

July 11, 2013

Ishikari delegation visits Campbell River over Canada Day weekend

A delegation of 26 dignitaries from our sister city, Ishikari, Japan visited Campbell River over the Canada Day long weekend to celebrate our 30th anniversary of twinning.

Freeman Mary Ashley, who was a Councillor in 1983 when the twinning agreement between Ishikari and Campbell River was signed, and has been a strong twinning supporter for years, comments: *"Our sister city relationship with Ishikari has grown from babyhood to maturity over the past 30 years. That is obvious from our 'birthday celebrations' this past week. When one thinks of the changes that occur between a one-year-old and a 30y-year-old, it helps to understand how much we have learned from each other. Both our cities have encouraged our children, youth and interested citizens to exchange knowledge and cultural values; to become international in our thinking in the increasing closeness of a global world. There is a lot of interest in taking our twinning to a new level as we renew our relationship. What struck me most about the Ishikari visit this time was the excitement of all generations involved, and the desire to continue and expand through educational, cultural and economic exchanges. The more we understand each other and work together, the more doors will open."*

Mayor Jakeway stated: *"Since 1983, when we formalized our sister city relationship, our communities have enjoyed numerous cultural, educational and professional exchanges as a result."* He added: *"A special thanks also to both the Ishikari and Campbell River Twinning Societies for your important role in the quality exchanges enjoyed by the Young Ambassadors and the Senior Exchange. Bravo."*

Upon arrival on Friday evening, the delegation's whirlwind tour included a shopping excursion downtown and an opportunity to visit a fish farm operation Saturday. Following more tours on Sunday, a dinner was held that evening to commemorate the anniversary, and renew our twinning agreement. Gifts were exchanged. Mayor Jakeway presented a piece of art from local artist William van Orden of Quadra Island for Mayor Taoka, and received a grizzly bear carving from Ishikari on behalf of the City of Campbell River.

Campbell River Twinning Society vice president David Armitage declared: *"What a profound experience it was listening to the former exchange students and individuals at the 30th anniversary banquet on Sunday as to how the sister city experience changed their lives. It shows the depth and history Ishikari and Campbell River have in furthering their commitments to each other."* He added: *"Our cities have been leaders in community-to-community involvement, and I look forward to future anniversaries in which we can continue to proudly retain our stature as one of the most successful and respected sister cities in BC and in Hokkaido Japan."*

The visiting group joined Monday's Canada Day celebrations, enjoying the Willow Point pancake breakfast and carving exhibits, waving to the crowd from the Campbell River Twinning Society parade float, and taking in the Canada Day Fireworks. The tired but happy group departed from Campbell River early Tuesday morning.

Campbell River enjoys one of the longest twinning relationships of BC communities.

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