

Book recalls folk tales of Tlingit, Haida

Long-time Ketchikan resident Mary L. Beck brings together several oral folk tales of the Tlingit and Haida cultures in a new book published by the Alaska Northwest Publishing Co.

Heroes and Heroines in Tlingit-Haida Legend covers nine traditional stories. In the introduction to each legend, the characters in the Native tale are compared to their counterparts in classical mythology.

While parallels can be seen, the stories are unique in dealing with the history and adventures, the supernatural and the ordinary of the Tlingit and Haida peoples.

One of the most popular legends in the book tells about the life and exploits of Natsilane, whose physical skills alone merit hero status. Natsilane is also honored as the artisan who created and gave life to the first Killer Whale for the purpose of one act of revenge, after which it became a benefactor to the village, keeping the people supplied with food and securing Natsilane's legendary position.

To insure authenticity, Beck went to the storytellers themselves and had the book illustrated by Nancy DeWitt, wife of Chief Shakes, a Tlingit Eagle.

The books is available at bookstores or from the publisher for \$14.95.