our culture black and white wolves are the most influential in First Nation traditional laws and justice systems.

- Male and female elk plentiful in valley prior to arrival of prospectors and advent of mining industry
- Chief Tahahtis Big House, Tsasomlthahcomlthaht [House of the Grey Haired People] *the story about the residents & the chief of Big House; the residents in the house spend so much time thinking and strategizing as advisors to chiefs of E/C tribes their hair turned grey.*
- Larger peak is Kaouk Mountain; the smaller peak was Harry Petersen's sacred place of cleansing and communicating with the Creator. This area was a source of yellow cedar; also this is an area where the mining company attempted to blast a mining tunnel but couldn't due to the hard rock formation.
- Network of logging roads in the area.
- Thunderbird over Kaouk Mountain, the blue represents heavy rains during a violent thunderstorm.

Panel # 2 Bottom to Top

- Halibut was unavailable to Ehattesahk except through trade with other tribes until Tatchu Point Tribe [Big House of Hawiitahcoomlthaht] joined Ehattesahk Tribe when they moved to Resolution Park.
- Humpback whale with newborn whale. Ehattesahk obtained rights to hunt whales when Tatchu people were accepted into Ehattesahk tribe. During one whaling expedition the Ehattesahk/Chenahkint tribe whalers met up with Maori fishermen who gotten of he trade wind currents and were drifting toward Yellow Bluff.
- Killer whale after feasting on a hair seal
- Ehattesahk gained access to a source of traditional food, the hair seal when the Tatchu people came to Resolution Park seeking shelter from the winter storms of Tatchu, joining the three original Ehattesahk tribes, Ehatis, Ishsah and Achin.
- Salmon were fished at banks off Tatchu Point.
- Catala Island, the smoke over Catala with seabirds flying through smoke** *Explanation to follow*
- Rolling Steads passage between Catala and Yellow Bluff
- Left landmass, Rugged Point, Tatchu Point, Yellow Bluff with Rader Mountain in background.
- Final figure, Sun mask off Queen Mary's totem pole, Ehattesahk logo.

Conclusions

**As stated above, conclusions will begin with an explanation of sea birds flying through the smoke over Catala Island and a story on Yellow Bluff.

When fishermen were returning home from the fishing grounds in thick fog, seabirds were their navigational aides, seabirds at the end of the day or feeding sessions always travel toward land; according to old-timers, when seabirds get close to land, reefs, islands their flying pattern changes as does their communication which becomes shrill.

The smoke rising from Catala Island is of historical significance to Ehattesahk and, Nuchatlak families.

The Brown families were Eausaht an independent tribe at Bajo Reef, in Mowachaht traditional territory.

A dispute arose between Ehahtusaht and Mowachaht, the Mowachaht Tribe needed more lands for growth of their membership the Brown families were asked to leave Bajo Reef area by Chief Thomas John.

Ehausah tribe was on the way to Cheklesaht where they had family; they decided to rest over night at Catala Island. The Nuchatlaht chief noticed the smoke and, asked his tribesmen to go and see who was on Nuchatlaht tribal lands at Catala Island.

The group returned and informed the chief, the people were from Bajo Reef moving back to Cheklesaht after being asked to move out by Chief Thomas John.

The group was sent back to invite Ehausah tribe to come to Nuchatlaht as they were close relatives of the chief. The Ehausah were asked to stay and join Nuchatlaht tribe and were given a piece of land where they could build their homes.

Among the group was Harry Petersen son of Chief Tahahtis of Ehatis. Harry had been at Bajo Reef visiting relatives when the Browns were asked to leave Ehahus.

This sounds like a fictional happy ending, the Creator works in many strange ways.

Reflect back to the Vince Smith the carver of the panels; it was Vince's maternal grandfather, John Thomas who asked Vince's paternal grandfather Francis Smith an Ehusaht to leave Bajo Reef.

Some fifty years later on January 8,1949, Thomas John's daughter Julia John married Paul Smith and one of the children Paul and Julia had was Vince the artist of the panels.

My late mother and Paul's older sister Lily Michael is said to have uttered 'revenge is sweet', at Paul and Julia's wedding, we got even with Thomas John for chasing our families out of Ehahus.

It was mentioned earlier we are soon going to have the 7th generation of a family attending school at Zeballos Elementary Secondary School the generation beginning with; I understand we are there already starting from Old Ma Petersen uncle to Francis Smith:

- 1) Old Man Petersen.
- 2) Francis Smith – nephew
- 3) Paul Smith – son of Francis
- 4) Doreen John – daughter to Paul
- 5) Colleen John – daughter to Doreen
- 6) Ashley John & Kaylip – daughter and son Colleen and Simon John

7) Jaiden John – son of Ashley and Bert Boucher

To finish this conclusion by addressing the sun mask the last figure on panel is appropriate. This figure came from a totem pole that Queen Mary had carved in her honor since she had no children to succeed her. This totem pole stood in Hoke, capital of the Ehattesaht Confederacy.

Queen Mary was a sister to Old Man Petersen [Chief Hahuosis], and was the Hahcoom [Queen] from House of Wahenahtahcomlth Little Espinosa and the lagoon.

The sun mask is Ehattesaht/Chenahkint's logo that is seen on the tribes' letterhead.

Epilogue

There is much information to share about Ehattesaht/Chenahkint, these panels have brought back memories of stories I heard from elder relatives and mentors about Ehattesaht.

An explanation of the meaning of Ehattesaht and Ehatis is an appropriate place to begin.

Ehattesaht - explained by traditional historians and elders' means a tribe from **Ehatis** who are **Eehomlth** large in number with many relatives because Ehattesaht bloodlines and family roots are in many tribes.

Ehatis – a community situated by a river that has huge things drifting down the Tahahtis River after a thunder and rainstorm.

Historically Ehattesaht was made up of three tribes Ehattesaht (Zeballos), Ishsaht (Little Zeballos), Ahchinaht (Barr Creek).

With decimation from foreign diseases and Haida raids Ehattesaht evolved into Confederacy of seventeen tribes, today we can only identify fourteen from the Philip Drucker report on Northern and Central Nootkan Tribes.

The confederacy's central place to gather for winter festivities was Hoke where Queen Mary's totem pole stood along with a pole that belonged to George August father to Ehattesaht Hahcom Georgina Amos, Thla qua se.

Back to Panels #s 1 & 2 Same Order Bottom To Top

Cedar is important to Ehattesaht/Chenahkints culture as one can see by how often the use of cedar products appear on the panels;

- Artwork carved on cedar panels.
- Canoe carved from a cedar log.
- Welcome figure representing Old Man Petersen carved from cedar.
- Regalia made from yellow cedar bark.

- Dance mask/cedar branch
- Cedar tree/cub
- Sun mask
- Old Man Petersen's Big House is of cedar construction.

Cedar tree is second only to the salmon in order of importance to our people.

The cedar is so important to Ehattesaht/Chenahkint they call it their Grandfather Tree.

This was story told in Germany in 1991 when the BC Environmentalists were touring a giant cedar stump that came from Clayoquot Sound. My task was to counter the misinformation the environmentalists were spreading about total destruction of whole forests by the forest industry.

This cedar tree story is included in the Ehattesaht/Chenahkint Language Revitalization Initiative.

In the Yellow Bluff story one will see The Maori fisherman were send back to New Zealand in canoes carved from cedar trees.

Yellow Bluff – Maori / Chenahkint Connection

At about the age of four or five, my maternal grandfather Billy Ben told about three Maori men that lived among our people for three years at Yellow Bluff.

The story is Chenahkints were returning from a whale hunt, at about forty miles off shore, they spotted a strange looking vessel with three men going toward Yellow Bluff. They were Maori fishermen who had drifted out of the trade wind stream. These men lived among our people for three years, when the trade wind streams switched back toward New Zealand they left for their home lands. They were provided with three canoes fully provisioned and the each man was send home with a wife.

Tim Paul and his family have met with Maori delegations on a number of occasions, first was when Tim was commissioned in about 1990 to carve a totem pole for the 1994 Commonwealth Games to be held in New Zealand.

When Tim his family along with some Hesquiats stood up the pole in New Zealand, the Maori made a telling statement. From what I understand the Maori stated something to this effect; *'you have come a long ways to dispel a myth created by anthropologists, universities the educated; they say it was impossible for our people to have drifted so far and lived among your people for three years at Yellow Bluff and to return home safely'*

I was involved with two meetings with Maori delegations one at UBC 2004 and 2010 at a Gas Town Art Gallery.

At the UBC meeting I had an opportunity to sit with an elderly lady and her eight grand children ages from eight to fourteen years.

Their grandmother spoke of the three fishermen who landed somewhere in Canada, place called Yellow Bluff and how they were gone for about three years. She also mentioned the three women that returned with the fishermen.

She made mention of a group of Maori who are a little different than New Zealand Maori, she said they may be the off spring of the three women who returned with the three Maori fishermen from Yellow Bluff.

The second meeting I attended was June 12, 2010 at a Gas Town Art Gallery. The Maori delegation was artists and storytellers, traditional historians. A lady artist with cancer led the delegation, her mission was to honor and thank world-renowned artist Tim Paul for the 1994 Commonwealth Games Memorial Pole before she passed on to the spirit world.

The artist addressing Tim made the same observation that was made at the pole raising ceremonies in 1994; *'Tim you have made us proud as Maori, you and your family and tribe have validated through your totem pole, we as Maori have a connection to you through the three fishermen that lived among your ancestors at Yellow Bluff'*

After her speech the lady presented Tim with a painting showing how the three fishermen drifted out of the Trade wind stream and drifted toward Yellow Bluff. Seeing the artwork with a yellow background, depicting Yellow Bluff for the first time had an emotional effect on me.

To me the lady's story and painting validated the stories my grandfather Billy Ben told me about the three Maori men who lived among our people for three years at Yellow Bluff.

In developing this text about Vince's panels, From The Blue Skies To The Deep Seas, I came to an awareness of how important the cedar tree is to First Nations and how it has connected us to other people world wide for instance;

- Tim Paul's totem pole in New Zealand
- Tim's totem pole at the birth place of Captain Cook
- Cedar canoes in Norway
- Nuuchahnulth cedar canoes transporting Maori home from Yellow Bluff
- Mowachaht Whalers' Shrine in a New York Museum

This list could go on forever, now I understand more clearly why our people call the cedar Grandfather Tree.

My hope, Vince's panels will educate others like it educated myself; maybe then the whole of School District # 84 will begin collaborating with First Nations on improving

curriculum content for the benefit of the students and make First Nations traditional histories become part of the curriculum.

-END-

*Earl J Smith
April 3, 2013*