



Salish Spirit

By Noel Brown
Of the Snuneymuxw First Nation

Long ago there were no divisions between humans, animals and spirits. All things of the earth, sky and water were connected and all beings could pass freely between them. The salmon people, the kindest of them all, would pass through our village each season and leave their bodies behind to feed the humans, birds and animal people. They then would return to the oceans without their bodies and when they reached their homes their forms would look just like human beings, and their homes would look like the villages of our people.

We change forms to help one another. To honour and respect this cycle we always return the bones and body parts back to the sea, to respect these salmon people. We respect these swimming people because of their kindness, determination and courage. They also bring the healing powers to the villages. Eagles are a source of spiritual power and wisdom that bring help, peace of mind and heart to communities. Long ago, elders sighted eagles soaring over the harbour and Jack's Point. This was a sign, telling the people of the village that salmon were coming to feed the people in our times of need, eagles would come forward to tell us to prepare for the coming of the salmon people.

It is extraordinary that these same eagles flew over and looked onto the ground-breaking of the cruise ship terminal, during the blessing by former Chief Viola Wyse in October, 2008.

Together, eagles and salmon symbolizes that we are all connected and dependent on one another. If we come together, like the eagle and salmon, we too will have a deeper understanding that will help us building strong healthy and prosperous futures.