

# “The Hollerin’ Place on the North Spit: elk’elch"

Painting by Pam Stoehsler (Quiich/Lower Umpqua)

*Story adaptation modified for Kindergarten by the SB-13 Curriculum Committee of the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians 7/25/2023.*

“elk’elch” translates to “hollering place” and is located on the narrowest portion of the bay when traveling from the north entering Coos Bay. People of other tribes would often travel by canoe (the waterways were our highways) to the large Hanis Coos village named hanisiich [HAHN-IS-EACH] to trade goods. Visitors would stop at the narrow place and holler across to the village announcing themselves: “‘dai sla,’ (pronounced [DYE], meaning hello, [SLAH], meaning cousin/friend.) *“We have traveled many miles to be here with you. We have many gifts to share with you.”* A **canoe** (**ix** in hanis) from the



village would be sent to **ferry** visitors to and from the village to trade and visit. People who **paddle** in the canoes are called **Pullers** (chəmmayawa in hanis.)

When visitors arrive at a village by canoe, or foot, there are customs for welcoming. Native people still use these specific introduction practices when journeying up and down the Northwest Coast by canoe. When coming to a neighboring village, visitors always introduce themselves and if all is well between both parties, visitors would be welcomed to come ashore from their canoes. An elder of the Tribe would be chosen to greet the visitors first. Usually a feast would be prepared and shared with visitors. The stories tell us that this activity has happened as long as there have been people and we continue these customs today.

People of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw lived in plankhouses (yiẋewəẋ in hanis) which were houses made of cedar planks and fir poles. Cedar trees were gathered in many ways: washed up on the beach, fallen during a storm, or culturally modifiedthen carried. Cedar was also used to make canoes, clothing, baskets, mats, rope and other culturally important items. Cedar is still collected and processed today to make many of these items.

**Salmon** (**qalyeq** in hanis) is an important food and is cooked in a traditional way. The salmon is cut open flat and laid between a cedar stake that had been split in half. It is then slowly cooked over a fire. When the cooking is finished, all parts of the salmon that are not eaten (bones, etc.) are returned to the water in a special ceremony to honor the fish and the giving of themselves to feed the People.

Children often play a game called shinny (nauhina'nawas in hanis). Shinny is a traditional Native American game that is similar to modern day field hockey. The goal of Shinny is to move a small wooden ball (k'wesis in hanis) with carved, wooden sticks called shinny sticks. The children run back and forth across the field, trying to score goals against the other team

The rich exchanges among the people of hanisiich and visitors are common practice throughout the region of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw—welcoming visitors into





the warmth of our homes, sharing an abundance of fish and seafood, or entertaining children with traditional games. This story and its customs are practiced still today reflecting the culture and values we hold dear and carry forward into the future.

*Tribal Artist Paints Mural Depiction of Life at Hanisiich Village - Elk'elch "The Hollering Place"*



Quuiich (Lower Umpqua) Tribal artist Pam Stoehsler pictured in front of her mural depicting "The Hollering Place", the village of Hanisiich.



The hollering place story blends modern and historic landscape, canoes, salmon, people, baskets, and cultural ways much of which came from photographs found in the Tribes newsletters and books such as Stephen Dow Beckham's "The Indians of Western Oregon."



