



B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Breast Cancer Awareness a Must for First Nations](#)

[Land Stewardship Training for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native Images Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New Mexico Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

Campbell River First Nation becoming first-class landlord/developer

by Lyse Cantin

An international port facility might soon complement the Campbell River First Nation's existing commercial harbour.

In business, the key to success is more often than not a never-ending quest. How do you ensure a business venture will stand the ravages of a free-enterprise market system and still net back some decent returns? Take one very sophisticated Campbell River First Nation. Add one sound and experienced joint venture partner. Market the whole concept at an international forum, et voil.! It all adds up to the Discovery Harbour Shopping Centre.



Artist's conception of the Campbell River First Nation's Discovery Harbour Shopping Centre proposal.



The Discovery Harbour Shopping

Centre arose from the vision of late past Chief Bill Roberts and his son, Tony Roberts, who followed in his father's footsteps as chief of the Campbell River First Nation for 14 years. The vision took life in the hands of the First Nation's Business Manger, Robert Duncan, who has stick-handled the project over the last four years to see it finally

come to fruition this summer.

"A 1981 master land agreement originally helped create a 32-acre piece of reclaimed land," says Duncan. "We got the land in exchange for a piece that was taken from the reserve to build the new Island Highway." An additional 20 acres of reserve land held as leasehold land makes up the balance of the 52-acre development site.

Located within the Campbell River city limits, the development site backs onto the existing band-owned 460-birth marina and fronts on the Island Highway - an ideal high-profile location with easy access for locals and tourists.

"We're going to have approximately 420,000 square feet of retail space in the main mall including banks, restaurants, marina pub and a Native market. We also have a mix of other tenants who will be occupying free-standing buildings and the junior strip." Site preparation for the mall is under way, and anchor tenants including Zellers, Canadian Tire and Superstore are looking forward to moving into their new locations.

And so is the district. The Campbell River First Nation donated six acres on the south end of the property to the District of Campbell River. "District planners are proposing to build a new civic centre on three acres and the balance of the six acres will be a shared parking area co-managed with the Campbell River First Nation," says Duncan.

The civic centre will be built next to the hotel and convention centre. Plans are also in place for an eighty-unit condo development and the junior strip located across the highway from the major development itself is already under construction.

"To my knowledge, there is no other project like this anywhere else in Canada," explains Duncan. "Fifty percent of this development is built on reserve land and fifty percent is built off reserve on land owned by the Band's company. In many ways, this is a model project in that we've had to find ways to make all the zoning bylaws and guidelines apply to both lands."

According to Duncan, almost half of the First Nation's 500 members are eligible for employment. "Discovery Harbour Shopping Centre and the hotel will be creating about 1000 new jobs in the area," says Duncan. "Several of our anchors have committed to training programs for First Nations people. Canada Employment and Immigration has also already sponsored a couple of training programs in preparation for the new job opportunities."

According to a justifiably proud Robert Duncan, "What the Campbell River First Nation is ending up with in this phase of the development is ownership and management of fifty percent of a project worth over \$100 million - a project that expands past the boundaries of the reserve."

Resting at last, this fallen Nootka Island sentinel pays silent tribute to the Mowachaht people it has guarded for more than 65 years from its post near the original settlement of Friendly Cove. On June 15, 1996, the Mowachaht/ Muchalaht First Nation celebrated the opening of its new community, Tsaxana, 3 km. north of Gold River, British Columbia.



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



DREAMSPEAKER

B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Campbell River
First Nation becoming first-class landlord/
developer](#)

[Breast Cancer
Awareness a Must
for First Nations](#)

[Land Stewardship Training
for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native Images Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New Mexico Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

Breast Cancer Awareness a Must for First Nations

by Jacqueline Davis

My name is Jacqueline Davis. I am a Cree from Peguis Reserve, Manitoba. A divorced mother of three grown sons and two grandchildren, all of whom live back east. I moved to Vancouver in 1981 to work as a nursing aid in local hospitals. I had many changes in my life. I returned to upgrade my skills at the Native Education Centre here in Vancouver, and then transferred on to Langara College to pursue a career in the medical field. My dream is to become a registered nurse so that I can work with and help Native people.



While I attended the Native Education Centre, I was diagnosed with diabetes type II. As I was beginning to accept and live with diabetes, one year later, I got the most terrible news. I was diagnosed with breast cancer.

After hearing the words "breast cancer" my thoughts were - am I going to die? From then on, everything moved pretty fast, like having mastectomy surgery, chemotherapy treatments and reconstruction. It was like I was outside my body watching this woman battling for her life against an enemy who's trying to eat her up. Then

I had this abundance of strength. I was going to fight. This crab-like monster wasn't going to snuff out my life so easily. I had to take a life-threatening situation and make the best of it, and I did.

I do volunteer work with the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, B.C. Chapter, Education Committee as a qualified breast self-examination instructor; the Canadian Cancer Society's Breast Cancer Visitors Program (formerly the Reach to Recovery Program), where I visit newly-diagnosed Native women or other women; B.C./Yukon Breast Cancer Information Projects Panel, learning about new and up-to-date information and what's the best way to get it to my people.

I chose to work in breast cancer education because I want to bring breast health and awareness education to Native women. Since my diagnosis I have come to realize the need for this education among First Nations women.

I founded the First Nations Breast Cancer Society (FNBCS) in July 1995. I felt that if Native women had a place where they could go for breast cancer information, that was run by other breast cancer women or Native women, that they would come out and support the society. The society works in conjunction with other cancer agencies all sharing and bringing breast cancer information to First Nations women.

With the help of the Canadian Cancer Society I was able to form a First Nations Breast Cancer Support Group specifically for Native women who are diagnosed with the disease. It is a self-help group run by myself and other Native breast cancer survivors.

Recently, with assistance from Health Canada, the First Nations Breast Cancer Society and the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, B.C. Chapter, completed *Echoes of the Sisters - First Nations Women: Breast Cancer*, a documentary that uses Native breast cancer survivors telling their own stories and delivering the important awareness message to practice breast self-examination, have yearly mammograms and checkups and practice a healthy lifestyle. Early detection is the best protection.

I hope that the "visual" nature of the message in *Echoes of the Sisters*, will reach many First Nations women on and off reserve. It will save lives for generations to come.

The video will be broadcast on the Knowledge Network this fall, and plans are underway to have it aired across Canada on CBC North. A copy of *Echoes of the Sisters*, accompanied by a full-colour poster and an 18-page resource booklet, has already been sent free of charge to all 604 First Nations in Canada. First Nations communities can order additional copies of the video for \$45 each from the First Nations Breast Cancer Society at the address given at the end of this article.

I hope all Aboriginal people in Canada will support the FNBCS and its educational and support programs by purchasing the video or making a donation. This is a very important project. I know that breast cancer education and awareness are not reaching our people, so I hope to make a difference. Our people must know that breast cancer is not prejudiced - it's not proud in who it attacks, and it's not only a white person's disease - it's everyone's disease.

For more information about the First Nations Breast Cancer Society, contact our office in room D-311 of the B.C. Women's Hospital and Health Centre, 4500 Oak Street, Vancouver, B.C., V6H 3N1; tel: (604) 875-3677; fax: (604) 875-2445. For information about the First Nations Breast Cancer Support Group contact me, Jacqueline, at (604) 876-0675.



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Campbell River
First Nation becoming first-class
landlord/
developer](#)

[Breast Cancer
Awareness a Must
for First Nations](#)

[Land Stewardship Training
for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native Images Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New Mexico
Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

Land Stewardship Training for First Nations

by Martha Reeve and Bessie Brown

Over the last few years, First Nations have identified an increasing need for land stewardship expertise to deal with developments taking place on their land and traditional territories. Contributing to this need is the court's decision in the Delgamuukw case that requires that a First Nation be consulted on issues that may affect its ability to carry on traditional activities, says Richard Frizell, Director, Lands and Trusts Services, B.C. Region. "That need is becoming even more urgent as we move towards a post-treaty environment."

Karl Morgan, Tsawwassen First Nation carver, celebrated National Aboriginal Day June 21 by demonstrating his carving skills at the BC Tel Phone Mart in Richmond.

To support First Nations in addressing this growing need, DIAND is promoting the development of a Land Stewardship Training Initiative (LSTI). "The initiative stems from the federal government's commitment to support



FirstNation self-government and the ongoing need for training and capacity building," says Frizell.

The LSTI is intended to strengthen First Nations' expertise in land-use planning and resource management, including the ability to initiate land and resource management processes and respond to provincial referrals. "It's essential that DIAND proactively support initiatives that enhance the professional capacity of First Nations to assume legal stewardship responsibilities." adds Frizell.

Currently, the Land Management Training Program (LMTP) available to First Nations from DIAND is limited to technical aspects of processing legal documents for land transactions on reserves and environmental awareness related to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, related to delegated authorities under the Indian Act. Other programs currently offered through colleges and universities in the area of First Nations land and resource management lack a comprehensive approach.

However, Frizell says that the LSTI will reflect a holistic, community-oriented approach to land and resource management and the program will have post-secondary accreditation. He notes that the LSTI program will provide communities with the skills to look at a wide range of activities and related proposals, such as natural gas development projects or submissions to spray lands because of beetle infestations.

The participation of First Nations in the design of the LSTI program is critical if it is to be successful, Frizell emphasizes. "Our preliminary discussions with First Nations have confirmed their interest in pursuing the LSTI." He reports that more than 60 percent of B.C. First Nations have already expressed interest in the initiative.

According to Frizell, the plan is to have a First Nations Advisory Committee (FNAC) in place by September 1996, to work on the design and development of the program. Once the FNAC has decided on the general nature and content of the program, other related issues will be addressed (e.g., content of each module, delivery methods and location, program administration). The first of two pilot programs, each to have 25 people, is to be in place by January 1997.



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Campbell River
First Nation becoming
first-class landlord/
developer](#)

[Breast Cancer
Awareness a Must
for First Nations](#)

[Land Stewardship Training
for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native
Images Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations
Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New
Mexico Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal
Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

Trapping the Future

by *Jolayne Madden-Marsh*

The T'Sou-ke First Nation is reclaiming a part of its heritage by reviving the abandoned practice of trapping salmon in large nets for the purpose of acquiring fish for food, societal and ceremonial purposes.

The T'Sou-ke First Nation people used a reef net, or SXOLE, years ago, and a pile-secured salmon trap later, before decreased fishing times, increased operating costs and the development of the modern seine fleet made it necessary to discontinue its use in 1958. The new trap is named "Glung-Us", in memory of the last T'Sou-ke chief to fish with a reef net at their traditional territory of Sooke, a small community 64 km west of Victoria, British Columbia.

The trap was designed and tested in the flume tank at the Marine Institute of the Memorial University of Newfoundland. While there, the T'Sou-ke people hired some local fishers and brought them to Sooke as consultants on the project, because of their experience with similar fish traps, specifically the east coast cod trap.

There are vast advantages to using these traps over using drift nets or gill nets. The trap allows fish to remain alive until harvest or release,



which, in turn, enables harvesting of top condition, or "ocean bright", fish. Since the traps are in a fixed location, they can be used for stock assessment, tagging and monitoring. The traps are a renewable product, able to be used year after year, with only minor repairs to any section which needs it.

Another great benefit of this trap is that it will allow the First Nation's people to begin fishing in their traditional territory again, employing people from their own community. Currently they are meeting their fish needs by hiring a seine boat which does not fish in their territory and does not employ any T'Sou-ke people. David Mannix, T'Sou-ke forestry consultant, says use of the trap will create about 12 new jobs. He also mentioned that there has been discussion regarding patenting the design of Glung-Us. "There is interest from other Native bands. They're watching what we're doing," remarks Mannix.

The trap net is a funny-looking contraption. It is large, about 35 fathoms long, and about 12 fathoms at its widest point. (To all landlubbers: a fathom is the length from fingertip to fingertip of an average man's outstretched arms, or six feet.) It has four distinct sections called the diamond, the heart, the pot and the spiller. The fish swim up along a very long section of lead net, which encourages them right into the first section of the trap, the diamond.

Gordon Curry, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans officer who worked with the T'Sou-ke First Nation on this project, explained it this way. "The salmon tend to swim against the current when trapped and, when further guided by deflecting panels, the fish swim through funnel-shaped openings into the heart, pot and spiller. This style of trap net only fishes on the flood tide so when the tide changes, the entrance into the spiller is closed to prevent the catch from escaping."

There is a great deal of concern about the state of the west coast fisheries, both by those inside and outside of the fishing industry. Conservation and revitalization of west coast salmon stocks are a priority of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and the T'Sou-ke First Nation's new "old" approach to harvesting salmon will allow fishers to contribute to the revitalization of weak salmon stocks while harvesting from strong, sustainable stocks.



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



DREAMSPEAKER

B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Campbell River
First Nation becoming first-class landlord/
developer](#)

[Breast Cancer
Awareness a Must
for First Nations](#)

[Land Stewardship Training
for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native Images Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New Mexico Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

People Feast

by Lyse Cantin

**Bannock mogul and proud owner of
Liliget Feast House, Dolly Watts**

If you want to check out something apart from the ordinary, be transformed into another world, all you have to do is descend a few short steps from street level and enter one of Vancouver's most welcoming rooms. Warm orange cedar tables and benches greet your arrival. Drum-heavy background music inspires the beat of your heart. Carefully selected First Nations art adorns the walls of a room reminiscent of a traditional long house. The perfect balance between reflection and simple comfort awaits you. You have arrived at Liliget Feast House.



Liliget is Gitxsan meaning the place where people feast. And people are what Dolly Watts, restaurant owner, is all about. She knows what pleases people and their palates. Watts opened Liliget Feast House late last August and business has been great. The restaurant specializes in alder-barbecued items such as salmon, oysters, mussels, prawns and venison, served with wild rice, steamed ferns and sweet potato. All meals start with a basket of warm bannock.

Watts credits her start in the catering and restaurant business to her love affair with the quintessential First Nations soul food - bannock. When she was completing

her studies in anthropology at the University of British Columbia, she started selling the Indian bread to pay for her tuition and books. "I did a fundraiser to help some of the kids fund a trip. In that first week, I made \$1,500." In that first year, Watts and her newly-acquired staff made 11,000 pieces of bannock per month, all by hand - no small feat considering she was still in school full time.

Watts openly shares the trials and tribulations she has faced as a small business owner. "It's been hard work, and it still is. The catering business is very competitive but I have really good people working for me now, so that helps."

Even though Watts has been operating a successful catering company for several years, it didn't help her when it came to negotiating with banks to buy the restaurant.

"We tried," she says, "but they really didn't want anything to do with us, even though we already had a successful business and some cash for renovations and start-up costs. The restaurant business is on their 'high risk' list."

So when it came time to buy Liliget, formerly known as Quilicum, Watts thought she would join up with her son and they'd go it on their own. "We approached our family and friends for help on the financing. We opened our doors quietly on August 26th last year because we really weren't prepared - we had no experience. That first day, we were run off our feet. We even had to send customers across the street to a pub while they waited for a table. To make matters worse, our electronic credit card point-of-sale machine did not arrive on time. We wrote the bills by hand."

Things have continued at the same hectic pace since. Watts spends sixteen hours a day, every day, at the restaurant and filling catering orders. "I got lucky this year. I got three days off for Christmas."

More exciting new prospects are on the horizon for Watts. She is starting another venture with a local bread supplier. Together, the two are finding ways to produce machine-made bannock. Trial runs have been successful and Dolly has already seen her recipe roll off the production line.

The future possibilities for Watts's catering and restaurant operations are astounding. Even without automation, Watts and her crew produced 450,000 pieces of bannock last year - all by hand! And, spurred by renewed awareness of First Nations culture, it's a good bet that Liliget promises to succeed where other restaurants have failed.

To help ensure her own success, Watts and her friend, Beverley O'Neil of O'Neil Marketing Consultants, have recently started the Aboriginal Business Club for Aboriginal entrepreneurs, consultants and business people. The group meets at Liliget Feast House to listen to a guest speaker and enjoy an early morning breakfast. The focus? What else - sharing successful business strategies and networking.

Certainly, when it comes to business, Dolly Watts knows her stuff. "Perseverance will get you there. Never give up," says Watts. "If something or someone stands in the way, find another way." If it worked for her, she says, it can work for you - you can take that to the bannock.



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Campbell River
First Nation becoming first-class landlord/
developer](#)

[Breast Cancer
Awareness a Must
for First Nations](#)

[Land Stewardship Training
for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native Images Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New Mexico Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

Healing our Spirit

by Bessie Brown

The 11th Annual Conference on AIDS held in Vancouver recently illustrated that First Nations communities in B.C. and the rest of Canada are in the midst of a war against the spread of HIV/AIDS.

"Communities are still struggling to come to terms with HIV/AIDS. That struggle not only includes accepting that HIV/AIDS are a reality in many communities, but it also involves supporting community members who are HIV positive or have AIDS," says Rod George.

George, a co-chief administrator of Healing Our Spirit (HOS) B.C. First Nations AIDS Society, says the society was formed to provide HIV/AIDS education to Aboriginal communities throughout B.C.

The founders of HOS, Leonard Johnston and Frederick Haineault, recognized the need for HIV/AIDS education and prevention work in First Nations communities, George says. "They wanted to prevent and reduce the spread of HIV in Aboriginal communities by using traditional holistic approaches to healing the physical, emotional, and mental aspects of being. This holistic healing is represented by the Circle of Healing where everyone is part of the circle, including people with HIV and AIDS. Communities in balance keep the circle strong by working together in caring, supporting, and healing."

But just how prevalent HIV/AIDS are in communities isn't clear yet. In January of this year, Health Canada said that the number of AIDS cases among Aboriginals in Canada has increased more than sevenfold since 1990, jumping to 176 last year from 24. The numbers are

considered relatively low, and most of the people close to the AIDS scene believe they represent only the tip of the iceberg, since testing in remote communities is rare.

But whether that figure is high or low is a moot point, according to George. "What's clear is the need for education and prevention work in First Nations communities throughout B.C. and that's what Healing Our Spirit is doing. The primary vehicle through which services are delivered is workshops."

The workshops are planned in consultation with community representatives. George says all the information discussed in the workshops is delivered clearly, lots of straight talk without jargon. Typically, a workshop will explain how HIV is spread, and how, when, why and where to get tested. "They will know how to protect themselves, how to dispel fear, where to go for help, and understand and support a person who is affected by HIV/AIDS," George says. Each workshop also includes a guest speaker who is HIV positive.

As well as providing education and prevention workshops Healing Our Spirit provides a rent subsidy program which provides a limited number of rent subsidies for HIV positive people who are living in the Lower Mainland. "This project ensures that 10 qualified society members may stay in their homes and not have to spend more than one-third of their income on housing."

George says HOS is an organization in transition and growth. "The workshops are being revised and redesigned to better meet the needs of our communities and to stay abreast of the rapidly changing nature of HIV/AIDS."

HOS is staffed by an eight-person team and governed by a volunteer seven-member Board of Directors who are elected at an Annual General Meeting. "The staff are capably assisted by a cadre of volunteers who, through their generosity and enthusiasm, drive the organization," George says.

The challenge facing First Nations communities is simple, according to George. "We must work together to help ourselves, and our children, lead healthier lives. We believe that shared information is shared responsibility. As First Nations people we must work together to promote health and wellness in our communities."



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



DREAMSPEAKER

B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Campbell River
First Nation becoming first-class landlord/
developer](#)

[Breast Cancer
Awareness a Must
for First Nations](#)

[Land Stewardship Training
for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native Images Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New Mexico Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

HOS Speaker's Bureau

by Allan M.

One of the programs of *Healing Our Spirits* B.C. First Nations AIDS Society is the Speaker's Bureau. We believe that the communities must hear the firsthand experience of people who are directly affected by HIV and AIDS. The Speaker's Bureau comprises volunteers who tell their stories of prejudice, hurt, shame, recovery of dignity, healing, and hope for the future. The speakers put a human face on the grim statistics of the infection rate and tragic consequences of HIV/AIDS in a compassionate, humorous, and non-judgemental way.

The following is a brief excerpt from the story of one of our speakers.

"My name is Allan M. and I was diagnosed as HIV positive in 1984 just before Christmas. I was absolutely devastated when the doctor made the announcement to me; it was like receiving a death sentence. I despaired and thought about ending my life by stepping out in front of a bus, but some small voice inside me stopped me from carrying through.

I didn't want my life to end like that, so I resolved to make the best life I could for myself. I set about building my own network of support of family and friends to help me cope as there were very few resources around at the time for people like me. There was no *Healing Our Spirits*. I have come a long way since that fateful day in December.

I first heard about *Healing Our Spirit* about three years ago when I signed up for the rent subsidy program administered by *Healing Our Spirits*. Shortly after getting

on the rent subsidy program, I heard about the Speaker's Bureau from a great friend, as well as from one of the employees from Healing Our Spirit. Both of them encouraged me to get involved, and I started volunteering in February 1995. Since then, I have done a lot of travelling and sharing my story with people throughout British Columbia.

I volunteered primarily to help dispel some of the myths and fears about HIV/AIDS by sharing my story with our people, especially the youth and the elders. When I say the youth it may be self-evident why. The reason why I say the elders is because we consider them to be our teachers, and if they don't know much about HIV/AIDS, then they are not able to assist us in passing along the appropriate teachings. I firmly believe that elders are an important part of remedying the situation.

The Speaker's Bureau has given me the opportunity to carry a message of hope, to live and never give up, despite the seemingly overwhelming odds. I feel great to be carrying the message and role modelling someone living life to its fullest. Today, I do not feel alone or depressed about being HIV positive, but I do sometimes feel sorrow for those who don't understand what living with this virus is all about. For those Aboriginal brothers and sisters who might be positive who will read this, I want to encourage you to reach out for help and to not be afraid. To our communities who have welcomed me, thank you for giving me the privilege of sharing my story with you."



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Campbell River
First Nation becoming first-class landlord/
developer](#)

[Breast Cancer
Awareness a Must
for First Nations](#)

[Land Stewardship Training
for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native Images Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New Mexico Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

HIV/AIDS FACTS

What is HIV?

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is widely believed to be the cause of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). HIV infection slowly breaks down the body's immune system, making it susceptible to a variety of other illnesses.

What is AIDS?

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. It's the advanced stage of illness believed to be caused by HIV.

How does someone get infected with HIV?

There are several ways a person can become infected with HIV:

- through unprotected sexual intercourse, both vaginal and anal;
- by sharing injection needles and syringes;
- from a woman with HIV infection to her baby, before, during or after birth through breast-feeding; or
- through HIV-infected blood transfusions or blood products received prior to 1986. Since then, all blood donations in Canada have been screened for the virus.

HIV is NOT spread by:

- casual contact such as hugging, kissing, shaking hands;
- via toilets, drinking cups, water fountains, clothing, food or insects; or
- spending time with an HIV-infected person or AIDS sufferer.

The Facts about HIV/AIDS:

- Heterosexual, as well as homosexual, women and men can get HIV/AIDS.
- About one in five Canadians with AIDS is between the ages of 20 and 29, and probably caught HIV as a teenager.

For more information call:

Healing Our Spirit
B.C. First Nations AIDS Society
102 - 1193 Kingsway
Vancouver, B.C.
V5V 3C9
Tel: (604) 879-0906
Fax: (604) 879-1690



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Campbell River
First Nation becoming first-class landlord/
developer](#)

[Breast Cancer
Awareness a Must
for First Nations](#)

[Land Stewardship Training
for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native Images Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New Mexico Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

Tattoo Artistry at Native Images Tattoo

by Bessie Brown

**For Percy Lemaigre - owner of
Native Images Tattoo in Vancouver -
crossing his arms makes a fashion
statement.**



Last spring I decided I wanted a tattoo. I saw a young man with a tattoo of a killer whale on his leg and was quite impressed with the work. So, despite all the warnings I had received about never going to tattoo "parlors" I headed for Native Images Tattoo on Commercial Drive in Vancouver.

As my friends and I walked through the door of Native Images I felt a little anxious. I took one look at Native Image owner Percy Lemaigre and felt very anxious.

Percy was sitting behind a small counter. He looked just like I thought a tattoo artist would look - kind of intimidating in his sleeveless T-shirt and haircut. His arms were covered with tattoos and he was wearing a lot of necklaces and earrings. On that particular day his voice sounded really, really BIG.

I looked through the photo albums of all the tattoos that Percy had done. All very impressive and, besides, who would tell him otherwise.

The 31-year-old has seen a lot of skin over the last few years. He is a 15-year-veteran of the tattoo trade and has

helped drag the art out of the grungy parlor and into the bigger, brighter and more profitable 1990s. "Everything I've learned has been self-taught - I've never taken any art courses or anything like that."

Percy has come a long way since he left his hometown in northern Saskatchewan.

Like a lot of us Percy was given a map and not a road to follow when he was growing up. He took a lot of detours and by his own admission he took some wrong turns. But Percy says he always knew where he would end up. "I didn't know how it would happen but I always knew I'd end up working as a tattoo artist."

After working at several tattoo shops Percy decided the only way to go was to start his own business. "I just walked into a couple of banks and asked for a loan. I thought hey I'm a nice guy why wouldn't they want to loan me some money."

Well the banks had several reasons why they wouldn't loan Percy the money. "It was only then I realized that I would need to find someone who had money. In the end my mother-in-law put in some money and I was able to get a loan. Without that kind of help I couldn't have opened the shop."

Today Percy owns the shop lock, stock and barrel. "It feels pretty good to own the place. I never thought I would ever own a business."

Since he opened Native Images Percy has created almost 1,300 tattoos. While he specializes in West Coast Native images only 10 to 20 percent of his clients are First Nations people. "It's a market that hasn't really been tapped yet."

Most of his customers heard about Native Images through word of mouth. "Others have seen my work in tattoo magazines."

These days Percy says a lot more professionals are coming in for tattoos. "I see a lot more lawyers, nurses, and doctors than I used to."

He also sees a lot more young people than he used to. Bob, a cook in his early twenties, tells Percy he wants a tiger tattoo. He says having a tattoo has become the

equivalent of wearing an earring. "It's not so unusual now. Almost everyone I know either has a tattoo or is considering getting a tattoo."

The walls of Native Images are covered with art. "It looks more like a museum than a tattoo place. I wanted to make people feel comfortable when they come here."

Relatively few of his customers are concerned about health and safety issues related to tattooing, Percy said. "For those who do ask, I tell them I use new needles and ensure that everything is clean and sterilized."

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that Percy loves his job. "I could work every day and not complain. There is nothing I'd rather be doing. Life's too short to work at a job you don't enjoy."



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Campbell River
First Nation becoming first-class
landlord/
developer](#)

[Breast Cancer
Awareness a Must
for First Nations](#)

[Land Stewardship Training
for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native Images
Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New Mexico
Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

FIRSTHOSTS for First Nations Tourism

by Jolayne Madden-Marsh

At last Sandra White will see the fruits of her labour. For more than three years she has been developing a British Columbia First Nations tourism initiative. "The whole object of developing a customer service program was to provide Aboriginal businesses with information which was relevant and accessible to Aboriginal needs," says FirstHost project manager White.



Lynn Phelan of the Senklip Native Theatre group delivered the premiere FirstHost workshops in June at the Cherry Grove Golf Course, owned by the Osoyoos First Nation. FirstHost Leader Katherine Robinson of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth Economic Development Corporation delivered a simultaneous eight-hour customer service and tourism training program at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre.

What distinguishes First-Host from other customer service programs is its focus on cultural tourism products. FirstHost explains to its participants the sorts of cultural tourism products on the market and the issues that arise because of them.

Most of the participants, called "circle members", are already involved in the tourism industry, as frontline customer service workers, business owners and First Nation staff members. Still others are career changers, looking for an introduction to the world of Aboriginal tourism. First-Host workshops are open to the public.

The workshop consists of four modules called "learning circles". The first learning circle focuses on tourism - what is tourism, who has been involved historically, and what businesses are involved in Aboriginal tourism in British Columbia. The second learning circle is about the guest - how to identify your guests, how to meet their needs and expectations, and how to build a service relationship with them. This section also highlights British Columbia's tourism market, and how to appreciate cultural differences. "It's about sharing culture," says White.

The third learning circle is one of the most important, perhaps the most beneficial for universal learning. Customer service - communications skills, greetings, first impressions and complaint handling - is covered in a theory lesson, followed by intensive role play practice. At the end of this long day, the fourth learning circle focuses on the tourism market in the community each circle member lives and works in, so the new FirstHosts can provide accurate information to their guests.

"I have projected that there are over 250 First Nations tourism-related businesses in British Columbia now," says White. "There are probably over 1500 people currently employed in the First Nations tourism industry." A projected 1300 British Columbia First Nations people will be trained in the arts of customer service and tourism by the end of FirstHost's first year of operations.

FirstHost's logo was designed with the First Nations market in mind. It makes use of traditional icons such as the circle and the four directions, which, when pictured with four human figures facing each other, represent the unity among peoples and the four learning circles of the workshop. The two eagle feathers also incorporated into the design signify love, peace and harmony.

The Urban Native Indian Education Society (UNIES) developed FirstHost in conjunction with Human Resources Development Canada and British Columbia's Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour. FirstHost is owned by UNIES.

If you or your business would like further information about FirstHost, contact Sandra White at (604) 929-3917.



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



DREAMSPEAKER

B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Campbell River
First Nation becoming first-class landlord/
developer](#)

[Breast Cancer
Awareness a Must
for First Nations](#)

[Land Stewardship Training
for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native Images Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New Mexico Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

Tribal Accents

by Bessie Brown

After spending a few minutes with Kathy Humpherville you become a little more appreciative of entrepreneurial types.

After 20 minutes, you start thinking you could easily open a small business.

When you leave Humpherville there's little doubt that her arts and crafts shop, Tribal Accents, is going to be around for a very long time. And there's no doubt that it's going to be financially successful.

Humpherville is the owner of Tribal Accents, which is located in downtown Prince Rupert. Even with her high energy level Humpherville says she couldn't keep the business afloat alone. She credits the success of Tribal Accents to her family. "I have six daughters and at one time or another they've all helped with the shop. My husband Ken makes some of the paddles and other carvings."

After almost seven years in business the family is doing more than just eking out a living. "I didn't think the shop would ever become our main source of income but with each passing year we move closer to that happening. In some respects it's been a long haul. We've seen a lot of stores come and go on this street. But I feel like we're here to stay."

Humpherville, originally from Metlakatla, says the shop's success can also be attributed to the fact that it offers something to almost every buyer. Tribal Accent merchandise includes bent boxes, drums, paddles, pottery, dream catchers, dolls, baskets, t-shirts, silkscreen

prints, button blankets, traditional and contemporary tapes and leather dresses and vests.

All of the dresses and vests are handmade by the industrious and talented Humpherville. "They sell for around \$1,000 - the price of the dress depends on how much beadwork is necessary. We've received several orders for leather wedding dresses. The beauty of the dresses is the fact that they can be used for other occasions such as potlatches."

Most of the work in the shop comes from local artists, she said. "Of course we can't buy everything that walks through the door. It simply wouldn't be good business practice. But we do try to support local artists."

As well as manage the shop Kathy also finds the time to participate in fashion shows. "I don't do it as often as I should because it takes time to prepare for the shows. When I do go it's very enjoyable because my daughters model the clothing and regalia I design and make."

If Humpherville has a message for would-be entrepreneurs it's not to get discouraged. "It takes time to establish yourself. I've dealt with artists who want to sell their work immediately - sometimes it happens but sometimes they have to wait awhile for it to sell."

Humpherville says one of the most rewarding aspects of owning the business is having the opportunity to share some of the First Nations history and culture with customers, Humpherville said. "It's important for them to know and to understand that a design on a paddle or drum isn't just a design. They mean something much more to First Nations people."

Tseshahat Nation designs adorn the walls and floor of the Bank of Montreal's new Tseshahat Reserve branch which opened in March





[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Campbell River
First Nation becoming first-class
landlord/
developer](#)

[Breast Cancer
Awareness a Must
for First Nations](#)

[Land Stewardship Training
for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native Images
Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New Mexico
Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New Mexico Journey

by Caledonia Fred, student

Ha-Ho-Payuk Adult Education Centre, located in Port Alberni, B.C., is a First Nations learning center that offers accredited Adult Basic Education and College Prep courses. The Adult Education Class recently concluded a 10-day cultural and educational trip to New Mexico. This is their story.



"After vigorous planning, fundraising, and overwhelming community support we were able to make our dream a reality. On April 16, 1996, twelve students, two instructors, three elders and a local artist made the four-hour flight to Tohatchi, New Mexico. In Tohatchi we were introduced to the kind people who were to host us in their homes for the week.

We learned that Navajo means 'thief' in Spanish, so they prefer to be called Din,, which means 'the people'. Each morning we met at the Catholic church's bingo hall for breakfast and went over the agenda for the day.

During our stay we visited two elementary schools (one was a boarding school), the mid-school, and the high school. At each school we performed and danced three songs, introduced ourselves and told them where we were from, told them about our culture and our experience with the Din,. We also hiked Canyon de Chelly, a 600-foot-deep canyon where the Din, people were slaughtered in the late 1800s. There were ancient ruins with petroglyphs at the bottom of the canyon and we could see caves in the cliffs.

The community held a potluck dinner for us. The Din, people shared more of their culture and in exchange we sang and danced for them and shared our culture.

Later in the week, we went to the capitol of the Navajo Nation, Window Rock, Arizona. They have three branches in their government: legislative, executive and judicial. There are 200,000 people in the Din, Nation divided among approximately 110 political units called chapters. We toured the legislature and the executive branch and got a brief overview of how they run.

We all attended a smoke blessing which was held in a hogan, a traditional ceremonial lodge used for praying. Some people attended a sweat lodge and a couple of people attended a Native American church meeting.

To conclude our visit with the Din, people, we held an appreciation dinner for our host families and the community. We presented them with gifts and flour and said our good-byes. We danced for them for the final time and they danced and sang for us. It was an eventful night. On the way to Albuquerque we stopped and met the president of the Acoma Nation. He spoke to us about the past and the present situation of the Acoma Nation and his duties as president.

On April 26 and 27, we attended the Gathering of Nations Powwow, the largest powwow in North America. A few of us participated in the inter-tribal dance, that is when the floor is open for anyone to dance. The grounds were full of arts and crafts from various nations for sale. We heard there were 25,000 people in the stadium on Saturday; it was very powerful to see so many Indigenous people in one place.

Approximately 75% of the Din, people know their language. They still perform their rituals and have medicine men. Seeing their strong culture and language has inspired our group to learn more about our own culture. We really appreciated the elders that accompanied us. We learned from them as they were teaching the Din, people our culture. It has been an experience that will never be forgotten."



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Campbell River
First Nation becoming
first-class landlord/
developer](#)

[Breast Cancer
Awareness a Must
for First Nations](#)

[Land Stewardship Training
for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native
Images Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations
Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New
Mexico Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal
Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

Kitasoo Ferry Terminal Opening

Congratulations to B.C. Ferry Corporation's newest route, Adventure Circle Tour, which made its maiden voyage to Klemtu on June 13. Here, Kitasoo First Nation Chief Archie Robinson presents a paddle to Associate Regional Director General of D.I.A.N.D. B.C. region, Bill Montour, as a token of thanks for the department's \$400,000 contribution to the project. The ferry will service Klemtu, Bella Bella, Rivers Inlet, Ocean Falls, Port Hardy and Bella Coola and the surrounding communities of the Mid-Coast. The 29-year-old *Queen of Prince Rupert* will be replaced in the next three years at a cost of about \$70 million.





[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



DREAMSPEAKER

B.C. Region, DIAND — Summer 1996

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Campbell River
First Nation becoming first-class landlord/
developer](#)

[Breast Cancer
Awareness a Must
for First Nations](#)

[Land
Stewardship Training
for First Nations](#)

[Trapping the Future](#)

[People Feast](#)

[Healing Our Spirit](#)

[HOS Speaker's Bureau](#)

[HIV/AIDS Facts](#)

[Tattoo Artistry at Native Images Tattoo](#)

[FirstHosts for First Nations Tourism](#)

[Tribal Accents](#)

[Ha-Ho-Payuk goes on New Mexico Journey](#)

[Kitasoo Ferry Terminal Opening](#)

[Credits](#)

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[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)