

Treasure Bearers

Personal Foundations for Effective Leadership in Northern Coast Salish Heritage Stewardship

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Abstract Heritage institutions often seem bureaucratic and faceless, but law, policy, and practice are traceable to personal values, preferences, and actions. Individuals have been recognized as “agents” in critical theory and archaeology, but aside from celebrity campaigners for high-profile preservation causes and other anecdotal accounts, the people who carry tangible and intangible heritage across generations receive scant attention. Our profiles of cultural practitioners, documenters, and advocates — five bearers of Northern Coast Salish cultural heritage in British Columbia, Canada — identify four personal characteristics that appear to increase leadership effectiveness in heritage stewardship. We suggest that individuals are more likely to achieve stewardship goals when they are (1) personally identified with the heritage; (2) clearly serving collective interests; (3) credible in communications within and across social boundaries; and (4) willing to act on personal commitments, even in risky situations. The lives and works of the five Treasure Bearers profiled here established the baseline terms of reference, data sets, and priorities for the region’s first significant collaborations among First Nations, local governments, researchers, and citizens. Their seminal efforts not only paved the way for initial steps toward intercommunity reconciliation, but assured a pivotal role for cultural heritage in an ongoing suite of community-based initiatives to incorporate the most significant and valuable aspects of the past into a regional future all can be proud of.

Resumen Las instituciones patrimoniales parecen a menudo burocráticas y sin rostro, pero la ley, la política y la práctica se pueden asociar fácilmente a valores, preferencias y acciones personales. Los individuos han sido reconocidos como “agentes” en la teoría crítica y en la arqueología, pero aparte de campañas de algunas celebridades a favor de causas de gran impacto y de otros asuntos anecdóticos, las personas que transportan un patrimonio tangible e intangible a lo largo de generaciones reciben una escasa atención. Nuestros perfiles de practicantes, defensores y documentalistas de la cultura —cinco “portadores” del patrimonio cultural Salish de la Costa Norte en la Columbia Británica en Canadá— identifican cuatro características personales que parecen incrementar la eficacia del liderazgo en la administración del patrimonio. Sugerimos que los individuos cumplen sus objetivos más fácilmente cuando: 1. Se identifican personalmente con el patrimonio; 2. Están sirviendo claramente a intereses colectivos; 3. Son creíbles en su comunicación dentro y a través de sus límites sociales y 4. cuando están dispuestos a actuar por compromiso personal, incluso en situaciones

de riesgo. Las vidas y trabajos de estos cinco “Portadores de tesoros” que aquí esbozamos establecieron la línea de partida para la referencia, toma de datos y prioridades de la primera colaboración importante entre las Primeras Naciones (First Nations), las administraciones locales, los investigadores y los ciudadanos. Su esfuerzo fue fundamental en la construcción de una vía hacia la reconciliación intercomunitaria, y además aseguró un papel principal al patrimonio cultural en una constante serie de iniciativas basadas en la comunidad para incorporar los aspectos más significativos y valiosos del pasado a un futuro regional del que todos podrán enorgullecerse.

Résumé Les institutions patrimoniales peuvent paraître bureaucratiques et anonymes, mais les lois, les politiques et la pratique peuvent être retraces jusqu’aux valeurs, préférences et actions des individus. Les individus sont souvent identifiés par la théorie critique et par l’archéologie comme “agents”. Outre quelques défenseurs célèbres de causes, célèbres elles aussi mais anecdotiques, les personnes qui transmettent le patrimoine tangible et intangible d’une génération à l’autre passent inaperçues. Le profil que nous avons dressé de cinq intervenants – cinq porteurs du patrimoine culturel des Salish du littoral en Colombie-Britannique, Canada – identifie quatre caractéristiques personnels qui augmentent l’efficacité du gardiennage du patrimoine culturel. Nous suggérons que les individus sont plus aptes à atteindre des objectifs lorsqu’ils sont (1) directement associés à ce patrimoine; (2) au service d’intérêts collectifs; (3) des communicateurs crédible à l’intérieur de leur communauté et entre les communautés; et (4) prêts à agir en fonction de leurs croyances personnelles, même dans des situations de risque. La vie et l’oeuvre de cinq Porteurs de trésors analysés ici a établi le seuil de référence, le corpus de données et les priorités pour les premières collaborations entre Premières nations, gouvernements locaux, chercheurs et citoyens. L’effort qu’ils ont déployés ont ouvert le chemin pour la réconciliation entre communautés tout en assurant une place de prédilection au patrimoine dans le cadre des initiatives communautaires visant à intégrer les éléments les plus significatifs et le plus appréciés à un projet d’avenir régional dont tous peuvent être fiers.

What elements of our vast cultural and biophysical inheritance shall humanity carry forward? Which objects, places, traditions, and ecosystems — and which of the intangible ways of thinking and acting in relation to them and to one another — will be our legacies? In the face of escalating societal change and reductions in the volume and diversity of preindustrial heritage, what can and should be done to identify, safeguard, and pass on what is most important and useful?

These questions drive heritage stewardship — the assessment, documentation, protection, and harmonization of cultural, educational, political, economic, and management values of objects, places, traditions, and ecosystems.¹ People respond to such questions daily, even hourly, through minor and momentous decisions and actions at personal, household, communal, professional, regional, national, and international levels. Trouillot (1995)

observes that individuals and groups alternately silence and amplify elements of the past as we use or ignore, save or discard, and modify, declaim, espouse or dispense with knowledge, items, places, and institutions that convey ideas and traditions across generations. The cumulative effects of such silencing and amplifying choices, although proximally individual, ultimately define and determine history, both in the sense of that which happened and that for which we have evidence and interpretation (Trouillot 1995).

Archaeologists and other heritage professionals have lately dedicated much thought to collaboration (Eiselt 2009; see, for example, Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2007). Although working together is of undeniable importance in heritage stewardship, potent partnerships are, most fundamentally, the products of capabilities possessed and influences and resistances acted upon by individuals. If we are to understand and enhance the effectiveness of stewardship collaborations, it is important to examine how and why specific persons influence heritage stewardship in ways that are significant, positive, and enduring.

Individual agency has come to the fore in postmodern social theory (Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1991), resource management (Westley 2002) and archaeology (Dobres and Robb 2000). This article draws heritage stewardship into this broadly theoretical discussion with a narrowly descriptive examination of five *Treasure Bearers*—a term we use in respectful reference to those responsible for positive valuations, treatments, studies, and conservation of heritage in the Northern Coast Salish region (Figure 1). In an attempt to move beyond personal narratives as constructive advice and cautionary tales (e.g., Nicholas et al. 2007), we build on Pinkerton's (1998) study of First Nations leadership in advancing ecosystem-based forest management. We recast Pinkerton's (1998) characteristics of successful community leaders to suggest a suite of four attributes held in common among cultural practitioners, researchers, and advocates sharing interests in respecting and protecting cultural heritage.

Although innumerable community members, heritage professionals, and government officials have made contributions, large and small, to managing the heritage of the Ayahjuthum-speaking (Mainland Comox) First Nations (Homalco, Klahoose, and Sliammon) of southwestern British Columbia, we give particular attention to five individuals.² Elders Rose and Bill Mitchell lived and shared their language and cultural traditions during the racially divisive early and middle decades of the 20th century. Archaeologists Steven Acheson and Sydney Riley spent two summers in the 1970s recording hundreds of the region's heritage sites. More recently, Norman Gallagher used his position as a Sliammon elder and elected councilor—as well as his

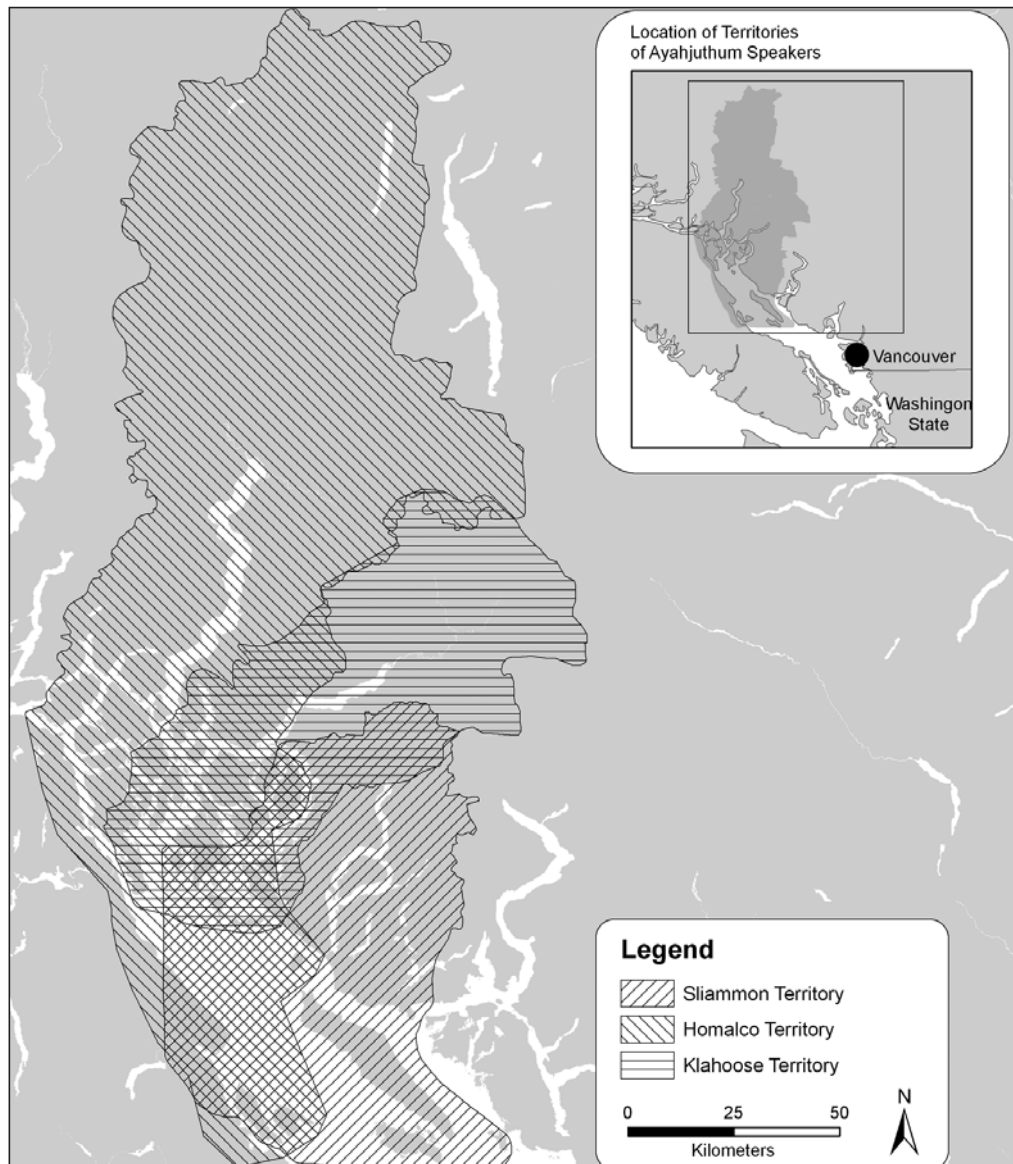


Figure 1. Territories of Ayahjuthum Speaking First Nations, British Columbia, Canada, as defined in the BC Treaty Statement of Intent for the Sliammon Band.

integrated knowledge of Sliammon culture, provincial heritage law, forestry practices, and treaty negotiations — to advocate for protecting and restoring links among First Nations oral traditions, traditional territories, and heritage sites. Each of these individuals, and the many partnerships and friendships centered upon them, forged or strengthened links between heritage and society. Their efforts enhanced their varied senses of community and personal satisfaction while boosting the value and significance of Ayahjuthum speakers' heritage. Diverse initiatives to enfold the Ayahjuthum past in the rapidly unfolding present are among the Treasure Bearers' many legacies.

In what follows we describe historical and contemporary contexts for heritage stewardship in the territory of the Ayahjuthum speakers, including our ongoing collaborations. In three profiles we present the five Treasure Bearers and their backgrounds, motivations, and influences on regional heritage management policies and practices. We offer their stories in recognition of their many contributions and as the basis for understanding crucial roles played by personal stewardship efforts. The five individuals' unassuming leadership reverberates at the root of many current initiatives to protect Ayahjuthum speakers' tangible heritage sites and objects and to perpetuate intangible place names, stories, songs, and other associations. These initiatives are, in turn, at or near the core of a growing regional interest in and commitment to fostering sustainability on social and ecological scales (Sustainability Charter Steering Committee 2010). The three profiles provide object lessons in the personal satisfactions and societal benefits stemming from altruistic service to cultural and biophysical heritage.

Heritage in the Territory of the Ayahjuthum-Speakers

The Ayahjuthum speakers today are the Homalco (also Xwemalkwu, Homalko, Hamalthco), Klahoose (Tl'uhus, Tlo'hos), and Sliammon (Tla'amin, Tlaamin) First Nations (Washington 2004). As a cluster of closely related families and communities having ancestral ties to northern reaches of the Salish Sea (Gulf of Georgia; Figure 1, Figure 2), these First Nations share a dialect of one of the Coast Salish languages, as well as cultural and historical origins and experience (Barnett 1938, 1955; Kennedy and Bouchard 1983, 1990; Carlson 2005).

Tangible and Intangible Heritage

There are few first-person accounts of history and culture authored by Ayahjuthum speakers. Most published descriptions of Northern Coast Salish cultural heritage paraphrase classic anthropological texts (especially Barnett 1955; Kennedy and Bouchard, 1983, 1990). Chosen because it represents the voice and views of an Ayahjuthum speaker, the following summary is a useful window into Ayahjuthum speakers' cultural heritage drawn from a statutory declaration filed to curb gravesite desecrations by Hewkin (Joseph Mitchell, son of Treasure Bearers Rose and Bill Mitchell). According to Hewkin,

The Klahoose, Sliammon, and Homalko people were all one people . . . These three groups separated around the mid-1800's

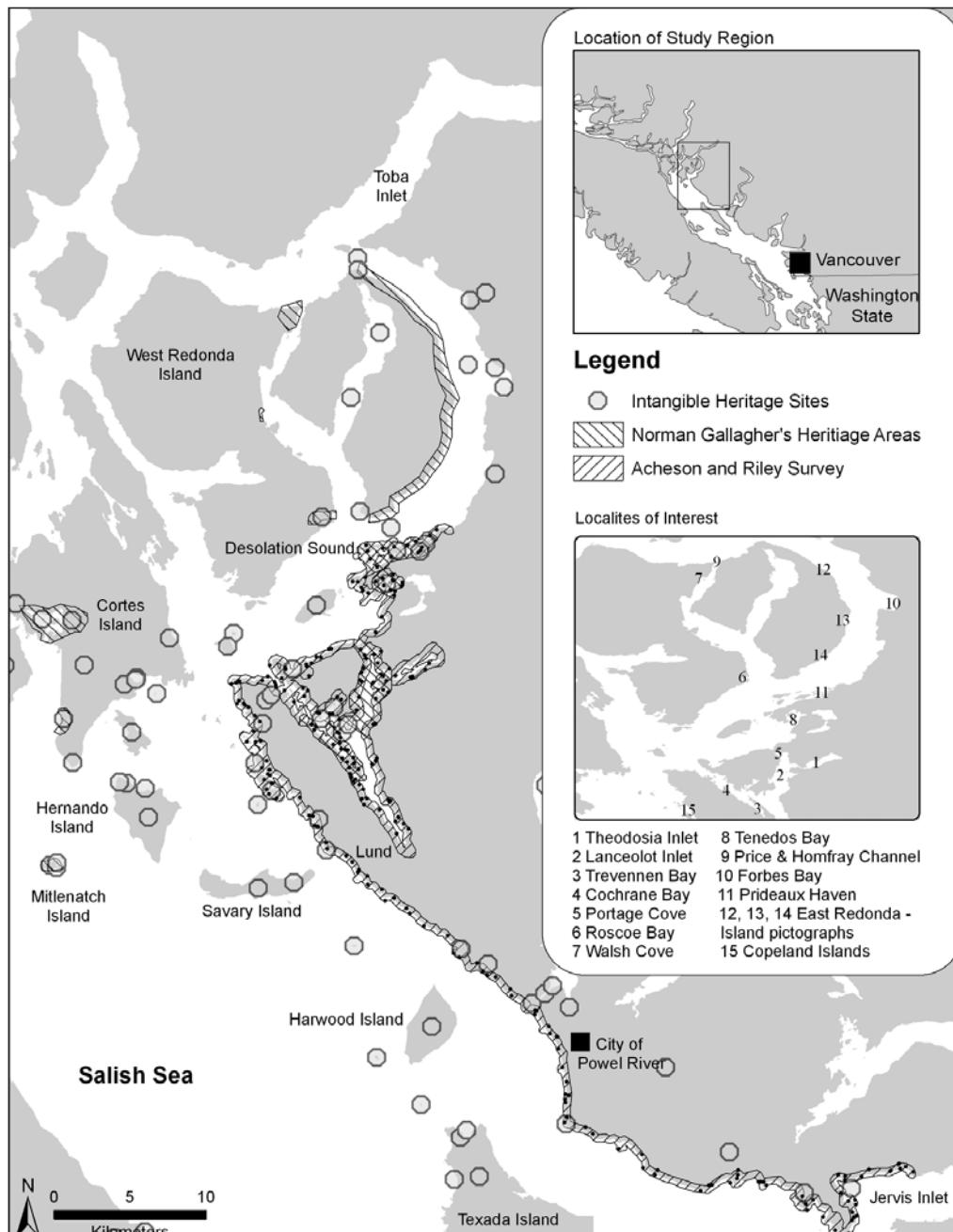


Figure 2. The study region, showing heritage sites associated with Ayahjuthum oral traditions, as well as Steven and Syd's archaeological inventory areas.

when priests moved to the Powell River area [They] lived in one territory located on the islands and mainland inlets just east of Vancouver Island and north of Powell River. The traditional territories include Toba Inlet, Bute Inlet, Cortes Island, Hernando Island, Redonda Island, Read Island, Stuart Island, Savary Island, and other areas [Mitchell 1994:2].

Hewkin's description of his ancestors' seasonal movements provides a glimpse of the abundance, diversity, and interconnectedness of tangible and intangible heritage as these defined the occupation and use of the watery territory of the Northern Coast Salish. Hewkin notes that,

These islands have mild winters with little snow. Food, including game and seafood, was plentiful on the islands. In contrast, the territory on the mainland has colder winters, the inlets freeze over and there is more snow . . . Winter was a time when people came together for social and spiritual celebrations, such as the potlatch. It was a time to celebrate, dance and feast, and to strengthen ties to each other and the land. It was a time of spiritual renewal. Large villages existed on these islands when people met there for the winter months. There were many longhouses on the islands at one time. There are many middens and other signs of our ancestors who lived on the islands, such as lines of clam shells, rocks with fish carvings, and burial sites . . . People travelled through the islands slowly in rowboats, so there was time to tell stories about each place along the way. People stopped at many places on their journeys and got to know where food could be found in different places at different times . . . In the springtime, the people would spread out all over the inlets and lakes of our territory to harvest salmon. There was a Chief who knew how much salmon to take from a place so that the salmon would return the next year . . . People were always buried in caves or overhanging areas in this way [in crouched positions in bent wood boxes] until the early 1800s when the smallpox epidemic came . . . The burial sites of the Klahoose, Sliammon, and Homalco people are all sacred places [Mitchell 1994:2–3].

Heritage in a Modern Context

Although strong threads connect today's Sliammon, Klahoose, and Homalco First Nations to their past, much heritage has been lost. As early as the 1930s, Barnett (1955:2) claimed, "the old culture is practically dead," and noted powerful forces impacting lands, economies, technologies, languages, and cultural traditions (Table 1). Until the 1980s and 1990s, when Canada's constitution and courts affirmed the survival and legitimacy of Aboriginal rights and land titles not explicitly extinguished by law or treaty, Canadian First Nations had almost no role in managing their heritage above the individual or household level (Bell and Napoleon 2008). Collaborations

Table 1. Some Milestones in Sliammon History and Heritage Stewardship

1780s	European epidemic diseases spread in advance of contact and decimate Coast Salish, resulting in momentous population reductions and social changes
1838	Fur trade begins when Hudson's Bay Company ship "Beaver" encounters Sliammon people at the north end of Texada Island
1860s	Catholic (Oblate) priests begin missionizing, giving rise to residential schools
1875–1879	Indian Reserve Commission establishes Northern Coast Salish reserves, imposing limits on First Nations access to off-reserve territories and resources
1885	Canada's Indian Act outlaws First Nation's ceremonies, including potlatches and other communal cultural and subsistence practices
Early 1900s	Government and Catholic authorities systematically replace personal and place names with predominantly English names to facilitate record keeping
1909	Founding of the Powell River Paper Co. leads to 1912 construction of the Powell River dam and Sliammon resistance to relocation from village at millsite
1920	Mandatory residential schooling for First Nations youth leads to forcible removal of children; resistance includes hiding children and family relocations
1982	Section 35 of the new Canadian Constitution affirms Aboriginal Title
1990	In <i>Sparrow</i> , Canada's Supreme Court rules that First Nations have an aboriginal right to fish for food and social needs
1994	Sliammon begins treaty negotiations with British Columbia and Canada
1997	In <i>Delgamuukw</i> , Canada's Supreme Court confirms aboriginal title in British Columbia and First Nations' rights to land, not just to hunt and fish
2002	Sliammon completes traditional land use and place name mapping and database
2006	Sliammon and the Powell River Museum sign agreement to facilitate repatriation and curation of cultural items until Sliammon has its own cultural centre
2008	The Sliammon–Powell River Regional District government-to-government relationship includes recommendations for heritage sites management

(Source: Sliammon Treaty Society, http://www.sliammontreaty.com/governance_timeline.html)

among First Nations, archaeologists, and other heritage professionals took place prior to court decisions in *Sparrow*, *Delgamuukw*, and other cases that supported First Nations' land and resource claims (Carlson 1979; Lepofsky 2008). At least as often, however, First Nations were obliged to intervene to seek protection for their heritage through reactive resistance to site damages and resource extractions in their traditional territories (Blomley 1996; Ross 2005). Logging, relic hunting, and construction have damaged most of the 300-plus registered archaeological sites in the Ayahjuthum speakers' territory (Acheson and Riley 1976a, 1976b, 1977). Land clearing and construction continue to alter and threaten Ayahjuthum speakers' heritage, especially

along the highly sought after waterfront, where “conflicts with archaeological sites” are almost inevitable (Powell River Regional District 2008:14).

Legal recognition of their aboriginal land titles and resource management rights has prompted the Sliammon First Nation, along with about sixty other First Nations in British Columbia, to engage provincial and federal governments in long-overdue treaty negotiations (BC Treaty Commission 2009). The spatial extent, temporal depth, and cultural ties of territorial affiliations are pivotal elements in these momentous deliberations. In seeking to balance assertions of their ancestral rights with responsibilities to their descendants, the Sliammon First Nation is using treaty processes to plan governance systems for sovereign futures that incorporate distinctive and significant elements of their pasts. Indigenous management principles, applications of local and traditional knowledge, and heritage site and object conservation are prominent in treaty negotiations and other intergovernmental discussions (Carlson et al. 2004; Klassen et al. 2009; Schaepe 2007).

Tla’amin-Simon Fraser University Archaeology and Heritage Stewardship Program

Our work in the region since 2007 arose directly out of Sliammon plans to incorporate their ancestral heritage values into post-treaty self-governance and out of the recognition that without such plans, this precious heritage will continue to be treated as obsolete and brushed aside or degraded (Sliammon First Nation 2009). Co-directed by Lepofsky and Welch, as well as Michelle Washington of the Sliammon Treaty Society, the program is a community-based exploration of how archaeological sites, perspectives, practices, and data can be employed in land and place histories, in revitalizing ecosystems and stewardship traditions, and in intercultural reconciliation (Shore 2008, 2009, 2010). The program includes a for-credit field school coupled with diverse research and outreach opportunities for integrated studies of regional archaeology, history, culture, and ecology. Our program goals are to (1) explore and enhance knowledge about Sliammon territory and Ayahjuthum speakers’ heritage through heritage site and object identification, documentation, and investigation, (2) train First Nations and university students in archaeology and heritage stewardship, (3) increase awareness and knowledge of Northern Coast Salish history and land use, and (4) advance First Nations goals of self-governance, self-determination, and self-representation.

Our initial work made it clear that several forebears and benefactors had set the stage for our program, subtly influencing our plans and substantially

increasing the prospects for our success. Our partnership and commitment to continuous, reflexive assessment led us to examine the individual efforts and institutional arrangements linking our program to regional heritage management history. Initial discussions made it clear that a handful of Treasure Bearers were disproportionately responsible for the geographical and topical foci of our work. In 2008 and 2009, Welch took the lead in interviews and archival studies to illuminate the Treasure Bearers' lives and works. Based on these data, the following three profiles describe how the information collected, relationships established, and institutions initially crafted by the Treasure Bearers and their collaborators laid the foundations for our program and for other initiatives embracing and conserving the region's impressive cultural heritage.

Rose and Bill Mitchell: Weaving Heritage into Changing Society

The husband and wife team of Chithlethukt (Rose Mitchell, 1904–1988) and Xwaxwe (Bill Mitchell, 1903–1985) dedicated their lives to inspiring and ensuring the documentation and perpetuation of their cultural inheritance (Figure 3). Known as “Grannie and Pah” to the family members and close friends who provided most of this profile, they did not set out to change the world, only to use and share their knowledge and expertise and to enable succeeding generations to appreciate their heritage and harvest the bounty of their collective inheritance. Rose and Bill are among a handful of Northwest Coast knowledge keepers who were able to bear and propagate their heritage at a time when such knowledge was undervalued and suppressed, often vigorously and sometimes violently. According to Hewkin's declaration, Xwaxwe

grew up at Sechelt. His mother passed away when he was very young and then his grandparents [primarily his grandmother] raised him. His father was Maori from New Zealand and his mother was Sechelt . . . He and my mother had an arranged marriage which lasted 63 years. After my parents' marriage, my father moved [from 07P', New Church House, near the mouth of Bute Inlet] to Tork [Squirrel Cove, the primary Klahoose village] and lived there with my mother [Mitchell 1994:1–2].

Hewkin says Chithlethukt

grew up in Tork . . . and never went to school. She knew well the traditional ways of the Klahoose people, and I learned these from



Figure 3. Jeanne Dominick, Bill Mitchell, and Rose Mitchell with some of the baskets and other cultural treasures they produced for posterity (*Sliammon Treaty Society*. Courtesy Rolland Desilets, photographer).

her words and from the way she lived. She thought skills such as hunting, preparing food, and gathering wood were more useful skills than reading, which she thought made a person lazy (Mitchell, 1994:2). 3

But Rose was learned as well as savvy. She spoke English as well as seven Native languages and dialects, enabling communications with and among First Nations and non-natives during a period of profound and rapid changes. Chithlethukt came to appreciate the value of reading and writing through Bill's work as an interpreter in courts and other proceedings, and through her own work recording the Ayahjuthum language and its cultural associations with linguists and anthropologists.

The lives of Rose and Bill Mitchell exemplify effective, community-based cultural heritage stewardship and transmission. Rose was a specialist in foods and medicines, as well as a midwife, noted basket maker, and liaison who assisted grieving families and prepared their loved ones for final resting. Bill served as an advocate-interpreter, fighting for Native rights and bridging gaps between bands, and among families and the provincial, federal, police, and church officials. As the Klahoose Chief from 1930 to 1981 he travelled

frequently to intergovernmental meetings and to retrieve the bodies of community members who had passed away from home. He was also a master canoe builder, casket maker, logger, commercial fisherman, and builder of houses on the Klahoose, Sliammon, and Homalco reserves. Bill was one of the founding members of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia (2009), the oldest aboriginal fisherman's association in Canada (Tennant 1990). Bill and Rose took care of their people from cradle to grave, making friends along the way from Haida to Tulalip in Washington State. The couple also created or assembled, and then passed on many teachings and collections of hunting, fishing, and food processing implements, including handmade baskets, dolls, canoe bailers, and other rare items.

The most concrete and widely accessible product of Rose and Bill's commitment to sharing their heritage is a book. *Sliammon Life, Sliammon Lands* (Kennedy and Bouchard 1983) sprang from a decade-long association with trusted anthropological fieldworkers. Rose and Bill politely declined requests for information from researchers in any kind of a hurry, but family members recall that Randy Bouchard and Dorothy Kennedy were different: respectful, patient, and generous. Rose and Bill did assist other researchers, but none at levels comparable to their collaboration with Randy and Dorothy. The work engaged another Klahoose Band member, Jeannie Dominick, as well as Mary Clifton (Comox), and Ambrose Wilson, Tommy Paul, and Noel George Harry (all Homalco). This potent team documented hundreds of place names and recorded hundreds of hours of topical interviews and stories (Figure 2; see Kennedy and Bouchard 1990). Barnett's (1955) *The Coast Salish Indians of British Columbia* also relied on consultations with John Dominick, Rose's father, and Tom Timothy, the Sliammon Chief for more than two decades. Taken as a whole, this group of scholars and stewards—meaning both the Ayahjuthum speakers and their academic partners—documented most of the knowledge carried forward, thus enabling much of the ongoing appreciation and application of the region's cultural heritage.

Rose and Bill's legacy also includes a network of family and friends who continue to use, enjoy, and pass on cultural knowledge and practice. Their elder daughter, Sue, dedicated her life to teaching the Ayahjuthum language in the region's public schools. Their younger daughter, Liz, served as the first Sliammon elected to the Powell River School Board and initiated the Band's Culture and Heritage Committee as a hub for heritage protection and transmission. Rose and Bill's son, Joe (Hewkin), served the Sliammon Band in many leadership roles, including elected Councillor and Chief Councillor for two decades. Sue, Liz and Joe helped create cultural elements of Powell

River's Kathaumixw, an annual international choral festival (Kathaumixw Organizing Committee 2009). Many of their grandchildren remain involved in heritage carrying and sharing, including the building and gifting to the community of Gahnohs ("treasure from the past"), a Coast Salish style cedar canoe (Blackmore and Blackmore 2001). Indeed, most persons with substantial knowledge of or love for Northern Coast Salish heritage had their interest sparked or fuelled by Rose and Bill.

It is of singular significance that Rose and Bill persevered at a time in which many aspects of First Nations heritage were considered immoral and prosecuted as illegal in British Columbia. Living and laboring during the early and middle decades of the 20th century, Chithlethukt's and Xwaxwe's lives spanned this turbulent period of oppression and intolerance. Most of their work was done without compensation or benefits. Almost always polite, they were nevertheless steadfast and strategic in their resistance to illegitimate domination. Bill travelled to the Kamloops residential school, where the low quality of the food inspired him to insist that the priests running the school share the morning's unpalatable porridge. Confronted at one point by a fisheries enforcement officer who insisted Rose limit her catch to what she could eat, Rose brandished an oar to underscore her contention that the fish were needed to feed her community members. The officer reconsidered his enforcement priorities.

Through acts of exceptional and tactful defiance, as well as quiet resistance and tactful conveyance, Rose and Bill carried their ancestral heritage through difficult times (see Scott 1990). Their lives and works helped to pave the way for First Nations to be respected, heard, and treated fairly. The place names, stories, interpersonal relationships, and basket and artifact collections they created are foundations for our Sliammon collaborations on place histories and regional archaeology and heritage policy advancement. The cultural heritage they helped bear forward is central in a new era of broader appreciation for diversity and greater opportunity for First Nations self-representation and self-determination.

Steven Acheson and Sydney Riley: Documenting Ancient Presence

In contrast to contributions by Rose and Bill, which emphasize intangible cultural heritage, Steven Acheson and Syd Riley spent two summers focused on tangible heritage in accord with interests and standards of professional archaeologists (Figures 4 and 5). Their work created baseline records of ar-



Figure 4. Sydney Riley (*Courtesy Steven Acheson*). **Figure 5.** Steven Acheson (*Courtesy Steven Acheson*).

archaeological sites along coastal reaches of Ayahjuthum speakers' territory. At a time when many archaeologists employed an exclusively scientific perspective, Steven and Syd engaged First Nations representatives in respectful and effective efforts to understand at least some of the cultural and educational values assigned to heritage sites by Sliammon people.

The Acheson-Riley survey of portions of the Powell River and Sunshine Coast regional districts was part of a flurry of mid-1970s archaeological reconnaissance surveys commissioned by British Columbia's Archaeological Sites Advisory Board. Authorized by the province's Archaeological and Historical Sites Protection Act of 1960, the Archaeological Sites Advisory Board was the central node in the system envisioned by Charles Borden and Wilson Duff, the fathers of archaeological heritage management in British Columbia (Borden 1981; Borden and Duff 1952; Bryan 1980). The 1960 law, as interpreted through the 1970s, charged the Board with advising the provincial government on matters relating to archaeological heritage; reviewing applications and issuing permits for archaeological research; establishing a system of regional advisors ("Borden's wardens"); conducting proactive archaeological surveys in regions with high levels of land modification; and sponsoring or conducting reactive "salvage" excavations at threatened sites (Roy Carlson, personal communication 2009; Bjorn Simonsen, personal communication 2009). From 1971 until the Board was disbanded in 1981, provincial archaeologist Bjorn Simonsen oversaw the surveys that provided the critical mass for establishing the heritage site registry and data base that still plays a central role in the province's heritage management (British Columbia Archaeology Branch 2009).

British Columbia's experiment in centralized, state-based archaeological

heritage planning and research subsequently folded as a result of budget cuts, but in the spring of 1976, archaeological opportunities abounded.⁴ Both Steven and Syd looked to the Archaeological Sites Advisory Board to open the door to the next stage in their nascent archaeological careers. Born in Vancouver in 1949, Steven graduated from Simon Fraser University in 1975 and participated in the university's archaeology field school before working on the Archaeological Sites Advisory Board survey of the southeast coast of Vancouver Island (Acheson, et al. 1975).

With Steven prepared to lead another survey for the Board, Simonsen selected one of "Borden's Wardens," Sydney Riley, to assist Steven in the survey of the Powell River and Sunshine Coast region (Figure 2). Born in Powell River in 1928, Syd Riley's interests in archaeology and ecology were sparked by Golden R. Stanley, a guiding light in the establishment of the Powell River Historical Museum and Archives (Archives Canada, 2009). By 1975, Riley had quit his career position at the Powell River paper mill to seek new opportunities and spend more time outdoors. Although Riley was among the few Simonsen hired without academic credentials, his participation in the Board's regional advisors program, personal attributes, and local knowledge and contacts made up for his lack of coursework in archaeology (Bjorn Simonsen, personal communication 2009).

After some cursory training in May 1976 at the Board offices of the recently rehabilitated St. Anne's Academy in Victoria, Simonsen issued the pair a pickup truck, a 12-foot skiff with a 10 horsepower Chrysler motor, a set of maps, some field gear, and instructions to record as many sites as possible. In keeping with the Board mandate to direct its limited resources to areas of actual or prospective conflict between land modification activities and heritage sites, Simonsen told Steven and Syd to focus their work on the coast — any strips and pockets of relatively flat land that naturally attracted both ancient settlement and recent or prospective industrial and residential development. Both partners recall the sense of adventure in having four months to explore terrain unknown to archaeologists. Steven remembers Simonsen's parting instructions as, "cover as much ground as possible, and submit the report by September 1, because there's no money for you after that" (Acheson, personal communication to Welch July 16, 2009).

Using Syd's home in Powell River's Grief Point neighbourhood as a base of operations, the duo got to work. They launched the boat, found places to land and began walking and recording sites. "My wife did the cooking. We used the rumpus room to store our stuff, covering up our pool table with maps and charts. We usually worked ten days straight, often doing site forms and preparing our weekly reports well into the eve-

nings, then took a four-day break so Steve could head back to his base. . . . It was a good deal” (Riley, personal communication 2009). Syd was captivated by archaeology and used many of his days off to map sites close to his home. Most of those sites have since been damaged or destroyed by construction activities.

Their fieldwork was expeditious. There was no sub-surface probing, so determinations of site boundaries were based on visible features, shell midden, and artifacts. “Steve was the one with the skills and knowledge about how to get the job done. We’d just head out and pick up where we had left off.” (Riley, personal communication 2009). Motoring along the coast from Jervis Inlet to Prideaux Haven (see Figure 2), Steven and Syd used their accumulating experience to find and record sites. “If the landform looked promising because it was flat, close to fresh water, or defensible, we walked it” (Acheson, personal communication 2009). If conditions allowed, they would “leapfrog,” taking turns dropping one another off, driving the boat up the coast, and walking until their partner caught up and left the boat for the other. When the distances between work areas and boat launches became too great to get in a full day’s work, Steven and Syd camped. When the weather turned foul, the camping trips sometimes became impromptu or prolonged. “On one trip out to Nelson Island we had to follow the overhead transmission line to avoid getting lost in the fog. We had an informal quota of six sites per day, which would allow us to finish all the paperwork and get to bed before midnight” (Acheson, personal communication 2009).

Operational details and challenges aside, the bottom line is that the Acheson and Riley surveys were highly successful. In seven total months of fieldwork and report preparation, at a taxpayer cost of less than \$16,000 for salaries, equipment, and supplies, Steven and Syd covered about 500 linear kilometres (~10,000 hectares), recording 298 heritage sites. Their consultations with Joe Mitchell (Hewkin)—in his capacity as the Sliammon chief—and with other local land users established the enduring basis for linking archaeological heritage to regional interests in land use planning, heritage education and tourism, sustainability, and site protection. Syd followed up on the summer projects with an intensive, two-year public archaeology program in the City of Powell River and remains a staunch proponent of heritage education. Steven continues his career in archaeological research and management on the staff of the province’s Archaeology Branch. Our own heritage site identification efforts in the region have confirmed that Steven and Syd accurately located and described the vast majority of the coastal sites. Their model survey will serve indefinitely as a principle regional foundation for heritage site research and stewardship.

Norman Gallagher: Making the Past Present

With substantial complements of Ayahjuthum speakers' intangible and tangible heritage recorded by Rose and Bill and Steven and Syd and their collaborators, it remained for somebody to apply the documentation through preservation advocacy. Motivated by a deep commitment to asserting Sliammon rights to resources and title to Aboriginal lands, Norman Gallagher took on that role with zeal.

Born just north of Lund, at Bliss Landing (Figure 2) in 1938, Norman had first-hand experience with the poor treatment of First Nations by British Columbia and local government officials and the federal residential school system. Norman spent a career in forestry before going to work in the late 1990s as a community and traditional advisor for the Sliammon Treaty Society and serving three terms as a Sliammon Councillor and as a Director with the Sliammon Development Corporation. Concerned that the treaty process was merely the latest in a long string of dead end government overtures, Norman employed an impersonal communication style in professional contexts and was particularly suspicious of consulting archaeologists. He thought their compliance-focused work to clear heritage sites from the path of profit-driven land modification was harmful and regarded their uses of elders' knowledge as more properly handled by First Nations themselves (L. Maynard Harry, personal communication 2009).

Norman's son, Joe Gallagher, served as the Sliammon Band's Chief Treaty Negotiator from 1995 to 2005. Seeking a way to support both his son's work and Hewkin's efforts to complete the traditional use study as the foundation for Sliammon land claims, Norman teamed up with Maynard Harry, the Research Coordinator for the Sliammon Treaty Society from 1995 to 1999 (also Sliammon Councillor, 1998–2002 and 2006–2010; Chief Councillor, 2002–2004). Their job was to apply knowledge available from the traditional land use study and archaeological surveys in analyses of commercial land modification proposals within Sliammon territory. Their work was particularly important in light of Sliammon efforts to reclaim rights and title to land through treaty negotiations and to protect land and resource values from being pre-emptively liquidated or encumbered in advance of treaty settlement.

Norman thus accumulated knowledge and perspective on treaty processes and heritage values, as well as authority to represent Sliammon interests by virtue of his repeated election to the Band Council. His next step was to link this cultural and political knowledge to instruction available through Forest Renewal BC, a provincial program (1994–2002) that provided training support for the forest industry. Forest Renewal BC funded the Sliammon

traditional use study and Norman's participation in workshops on the identification and protection of heritage sites, including culturally modified trees (see Sliammon First Nation 2007). After completing the training workshops, working with Maynard, Jason Francis, and others, Norman conducted inspections of archaeological investigations and proposed land developments in Sliammon territory (Laura Roddan, personal communication 2009).

In reviewing land modification proposals Norman began giving particular attention to those he judged as having a high potential to impinge on the band's treaty-related land claims, heritage sites, or both.

Norm liked to visit project areas, often unannounced, and was good at assessing the presence of heritage sites and aspects of their significance. His interest in archaeology and experience as a logger helped him understand the possible consequences to arch sites from proposed land modifications. Norman could be real tough on one occasion bringing federal or provincial treaty negotiators and consultants to tears. He was a lot less interested in making friends than he was in protecting sites, generating jobs for Sliammon members, and linking the treaty process to archaeological evidence of ancestral use of our territory [L. Maynard Harry, personal communication 2009].

Whether dealing with timber extraction, infrastructure projects, industrial activity, or archaeological research, Norman's position concerning impacts to heritage sites was clear and consistent: "No!" His stance, backed up by the Acheson-Riley surveys and other professional opinions, was that the small percentage of the region's archaeological sites not already damaged should be protected. He asserted this conviction with aggressive advocacy. If a road had to be built, it should go around the site. If culturally modified trees were found in proposed clear cuts, they should be buffered against high winds and left in place. If the conflict between a development proposal and a heritage site was otherwise unavoidable, the site should be respectfully buried by clean fill to protect it (see Walz 2003a). If interpretive and directional signs were needed, these should be placed, unobtrusively, outside of site boundaries.

Norman had zero tolerance for site damage and capitalized on infractions to advance Sliammon interests. During a 2002 inspection of construction activities for the Westview Seawalk in the City of Powell River, Norman and Maynard discovered that the project had damaged a midden and failed to identify or protect nearby petroglyphs and fish traps (Walz 2002). Norman

demanded three significant remedies: (1) consultations among Sliammon, city, and provincial officials; (2) supplemental archaeological studies that he would personally monitor; and (3) substantial Sliammon involvement in Seawalk construction contracts (Walz 2003b). His forceful response overwhelmed the other parties and created a basis for collaboration. As a result, the Sliammon Development Corporation became the manager for the next phase of Seawalk construction (Walz 2003c). The formal, government-to-government Community Accord (Sliammon First Nation and City of Powell River 2003) is acknowledged across Canada as a breakthrough in intergovernmental relations (Walz 2003d). The subsidiary Protocol Agreement on Cultural Heritage Protection and Economic Development (Sliammon First Nation and City of Powell River 2007) guides Sliammon and the city toward protecting heritage sites from land modification and is serving as the basis for expanding regional project reviews (Walz 2004).

These are the sort of results Norman wanted. Constructive relationships with Powell River officials opened Norman to additional partnership discussions. In 2003, as Sliammon and BC Parks began treaty-based deliberations on cooperative land management, Norman started working on heritage site protection with BC Parks area supervisor Derek Poole and, in 2005, with Georgia Combes, the ranger recently reassigned to Desolation Sound Marine Park. Through references to the heritage site degradation documented in the Marine Park by the Acheson-Riley surveys and recent backcountry recreation impact monitoring, Norman argued that provincial management of heritage sites required prompt improvements.

Norman's next step was a set of five field trips in 2005. Although the trips catalyzed unprecedented intergovernmental collaboration to document and assess heritage sites, they proved to be Norman's swan song. During his visit to Walsh Cove (Figure 6) Norman looked both to the past and the future, seeking to grasp his people's previous ways of living with the land and one another, then, in the next moment wondering how heritage would matter for future generations. Perhaps sensing his mortality, the trips provided a context for Norman to convey to Georgia his sense of personal responsibility for protecting the ancestral sites in the region's BC Parks. Norman died that fall.

Norman Gallagher followed in Rose and Bill's footsteps by resisting losses of cultural heritage. He used Steven and Syd's documentation as a tool to demonstrate to municipal and provincial officials that valuable sites were significant landscape features and that these were being rapidly lost and damaged. Norman stepped forward, intervening in destructive and



Figure 6. Norman Gallagher at Walsh Cove (*Sliammon Treaty Society*. Courtesy Georgia Combes, *photographer*).

potentially degrading activities. His actions led to the protection of individual sites, to attitudinal changes on the part of diverse individuals, to institutional and political advances toward positive valuation of heritage sites, and to the more general promotion of respectful consideration of culture and history.

Bearers of Treasured Pasts, Makers of Whole Futures

Five individuals is an admittedly incomplete basis for building theory about personal agency in heritage stewardship. Nonetheless, the profiles illustrate issues and dynamics relevant across the field and invite examinations of the concept of servant leadership (Greenleaf 1977) and of Pinkerton's (1998:378) discussion of community leadership in forest management. Specifically, patterns in the Treasure Bearers' actions and impacts suggest four overlapping characteristics of effective leadership in heritage stewardship: (1) personal identification with heritage; (2) motivation to serve collective interest; (3) credibility in communicating within and across social boundaries; and (4) willingness to act on personal commitments, even in risky situations. We discuss each of these four characteristics as a way to link the three profiles

to one another, to the diverse roles individuals play in heritage stewardship worldwide, and to our ongoing collaborative program of archaeological research, training, and outreach with the Sliammon First Nation. We begin the discussion of each attribute with a general proposition intended to invite and enable comparative analyses and other means for assessment, refinement, or replacement of conditions that favor success in heritage stewardship.

Personal Identification with Heritage

Individuals with personal and familial ties to the landscapes, places, objects, and traditions at issue are more likely to be effective in protecting and perpetuating this heritage than individuals lacking such ties. Rose and Bill Mitchell assumed their leadership roles on the basis of ingrained cultural mandates concerning right ways of thinking, acting, and serving in relationship with their territory and community. Their “embeddedness” in Ayahjuthum speakers’ tangible and intangible heritage, and the respect they received from both inside and outside their communities, naturally promoted them to ir-reproachable leadership roles.

Although Steven Acheson and Syd Riley lacked comparably “deep” familial affinities with the heritage sites they recorded in the mid-1970s, this changed as they spent time in close association with Ayahjuthum speakers’ territory. The quantity and quality of information they produced attests to their personal commitments to the region’s landscapes and places and the transcendence of professional duties. Now in his eighties, Syd continues to live in the region and participate in matters relating to cultural and biophysical heritage conservation; Steven recalls his summers there as seminal career highpoints and makes return visits almost every year.

Norman Gallagher made it clear to everyone he contacted during his career in heritage stewardship that the issues, objects, sites, and lands under discussion were deeply personal to him. His use of first person pronouns (“I,” “We”) and references to “our ancestors” contributed to his success in changing ingrained attitudes, in protecting individual sites, in developing heritage policies, in aligning divergent interests, and in setting the stage for additional successes. Bill, Rose, Norman, and others provided models and blazed trails that younger members of the Ayahjuthum speakers’ First Nations are following. Although counter examples undoubtedly exist, our observations provide support for widespread preferences for training and promoting community members instead of hiring outsiders to staff heritage stewardship programs and projects (see Nicholas 2010).

Motivation to Serve Collective Interest

Individuals who set aside personal interests or link such concerns to communal heritage goals are more likely to attract support for their agenda. None of the Treasure Bearers profiled here used their participation in heritage stewardship to advance narrowly defined personal interests. None received substantial or undue financial rewards. All lived or continue to live modest lives. All gave at least as much as they received. The colleagues and friends who know them best describe them as humble and attentive to others' needs and interests. Rose and Bill were true servant leaders (Greenleaf 1977), endlessly giving of their time, knowledge and culture to community causes ranging from provisioning individuals and families to negotiating with officials at all levels of government. Steven and Syd were employed to do a specific job, to be sure. But their noteworthy efficiency and effectiveness, as well as the respect they offered First Nations and their heritage sites, signal their understanding of their work as an essential foundation for safeguarding and learning from shared heritage. For his part, Norman was successful because he embraced both his indigenous birthright and hard-nosed business experience, as well as the province's non-indigenous heritage site conservation systems and rules. His integration of these diverse sources to secure greater respect and protection for Ayahjuthum speakers' territorial and cultural heritage became the basis not only for site protection, but for collaborative relationships between people and communities.

Credibility in Communicating within and across Social Boundaries

Individuals possessing the recognized authority and requisite skills to share knowledge and perspective within their social group—and who are then trusted and endorsed, implicitly or explicitly, to represent collective interests to external parties—are more likely to achieve success in heritage stewardship than those who lack communicative credibility, skill, or both. Individuals can and do make differences in carrying forward treasured elements of heritage, but they are seldom able to do so alone. The Treasure Bearers described here not only displayed uncommon personal commitments, but also deployed effective skills as culture brokers by forming potent and enduring partnerships based on common interests and candid communication across significant social boundaries (Downum and Price 1999). They created and sustained networks of individuals and groups who shared their goals

and perspectives and made specific commitments to desired futures. Perhaps more significantly, they inspired others — including many with whom they had little or no contact — to pursue heritage stewardship.

Rose and Bill were trained by their upbringing to serve their people, the Ayahjuthum speakers. Somewhat ironically, they emerged as prominent leaders by virtue of the external recognition they received from elected representatives of other First Nations, of neighboring municipalities, and of British Columbia. In a similar vein, Steven and Syd's uncontested professional credibility among colleagues in archaeology was and is fundamental to the common and widely acknowledged use of their reports in regional and project planning, treaty negotiations, and our collaboration with the Sliammon First Nation. As duly designated First Nations representatives, Bill Mitchell and Norman Gallagher used their offices to expand their influence and pursue their constituents' interests through innovative means, including service in the criminal justice system (Bill) and heritage site monitoring and heritage service contracting (Norman). All five of the Treasure Bearers were and are gifted communicators and tacticians who deployed their personal attributes and interpersonal skills for the greater good.

Willingness to Act on Personal Commitments, even in Risky Situations

Individuals who pursue communal interests in the face of uncertainty and even jeopardy are more likely to be effective leaders than those who attempt to substitute good ideas and best intentions for courageous action (for a study of bravery that was ultimately unsuccessful, see Silverman 2009). This characteristic boils down to principle-driven action in the face of adversity and potentially harmful consequences. Rose and Bill stand out not only because of their immense knowledge, generous sharing, and long lives, but because they applied their cultural precepts and principles during a historical period in which it was dangerous to do so. Everybody who was paying attention understood the fine line that Rose and Bill walked; stories of Native people who had been jailed, beaten, or otherwise punished for asserting their culture were widely shared (Cole and Chaikin 1990; Xwi7wa Library 2009). The fact that none successfully challenged these two venerable community representatives — and that Rose and Bill lived in accord with their cultural training — made it safer and easier for their successors to reclaim their heritage, a truth that has greatly benefitted our collaborative program (Rigney 2003).

The social stakes may not have been as high for Steven and Syd, but the risks they faced while navigating a dangerous coast were nonetheless real. Steven lost his footing and took a nasty tumble off a rock ledge. Their work required personal commitments of ingenuity, integrity, and industry. It yielded not only data, but also abiding self-confidence and expansive capacity for follow-up work.

Norman Gallagher was cruising through his retirement when duty and conscience summoned him to service. His interest was not in heritage per se, but in using heritage as a means to advance the causes espoused by the people he most cared about. He found in heritage site conservation policy and practice a series of opportunities for building reasonable and meaningful outcomes in treaty negotiations. Norman seems to have made a strategic decision to revitalize links between Ayahjuthum speakers' territories, cultural heritage, and land claims and to make these into "actionable" realities. Norman went above and beyond normal duty to acquire the legal, conceptual, and factual tools required to halt heritage site damage. His work has led to greater respect for all cultural heritage and to central roles for coastal First Nations in the stewardship of their heritage sites. Our own collaboration with Sliammon owes much to Norman's leadership in demonstrating that involvement in heritage stewardship could yield economic and political benefits, as well as cultural and educational advances.

Concluding Thoughts

Regardless of specific motivations or tactics, the preserved and remembered pasts and the policies and practices we use to manage heritage exist because of the efforts of individual leaders and their partners (see also Nicholas 2010). In the wake of changes to the Canadian legal frameworks for land and resource management, treaty negotiations and related efforts to transcend colonial impositions through ecological and cultural system conservation are actively determining the future of heritage in British Columbia (Buddwa 2005; Klassen et al. 2009).

Rose and Bill Mitchell left not only a body of data that continues to be harnessed in community and scholarly projects, but vital and loving groups of family and friends that continue to live and perpetuate what they inherited from Rose, Bill, and other benefactors. The documentation compiled by Steven and Syd remains integral to research, preservation, and intergovernmental processes more than three decades later. Their personal and professional lives continue to focus on heritage matters and to have beneficial effects radiating outwards from their vast knowledge. Norman will long be

remembered as a guy who stepped out of the shadows and made personal the requirements for development projects to comply with customary as well as provincial laws and leave heritage sites undisturbed wherever possible. His advocacy has been institutionalized in formal agreements and the ample good will and respect that exists between the Sliammon Band and local governments, especially the City of Powell River.

Future generations will determine, through judgment and action, whether these Treasure Bearers' efforts matter in the long run. Did their contributions and sacrifices lead the way to continuing respectful use, enjoyment, and perpetuation of the heritage they cherished and carried forward? Will Ayahjuthum speakers and their descendants reestablish customary knowledge and practice as foundations for taking care of their territories, one another, and their neighbors? In these terms, our final conclusion is that although individuals necessarily serve as the primary agents of heritage stewardship, "it is not enough merely to identify individual events and persons" (Hodder 2000:26). Individuals and their personal preferences, values and crusades are the ultimate sources for all institutions, including heritage policy, but opportunities exist to identify and analyze the factors and dynamics affecting individual and group impacts in heritage stewardship. These profiles tell a few of the untold stories and recognize a few unrecognized successes in heritage stewardship. However, if we are serious about just and appropriate heritage management then much of our attention must be fixed upon management in general. More specifically, we see the need for concerted study of *personal contexts* — the social structures and processes that give rise to individual leadership and collaborations — as well as *collective consequences*, a term that refers to the power of heritage to inspire, unite, and guide.

Every human possesses personal proclivities and shared cultural heritage that steer the choices we make and the commitments we affirm. Today, as we engage a future that promises unprecedented social and ecological challenges, there will never be a better time for greater and more deliberate attention to what should be carried forward and to the learning, teaching, and acting required to bear this treasure. In this spirit we offer the five Treasure Bearers' works and the four characteristics of effective heritage leadership as initial models and guides for study, strategic commitment and passionate action.

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Notes

1. We use *heritage stewardship* in lieu of *heritage management* to emphasize constructive, community-based protection and sustainable use of cultural and biophysical legacies as alternatives to extractive, top-down approaches. Local, academic, and public policy alignments that perpetuate heritage places, landscapes, and tangible-intangible associations provide people with senses of orientation, identity, and ancestor-descendant relationship, as well as food and shelter. “Stewardship” and “management” perpetuate potentially problematic notions of human dominion, but our preferred term at least leaves open possibilities for reciprocal relationships across generational and species boundaries.
2. The term *Ayahjuthum* (*ʔayʔadjuθəm* or *ʔAyjuθəm*, “the speakers” or “talk the language”) (Davis 1970; Czaykowska-Higgins and Kinkade 1998:64; Kennedy

and Bouchard 1983) is a language-based referent for the three, closely related, Northern Coast Salish First Nations — Sliammon, Klahoose and Homalco (Washington 2004). This designation is used in lieu of the more common “Mainland Comox” because the latter, is “an anglicization of a Kwakwala term . . . [that] has caused and continues to cause much confusion, particularly because most of the Indian people now living at Comox are descendants of Kwakwala-speaking groups” (Kennedy and Bouchard 1983:23, 1990).

3. For at least two reasons, First Nations children raised by their grandparents are particularly potent forces in cultural heritage protection and perpetuation. First, the senior generations that assumed these rearing responsibilities tended to possess the knowledge, self-confidence, and pride in cultural identity required to resist external domination. Second, those who avoided residential schools themselves often sought to shelter youngsters from the experience. This they did by protecting children under their care from schools, by providing them with culturally based educations, and by encouraging them to think and act critically in relation to Western institutions in general and residential schools in particular.
4. Shifts in political winds and provincial budgets — coupled with lack of consensus among avocational archaeologists, academic archaeologists, consulting archaeologists, and First Nations representatives — doomed the Archaeological Sites Advisory Board and led the British Columbia government to restrict involvement in the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage to reactive, compliance-focused permitting of archaeological site alterations.

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