Photographer: Clint Johnson Kendrick (sgaan gwaay aerial_cj05)
Caption: Aerial view of SGang Gwaay World Heritage Site, located on the far southwest edge of Gwaii Haanas.
In 1995, Parks Canada staff took the Hereditary chiefs to SGang Gwaay to discuss strategies for the preservation of the island’s cultural treasures. The chiefs decided among other things, that the poles should eventually return to the earth as part of the natural cycle.
Caption: Mortuary poles, as shown in this photo, once held human remains. Conservation is guided by the principles of respect and integrity. As such, the least intrusive conservation methods are used.
Caption: A row of long houses once stood behind the poles in the historic village. They were built of beams and planks made from monumental trees. The large timbers shown are roof beams that rest on the top tier of a house pit.
Conservation work at the village includes removing plant growth from poles and using shells to delineate.
Each clan owns a number of crests. This person of high standing was honoured with this mortuary pole showing the black bear crest.
Caption: The Haida Gwaii Watchmen share stories of Haida life ways with visitors.
Caption: These surviving interlocking hand hewn facia boards and corner posts give an idea of the ingenuity and scale of Haida construction.
Caption: Low tide in front of SGang Gwaay showing where the ancestors once brought their canoes home through use of canoe runs. Rocks were cleared in front of old villages, as seen in the photo, that allowed the canoes to be brought ashore unharmed.
Caption: Whether storming or sunshine the village is an oasis of quiet and peace.
There is a sense of awe when quiet, poles and sunshine grace a day at SGang Gwaay Llnagaay.
Photographer: Linda Tollas
Filename: Haida Gwaii Watchmen enjoy showing this wonderous place to young and old.
Caption: The Gwaii Haanas Backcountry Management restricts the numbers of visitors allowed on shore at any given time, allowing each one to experience, in solitude, the spirit of the place.