

Forever Is a Long Time

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In 1997, I was alone with a Haida Elder at a campfire late at night in Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site. We were gifted by a small group of humpback whales that were coming through a narrow channel about 100 yards away from us. We could hear them blowing and but could only get occasional glimpses from moonlight shining from their wet backs. We were chatting about the very old sites we'd been finding inland after Daryl Fedje had figured out the sea level history. The elder said to me: "You know how you archaeology guys say that we've been here for 10,000 years and some of us say we've been here forever? Well, why can't we agree that 10,000 years IS forever?" To which I replied: "Deal, I'm going to spread that around!" And so I did; I would sometimes use it as an opening or closing line when I gave talks about the Gwaii Haanas work.